



## **Degree Project**

Level: Bachelor

### **Alcohol advertising**

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#### **A Minor Field Study in Cape Town.**

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**Abstract:**

The purpose of this study was to examine marketers view of alcohol advertising. Focus have been on its potential effect on the society, moral aspects and its relation to sustainability, identity, gender and celebrities. The method used was semi-structured interviews with eight marketers at three advertise agencies/production companies in Cape Town who have working experience of alcohol advertising and this have been analysed in relation to impact and identity theories as well as ethics. The result showed that majority of the marketers did not believe alcohol advertising increase alcohol consumption nor lead to alcohol abuse but rather create brand awareness and competition between brands. Their perception was also that alcohol brands are connected to identity in South Africa and that using celebrities in alcohol advertising could be highly effecting when using the right celebrity. One conclusion is that the participants did not suffer from moral myopia since they were fully aware of what harm alcohol could have on the society. Regarding moral discussion at work was it some of the marketers that did not talk about ethical issues which could be a sign of moral muteness but it is really hard to draw any conclusion about it after a short interview.

**Keywords:**

Advertise agency, alcohol advertising, sustainable marketing, ethics, moral myopia, moral muteness.

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Pavlina Arsova

*Cape Town, South Africa 2018*

“[A]lcohol could gild a party and it could destroy a life”.<sup>1</sup>

- *Maria Larsson, former Minister of Public Health in Sweden*

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<sup>1</sup> IQ. *Vem behöver alkoholreklamen? En rapport om hur marknadsföring påverkar alkoholkonsumtion och debutålder.* Report/IQ: 22. Stockholm: IQ-Initiativet, 2009. [http://www.iq.se/public/assets/Documents/Alkoholreklam/IQ\\_Rapport\\_Vem-behover-alkoholreklamen\\_2009-06-25.pdf](http://www.iq.se/public/assets/Documents/Alkoholreklam/IQ_Rapport_Vem-behover-alkoholreklamen_2009-06-25.pdf) (Accessed 2018-01-20), 3. (My translation).

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# 1. Introduction

This research, which is conducted in Cape Town between Mars 2<sup>nd</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup> 2018, was enabled due to a received Minor Field Study scholarship. It was chosen by a committee at Dalarna University in Sweden but is financed through SIDA. The essay need to be conducted in a developing country of own choice during at least eight weeks and be in a developing context, but SIDA has no power of influencing the content of the essay.

## 1.1 Presentation

After three years of studying at the university is it soon time to enter the advertising industry. This is both exciting but also filled with responsibilities. During our education have we learnt that we as media producers are in a position of power. Henry Jenkins, the author of *Convergence Culture: Where old and new media collide*, writes that even though we live in a participation culture where the consumer could interact and form the media content from a grassroot level does media "[c]orporations – and even individuals within corporate media – still exert greater power than any individual consumer or even the aggregate of consumers" which he write is not completely an equal relationship.<sup>2</sup> He lifts up the perspective of power between professional media producers and the consumer in the digital age. It is therefore relevant that we in the media industry now and then question our view on ourselves and what effect it has on the society. What are we selling, to whom, with what messages, can we stand behind them and should we really encourage to an increased consumption?

An upcoming challenge that will face us is how to deal with marketing of non-sustainable products. In *Hållbar marknadsföring - Hur sociala, miljömässiga och ekonomiska hänsynstaganden kan bidra till hållbara företag och marknader*, written by Mikael Ottosson and Anders Parment, is it stated that one product that is problematic from a sustainable point is alcohol.<sup>3</sup> People consume it for many different reasons. Because it tastes good, for the health, to relax or to celebrate. I myself sip a glass of wine now and then which I enjoy greatly. Many drink it without trouble, but if it is overconsumed could it have strong negative socioeconomic effects and because of this is it considered unsustainable. As a marketer is it included in the job to increase the sale of products,

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<sup>2</sup> Henry Jenkins. *Convergence Culture: Where old and new media collide*, New edition. New York: New York University Press, 2008, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Mikael Ottosson och Anders Parment. *Hållbar marknadsföring - Hur sociala, miljömässiga och ekonomiska hänsynstaganden kan bidra till hållbara företag och marknader*, 2 uppl. Lund: Studentlitteratur AB, 2016, 11.

which could be contradictory to the well-being of others so how should we as future marketers morally relate to this? Should we really advertise a product that has the potential of being harmful?

There is a knowledge gap of the area. Minette E. Drumwright and Patrick E. Murphy writes about this in their article “How advertising practitioners view ethics - Moral Muteness, Moral Myopia, and Moral Imagination”. They mean that research about ethics in advertising has historically been from a macro and not micro perspective since it mainly has consisted of measuring effect on the receiver and not examining the views among the professionals who work with it.<sup>4</sup> Knowledge of moral dilemmas faced by professional marketers, how they perceive and deals with the situation, is thereby limited. When it comes to the field of sustainability does Parment and Ottosson mean that “it exist a need to systematically problematize the contribution of marketing to a sustainable society”.<sup>5</sup> They point out that the area of sustainability in connection to advertising is not researched enough. By filling this gap could new insights be made that is valuable for both inside and outside the advertising industry.

## 1.2 Background

One of the countries that is known worldwide for its alcohol is South Africa. They are the seventh largest wine producer in the world which contributes largely to their economy. Majority of their wineries are located in the province of Western Cape, where Cape Town is situated.

### 1.21 Alcohol history of South Africa

South Africa have a long history of alcohol production. Originally was maize produced for food and the home-brewed African beer Umqombothi which was consumed during traditional celebrations where lonely drinking was not allowed.<sup>6</sup> Wine grapes and malt-beer, also known as western beer, was introduced by the Dutch settlers from the Dutch East India Company who arrived in 1652 and created a supply station at what is now Cape Town. It was also there the first South African wine bottle was produced in 1659 by the Dutch Jan van Riebeeck and during late 18th century was wine farming established by the colonizers in Western Cape.<sup>7</sup> During apartheid did the government use alcohol to “social and economic control over non-white population groups, especially blacks” by

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<sup>4</sup> Drumwright, Minette E and Murphy, Patrick E. “How advertising practitioners view ethics - Moral Muteness, Moral Myopia, and Moral imagination”. *The Journal of Advertising*. Volume 33, no 2 (2004), 7-24, doi:10.1080/00913367.2004.10639158, 7.

<sup>5</sup> Ottosson och Parment. *Hållbar marknadsföring - Hur sociala, miljömässiga och ekonomiska hänsynstaganden kan bidra till hållbara företag och marknader*, 25. (My translation).

<sup>6</sup> Charles DH. Parry and Anna L. Bennetts. *Alcohol policy and public health in South Africa*, Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1998, 3-4.

<sup>7</sup> Parry and Bennetts. *Alcohol policy and public health in South Africa*, 6-7.



implementing segregation of bars, which was called *White bars* and *Black bars* that were separated by skin color, and the *dop-* or *tot-system* where farm workers got salary in form of cheap wine.<sup>8</sup> In 1994 when Nelson Mandela came into power and South Africa became a democracy was this system banned. Regarding accessibility of alcohol is there today around 5300 licensed stores in Western Cape and 25,000 shabeens, which is illegal liquor stores that often is at someone's home.<sup>9</sup> This means that it is easy for an underage person to buy alcohol since the control of selling is weak. Shabeens have historically been "a widespread cultural and economic phenomenon in the lives of black South Africans" and it "became a potent form of defiance against white, colonial, and apartheid rule".<sup>10</sup> This means that a sub-culture was created due to the apartheid era where shabeens became both a place for black South Africans to interact with each other but also an income source for their families.

### *1.22 Socioeconomic consequences of heavy drinking*

There are a lot of heavy drinkers in South Africa. The total consumption among drinkers is 27.1 litres of pure alcohol per capita<sup>11</sup>, compared to 13.3 litres in Sweden according to numbers from World Health Organization.<sup>12</sup> This is twice the number. It is not everybody that drink in South Africa, there are some groups that drink more than others. In a report from Department of Health South Africa is it stated that 37% of the men had consumed alcohol the last seven days, compared to 10% of women.<sup>13</sup> This means that heavy drinking could be gender related. Regarding ethnicity among men did the study show that drinking was highest among white (58%), followed by black/African (38%), colored (36%), and last Indian/Asians (13%).<sup>14</sup> If these numbers are a sign of alcoholism is hard to say since it only convey alcohol intake the last week and many drink without being alcoholics. For example could the country's high tourism increase these numbers since people on vacation tend to drink a lot. Also a CAGE test was done where 16% of men showed signs of

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<sup>8</sup> Parry and Bennetts. *Alcohol policy and public health in South Africa*, 4.

<sup>9</sup> J. Phillip Gossage, Cudore L. Snell, Charles D. H. Parry, Anna-Susan Marais, Ronel Barnard, Marlene De Vries, Jason Blankenship, Soraya Seedat, Julie M. Hasken, and Philip A. May. "Alcohol Use, Working Conditions, Job Benefits, and the Legacy of the "Dop" System among Farm Workers in the Western Cape Province, South Africa: Hope Despite High Levels of Risky Drinking". *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. Volume 11, no 7, (2014), 7406-7424, doi:10.3390/ijerph110707406, 7408.

