

2017 Belmont Undergraduate Research Symposium

Department of Sociology

Moderator: Erin Pryor, Ph.D.

April 20, 2017, 6:30pm-9:00pm

JAAC 2141

6:30pm-7:00pm

Gender Identity and Alcohol Consumption: An Aspect of Hegemonic Masculinity

Elliott Durbin, Leah Hodgkiss, and Emma Snow

Faculty Advisor: Erin Pryor, Ph.D.

Hegemonic masculine is the reigning conception of what it means to be a “man” in America. There are prescriptive behaviors and traits associated with this hegemonic ideology, including, but not limited to: success, power, competition, emotionally restrictive, sexually active, and self-assured (Sasso 2015; Gottdiener et al. 2014). Individuals are socialized from birth and pressured to conform to these behaviors, traits, and associated expectations. Therefore, men tend to seek ways to best portray their masculinity (Holt & Thompson, 2004; Iwamoto et al., 2014; Sasso 2015; Peralta 2007). Research indicates one way males perform masculinity is through alcohol consumption (Sasso 2015; Gottdiener et al., 2014), as well, they express masculinity by sharing competitive stories of past drinking experiences and demonstrating alcohol related risk-taking behaviors (Kimmel & Davis 2011). One common place for this performance is in male-dominated organizations, such as fraternities and athletic teams, where men drink as a way to bond (Sasso 2015; Gottdiener et al., 2014). Through Dr. Pryor’s Social Research Methods class, we reviewed existing literature regarding the hegemonic masculine ideology and how alcohol consumption was a part of that identity, conducted a survey completed by half of an Introduction to Sociology class at Belmont University, ran analyses on existing secondary data, conducted a content analysis of Budweiser and Bud Light beer advertisements from the years 2005-present, and interviewed a fraternity president. Utilizing all of these methods, our research explores how alcohol consumption is a means to reinforce hegemonic masculinity and a masculine identity in contemporary American society.

7:00pm-7:30pm

Exploring the Intersection of Gender Identity and Health

Celeste Burgin, Tyler Hanmer, Denisha Morris, Janai Todd

Faculty Advisor: Erin Pryor, Ph.D.

Biological sex is composed of three categories – male, female, or intersex that are assigned at birth based on chromosomes and genitalia (West and Zimmerman 1987; Zavallos 2011). Gender is the socially prescribed attributes, and cultural and attitudinal qualities, which are associated with being male and female (Pryor 2017). Gender is continually socially constructed through the embodiment of the normative concepts associated with sex (West and Zimmerman 1987). People

tend to perform gender through interactions and they present information about their gender identity through symbolic gender cues such as hair, clothing, and body language (Schilt and Westbrook 2009; Birkman et al 2014). Transgender individuals tend to perform gender (masculinity and femininity) in ways that do not necessarily correspond with the genitalia that is assumed appropriate (Connell 2010; Schilt and Westbrook 2009). Because of these assumptions, transgender people are at risk of discrimination by healthcare professionals and are often reluctant so come out and seek healthcare. (Fredriksen-Goldsen et al. 2013). The purpose of our study is to examine how race may play a part in discrimination faced by transgender people of color in a healthcare setting. In the process of Dr. Pryor's Social Research Methods class, we surveyed Introduction to Sociology students at Belmont University about their awareness of transgender people and relevant issues, conducted secondary data analysis of previous research, performed a content analysis of Nashville-located plastic surgeons' websites, and interviewed a transgender man. These research methods helped us gain a variety of perspectives on how transgender individuals experience healthcare.

7:30pm-8:00pm

Chronic Illness, Stress, and Depression in 18 to 24 year olds.

Savannah Dunmire, Mallory Korpics, Alex Logan

Faculty Advisor: Erin Pryor, Ph.D.

For decades scholars have demonstrated the disruptive nature of a chronic disease diagnosis (Bury 1982; Charmaz 1983). Research indicates that chronic disease can often bring a great deal of stress for the individual, necessitating adequate coping mechanisms. (Houtum, Rijken, and Groenewegen 2015; Townsend, Wyke, and Hunt 2006; Furler, Walker, Blackberry, Dunning, Sulaiman, Dunbar, Best, and Young 2008; Thoits 2013). For instance, implementing adaptive coping methods - like support groups, familial support, and religion – as a way to move away from maladaptive coping methods, such as anger, drugs, and alcohol (Khakha and Kapoor 2015; Rodriguez, Lisha, Metz, Sun, Rohrbach, and Sussman 2015; Mihalca, Gherasim, and Butnariu 2016). Additionally, there is a positive association between youth, high stress levels, and an increase in depressive symptoms. Indeed, adolescents aged 18-24 suffer high rates of chronic stress and depression (Houman and Stapley 2010); yet, less is known about this age group's general experiences with chronic disease(s), and how these experiences might hasten the development of stress and depression. Through Dr. Pryor's Social Research Methods course, we reviewed previous literature on chronic illness and chronic stress, administered a survey to an Introduction to Sociology course at Belmont University, conducted secondary data analysis, conducted a content analysis of users on a health forum, and interviewed individuals with chronic diseases. Each of these methods has helped us explore the relationship between life-stress, depression and social support in individuals aged 18-24 facing a chronic disease.

8 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Child Delinquency and Parental Socialization: Do Bad Relationships Create Bad Children?

Rebecca Arnold, Ellen Currey, Aaron Krak, & Cat Northam

Faculty Advisor: Erin Pryor, Ph.D.

Over the past decade, rates of juvenile delinquency have been rising across the United States (Carlson 2012). For years researchers have pointed to everything to violent video games, too much television, and not enough of physical activity as causes of deviant behavior among adolescents (Puiu 2015), but other research has indicated that crime and delinquency in adolescents can be linked to parental neglect (Calabrese, Sykes and Matza 1957; Nikulina 2011). A lack of parental guidance and supervision can motivate adolescents to behave in unconventional and deviant ways (Chambliss 2012; Kazden 1997; Matherne and Thomas 2001). In fact, juveniles who experience an absence of close parental supervision are more likely to be deviant than those that have strong, positive relationships with their parents (Matherne and Thomas 2001). Through Dr. Pryor's Social Research Methods class, we have examined the relationship between juvenile delinquency and parental neglect. Using surveys, secondary data, content analysis, interviews, and literature reviews, we explored variations of the same question – Does the absence of a consistent parental figure lead to juvenile delinquency?