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1 **"She was like 'don't try this' and 'don't drink this' and 'don't mix these'": Older**

2 **Siblings and the Transmission of Embodied Knowledge Surrounding Alcohol**

3 **Consumption**

4 **Abstract**

5 This paper draws on mixed-methods qualitative research conducted with 40 young people, aged

6 15-24, in the suburban case study locations of Chorlton and Wythenshawe, Manchester UK.

7 Through the lens of alcohol consumption, this paper brings to the fore how older siblings use

8 their experiences of, drawing on Latour, "*learn*[ing] *to be affected*"; that is, "effectuated",

9 moved, propelled into motion by different human and more-than-human agencies, to transmit

10 embodied knowledge to younger siblings. This paper finds that older siblings are an important

11 source of protection for younger siblings when starting their drinking careers. Moreover, this

12 paper finds that older siblings play a fundamental role in facilitating open intragenerational

13 dialogue surrounding alcohol consumption. Through highlighting the important role of older

14 siblings in transmitting embodied knowledge to younger siblings during the transition to

15 adulthood, this paper argues that there is a need to encourage greater involvement of siblings

16 in formal educational settings surrounding learning about important issues, such as: alcohol

17 consumption; drug consumption; and relationships and sex education, to help ensure consistent

18 messages.

19 **Key words: Alcohol; Embodiment; Qualitative; Relational; Siblings**

20 **Introduction**

21 This paper presents findings from research undertaken with 40 young people, aged 15-24,

22 living in the suburban case study locations of Chorlton and Wythenshawe, Manchester UK.

23 The aim of the broader study was to explore young people's alcohol consumption practices and

24 experiences in often-overlooked suburban drinking locations. Sibling relationships were not

25   the original focus of the research, but emerged as an important finding when asking young

26   people questions during the research process surrounding how they access alcohol, and how

27   they learn about drinking. This paper engages with findings that emerged through the

28   deployment of a palette of traditional and novel qualitative methods (see removed for

29   anonymity), comprising: individual and friendship group in-depth semi-structured interviews;

30   peer-interviews; participant observation of young people's nights in/out involving alcohol; and

31   text messaging. Through the lens of alcohol consumption, this paper brings to the fore how

32   older siblings use their experiences of "*learn*[ing] *to be affected*" ; that is, "effectuated", moved,

33   propelled into motion by different human and more-than-human agencies, to transmit

34   knowledge to younger siblings (Latour, 2004b:205, emphasis in original). This paper finds that

35   older siblings are an important source of protection for younger siblings starting their drinking

36   careers. Moreover, older siblings play a fundamental role in facilitating open intragenerational

37   dialogue surrounding alcohol consumption.

38   Current National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE, 2007) guidelines recommend that

39   head teachers, teachers, school governors, and others working in/with schools should ensure

40   alcohol education is a fundamental part of the education curricula. The aim is to encourage

41   children not to drink; to delay the onset of alcohol consumption; and reduce the harm it can

42   cause to drinkers. The NICE (2007) guidelines recommend a 'whole school' approach,

43   involving staff, parents and pupils. The potentially valuable role older siblings can play in

44   educating younger siblings about alcohol consumption practices and experiences has been side-

45   lined. This is an important neglect, since Davies (2018) recently expounded the importance of

46   sibling relationships in shaping experiences and orientations towards education. Moreover,

47   school-based alcohol education is less emotive than knowledge transmitted through siblings.

48   That is, schools-based alcohol education is expressed largely in black and white terms (Eadie

49   et al., 2010), whereas this paper finds that older siblings are a useful resource for educating

50 younger siblings about the corporeal, emotional and embodied effects of alcohol consumption.

51 Recognising the important role of sibling relationships in providing embodied knowledge to

52 younger siblings during the transition to adulthood, this paper argues that there is a need to

53 encourage greater involvement of siblings in formal educational settings, surrounding learning

54 about a range of important issues, including: alcohol consumption; drug consumption; and

55 relationships and sex education, to help ensure consistent messages.

56 The paper is structured as follows: first, I situate the research within an academic context of

57 relational understandings of age, and Sociological literature on sibling relationships. Following

58 this, the case study locations are introduced, and the novel methods underpinning this study are

59 outlined. After which, findings are presented surrounding two main themes: siblings as

60 'assistant parents' (Seaman and Sweeting, 2004:183); and intragenerational dialogues

61 surrounding alcohol. Finally, this paper is drawn to a close, signalling important

62 recommendations.