<sup>10</sup> Parry and Bennetts. *Alcohol policy and public health in South Africa*, 5.

<sup>11</sup> World Health Organization. *South Africa – Alcohol consumption: levels and patterns*. 2014.

[http://www.who.int/substance\\_abuse/publications/global\\_alcohol\\_report/profiles/zaf.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/publications/global_alcohol_report/profiles/zaf.pdf?ua=1) (Accessed 2017-09-28).

<sup>12</sup> World Health Organization. *Sweden – Alcohol consumption: levels and patterns*. 2014.

[http://www.who.int/substance\\_abuse/publications/global\\_alcohol\\_report/profiles/swe.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/publications/global_alcohol_report/profiles/swe.pdf?ua=1) (Accessed 2017-09-28).

<sup>13</sup> National Department of Health (NDoH), Statistics South Africa, (Stats SA) South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) and ICF. *South Africa Demographic and Health Survey 2016: Key Indicators Report*. Report/ Department of Health South Africa: 58. Pretoria, Rockville and Maryland: NDoH, Stats SA, SAMRC and ICF, 2017. (Accessed 2018-05-02), 39.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 39.

problem drinking.<sup>15</sup> The report was released in 2017 and it was conducted on 6126 women and 4210 men at the age of 15-65+. Since South Africa has a population of over 57 millions of people are the numbers not completely representative for the whole population. To get more accurate numbers would greater parts of the population have needed to participate. Heavy drinking have a lot of socioeconomic consequences since it could lead to (gender based) violence, rape, spread of HIV/AIDS, murder, traffic accidents and alcohol-related diseases, which result in expensive healthcare costs. South Africa rank for example one of the highest in the world when it comes to alcohol-related birth defects, so called fetal alcohol syndrome (*FAS*), which is caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy.<sup>16</sup> It could create malformations, neurological injuries and difficulties in completing elementary school, but have also severe consequences for the family and for society as a whole since it can lead to unemployment and financial difficulties in adulthood.

### 1.23 A global concern

Alcohol is a subject of global concern. The world leaders have via United Nations signed a contract of seventeen sustainable development goals to reach by 2030 and prevention of substance abuse, including harmful drinking, is included in several goals. For example goal three *Good Health and Well Being*.<sup>17</sup> This means that alcohol is considered to be an obstacle to overcome sustainable development since it have a negative impact on public health. 3,3 million deaths every year is estimated to be alcohol related, which correspond to 5,9% of all deaths in the whole world.<sup>18</sup> Some of the measures that have been taken is banning or restrictions of advertising, warning labels, taxation, information campaigns and rehabilitation of addicts. The critics, however, mean that there are also positive effects with alcohol such as goal one *No Poverty* since employment in the alcohol industry could lead to economic growth. Ottosson and Parment writes that there are two types of interpretation of sustainable development. A hard interpretation which believes that the three areas social, economic and environmental sustainability are equal important and a weak interpretation

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<sup>15</sup> National Department of Health (NDoH), Statistics South Africa, (Stats SA) South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) and ICF. *South Africa Demographic and Health Survey 2016: Key Indicators Report*, 39.

<sup>16</sup> Philip A. May, Jason Blankenship, Anna-Susan Marais, J. Phillip Gossage, Wendy O. Kalberg, Ronel Barnard, Marlene De Vries, Luther K. Robinson, Colleen M. Adnams, David Buckley, Melanie Manning, Jones L. Kenneth, Charles, H. Parry, H. Eugene Hoyme and Soraya Seedat. "Approaching the prevalence of the full spectrum of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders in a South African population-based study". *Alcohol Clin Exp Res*. Volume 37, no 5 (2013), 818-830, doi: 10.1111/acer.12033, 818.

<sup>17</sup> United Nations. *Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages*. <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/health/#>. (Accessed 2018-02-07).

<sup>18</sup> Vladimir Poznyak and Dag Rekve (eds.). *Global status report on alcohol and health 2014*. Report/World Health Organization: 389. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2014. (Accessed 2018-06-03). 46.

which allows negative impact in one area if it increases sustainability in one of the other areas.<sup>19</sup> So the critics are probably leaning toward the weaker interpretation of sustainability.

### **1.3 Purpose and aim of the study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the attitudes around alcohol advertising among marketers in Cape Town. This is of importance since it could be included in our future employment to market alcohol so therefore is it relevant to get an insight into how the industry morally perceive and deals with the situation. South Africa, and especially Cape Town, is relevant since they have a long history of alcohol production, widespread problems with heavy drinkers, a flourishing film industry who have created alcohol ads and have had political discussions about banning it. The international perspective is essential since the ads we produce could easily be viewed world-wide due to digital media and global marketing campaigns and the rules regarding marketing of alcohol looks different in each country, which is something we need to be aware of. My research will hopefully contribute to a raised awareness so when students step into the industry can we make more aware and confident decisions.

The questions that will be investigated are:

- What attitudes do marketers in Cape Town have toward alcohol advertising and its potential effects on the society?
- What social and moral responsibility do they perceive they have?

## **2. Theory**

This chapter will lift up theory, central concepts and earlier research that is related to impact effect on the consumer and ethical dilemmas of marketers. The purpose is to understand their situation deeper and to be able to analyse their answers.

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<sup>19</sup> Ottosson och Parment. *Hållbar marknadsföring - Hur sociala, miljömässiga och ekonomiska hänsynstaganden kan bidra till hållbara företag och marknader*, 14.

## 2.1 Impact theory of advertising on the consumers

### 2.11 Causal theory

Those who believe that advertising have a direct effect on the consumers behavior, such as desire to buy a product, believes in the causal theory. Magnus Söderlund, the editor of the anthology *Marknadsföring och påverkan på konsumenten*, writes that this is an assumption we do and that this theory is problematic since the two variables X and Y, where X stand for cause and Y for effect, cannot be influenced by other variables.<sup>20</sup> Related to the issue of alcohol advertising does this mean that alcohol abuse would only exist because of alcohol advertising. It cannot be influenced by other factors in life, such as unemployment or psychological factors, and the problem would neither exist if alcohol advertising did not exist. Helen Katz, the author of *The Media Handbook: A complete guide to advertising media selection, planning, research, and buying* lifts up that also media is complex. She states that each person are exposed to over 5000 ads every week.<sup>21</sup> This means that the consumers constantly get exposed to new ads every day and that it becomes really hard to measure what effect a single ad have on their behavior since it coexist with others ads they have seen and other factors in their life.

### 2.12 Mutual value

The current belief among many marketers is the theory of mutual value. Sara Rosengren states in *Marknadsföring och påverkan på konsumenten* that this belief is the core in both her own research and in the area of branded content and that it is defined by the branch organization Swedish Content Agency as advertising where “the content in itself has a great value for the receiver”.<sup>22</sup> What she suggest is that if advertising gives the consumers a deeper meaning could it have an impact. This by, for example, creating dreams and hopes. Ellis Cashmore writes in *Making sense of sports* about Nikes global success that was built by having a cooperation with the basketball player Michael Jordan and other sport stars. He writes:

Nike picked the perfect intersection of history and personality. At a time when America was still mortified by its never-ending racial problems, it was comforting to know that black individuals, however humble their origins, could soar to the top. Jordan’s play could mesmerize audiences, his persuasive advertising could enchant markets.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Magnus Söderlund (ed). *Marknadsföring och påverkan på konsumenten*, Lund: Studentlitteratur AB, 2014, 20-21.

<sup>21</sup> Helen Katz. *The Media Handbook: A complete guide to advertising media selection, planning, research, and buying*, 6 ed. New York: Routledge, 2017, 13.

<sup>22</sup> Swedish Content Agency cited in Söderlund. *Marknadsföring och påverkan på konsumenten*, 97. (My translation).

<sup>23</sup> Ellis Cashmore. *Making sense of sports*, 4 ed. New York: Routledge, 2005, 384.

He is pointing out that Nike's success was built by using minorities which gave a sense of pioneer ship and hope of a better future and that Michael Jordan became an anti-hero that people could identify themselves in and look up to. People wanted to be Michael Jordan so by buying a pair of Air Jordan basketball shoes did the consumers get a sense of value. This example highlights that cooperation with the right celebrities could boost the sale of products.

### *2.13 Participation culture*

The technological development has created a change in how the consumers interact. When only traditional media, such as television and newspapers, existed was media produced by a few experts, but since the implementation of digital media there has been a transformation. Jenkins describe it as following:

If old consumers were assumed to be passive, the new consumers are active. If old consumers were predictable and stayed where you told them to stay, then new consumers are migratory, showing a declining loyalty to networks or media. If old consumers were isolated individuals, the new consumers are more socially connected. If the work of media consumers was once silent and invisible, the new consumers are now noisy and public.<sup>24</sup>

He suggests that the consumers are no longer believed to be passive receivers, but now both receivers and active producers that contribute and interact, often unexpectedly, with the messages they come across. They like, dislike, comment, produce own material and share with their friends. Thereby can advertising no longer be understood as a rectified message from the media corporations but rather as a many-to-many flow that connects people in a network and create a form of collective intelligence.

