

Public Abstract

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Binge drinking is a problem on campuses with alcohol related deaths increasing from 1,440 in 1998 to 1,825 in 2005, a 3 percent increase per 100,000 students (Hingson, Zha, & Weitzman, 2009). It is difficult not to wonder the following question: How do alcohol advertising and social norming correspond to alcohol-related behaviors on college campuses? Through a series of focus groups, obtained from a large, public Midwestern university, I hoped to gain more insight into this phenomenon. Thus, this thesis focuses on the practical aspects of alcohol advertising's effects as well as theoretical implications gleaned from social norming and Third Person Effect Hypothesis research.