63 *Relational Understandings of Age*

64 Instead of simply examining the experiences of different age groups, we need, as Hopkins *et*

65 *al*. (2011) argue, a holistic and relational understanding of age. This is important because

66 identity is relational; it only develops and operates in relation to other identities (Valentine,

67 2003). An alternative to viewing youth as a transition from dependence to independence is by

68 exercising the notion of *inter*dependence. An interdependence perspective thinks through

69 dependency/independence as relational states, examining young people's transitions to

70 adulthood not as solo projects, but as processes which are shared with family and significant

71 others, including siblings (Holdsworth, 2007a). An interdependence perspective is thus

72 important for considering the ways in which young people's lives are connected to others

73 (Evans, 2008).

74 In the context of rural Bolivia, Punch (2002) usefully highlights that interdependent house

75 relations underlie young people's choice of transitions; notably these relations are not fixed,

76 but are worked out and renegotiated according to the existence of different constraints and

77 opportunities. As such, Punch (2002:123, emphasis in original) advances the notion of

78 '*negotiated interdependence*' as a useful way of understanding how young people work within

79 their structural limitations, whilst asserting some level of agency over their choice of transition.

80 Further, the concept of 'negotiated interdependence' recognises that young people engage with

81 significant (extra)familial others during key 'transitional events'.

82 An interdependence perspective moves beyond the significant emphasis that a 'transitions'

83 approach places on the young person (Gillies, 2000), to take into consideration the importance

84 of family relationships on the individual's life course trajectory. The importance of young

85 people's family relations and friendships, and the potential support received from, and created

86 in them, was noted by Tolonen (2008), regarding the educational and work transitions of

87 young Finns. Further, in the context of young people's educational journeys, Davies (2018)

88 advocates a relational understanding of education, arguing that educational experiences and

89 decision-making are not individualised, but instead socially embedded. Davies (2018) asserts

90 that sibling relationships are characterised by 'sticky' proximities; that is, connections that

91 make siblings important for young people's educational experiences, regardless of whether

92 the relationships are perceived as positive. The work of Davies' (2018) should be praised for

93 being one of few papers that explores advantages derived from sibling relationships from the

94 perspectives of young people.

95 Importantly, in a study exploring working-class Fnnish 15-17 year old's future expectations

96 and decision-making processes, in terms of their future educational choice, Aaltonen (2016)

97 highlights that advice offered by parents and siblings are often not congruent with each other.

98   The author also states that advice from siblings is considered reliable, even more so than that

99   obtained from formal career services (Aaltonen, 2016). This perceived reliability of advice

100   received from siblings, highlights the importance of bringing the fore embodied knowledges

101   transmitted between siblings related to important issues, such as alcohol consumption.

102   ***Sibling Relationships and Alcohol Consumption***

103   Whilst literature has begun to focus on intergenerational transmission of knowledges and

104   practices surrounding alcohol consumption (e.g. Valentine *et al*., 2012), literature on the

105   transmission of knowledges and practices between siblings is lacking. There are a few notable

106   exceptions. For instance, Kothari *et al*. (2014) found that adolescents and young adults engage

107   in alcohol, tobacco, and other drug behaviours similar to those of their older siblings. The

108   authors find that siblings may model, facilitate and encourage emerging alcohol, tobacco and

109   other drug behaviours. Likewise, Whiteman *et al*. (2011) note that older siblings' alcohol and

110   other substance use is positively associated with younger siblings' patterns of use. Whiteman

111   *et al*. (2011) conclude that younger siblings who endorse modelling their older brothers and

112   sisters, and share friends with those siblings, show the greatest similarity in alcohol use.

113   Due to the limited number of studies exploring sibling relationships and drinking, here, I

114   collate literature on sibling relationships, and signpost why this may be interesting in terms of

115   exploring how younger siblings learn about alcohol consumption. Ripoll-Núñez and Carrillo

116   (2014) point out that childhood sibling relationships can be characterised by

117   warmth/closeness; however, warmth and nurturance do not occur in isolation from conflict.

118   According to the authors, differences in power and status among siblings means that siblings

119   typically experience their relationship differently, dependent upon whether they are the older

120   or younger child. Ripoll-Núñez and Carrillo (2014) argue that older siblings often teach

121   younger siblings, with younger siblings being the recipient of teaching and caregiving.

Gendered power in sibling relationships is explored by Edwards *et al.* (2005). The authors suggest that 'talking' and 'doing activities together' are recurrent features of children's closeness to their siblings, or divisions between them. The authors suggest that, typically, girls describe talking together as a significant aspect of their connection to sisters, whilst boys regard doing activities together as a significant aspect of connection between brothers (Edwards *et al.*, 2005). With a focus on sistering, Mauthner (2000:291) uses the term 'minimothering' to describe the process where sisters adopt 'big' and 'little' sister roles of carer and cared for. Elsewhere, Mauthner (2005) point outs that sisters can alternate between these roles, as caring and power relations between sisters fluctuate over time.