## **2.2 Identity theory on the consumers**

### *2.21 Consumer identity*

Brands could influence the perception of identity. John O'Shaughnessy and Nicholas Jackson O'Shaughnessy writes about how consumers use products to express and maintain their identities in their article "Marketing, the consumer society and hedonism". There is it stated that "[c]onsumers take their identity from their possessions" and that it creates "social meaning", "power of status", "social membership and social acceptance".<sup>25</sup> He points out that we are living in a consumption

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<sup>24</sup> Jenkins. *Convergence Culture: Where old and new media collide*, 18-19.

<sup>25</sup> John O'Shaughnessy and Nicholas Jackson O'Shaughnessy. "Marketing, the consumer society and hedonism". *European Journal of Marketing*. Volume 36, no 5/6 (2002), 524-547, doi: 10.1108/03090560210422871, 531-532.

society where possessions are valued high and that products becomes a meaning system since it can communicate who we are or what groups we want belong to. So by buying certain brands or products could the consumers get a sense of becoming someone or getting closer to a certain lifestyle. Advertising can thereby strengthen the consumers attitudes and appeal to their need to express taste and individuality through consumption.

### 2.22 Celebrities and identity

Also celebrities could have an impact. Deborah J. Macinnis, C. Whan Park and Joseph W. Priester writes in *Handbook of Brand Relationships* about how celebrities are used as a marketing strategy in advertising. They write that “celebrity-based brand associations can help consumers achieve goals that are motivated by the self, such as self-construction and self-enhancement” and that “celebrity-endorsement effect will be stronger when self-needs relevant to constructing one’s self-identity are high”.<sup>26</sup> What they imply is that celebrities in advertising could be effective since consumers identifies themselves in their idols which creates a stronger bond to the brand and that it is mainly persons that are in an identity searching phase that is susceptible. Especially young consumers who have not yet established their identities could potentially be affected. However, this is not universal for all celebrities, it requires a celebrity that the consumers could identify themselves in or that they want to become that person, otherwise it have no, or opposite, effect.

### 2.23 Individual differences

Consumers react differently to the same ad. Connie Malamed is lifting this in her book *Visual Language for designers*. She states:

We cannot know how an individual will perceive a graphic, nor what thoughts, emotion, knowledge, and expectations the viewer will bring to a visual encounter. When viewers look at a graphic, their perceptions are inevitably colored by their preconceived ideas, likes and dislikes, values, and beliefs /---/ Age, gender, educational background, culture and language are other potent influences on perception.<sup>27</sup>

What Malamed is aiming at is that each person is unique and that the impact of visuals is dependent on prior experiences, ability and willingness to process that information. With this theory cannot an individual blame their behavior of the impact of visuals since there are many other factors that have a strong influence and it is neither possible to mass impact a whole population. Low educational

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<sup>26</sup> Deborah J. Macinnis, C. Whan Park and Joseph W Priester. *Handbook of Brand Relationships*. Taylor & Francis. 2014. E-bok, 118.

<sup>27</sup> Connie Malamed. *Visual Language for designers: principles for creating graphics that people understand*. Rockport Beverly: Mass, 2009, 20.

level or low media literacy could however potentially be a factor that influence a person's receptivity and therefore is education, especially in media literacy, important.

## 2.3 Moral issues among marketers

### 2.31 *Moral myopia and moral muteness*

Marketers could be exposed to moral dilemmas. This is however not exclusively for the media industry and is something that both individuals and organizations face at all workplaces. Øyvind Kvalnes, the author of *Moral Reasoning at Work: Rethinking Ethics in Organizations* has written a book about the topic where he discusses several moral conditions. One of them is moral blindness, which is also called moral myopia. He describe it like this:

Moral blindness is something that can strike any decision-maker in an organization. We have complex tasks and are supposed to deal with them quickly in order to be ready for further challenges at work. In the heat of the moment, we can become blind to important aspect of the situation.<sup>28</sup>

He mean that a temporary blindness can occur in environments where people are under pressure. It is relevant for the advertise industry since marketers works against deadlines and could be in complex situations. Another moral concept is moral muteness. This is defined as a person who see an ethical problem but is silent about it.<sup>29</sup> A person might not want to speak their mind due to social reasons or fear of losing their current or future jobs. In the advertise industry are many employed as freelancers and are recruited to a specific project so they are economically dependent to keep the relations good and might not want to risk it for the sake of moral issues.

### 2.32 *Conflict of interest*

There are situations where a person or organization might waive its moral principles. Kvalnes writes that it could occur when working with clients. He writes that “[t]he professional has a primary duty to look after the interest of the client, and a secondary duty to serve his or her personal interests” and that this could create “temptations to choose the morally wrong option at the expense of the morally right one”.<sup>30</sup> What he mean is that a conflict of interest could occur where the professional might leave its moral values to keep the client. For example, a marketer might

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<sup>28</sup> Øyvind Kvalnes. *Moral Reasoning at Work: Rethinking Ethics in Organizations*. Palgrave MacMillan M.U.A, 2015. E-bok, 92.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 94.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 62.

really dislike a certain clothing brand and would as a private person never buy their clothes due to ethical reasons since they take advantage of child labor in their production, but when representatives from this brand contact the marketer since they want to create an advert the marketer might do it anyway since it generates income and is a part of the job.

### 2.33 Utilitarianism vs the duty ethics

What is morally right could be viewed from different perspectives. In *Inledning till Etiken*, written by Göran Collste, are several ethical theories presented. One of these is utilitarianism, whose goal is maximum happiness in the world.<sup>31</sup> This means that the focus is on what is best for the vast majority. For example, drinking alcohol makes a lot of people happy and a few people unhappy. Should we then ban it? Not according to this theory since most people in the world enjoy it without trouble. Another theory is the duty ethics, founded by Emanuel Kant, whose goal is “the moral law” which is connected to “moral duties”.<sup>32</sup> This theory believes that the right thing is prioritized over the greater good. When it comes to alcohol is it connected with (gender-based) violence and according to this theory should alcohol be banned since it is not morally right that an innocent person should be exposed to someone else’s violent behavior when overconsuming alcohol. So the issue of moral view could be depending on what perspective is used.

## 3. Previous research

This section will explain previous research that is relevant for understanding the topic of the essay. The focus will be on impact effect of alcohol advertising and brands on the consumers as well as ethical issues among marketers.

### 3.1 Impact effect of alcohol advertising on the consumers

It exists a lot of research of the impact effect of alcohol advertising on the consumers. These show various effects, some pro and some against. One of them is an experiment from 2014. The participants got to choose between two gift cards worth 10 dollars, one for a bar and one for a coffee shop, after seeing ads for either beer or water. The result showed that 73% of those that saw the beer ads chose the bar gift card, compared to 45% of those who saw the water ads who chose

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<sup>31</sup> Göran Collste, *Inledning till Etiken*, 3 uppl. Lund: Studentlitteratur AB, 2010, 46.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 55-56. (My translation)



the coffee shop gift card.<sup>33</sup> The likelihood to choose a bar gift card was thereby higher in both groups. Those who were classified as heavy drinkers were more likely to express their intentions to drink due to the exposure of the beer ads compared to the low-risk groups.<sup>34</sup> This could suggest that alcohol ads have a causal effect on those who already drink alcohol. It could also suggest that these persons would consume alcohol anyway and wanted to blame their behavior on advertising. The study was conducted on 121 participants in a college town in the Midwest USA. It took place in a research lab where the participants answered an online survey where the ads were displayed. Several factors might have influenced their behavior. Firstly, the research effect, meaning they were affected by the clinical environment of the study where the phenomenon was not studied in its natural platform since it was not viewed as realistic commercials. Secondly one of the ads showed water and not coffee. Showing a nice cup of coffee would have been more representative for the coffee gift card.

### 3.2 Effect of brands on the consumers

Why do brands spend enormous amount of money on advertising if it does not have an causal effect? In 2001 did Coca-Cola spend \$1.4 billion on it while Pepsi spend over \$1 billion.<sup>35</sup> According to research does brands have an effect on the consumers. Claes-Robert Julander writes in *Marknadsföring och påverkan på konsumenten* about a blind test where the participants got to taste both Coca-Cola and Pepsi. When they were asked to value them without knowing the name of the brand did Pepsi win in taste, but when the participants saw the brands at the tasting they chose Coca-Cola as a winner.<sup>36</sup> This mean that the brand itself could be more important for the consumers than the quality or experience of the product. We also have a higher trust in brands we already know. Katz states that “[p]eople are far more likely to purchase a brand whose name they have heard before than one about which they have no information”.<sup>37</sup> What she means is that if a person have a need for a product and there are several products in the same category would we rather choose a known brand that we already have established a positive relation to. According to this theory does advertising generate competition between brands within the same area of field.