As Gillies and Lucey (2006) contend, younger siblings rely on older brothers and sisters to cope with the demands of growing up and becoming adult. Siblings can provide key sources of emotional and practical support (Song, 2010). Gillies and Lucey (2006) distinguish sibling relationships from peer relationships through their ability to withstand conflict. Whilst sibling relationships during the transition to adulthood have seldom been studied, Conger and Little's (2010) paper sought to redress this neglect. Exploring the process of one sibling leaving home, the authors contend that when the relationship has been warm and supportive, siblings may experience a sense of loss as a sibling moves into adult roles. Conversely, adolescents with conflicting sibling relationships may experience feelings of relief. Further, Guan and Fulgini (2015) note that siblings are often major sources of companionship and intimacy during transitions to adulthood. Whiteman *et al.* (2011) state that, as siblings move through adolescence and young adulthood, they become more involved in relationships outside the family, and their engagement in their sibling relationships decreases. Notwithstanding this, sibling relations can be amongst people's longest lasting social relationships (Tibbetts and Scharfe, 2015), and hence their role in young people's alcohol consumption practices and experiences warrants much greater attention.

147 Punch (2008), drawing on Goffman (1959), illustrates that children's sibling interactions

148 typically consist of backstage, rather than frontstage, performances. Goffman (1959:109;114)

149 distinguishes between a "front region" and a "back region". 'Front region' refers to the space

150 in which the performance takes place. 'Back region' is where performances are openly

151 constructed, and where performers can relax and drop their fronts (Goffman, 1959). This is

152 where, as Goffman (1959:97) contends, "supressed facts make an appearance", and people

153 drop the front that they may otherwise perform. Many participants in Punch's (2008) study

154 contend that techniques of impression management are not required with siblings. Punch

155 (2008) makes clear that whilst behind the scenes may be an easy, relaxed atmosphere, because

156 many social conventions are dropped, backstage can also be a tense, irritable space. The author

157 concludes that siblings are less able to perform in front of one another, as it would be impossible

158 to sustain a continual performance, due to the knowledge they have of each other. Due to the

159 unique relationship that siblings have with each other, which is often very different to the way

160 young people perform in front of friends and parents, it is important to explore how knowledge

161 and experiences surrounding alcohol consumption are transmitted.

162 To sum, the focus on sibling relationships, bound up with the consumption of alcohol, has been

163 somewhat neglected in the existing alcohol studies literature. However, through collating

164 literature on sibling relationships I have highlighted why it is important to explore the role of

165 siblings in young people's drinking practices and experiences. First, since sibling relationships

166 have unique qualities that situate them somewhere between parent and friends (Guan and

167 Fuligni, 2015). Second, siblings have a unique role in that many social conventions and

168 performances can be dropped in front of siblings (Punch, 2008), more so than with parents and

169 friends. Third, sibling relationships are more likely to withstand conflict, than relationships

170 with peers (Song, 2010). Relatedly, sibling relationships can be amongst people's longest

171 lasting social relationship (Tibbetts and Schafem 2015). Through the lens of alcohol

172 consumption, this paper contributes to the existing literature on sibling relationships, by

173 showing how older siblings use their embodied experiences of 'learning to be affected' (Latour,

174 2004) by alcohol, to transmit knowledge surrounding drinking to younger siblings. In so doing,

175 this paper highlights the important role of older siblings in offering both protection, and

176 intragenerational dialogue, to younger siblings during their transition to adulthood.

177 Having provided the academic context for this paper, I now move on to detail the methodology.

178 First, I provide an overview of the case study locations, where I conducted research between

179 September 2013-September 2014. After this, I detail the process of sampling and recruitment,

180 before reflecting on my positionality. I then outline the methods I used to conduct the research,

181 before detailing the means of data analysis, and ethical considerations.

182 ***Methodology***

183 *Case Study Locations*

184 Wythenshawe was created in the 1920s as a Garden City in an attempt to resolve Manchester's

185 overpopulation problem and 'depravation' in its inner-city slums. Wythenshawe continued to

186 develop up to the 1970s. However, the 1980s and 1990s saw steady decline, high

187 unemployment, decaying infrastructure, crime and drug abuse problems (Atherton et al., 2005).

188 Wythenshawe was the outdoor filming location for the Channel 4 series *Shameless*, which

189 showed various shots of the local tower-blocks and housing estates. However, in 2007

190 production moved following disruption to filming caused by local young people (Manchester

191 Evening News, 2007). The town centre - known as the Civic Centre - was built in the 1960s,

192 and was renovated between 1999-2002 to include new stores. The main shopping area now

193 includes gates that are locked at night to prevent vandalism. The Forum centre, which opened

194 in 1971, houses a library, leisure centre, swimming pool, and cafe. Wythenshawe is a district

eight miles south of Manchester city centre, and faced with relatively poor transportation links (Lucas et al., 2009).

Chorlton is a residential area approximately five miles from Manchester city centre. Chorlton is a cosmopolitan neighbourhood with traditional family areas alongside younger, vibrant communities. The area has good road and bus access to, and from, the city centre, and is situated within easy access to the motorway network. Drawing on Manchester City Council's (2012) data from close to when data collection took place, Chorlton has a higher proportion of minority ethnic residents in comparison to Wythenshawe, and compared to the national average (19.1%, compared to the national average of 11.3%). As of November 2011, private residential property in Chorlton accounted for 90.3% of all property in the ward, much higher than the city average of 68.7%. Chorlton has three secondary schools; a shopping precinct; library; and is home to Chorlton Water Park - a local nature reserve comprising of a lake surrounded by grasslands and woodlands. Despite the varied locations for recruitment, the importance of relationships with siblings, bound up with the consumption of alcohol, seemed to be equally important to young people living in both case study locations, and seemed to transcend class and other demographic differences.

Sampling and Recruitment

I recruited 40 young people, aged 15-24, for multistage qualitative research. In some respects, the sampling strategy was purposive, as I aimed to recruit 20 young people from each case study location, and aimed for an equal gender distribution. I recruited the majority of participants through gatekeepers at local schools, community organisations, youth clubs and universities. In order to reach potential participants, I also distributed flyers and business cards to houses and businesses in both case study locations; posted on discussion forums concerning both areas; used Twitter and Facebook to promote my study to locals from each area; and arranged to be interviewed by the host of a local radio station in Wythenshawe. The young

220 people in my study were all able-bodied, predominantly heterosexual (one participant self-

221 identified as having a lesbian identity), and predominantly white (two participants were mixed-

222 race). The accounts in this paper thus relate to a specific group of young people.

223 Some young people, particularly those under the legal drinking age, were initially cautious

224 about participating in my study, due to worries about others (predominantly their parents or

225 teachers) finding out about their drinking practices. In the UK, the legal age for purchasing

226 alcohol is 18, and it is illegal for those under the age of 18 to consume alcohol unless in the

227 space of the home or eating a table meal at a licensed premises with those over the legal

228 drinking age. By building trust and friendship with participants (Valentine, 2013), they could

229 then tell their friends about the study and, from their first-hand experience, reassure friends that

230 confidentiality and anonymity are strongly abided by; this is recognised as a snowballing

231 sampling technique.

232 *Positionality*

233 I speculate that being a young researcher (in my twenties) may have been advantageous in

234 some respects. To explain, my age relative to those participants younger than myself is lower

235 than that of an older researcher, and participants perhaps perceived me as being more 'like

236 them', and thus were possibly more willing to divulge their drinking experiences and practices.

237 *Methods*

238 I had a palette of methods to utilise (see removed for anonymity), and made clear to the young

239 people that they could 'opt in' to whichever method(s) they wished. As Holland *et al*.,

240 (2008:19, emphasis in original) argue: 'by enabling young people to choose how they wish to

241 communicate with us we recognise them as social actors and begin to move our practice away

242 from adult-centric procedures'. The methods I draw on in this paper include: individual and

243 friendship group in-depth semi-structured interviews; peer-interviews; participant observation

244 of young people's nights in/out involving alcohol; and text messaging, as will now be discussed

245 in turn.

246 Individual and Friendship Group Interviews

247 Individual interviews enabled me to gain insight into the participants' perceptions, which are

248 subjective in nature (e.g. of their motivations for drinking, how they feel when they drink, and

249 where they like to drink) (Kaar, 2007). Whilst the individual interview has its benefits, there

250 are also drawbacks. Despite my relative closeness in age to participants, some young people

251 did not feel comfortable participating in a one-to-one interview with an adult researcher, and

252 asked to be interviewed with their friends. To address this, I implemented a friendship group

253 style of interviewing. I had not intended to use this method; this illustrates the agency of

254 participants to shape the research design, and the need for researchers to be flexible.

255 Friendship group interviews create a non-threatening and comfortable atmosphere for

256 participants to share drinking experiences (Renold, 2005). Moreover, friendship group

257 interviews provided access to interaction between participants (Miller *et al*., 2010) - this helped

258 tease out the importance of friendship and care to young people's drinking experiences (see

259 removed for anonymity). Overall, friendship group interviews allowed me to collect data that

260 otherwise may not have been accessible (Miller *et al*., 2010).