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<sup>33</sup> Saleem Alhabash, Anna R. McAlister, Wonkyung Kim , Chen Lou, Carie Cunningham, Elizabeth Taylor Quilliam, and Jef I. Richards. “Saw It on Facebook, Drank It at the Bar! Effects of Exposure to Facebook Alcohol Ads on Alcohol-Related Behaviours”. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*. Volume 16, no 1, (2016), 44-58, doi: 10.1080/15252019.2016.1160330, 52.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 54.

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.repinly.com/stats.aspx>. Cited in Ekaterina Walter and Jessica Gioglio. *The Power of Visual Storytelling: How to Use Visuals, Videos, and Social Media to Market Your Brand*. New York: McGraw Hill Education, 2014, 17.

<sup>36</sup> Söderlund. *Marknadsföring och påverkan på konsumenten*, 38.

<sup>37</sup> Katz. *The Media Handbook: A complete guide to advertising media selection, planning, research, and buying*, 15.

### 3.3 How do marketers perceive moral issues?

There are mixed results regarding how marketers perceive moral issues. According to one study by Shelby D. Hunt and Lawrence B. Chonko are moral difficulties common among marketers. Their result showed that 43 % of the participants perceived that these problems occur “a great deal” and two third felt it had a negative impact on both their working relationship with their colleagues and their individual working performance.<sup>38</sup> They point out that this is a frequent phenomenon and that it is social, meaning it could be related to both leadership and company culture. The study was conducted as a mail survey with 330 participants, but it was sent to 3064 advertising agency executives so the loss was high which makes the study less valid. It was performed in 1985 and much have happened both in advertising and society since then, such as the digitalization and implementation of social media. A more recent research by Minette E. Drumwright and Patrick E. Murphy suggest in contrary that marketers have lost their moral sensitivity. The result showed that many of the participants had “difficulty seeing ethical issues” and the conclusion was that they were affected by moral myopia.<sup>39</sup> The study was conducted as in-depth elite interviews with 51 persons at 29 agencies in eight cities in USA with advertisers at all levels. Since it was a qualitative study could the researchers own behavior and moral perceptions have an impact on the result.

## 4. Method

This chapter explains what method was used for the study and uses relevant theory to motivate the action. It presents how the selection was done, who the informants were, and how the interviews were operated. It also present loss, credibility, generalizability and research ethics.

### 4.1 Selection of method

#### 4.1.1 Semi-structured interviews

A qualitative method was chosen for this study by using semi-structured interviews. This is described in *Handbok i kvalitativa metoder*, edited by Göran Ahrne and Peter Svensson, as the collection of soft data that is hard to detect like feelings, thoughts and decisions<sup>40</sup> and the intention

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<sup>38</sup> Shelby D. Hunt and Lawrence B. Chonko, “Ethical Problems of Advertising Agency Executives”. *The Journal of Advertising*. Volume 16, no 4 (1984), 16-24, doi:10.1080/00913367.1987.10673091, 22.

<sup>39</sup> Drumwright and Murphy, *Journal of Advertising*, 11.

<sup>40</sup> Göran Ahrne och Peter Svensson. *Handbok i kvalitativa metoder*, 2 uppl. Stockholm: Liber, 2015, 9-10.

is to get an insight into social relations among individuals that share an environment.<sup>41</sup> What the authors mean is that it is subjective and that it is social scientific oriented. It could thereby give deeper knowledge of the society, including cultural values and structures of power(lessness). Semi-structure means that the interview is based on a planned guide but is not strictly followed and instead have space for spontaneous questions, which gives the researcher the freedom to steer the conversation into topics that appear under the interview. The reason why this method was chosen was because it is suitable for examining the attitudes of advertisers, which requires a rich description to understand their reality.

#### *4.12 Selection of participants*

To recruit marketers was a combination of snowball selection and comfort selection used. Snowball means that the participant recommends another participant and thereby the snowball continues to roll. This is a non-randomized selection. In the literature *Introduktion till samhällsvetenskaplig metod* does the sociologists Asbjorn Johannessen and Per Arne Tufte describe this as a strategic choice since they are selected after suitability.<sup>42</sup> What they mean is that the participants are carefully selected, first by the researcher and then by the participants. The risk of this is that the participants choose persons that have a similar view as themselves and that they control the selection which result in a more narrow perspective. I, however, perceive that the narrowness was beneficial for this study since it led to a homogeneous group where all participants shared an experience. If other marketers had been interviewed, such as those who are against alcohol advertising, who work as freelancers or at smaller advertise agencies, the outcome might have become something else. This selection was chosen because the advertise business is a relatively closed community and it becomes much easier to get access to the field through a gate opener. Comfort, on the other hand, mean that the participants are selected due to their easy accessibility.

#### *4.13 Material and analysing method*

The material, i.e. the data, consisted of eight recorded interviews that was gathered by using two semi-structured interview guides. The first guide was used on three participants at the first interview occasion and after that was improvements done which resulted in an improved version that was performed on five participants. The data was then partly transcribed, sorted and analysed by using coding. Anselm L. Strauss describe in *Qualitative analysis for social scientists* that this is

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<sup>41</sup> Ahrne och Svensson. *Handbok i kvalitativa metoder*, 34.

<sup>42</sup> Asbjorn Johannessen och Per Arne Tufte. *Introduktion till samhällsvetenskaplig metod*, Malmö: Liber, 2010, 84.

conducted in three steps. The first is *Open Coding* which means that the data is examined very closely and put into categories.<sup>43</sup> The second step is *Axial Coding*, which means that one category at time is analysed with the purpose to identify subcategories and get knowledge of their relationships.<sup>44</sup> The last is *Selective Coding*, meaning that only information that is relevant to the core codes is selected, the rest is reduced.<sup>45</sup> In my case it is only the content related to the two research questions that have been selected. The reason why this method was chosen was to increase the validity. In qualitative research the amount of material easily gets overwhelmingly large and it could be hard to keep the objectivity as a researcher if the analyzation process is not systemized.

## 4.2 Implementation

### 4.21 Presentation of participants

The participants consisted of eight marketers working at three different advertise agencies/ production companies in Cape Town. All had experience of alcohol ads, either by creating it and/or working at a client level with it, and four worked only with alcohol accounts, meaning they worked exclusively with alcohol advertising. The selection was mainly from an elite perspective, meaning that the participants are at or near the top of the agency. Several had leadership positions with personnel responsibilities and only one was a junior. Five were females and three were males and the age ranged between 26 to 46 years.

- **Marketer A**  
A male Chief Executive Officer who is 46 years old and has worked unknown years in advertising.
- **Marketer B**  
A female Senior Art Director who is 32 years old and has worked over 10 years in advertising.
- **Marketer C**  
A female Senior Copywriter who is 42 years old and has worked 7 years in advertising.
- **Marketer D**  
A male Managing Director who is a 46 years old and has worked 25 years in advertising.

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<sup>43</sup> Anselm L. Strauss. *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987, 28.

<sup>44</sup> Strauss. *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*, 32.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 33.

- **Marketer E**  
A female Group Account Director who is 34 years old and has worked around 11 years in advertising.
- **Marketer F**  
A female Account Director who is 31 years old and has worked 7 years in advertising.
- **Marketer G**  
A male Account Manager who is 27 years old and has worked 4,5 years in advertising.
- **Marketer H**  
A female Junior Copywriter who is 26 years old and has worked around 1,5 years in advertising.

#### *4.22 Execution of selection and loss*

Marketer A was recruited after receiving the contact details from a Swedish Art Director that I met in a bar in Cape Town that was this persons friend. Then was in total three interviews made in one day at one advertise agency, where two were a snowball and one was a comfort selection. I was then going to receive the name of a participant at another agency sometime after the interview, but never got it which resulted in that the snowball broke. To recruit new participants did I call three advertise agencies/production companies in Cape Town. The first said that they did not have an alcohol account, the second did not give me a definite answer and the third accepted to be interviewed. The following five participants were recruited through the same snowball selection. Johannessen and Tufte mean that there is always loss. They write that it probably have never been a full coverage during an investigation since someone always decline.<sup>46</sup> They point out that there are circumstances that the researcher cannot control due to the free will of the participant, which sometimes not even is intentional by the participant, it is just the human factor that occur.

#### *4.23 Execution of interviews*

After receiving the participants approval to participate were the interviews scheduled and conducted at their offices. It was common that numerous interviews were performed the same day. The meetings initiated with a brief personal presentation and information was given of the content of the study both verbally and written in form of an 2-sided information letter. The letter was based on Dalarna University's template when doing research and after reading it were they asked to sign their consent on the paper. The interviews then started and were recorded with an iPhone. The first interview, which was with Marketer C, was also recorded with an external mic with the intention to

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<sup>46</sup> Johannessen och Tufte. *Introduktion till samhällsvetenskaplig metod*,136.

auto-transcribe it by using Google Docs function *Voice typing* , but it was only used one time since the text became gibberish. The records were then saved on Google Docs on a password protected computer and will be deleted when the study is completed.