261 Peer Interview

262 When researching young people's alcohol consumption practices, the presence of adults may

263 restrict young people from speaking about their experiences and thoughts surrounding drinking

264 (Katainen and Rolando, 2015). Recognising the 'otherness' (see Jones, 2008) of those

265 participants younger than myself, I deployed a peer interview method. This method

266 acknowledges that young people's experiences of spaces and places differ from those of adults

267 (Schäfer and Yarwood, 2008). Young people are suitable for conducting peer interviews

268   because they speak the same language as other young people (Kilpatrick *et al*., 2007). Further,

269   they often have first-hand insights into matters affecting peers, as they are often affected by

270   these issues themselves (McCartan *et al*., 2012)

271   Participant Observation

272   I conducted participant observation over a period of 12 months, in a diverse range of spaces,

273   including: pubs, bars, clubs, casinos, streets, parks, and homes, and for a variety of occasions,

274   including routine nights out, to more celebratory occasions, such as an 18th birthday party. By

275   "hanging out" with participants (Kusenbach, 2003:463), I was able to explore young people's

276   drinking experiences as they moved through, and interacted with, their surroundings. Through

277   doing so, I acquired an understanding of young people's embodied drinking practices, and the

278   multi-sensory nature of drinking experiences (Langevang, 2007). Such visceral insights are not

279   easily obtained through other methods.

280   Text Messaging

281   Conversations I had with the young people, via text messages, regarding nights out they invited

282   me on was a valuable form of data (see removed for anonymity). This provided insight into:

283   what time they were planning on going out; what they were planning on wearing; what they

284   were planning to drink; how they intended to source their alcohol; where they were intending

285   to go; and whom they were intending to meet, for instance. Second, I asked participants to

286   update me, via text messages, of their experiences and practices during their nights in/out

287   involving alcohol, when I was not present. The date-and time-stamped text messages provided

288   me with an "experience snapshot" (Plowman and Stevenson, 2012:539) of young people's

289   alcohol-related, present-tense, action. Text messaging offered an informal, undemanding, and

290   unobtrusive, means of understanding young people's drinking practices and experiences, as

291   they unfolded.

Analysis

292   With regard to analysing interviews, field notes, and text-messages, I adopted the manual

294 method of coding by pen and paper, perceiving that computer-assisted qualitative data analysis

295 distances researchers from the data (Davis & Meyer, 2009). Initially, following Miles and

296 Huberman's (1994) three-stage model, a process of data reduction occurred, whereby I

297 organised the mass of data and attempted to meaningfully reduce this. Second, I undertook a

298 continual process of data display in the form of a table. Third, I undertook a process of

299 conclusion drawing and verification. Participants feature in this paper through pseudonyms, to

300 conceal their identities. Yet, in order to contextualise quotations, genuine ages and locations

301 are given.

Ethical Considerations

303   When observing young people's alcohol consumption practices in public spaces, I concur with

304 Spicker (2011) that undisclosed research in informal settings must be accepted as a normal part

305 of academic enquiry; as such, it is not necessary to gain consent from everyone. During

306 participant observations with young people who were consuming alcohol, I deployed a strategy

307 to retain informed consent. Deciding whether to include data acquired when participants

308 appeared drunk was achieved by following up with participants on another occasion, when they

309 were sober, to gauge whether they were comfortable with the inclusion of my observations of

310 their inebriated behaviour, a strategy also utilised by Joseph and Donnelly (2012). As this

311 illustrates, rather than ethical practice being secured by a single act of informed consent (Small,

312 2001), my approach to ethics was situational and responsive (Morrow, 2008). Further, during

313 participant observation, in order to ensure that I did not encourage participants to drink more

314 (in terms of quantity, cost, or alcohol content) than they otherwise would, I did not purchase

315 drinks for, or accept drinks from, participants.

316 Having discussed the methodologically underpinning this study, I now present two themes

317 arising from the data: siblings as 'assistant parents' (Seaman and Sweeting, 2004:183); and

318 intragenerational dialogues surrounding alcohol consumption.