## 4.3 Discussion of method

### 4.31 Ethics

All of the participants were informed about the four research ethical principles before the interviews started, both verbally and in an information letter that they were asked to read before the interviews started.<sup>47</sup> The first ethical principle is the *information requirement*. Here the participants were informed about the purpose and the terms of the study such as that the participation is completely voluntary and that they can choose to cancel at any time without it affecting them. The second is the *consent requirement*, where the participants gave their consent by signing the information letter with their signature. The third is the *confidentiality requirement*. This means that the researcher must ensure that the participants identity is confidential if the study has sensitive information. The first three persons I interviewed got to choose whether they wanted to be anonymous or not by ticking into boxes in the information letter. Two of them wanted to have both their names and the agency's name shown in the study, but after a dialog with my teacher did I changed this so that all participants are anonymous. And the last it the *utility requirement*. This means that the collected material about the participants and the result are only allowed for the intendent research. It is not allowed to use this in another research or other purposes. I informed the participants that the interviews would be presented as a 15 hp essay at Dalarna University. These four principles should always be followed since it otherwise could undermine the credibility of research or harm individuals. The individuals could, for example, lose their jobs or the agency could lose their clients. Due to this are the participants names coded in this study and all sensitive information intentionally excluded.

### 4.32 Credibility

There are several methods that can be used to increase the credibility. *Transparency* is one of these. Ahrne and Svensson describe this as being transparent in your writing by criticizing and discussing weaknesses.<sup>48</sup> What they mean is that a researcher should have a self-reflexive approach and not glamourize nor hide the truth. An issue that need to be highlighted in this study is potential conflict

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<sup>47</sup> Johannessen och Tuft. *Introduktion till samhällsvetenskaplig metod*,62-63.

<sup>48</sup> Ahrne och Svensson. *Handbok i kvalitativa metoder*, 25.

of interest. When it comes to the advertise industry are they my future employer. By criticizing them would hypothetically decrease my chance of employment. However, as a Swedish student am I less affected by this since I have no geographical anchoring to South Africa. Regarding frequency did I meet each participant only once and it was during the interviews. Another aspect is the contact person in the host country which in my case have been the research center SA MRC in Cape Town. It was a formal requirement to have this to receive the Minor Field scholarship, but neither parts receive salary or any economic compensation. I contacted them from Sweden at a point when my intention was to examine the impact effect of the Swedish alcohol brand Absolut Vodka in South Africa and I found them suitable since they had discussed this in a Swedish newspaper ten years ago and have insight into the socioeconomic consequences of alcohol. Since then have the content of this essay and the selection of respondents changed. I only met them during the first week of the field study and the last week, where I returned a book and said goodbye. They have had no knowledge of which agencies or individuals I have interviewed, the essay is not written for them and they have had no influence over the study nor the content of the essay. Instead it is my teacher in Sweden that have entirely had this role. As a scientist have my intention been to be objective and not to be influenced by these two factors.

#### 4.33 Criticism of method

There are several factors that could have affected the results. One is the method. Qualitative studies are criticized for having a low generalizability since it consist of a few individuals subjective experiences. It is thereby not statistical reliable and cannot convey the whole industry's view, only fragments of it. Another is the researcher. In *Etnografiska observationer*, written by Gösta Arvastson and Billy Ehn, is it stated that “all observations are subjective, even the researchers, since it is affected of memories, feelings and earlier experiences”.<sup>49</sup> What they mean is that there is no true answer since the same situation could be interpreted in several different ways. So depending on the researchers pre-understanding, choice of perspective, choice of questions, cultural and political view, interpretation of answers and willingness to report what you see will influence the outcome of the study. And thirdly, the participants. A interview is a social situation, on good and bad, and they could be influenced by the researcher, such as the researchers behavior or physical characteristics, including personality, age, gender and outfit. For me being a young-looking, white, female foreigner from Sweden whose mother language is not English and who study advertising could have an influence on the answers. I as a researcher felt that it mostly was in a positive way since

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<sup>49</sup> Gösta Arvastson och Billy Ehn, *Etnografiska observationer*. Lund: Studentlitteratur AB, 2015, 20. (My translation).

majority of the participants opened up. It is neither sure that the participants tell the truth. This could be due to economic or political interests or that they subconscious give the answers that they believe you as a researcher want to hear. Also the fact that the interview took place on their offices could have an impact on their answers since they might give the answers that are best for the company. What is common in all of these three factors is that they are all strongly influenced by subjectivity and is in no way statistical. However, in qualitative studies the statistics is not important, it is rather the content and values that are brought up that matter and what it says about the culture. Since individuals, corporations and media constantly changes, as the rest of the society, could the result neither be viewed as a static phenomenon. It only gives knowledge of this current time at the specific place.

## **5. Result**

In this section will the answers from the participants be presented. The structure and content is created with the study's two research questions in mind. These include what attitudes the participants have toward alcohol advertising, its potential effects on the society and what social and moral responsibility they perceive they have. Since it is a qualitative research are a lot of the quotes integrated in the text in order to give a richer description of what they mean.

### **5.1 Attitudes regarding alcohol advertising**

#### *5.1.1 Alcohol important for the economy*

Alcohol is a big economic issue in South Africa. The participants lifted up that the breweries generate a lot of money and that this have a financial impact both on the society, the advertising industry and the individual marketer. Marketer G believed it was "a 50 billion Rand industry" and both Marketer B and C said it was very important for the country's economy, where the latter stated it resulted in "lots of jobs". Marketer D believed that the South African beermaker SAB Miller, which "was recently acquired by Anheuser-Busch InBev in America", "are now the biggest in the world in terms of beer production". He then added: "So there is quite a beer culture". When it comes to the advertise industry did it turn out that South African advertise agencies/production companies are more or less financially dependent on doing alcohol ads. Marketer D said that "most of the ad agencies require an alcohol brand to survive" and that it is "a large part of the business". Marketer C explained that the breweries spend "huge budgets" on advertising companies and that "times are quite tough economically so we pretty much do every work we can". It is also related to



the private economy of marketers since a job mean family income. Marketer G said that he had a “personal obligation” to his family being a responsible father and Marketer A said that his family’s wealth was because of alcohol:

My experience of alcohol is that my father put me through school, university and, fed me because he was in exporting wine to Europe and...yah, mostly to Europe. So my family’s growth and who we were was because my father was in the alcohol business. – *Marketer A*

### *5.12 International perspective on legislation*

The legislation regarding alcohol advertising does not look the same in the whole world. According to the participants is there a cultural difference between South Africa and Sweden. Marketer A said that “advertising lives in a time and space within a country” and “what we appreciate advertising is very different to what happen in your country.” Two of the participants lifted that South Africa is the one who stand out regarding the law. Marketer B said: “I know in South Africa we quite lenient”. When I asked lenient in what way she said: “Just there aren't many laws saying what we can't do just beside selling to under age people but beside for that there aren't many laws“. Marketer E said: “I think the advertising alcohol industry here is very different from what I have seen around the world”. She continued talking about her international experience:

When I was working in London we could really see the difference between the different countries and how different kind of countries marketed their alcohol because there are so many regulations involved. So, you know in the UK we had to be a little bit more careful, but when you look at countries like Brazil whether or South America they were very careful or The States where you can't show even people drinking. /---/ They had to hold it and looking at it and never actually drink it. So here it is interesting because you can do a lot with the brands. – *Marketer E*

### *5.13 Banning of unsustainable products*

Marketer G talked about the suggestion of banning alcohol ads in traditional media. He said that “The Department of Health is proposing /---/ a clamp down on certain mediums of advertising. So for instance not being able to advertise traditional tv, televisions or big broadcasters”. He believed that the “Government and alcohol companies need to adopt different ways, creative ways, on how to curb the abusive circle of alcohol versus saying: No, you shouldn't be drinking alcohol at all”. Marketer D highlighted that the problem was not traditional media but rather digital media. He said: “I think there aren't really rules for social media as much as there should be rules but because it's such a new, a such a new medium people haven't really created rules”. He then gave an example: “You can't show a five year old kid drinking beer, like, or pregnant women drinking wine” in

traditional media in South Africa because the ARA rules don't allow it but at the same time can a "viral video of a five year old drinking beer" be put "out on the internet and it lands up getting, you know, ten million hits. There's no one really responsible for that. It's kind of in its own space". He also talked about the banning of cigarette advertising. He said that in the mid 90s "we used to do a lot of cigarette commercials, that was the way of the world" and that "they were one of the biggest spenders of money on advertising and pretty much every ad agency needed a cigarette client to get by". Then it became banned worldwide, which "wasn't a big issue for the ad agencies cause it ironically happened at a time when cell phones went from not being around to a really big commodity" so what happened was that "most of the ad agencies basically swapped the cigarette commercial clients for cell phone commercial clients". For the cigarette companies at the time was it "the best thing that could ever happen because it means that there's a barrier of entry for any new product". He said people remembered the ads for the already established cigarette brands and that "if you start a new brand you've got no way of penetrating the market". He said he thought "that kind of logic has a lot to do with not banning alcohol commercials now because what it will do is cement the current brand as being the only brand moving forward". He meant that people will still buy alcohol at the same frequency, but the competition between brands will stop. When I asked if he saw any difference between the two products did he said:

Oh yes, absolutely. Alcohol in moderation I don't think is bad for you /---/whereas smoking affects everyone around you, it's it leave kind a lingering smell...it's, you know, all people around you are inhaling. Like, it's clearly bad for everything, the environment, the people, the carbon footprints on its as well". – *Marketer D*

## **5.2 Potential effect of alcohol advertising**

### *5.21 Alcohol advertising*

Majority of the participants expressed that alcohol advertising does not increase consumption of alcohol. Marketer B said: "I don't think I can make you drink. I could probably persuade you to drink a specific brand /---/ but I don't think I can make you drink more, think that's your choice". She believed that advertising only create brand awareness and competition between brands. Many other participants argued in a similar way. Marketer A explained that advertising can only affect the consumer if they in beforehand have an interest to try the product: "I don't think I could make an ad where I convince a beer drinker to start drinking gin. But, maybe I could make an ad that convince a gin drinker to drink the gin I'm advertising". Regarding the frequency of ads that the consumer

notice did he say: “I think some research would suggest that only seven percent of all communication is even noticed” and continued talking about that the trust in brands was connected to how many times you had seen it and that this worked “subconsciously” and “purely by being noticed”. Marketer C believed that alcohol advertising “might glamourize” drinking, but believed people would drink anyway. Regarding advertising did she believe it is “a subconscious thing” and that word-of-mouth, even if it was digital word-of-mouth, had higher effect than traditional advertising. Marketer E believed special offers like “buy this and get this free” could increase consumption of alcohol and Marketer H was the only one who believed there is a link between advertising and drinking due to local events that are sponsored by alcohol companies:

I do think that alcohol problems have risen because of advertising. /---/ It’s now become a whole lifestyle that they making for people. We throwing events, we throwing festivals, we throwing parties from alcohol brands and people want to be amerced in that brand which causes more problems I feel cause it’s, it’s now not just drink at home on the weekends, it’s we gonna throw a party for you at the end of this month /---/ So there’s parties all over the place. – *Marketer H*

Three of the participants talked about the warning labels on alcohol ads. Marketer D explained that “six-seven years ago they made it compulsory to have a banner the bottom of every alcohol advert basically as a warning” where it says “drink responsibly”, “not to drink when you are pregnant” and “not to drink and drive”. When I asked if he thought the warning label is effective he said “No. Absolutely not”. I wondered why and he explained it like this:

It’s not a something that people use for decision making around drinking. In the same way that when you have a cigarette, a warning on a cigarette pack, you know, it can say cigarette can kill you and people will still smoke. It doesn't really make a difference. I think at the point where you pouring yourself a drink you not gonna read the label and think twice about it. – *Marketer D*

Marketer H also believed that “the warning label has no effect at all” and added: ”we just put in on there because the law and the rule say so”. Marketer A told that “someone once said that the disclaimer on the cigarette box actually adds to your desire to smoke”. He explained that the smoker “eventually recognize that disclaimer and it triggers your impulse reactions to want to smoke”.

## 5.22 Society

The participants were asked what factors influence drinking and they all believed it was society. Many brought up peer-pressure from friends. Marketer B expressed it as: “I think people make people drink”. Marketer D, who believed the same, said: “if everyone order a beer, you`ll have a beer, if everyone orders a glass of wine, you`ll have a glass of wine to be social. I think there is an

element of that”. Also your own personal situation was highlighted by several. Marketer G said “I don’t think advertising makes people drink more. I think people's circumstances push them to drink more” and then he defined these as “occasions”, “emotional issues that goes through your lives” and “financial means”. Marketer A said that the alcohol that are “badly abused in areas where women are drinking when they are pregnant” and are responsible “for the demise in the society are not the advertised ones”. He said: “that’s not because of advertising, it’s because of it’s cheap wine and it’s accessible to those people”. He believed that “the psychology of this country” had the largest impact. He said:

You`re living in constant anxiety and stress and depression I think. I think the country is.  
With sparks of good news. And I think the country as a whole use substance to make itself  
feel better – *Marketer A*

### 5.23 Brands

The marketers believed alcohol brands are linked with identity. Marketer E said: “here it is very, like, representative like what you drink, it says so much about you as a person”. When I asked in what way she explained:

A lot of people who buy alcohol in this country may not have a lot of money. But the brands that they buy makes them look like they are very affluent and very aspirational and they going places. So they definitely buy into what that brand has to say because they want to belong to that brand, they want to, their friends to know that this is like they are as a person. – *Marketer E*

Marketer A also believed that the brand was important and had a value. He told a story about how the consumers swap alcohol bottles since they did not want to be associated with one of them:

Well I know of some stories where two brands. One was Redd’s cider, it's not really a cider a flavored beer more, de-flavored beer with apple, and Savannah at the time. A couple of years ago. A number of years ago. Ten years ago. Redd's was much cheaper and sweeter, but Savannah was cooler. So people would keep a bottles of Redd's in their boot of their motor car, go to a club, walk out, de-cap their Redd’s into the Savannah and Corona bottle and walk around with the Savannah bottle because it look cooler, you know. And I would imagine that happens a lot. Because it's so important. Yes, like Redd’s but they don't like being seen as Redd’s. They wanna be seen as Savannahs. – *Marketer A*

Marketer A continued and explained that South Africa is a “very masculine country”, meaning having the attributes of masculinity such as “power” and “aggression”, and that it is “financially divided” and that these type of countries “need ostentatious, you need really flashy products to show how amazing you are”. He said that in Sweden “you don’t have to show off with really

expensive things, you look for things that feel good” but in South Africa “you want people to notice what you are drinking or wear”. He also described alcohol habits at nightclubs. He said that it is possible to “go to a club and hire a bottle to put on your table”. When I asked the purpose of it, whether they drank it or if it was just standing there he said:

Sometimes you don't drink it. And in the end of the evening you give it back, you know. Sometimes you go to a club and there's like six bottles and two guys sitting there, waiting for the ladies to see them. And if that's not psychology then I don't know. – *Marketer A*

He believed alcohol could be used to show wealth and to attract women. Marketer G talked about gender connected to identity in alcohol advertising. Regarding femininity did he say:

Usually when you talk about women in the space of alcohol you usually think softer drinks. You know, sweeter kind of beverages, liquor and so on. Wine, champagne. Whereas a lot of women are drinking beer nowadays. Maybe it's normal in other continents or countries but in South Africa, beer was, you know, taboo kind of, it was that one thing that's for men. It smells bad, it taste bad and women are not...that's not a common association you make with women. When you think women you think they smell good, they clean, you know, hygienic and beer is not that kind of territory, but we are moving away from that. – *Marketer G*

Regarding masculinity in advertising did he say that “being a man nowadays is not just about being a man, you know, working hard, it's also being a man that supports his women at home” and “a stable father”. Marketer F, in contrary, did not believe that advertising could contribute to the construction of consumer identity. She said: “I don't think so. I think you decide if you, if you relate to the people that you see in that ad”.

#### *5.24 Celebrities*

Three of the participants talked about celebrities in relation to alcohol advertising. Marketer D had experience of it and had “worked with quite a lot of big stars”. He said that “a lot of the brands we work on they will bring in, like, celebrities to work with us” and he believed it had “massive impact” and that these “definitely have an influence”. He thought that people “gravitate” around sport stars, such as rugby players, soccer players and Olympic athletes, but also political figures and “particularly movie stars”. When I asked what his opinion was about hip hop artists that make music videos with alcohol did he say: “We do them all the time”. He also said he could not relate to them and said “maybe it is my age group or whatever”. Marketer A said that this is called “influence of marketing” and that it is “highly effective”. He then talked about the cognac Hennessy's success in South Africa which is because of hip hop celebrities:

Hennessy has something like 980 songs, hip hop songs, written about Hennessy. Hennessy's advertising budget in this country is minuscular. It's tiny. Yet Hennessy's sells more Hennessy in this country than anywhere else in the world. I think it is the biggest of second biggest market for Hennessy VO. Advertising didn't do that, hip hop artists did that. – *Marketer A*

He believed the effect of celebrities is brand awareness and that it is hard to measure:

If you see the top hip hop artists in this country Cassper Nyovest drinking Moët, then /---/the millions of followers he has will probably when, given the opportunity to choose Don Pérignon or Moët, might choose Moët, you know, and that is a form of advertising. So yes, it does have an impact, but we be kidding ourselves because the investment of advertising is enormous compared to each sell. So the evidence is very hard. – *Marketer A*

He also said that hip-hop celebrities have a negative impact on gender roles:

The hip hop culture to me is like always girls in bikinis that are always too tight and shots from really low down, jiggling everything, and show diminishing roles all the times, never in a powerful role, massaging the guy while he is sitting, I mean that stuff must be harmful really. – *Marketer A*

Marketer H talked about how celebrities could glamourize alcohol consumption and “how people make alcohol look like a fantasy”. She said: “If you’re on social media and you see Chris Jenner getting really lit on a Instagram page with a glass of wine...Lots a people tend to idolize people that are in the public eye”. She also said that “if you're not well educated enough you might fall into that trap” and to avoid it is “just a case of knowing yourselves”. Marketer H also revealed how celebrities impact her own shopping habits:

Even as an advertiser I fell for it on a daily basis, you know. I look at, like, a Puma shoe and a Nike shoe and if the Puma advert has Rihanna in it and the Nike advert doesn't have Rihanna, it have some guy I don't know, I probably gonna buy Puma. Just because of Rihanna. – *Marketer H*

Marketer A highlighted that celebrities in advertise is not always effective. He mentioned a study which showed that when the consumers have “worked out that that hip hop artist has been paid to do it” they “rejects it more than normal”. He said that the trick was to avoid “really big hip hop artists because everybody knows then they are basically paid to do it” but instead less well-known celebrities that “might look like they are going: Hey I really like this bottle of Hennessy”.

## 5.3 Moral issues among marketers

### 5.3.1 Perceived moral or social responsibility

The participants gave mixed answers when asked about their moral and social responsibility. One participant felt that the consumer had a responsibility. Marketer F said: “I don’t think it’s necessary our responsibility to tell people how they should consume the product”. Another participant felt that they have a responsibility toward their clients:

I think there's different levels of responsibility. Like my levels of responsibility to do with what my clients want me to do. If you're the ad agency you're responsible for coming up with ideas that don't offend people /---/ if you're the brand owner, if it is your product, then you know, you should obviously try and, you know, go with, you know, operate within the rooms of showing yourself in the best light. – *Marketer D*

Others felt a social responsibility. Marketer A said he felt an “enormous” responsibility, but “as a human” and that he wanted “this place to be a better place”:

My own personal responsibility is to do projects that are important. So we have done anti-fetal alcohol campaigns here, we have done anti-rhino poaching, we have done organ donor foundation things, we have done fur, anti-fur, campaigns. We do them here because it's this kind if culture in this agency and because sometimes you get to do nice work. – *Marketer A*

Marketer B said: “I think we do have a huge social responsibility” and that “alcoholism is a huge problem so I guess just to really make people drink responsibly” but she added afterwards that harmful drinking is not because of advertising. She also gave an advice: “At the end of the day you must remember that them overindulging is not your fault, you just trying to advertise a specific brand /---/ so you mustn't feel bad about that”. Marketer E said that there are “lot on our shoulders” as marketers and that “we have to be careful and aware. Aware of socially what's happening in the world as well” since “you don't wanna upset people, you don't want people to think negatively about your brand” nor “put anything bad out there”. She neither wanted people to “abuse alcohol, you want them to enjoy it”. Several participants commented the advertising itself. Marketer C said that “we would never advertise, you know, going to excess. It's always be, like, just enjoy one glass of wine or that one beer because it is refreshing or has a great taste.” She also said:

We very much don't want to encourage, like, overconsumption cause especially amongst the lower economic income brackets because there are a lot bad that goes with that. Obviously, encourages people to maybe be violent and stuff. Yeah, so we are always walking that line not trying to, not glamourize it, not making it too cheap or too accessible. – *Marketer C*

Marketer G commented the warning label: “Nothing, there’s not piece of communication from any beer brand that says: drink all of this at once. Nothing like that. In fact, specifically says, enjoy responsible”. One participant felt guilt. Marketer H said: “I feel like I already disappointed my people just by being in the advertising industry and pushing them to buy alcohol in general, which also go to question my ethics as a person” and that “I am proud of the work that we do, but I’m also not proud of the impact that it has on people”. She then talked about millions of Rands being spent on ads and that they as marketer should do more to prevent alcoholism, such as educational videos.

### *5.32 Moral discussions at work*

To discuss moral issues at work varied. Four of the participants did it, where one marketer discussed it with their clients. Marketer G said that “these kind of conversation usually come up with our clients versus us having them on ourselves”. He also said that they have an one-hour long interactive online course with case studies around economic ethics, such as not taking bribes from clients at the agency, that he did a year ago. Also Marketer A, C and D said yes. Four persons said no, one of there was Marketer E. When I asked why she said: I don’t know. I just think it’s something we don’t...I think we all know what we have to do and can't do. And that's always in the back of our mind”. When I asked what impact it had on her subordinates since she is a leader did she say: “Oh, I probably should talk about it more”. She then explained that “we all worked on alcohol for so long that I think we all are very aware of what we can and can't do and, you know, what we wanna put out there”. She also added: “if someone writes a TV-ad that we think is a bit too far removed and isn't gonna be approved we'd say: Okey look, you can't do this” so it is something that they are doing subconsciously. Also marketer B, F and H said that they did not discuss ethics at work. Marketer F said: “it just has not been a topic of discussion really” and when I asked Marketer H if her boss ever brought up the issue she answered no.

### *5.33 Corporate social responsibility*

Several participants lifted corporate social responsibility in different levels. One level is how their clients work with it. Marketer C said that SAB “always try to give back to communities” and “help people who are in the lower socioeconomic kind of classes so I think they did try to balance it”. She also said that “there is a draught here at the moment and SAB has actually sticked into help. They using tracks to help transporting water down here from Joburg so that is a nice way they actually are being socially responsible”. Marketer G said that the beer brand Collin Black Label, which is “the biggest brand on this continent” have done a campaign where they acknowledge gender-based



violence. He said that men drink beer and then abuse their women and that the brand wanted to take a stand against this. He said the message of the campaign is:

We acknowledge this but we want our men, the Collin men, the champion men to take a stand again this since real men, REAL MEN, do not abuse women. Period. They don't abuse kids neither. – *Marketer G*

He believed that this message “shape how people think, it helps people to perceive themselves and each other” and he “think alcohol brands definitely play an important role in people’s lives and shaping a better society”. One participant mentioned pro bono. Marketer E said “I have worked with charities in the past and done pro bono work for charities /---/ So I do think it’s a great way to do, I think you need to have a balance”. Another participant talked about sustainability connected to employment. Marketer F said that a certain percentage of the employed at the company needed to be “black, colored and white”, which was called “black economic empowerment”, that this had been implemented “nationwide” and that companies needed to have this to “qualify for certain benefits with government contracts”. One participant talked about how they work with environmental sustainability at their office. Marketer D said: “we don't throw our rubbish away, we recycle. It costs us more to recycle than just to throw everything away /---/ I think people do need to be more green around that”.

#### *5.34 Common to reject working on alcohol ads?*

The participants were asked if their subordinates or any of their colleagues had ever rejected to work with alcohol advertising because of ethical or sustainable reasons. Majority expressed that they knew or had heard about persons who had done it. One mentioned religious subordinates who had said no. Marketer D said they have had “for instance a very religious members of staff who basically said: don't give me anything to do with nudity”. Several mentioned colleagues. Marketer D said that there “is a particular cinematographer that I worked with over the years who refuses to do anything with alcohol or cigarettes for ethical reasons”. Marketer G said that he had a colleague who also had said no because of religious reasons and Marketer E said that “there are people in the building who, you know, for religious reasons for example would never work on alcohol brand”, something they “completely respect”. She added: “if somebody starts to feel uneasy about alcohol brand then obviously they are more than welcome to come off and we'll find something else for them”. Marketer H said: “I do know there are a few Muslims in the building” and continued to say “but I think that’s something they discuss with the employer at the beginning of their contract to say: I'm a Muslim so I choose not to work on alcoholic beverages”. She had not heard of anyone

rejecting it after employment. The participants agreed that there would be no consequences at all for an subordinate who rejected to work with alcohol advertising for ethical or sustainable reasons. Several said it would be respected and that it is a matter of reshuffling that person with another person by moving them to a different campaign or brand.

## 6. Discussion and conclusion

In this chapter will the result be interpreted and discussed in relation to literature, earlier research and own observations. Also limitation, conclusion and a suggestion for future research will be presented.

### 6.1 Discussion

#### *6.11 Attitudes of alcohol ads and its potential effect*

So what attitudes did the participants have toward alcohol advertising and its potential effect on society? The result showed that a majority of the marketers believed that alcohol advertising does not increase alcohol consumption nor contribute to alcohol abuse, but rather create brand awareness and competition between brands. I thereby interpret that they, just like Söderlund and Rosengren, believe that advertising does not have a causal effect but instead create a mutual value for the consumer, which contradict the belief of The Department of Health who is proposing banning of alcohol advertising on traditional media in South Africa.<sup>50</sup> None of the participants mentioned mutual value by its name but they did it indirectly when talking about the importance of brands in the South African community, where even alcohol brands are supposed to defines your identity, which goes in line with O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy belief of brands being a meaning system that communicates power of status and social membership.<sup>51</sup> This was however not something I myself noticed when being in bars in Cape Town, but it is also hard to get knowledge of this phenomenon only by observing.

Also celebrities were important according to the participants, for example hip hop celebrities in South African alcohol advertising, and here I see a similarity to Cashmore and Nike about using black celebrities to inspire oppressed groups to soar to the top in order to increase sale.<sup>52</sup> By seeing

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<sup>50</sup> Swedish Content Agency cited in Söderlund. *Marknadsföring och påverkan på konsumenten*, 97.

<sup>51</sup> O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy. *European Journal of Marketing*, 531-532.