319 **Siblings as 'Assistant Parents'**

320 Findings from my study reveal that in both Chorlton and Wythenshawe older siblings do not

321 have a permissive attitude regarding providing their younger siblings with alcohol. The

322 quotation from Alice, below, is typical of a theme I saw in the data of siblings performing as

323 'assistant parents' (Seaman and Sweeting, 2004:183). Through her maternalistic pedagogue,

324 Alice's older sibling treads a fine line between expressing caring concern, and attempting to

325 control, contain or shape the behaviour of her younger sister (see Gillies and Lucey, 2006):

326 Jess often goes to parties in the park and stuff, that's my older sister. There's this place

327 where her friends hang out called The Fields. I don't know where it is cos I'm the

328 younger sister, I'm not allowed to know. Like she specifically said to me when I started

329 drinking, 'I'm not being one of those sisters who buys you alcohol, that's not

330 happening'

331 (Alice, 16, Chorlton, interview)

332 Indeed, throughout my research, I saw examples of both older sisters 'becoming' mum, and

333 older brothers 'becoming' dad. Consider the following excerpts:

334 My brother don't really like me drinking, but me mum said I can, so he can't really stop

335 me. My brother never introduced me to alcohol. Me mum did, but not me brother

336 (Jenny, 16, Wythenshawe, friendship group interview)

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338   Ethan: My friends use to get it [the alcohol]. I don't know where they got it from, but

339   they always use to run about with like WKDs [a brand of alcopop] and other bottles,

340   like whisky.

341   Scott: Would you have ever asked your older brothers to get it for you?

342   Ethan: Na, they'd kill me, they'd kill me if they knew what I was doing

343   (Ethan and Scott, 18, Wythenshawe, peer interview)

344   As the above shows, Jenny describes her mother as having a more permissive attitude towards

345   her consuming alcohol, in comparison to her brother. Similarly, Scott tells his friend Ethan that

346   he would not ask his older brothers to get him alcohol; he highlights that they would be far

347   from happy if they knew he was consuming alcohol.

348   Findings in my study show how older siblings seek to protect younger siblings from spaces and

349   people perceived to be unsafe, when bound up with the consumption of alcohol; this was

350   particularly prevalent in Wythenshawe. Consequently, younger siblings in my study were often

351   subject to enforced separation from older siblings outside the home (Hadfield *et al*., 2006).

352   Take the following exchange:

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359   Kelly: I've got two older brothers, one's 22 and one's 21 and I've asked them if I could

360   come out with them and they say no.

361   SW: Why do you think that is?

362   Jenny: Cos they've seen it, and they've, this sounds 'angin[1], but they've probably slept

363   with girls that are probably dead young, so they probably think it's going to happen to

364   us

365   (Kelly, 17, and Jenny, 16, Wythenshawe, friendship group interview)

366 Both Kelly and Jenny suggest that their older brothers distance themselves spatially from them

367 on their alcohol-related nights out. My findings support those in Gillies and Lucey's (2006)

368 study, where eldest brothers were more likely to be protective of their younger siblings,

369 watching out for potential threats. When asked why they consider their siblings do not invite

370 them on nights out, Jenny claims that their siblings are aware of the risky situations young

371 women and men can find themselves in when they have been consuming alcohol. For instance,

372 engaging in unsafe sex, or having sexual liaisons they may regret, and that their older brothers

373 would not wish for them to find themselves in such situations.

374 However, birth order and age are not fixed hierarchies, and as such younger siblings in both

375 case study locations highlight how they contest, resist and negotiate intragenerational power

376 imbalances (McIntosh and Punch, 2009). Take the following quotations:

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[1] 'Angin' is a word used to describe something particularly unpleasant.

380   My brother disapproves of how much I drink. Like, my mum would buy me beer, he

381   would never buy me beer. He doesn't think I should drink…But he would do that when

382   he was my age, probably worse. He's 24 but he thinks he's my dad. So I wouldn't drink

383   in front of him probably

384   (Jenny, 16, Wythenshawe, friendship group interview)

385   Here, Jenny describes her brother's disapproval over the quantity of alcohol she consumes,

386   contending that, consequently, he will not purchase alcohol on her behalf. The gendered

387   narrative of the brother here as a 'protector' of his sister shines through (Davies, 2018).

388   According to Punch (2005), siblings that are relatively close in age are less likely to take

389   seriously a command from the older sibling. Despite being eight years apart in age, Jenny

390   describes not drinking in front of her brother, thereby creating her own micro-space of hanging

391   out, as a way of avoiding his authority.

392   Having discussed the ways in which older siblings in both case study locations seek to protect

393   younger siblings from consuming alcohol, along with certain people and spaces, bound up with

394   the consumption of alcohol, this paper now turns to highlight the important role of siblings in

395   intragenerational dialogues surrounding alcohol consumption. By bringing to the fore the

396   transmission of embodied knowledges between siblings, I signpost the potential of older

397   siblings to be enrolled in formal schools-based educational interventions around a range of

398   important issues.