<sup>52</sup> Cashmore. *Making sense of sports*, 384.

their role models succeed could dreams of a better future be created, which could especially be important for young South Africans living in shacks in the townships who are in an identity searching phase. Here it exist a risk also. As one participant said are women sexualized and reduced in the hip hop culture and this could have a bad impact on the view of genus, especially in South Africa which is a masculine country that have problem with gender-based violence which is something that even the alcohol companies acknowledge in their advertising. But as several participants highlighted is it a matter if weather you as an individual choose to be affected or not, which is also what Malamed believe, but being born with fetal alcohol syndrome, having low education, low media literacy or addiction might increase the receptivity.<sup>53</sup>

The participants also believed that peer-pressure from friends is a large factor for drinking habits, which is confirmed by Söderlund. He mean that the primary cause is not advertising but consumers impact on other consumers.<sup>54</sup> This was something I myself noticed in Cape Town. After my arrival did I receive a lot more sponsored alcohol ads on social media, but it is not this that have influenced my decision process to drink, but rather the fact that there are so many bars, restaurants, events, nice weather and a large flow of tourism and in those environments is it nice to go out and take a beer with your friends. One participant also believed that word-of-mouth, even if it is digital, had a greater impact on drinking than traditional media. This could be connected to Jenkins belief of participation culture in the digital age where the contemporary consumer is active and socially connected.<sup>55</sup> Almost anyone can post an image or video on themselves or others showing their relation to alcohol, which contributes to the culture of drinking.

#### *6.12 Moral issues among marketers*

What social and moral responsibility did the marketers have? My perception was they did not suffer from moral myopia, as Drumwright and Murphy's research suggest, since they were all fully aware of what harm overindulging of alcohol have on the South African society and they also expressed that they did not want to contribute to alcoholism. Regarding moral discussion at work was it some of the participants that did not talk about ethical issues, which could be a sign of moral muteness, as Kvalnes writes about, but it is really hard to draw any conclusion about that after a short interview and for a valid research you almost need to be at the agency and observe what is happening to get a more valid picture. When it comes to responsibility did the participants give mixed answers, where some felt a responsibility toward their client while other felt a responsibility toward the society. It

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<sup>53</sup> Malamed. *Visual Language for designers: principles for creating graphics that people understand.*, 20.

<sup>54</sup> Söderlund. *Marknadsföring och påverkan på konsumenten*, 19.

<sup>55</sup> Jenkins. *Convergence Culture: Where old and new media collide*, 18-19.

also appeared that sustainability within marketing can be integrated in different levels, both how your clients works with it and how advertise agencies work with it, from employment to recycling.

## **6.2 Limitation of the study**

There are limitations in this study. One is the amount of pages. The essay needed to be 25 pages +-5 pages, so maximum 30 pages. This was a problem since not all findings from the interviews could be included in the result section, some had to be discarded.

## **6.3 Conclusion**

### *6.31 Back in Sweden*

After 8,5 weeks in South Africa am I now back in Sweden. Did the travelling give me any insights? I would definitely like to say yes to that. During this time have I got the possibility to create my own perception of the subject. I have been in Cape Town as well the townships, I have interviewed professional marketers, talked to locals, read about the alcohol history, visited several wineries and observed alcohol ads, both traditional and on social media. This have given me a holistic view over the issue. So what is my conclusion regarding marketing of non-sustainable products such as alcohol? Should we market it when we go out of school? According to the impact theory and the interviews with professional marketers does alcohol ads not have a causal relationship with alcohol consumption, so for this reason could we do it without feeling bad about it. However should the suitability of the content and the placement of the ads be individually discussed, especially at places where under age persons have access to it.

### *6.32 Suggestions for a future study*

In this study have only marketers with working experience of alcohol advertising been interviewed and it has mainly been from an elite perspective. The participants stated that they would respect if one of their employed did not want to work with alcohol advertising, but it does not say anything about how these persons, who have actively taken a stand against it and are lower down the hierarchy, perceive the situation since these voices have not been heard. The impact of organizational power, moral myopia and moral muteness might be more prominent in these groups since their actions are effected by the leader.

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## Appendix 1: Information letter to participants

11 april 2018  
Cape Town, South Africa



### **Information of alcohol advertising among advertisers.**

**You are hereby asked to participate in this study.**

The purpose of this bachelor study is to examine the attitudes around alcohol advertising among advertisers in Cape Town. This is of importance since it could be included in our future employment to market alcohol so therefore it is relevant to get an insight into how the industry ethically perceive and deals with this situation. It is also relevant for the advertise business since research about ethics in advertising has historically been from a macro and not micro perspective, meaning it mainly has consisted of effect studies focusing on the social impact on the receivers and not examining the views among the professionals who work with it.

### **The interview**

The aim is to interview between 6-8 advertisers in Cape Town who have a good knowledge of working with alcohol advertising. The intended selection is a snowball selection which means that the interviewed person need to recommend another suitable person and thereby the snowball continues to roll.

The method that will be used to collect data is semi-structured interviews, which means that it is based on a interview guide but spontaneous questions will also appear. This is a qualitative method whose purpose is to get a deeper knowledge of the society by asking a few persons about their subjective experiences, but due to the low amounts of participant the generalizability gets low so thereby it is not an effect study.

A participation consists of one interview that will take approximately one hour and will be recorded. The aim is not for it to be uncomfortable in any way.

### **Ethics**

The participation is completely anonymous. Neither the name of the individual nor the company will be revealed and in the essay these names will be coded.

The collected material will only be used for the intended research. It will not be used for commercial purposes nor will not be used against the participants. All sensitive information will be handled securely so that unauthorized persons do not access it.

The audio file will be saved on a password-protected computer and will only be saved during the period of writing the essay and then deleted. It will only be listened to by the researcher and maybe also by the supervisor in Sweden if this is requested. Parts of the interviews, however, will be integrated and presented in form of an bachelor essay of 15 hp at Dalarna University.

### **Finished essay**

You could take part of the finished result either by e-mailing the researcher or by writing your e-mail address below.

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E-mail adress

### **Consent to participate**

Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary. You can at any time cancel your participation without any explanation. You and your company will also be completely anonymous.

I hereby give my consent to participate in this study

---

Signature

### **Contact information**

Further information could be provided by the following persons.

#### Researcher (bachelor student)

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Signature of researcher

## Appendix 2: Interview manual 2 - Improved version

This interview manual was used on five of eight participants.

Short background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How old are you?</li> <li>• How many years have you worked in the advertising industry?</li> <li>• What position do you have at the company?</li> </ul>
Experience of alcohol advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you have experience of alcohol advertising?</li> <li>• What is your opinion of it as a professional?</li> </ul>
Marketing effect and its impact on the society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What effect do you think advertising have on the desire to buy or consume a product?</li> <li>• What effect does alcohol advertising have? Does it make people drink more?</li> <li>• What other factors have an impact on drinking habits?</li> <li>• What impact difference have digital media compared to traditional media?</li> </ul>
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what way do you believe that the legislation have effect on alcohol advertising?</li> </ul> <p><i>Is it easy to follow the rules?</i></p>
Organizational power and norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you (your employed) get a possibility to choose what projects you (they) want to work with?</li> <li>• Have you (your employed) or your colleagues ever said no to a project due to ethical or sustainable reasons?</li> <li>• Will there be consequences if you (they) say no?</li> </ul>
Moral dilemma of advertisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What moral or social responsibility do you feel you have as an advertiser?</li> <li>• Do you ever have moral discussions with your colleagues?</li> </ul>
Ending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there anything more you would like to add before the interview ends?</li> </ul>

### Appendix 3: Interview manual 1 - First version

This interview manual was used on three of eight participants.

Short background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How old are you?</li> <li>• What level of education do you have?</li> <li>• How long have you been employed?</li> <li>• What position do you have at the company?</li> <li>• What citizenship do you have?</li> </ul>
Working conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you think of the company as a workplace?</li> <li>• Do you get a possibility to choose what projects you want to work with?</li> <li>• Have you ever said no to a project due to ethical belief? <i>If no, would there be any consequences if you say no?</i></li> </ul>
Marketing effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What effect do you think advertising have on the desire to buy or consume a product?</li> </ul>
Alcohol advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your experience of alcohol and alcohol advertising? <i>If no, if a future employer would like you to produce an alcohol ad would you do it?</i></li> <li>• What is your knowledge of alcohol advertising? <i>What is the law (Government rules)</i> <i>What is the marketing rules?</i></li> </ul>
Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you believe alcohol advertising make people drink more?</li> <li>• To what extent do you as an advertiser feel that you have a social responsibility?</li> <li>• What other factors do you believe have an impact on drinking habits? <i>Which is the largest factor?</i></li> </ul>
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From a sustainable point of view, what effect do you think alcohol advertising have here in South Africa? <i>On the economy, society or the environment?</i></li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you discussed alcohol advertising, sustainability or ethics in school/at your workplace?</li> <li>• What advice would you give future students?</li> <li>• If you could change one thing, what would it be?</li> </ul>
Ending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there anything more you would like to add before the interview ends?</li> </ul>