399   **Intragenerational Dialogues Surrounding Alcohol**

400   Through participant observation, it was clear that older siblings in both case study locations

401   were often not keen to supply alcohol to their younger brothers or sisters, or to allow them to

402   go 'out and about' with them on alcohol-related nights out. However, what I did see / hear, in

403   both case study locations, is relatively open intragenerational dialogues around alcohol. The

404   following quotation from David brings this to light:

405   My younger brother is 18, and he doesn't drink, and he does have a very good reason

406   why. In September, we had an uncle that died from alcohol-related illnesses, he didn't

407   drink before that, and I think now he won't bother. I had the conversation with him,

408   and it's something you need to, if you start waking up in the morning and thinking

409   "Jesus I need a drink" you ought to be worried, but otherwise I think you're alright

410   (David, 21, Wythenshawe, interview)

411   In this excerpt, David describes an 'affective encounter' (Oswin and Olund, 2010:62) with his

412   younger brother, in which he conversed with him about how to distinguish whether one has an

413   alcohol problem. As noted in the literature, older siblings typically seek to educate and protect

414   their younger brothers and sisters, with younger siblings being recipients of teaching and

415   protection (Song, 2010). It is commonly recognised that having a sibling can enable access to

416   information not easily obtainable elsewhere (Gillies and Lucey, 2006). Edwards *et al*.

417   (2005:499) explore 'talk' and 'activity' as gendered features of children's relationships with

418   their sisters and brothers. The authors contend that, for women, talking together is a significant

419   aspect of their connection to their sisters, whilst doing activities together is a significant aspect

420   of connection between brothers. However, contrary to Edwards *et al*.'s (2005) contention,

421   through my data, the importance of talk for educating siblings about the consequences of

422   alcohol consumption was seen to be a practice transcending gender differences. Rather than

423   putting emotional connection and dependency on their siblings aside as they are growing older,

424   David's account highlights the importance of identification and affective ties (see Valentine *et*

425   *al*., 2014) with siblings for intensifying learning about alcohol.

426   Whilst David and his brother, introduced in the previously discussed excerpt, are only a few

427   years apart in age, this age spacing is still significant; the siblings are at different stages on the

428   pathway to adulthood (Conger and Little, 2010). In David's account, the 'sibling practice' of

429   talk (Edwards *et al*., 2006:60), enabled the older sibling to construct his identity as having

430   acquired corporeal knowledge of alcohol consumption. This '"doing" of sibship' (Bacon,

431   2012:308), is practiced by the older sibling to signal that he has transitioned closer towards the

432   status of adulthood (Punch, 2008); this therefore distances him from his younger sibling. This

433   notion is further evidenced through the quotations from Jack and Alice below:

434   My sister [Helen, 17] has told me that when you start feeling light-headed, that's when

435   you stop   (Jack, 16, Chorlton, interview)

436   My sister [Chloe, 18] likes to act like my mum, so she's always telling me stuff…When

437   I first started drinking, I flat out refused to try vodka, because I was so scared. My

438   sister had like had a whole talk with me before I left. She was like "don't try this" and

439   "don't drink this" and "don't mix these" …So she was like "don't mix spirits and beers,

440   cos that won't work, you'll throw up" urm and I was kinda too scared to get completely

441   drunk

442   (Alice, 16, Chorlton, interview)

443   The older siblings, referred to above, have acquired an enhanced ability to judge drunkenness,

444   and an improved knowledge of the effects of certain alcoholic drinks on their bodies. This

445   chimes with Latour's (2004b:205, emphasis in original) contention that the body has to '*learn*

446   *to be affected*'. Through experience and practice, both older siblings demonstrate signs of

447   having learnt the 'skills' of sensible drinking. First, Jack describes his older sister using her

448   embodied experiences of drunkenness to provide advice to him regarding when to stop

449   consuming alcohol. Second, Alice recalls her initial fear of obtaining a certain level of

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450 drunkenness. This was due to her older sister using 'accumulated experience' (Punch,

451 2001:809) about the differing affective capacities of certain types of alcoholic drinks.

452 However, a text message I received from Alice later in the study illustrates her autonomy, as

453 she describes her intention to consume vodka, despite her older sister telling her to avoid it:

454   I'm sticking with beer and cider but with the occasional bit of vodka. But, if my sister

455   finds out I've been drinking vodka she will go MENTAL, she hates the stuff, so many

456   of her friends have got drunk on it

457   (Alice, 16, Chorlton, text message, emphasis in original)

458 The above text message from Alice highlights that the idea of an intragenerational

459 transmission of practices and attitudes relating to alcohol, drinking and drunkenness between

460 siblings is overly simplistic. By consuming a type of alcohol she has been told to avoid, Alice

461 resists subjugation from the 'mini-mothering' of her older sister (Mauthner, 2000:291; 2005).

462 In a later interview, Alice states:

463   I don't think my sister likes the fact that I don't follow her rules when drinking, so like

464   at the first party I went to, after she told me not to drink vodka and beer, I did have a

465   sip of vodka anyway. And she asked me when I got home "so what did you drink?",

466   and I told her and she was like "I told you not to drink vodka", and I was like "yeah,

467   and, you're my sister not my mother"

468   (Alice, 16, Chorlton, follow up interview)

469 By establishing spatialities of freedom to consume vodka, away from the surveillance and

470 constriction of the sibship gaze, Alice actively manages her drinking biography. Thus, whilst

471 birth order can be viewed as a structural constraint, Alice practiced what Punch (2002:123,

472 emphasis in original) refers to as '*negotiated interdependence*'. That is, acting within and

473 between this structural limitation, by shaping her own personal drinking geographies (see

474 Valentine and Hughes, 2011).

Conclusions

476 In the alcohol-studies literature, the significance of intergenerational transmission in the

477 formation of young people's drinking practices has been explored (e.g. Jayne and Valentine,

478 2015). Meanwhile, the role of intragenerational transmission in drinking knowledges between

479 siblings is largely unexplored. This is an important neglect, since siblings have unique qualities

480 that situate them somewhere between parent and friends (Guan and Fuligni, 2015). Many

481 social conventions and performances can be dropped in front of siblings (Punch, 2008), more

482 so than with parents and friends. Moreover, sibling relationships are more likely to withstand

483 conflict, than relationships with peers (Song, 2010), and are thus amongst people's longest

484 lasting social relationships (Tibbetts and Schafem 2015). Mirroring the dearth of academic

485 attention paid to the role of siblings in young people's alcohol learning experiences, this paper

486 highlighted that NICE (2007) guidelines, regarding alcohol schools-based interventions,

487 emphasise the role of pupils, staff, and teachers, but downplay the important role older siblings

488 play in younger siblings' knowledge and learning about alcohol.

490 Despite the varied locations for recruitment, an important finding which emerged from the

491 mixed-methods qualitative research methods underpinning this study, is that relationships with

492 siblings, bound up with the consumption of alcohol, seemed to be equally important to young

493 people living in both case study locations, and seemed to transcend class and other

494 demographic differences. To recap, my findings from both Chorlton and Wythenshawe show

495 that older siblings are generally not permissive in providing younger siblings with alcohol, or

496 allowing them to accompany them on alcohol-related nights out. Importantly, my research

497 showed that birth order positions are not fixed and static, but performed, fluid, and negotiated

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498   (Davies, 2018). Some younger siblings in my study displayed tactics to circumvent the

499   authority of their older siblings, such as crafting spaces to experiment with alcohol away from

500   the 'sibling gaze'. Despite a strict attitude towards supplying their younger siblings with

501   alcohol, my paper finds that there is an open intragenerational dialogue surrounding alcohol;

502   that is, older siblings have 'learned to be affected' (Latour, 2004) by alcohol consumption, and

503   transmit their acquired embodied knowledge to younger siblings. Younger siblings'

504   experimentations with alcohol on the journey to adulthood can thus best be described as one

505   characterised by '*negotiated interdependence*' (Punch, 2002:123, emphasis in original).

506

507   To sum then, findings from this paper demonstrate that older siblings are an important source

508   for transmitting embodied knowledge to younger siblings during the transition to adulthood.

509   This has important implications given that advice from siblings is considered reliable, even

510   more so than that obtained from formal services (see Aaltonen, 2016 on careers services).

511   Schools-based alcohol education has been critiqued for being expressed largely in black and

512   white terms (Eadie et al., 2010). Meanwhile, older siblings have been shown to offer a useful

513   resource for educating younger siblings about the corporeal, emotional and embodied effects

514   of alcohol consumption. Consequently, I argue that older siblings should be encouraged to

515   have greater involvement in formal educational settings surrounding learning about a range of

516   important issues, to help ensure consistent messages. This could include: alcohol

517   consumption; drug consumption; and relationships and sex education. School-based

518   interventions would benefit from parallel campaigns targeting older siblings, highlighting their

519   importance as role models, and underlining key guidance messages. Recognising the cultural

520   and ethnic differences in the ways sibling relationships are conceptualised and practiced

521   (Davies, 2018), I recommend that research is conducted into the role of sibling relationships

522   in a variety of geographical, cultural, and ethnic contexts, to provide more tailored educational

523   intervention strategies in schools.

527   **Research Ethics**

528   All research on human subjects has been approved by The University of Manchester ethics

529   committee, and has therefore been performed in a way that is consistent with the ethical

530   standards articulated in the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki and its subsequent amendments and

531   Section 12 ('Informed Consent') of the ASA's Code of Ethics. All human subjects gave their

532   informed consent prior to their participation in the research and that adequate steps were taken

533   to protect participants' confidentiality.

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