CRITICAL POLICY STUDIES
https://doi.org/10.1080/19460171.2022.2065324

Routledge
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ARTICLE

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The analytical, the political and the personal: Swedish stakeholder narratives about alcohol policy at football stadiums

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ABSTRACT
For public health interventions to be effective, they need to be supported or at least accepted by those affected, and social policy should therefore be understood as political and strategic. This raises questions about the relationship between the analytical, the political and the personal in policy processes. This article offers an in-depth analysis of such issues, as they were enacted during interviews with Swedish alcohol policy stakeholders. It focuses on the assumptions and *a priori* 'truths' articulated in interviews about Responsible Beverage Services (RBS) at Swedish football stadiums or 'Football Without Bingeing'. We argue that the participants combined different narrative forms, such as seemingly objective chronological accounts and personal ethical judgments, in talking about the policy initiative. Through such narrative intersections, three key 'truths' were produced that reinforced the link between alcohol and violence, necessitated blanket population-level measures to reduce alcohol use and made gendered behavior an irrelevant policy target.

KEYWORDS
alcohol policy; RBS; STAD; football; gender; violence; Sweden

Introduction

For public health interventions to be effective, they need to be supported or at least accepted by those affected by them, and social policy should therefore be understood as political and strategic rather than as based on science (Butler 2009). This position prompts two questions. First, is it possible to differentiate between the supposedly 'political' (ideology, values, culture, subjective meanings, etc.) and the supposedly 'scientific' (techniques, nature, objective facts, etc.) in policymaking processes? A second question concerns who is defined as 'affected' by policy and whose support is needed to achieve effectiveness and legitimacy. Is it primarily those whose behavior is regulated or is it those who live with a policy's indirect costs (positive or negative, immediate or long term)? Such questions are both empirically and philosophically interesting since they address the Science and Technology Studies (STS) problem of how subjects and

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objects, active as well as passive, are performed or enacted in practice; that is, how practices stabilize assumptions about what works, for whom and why, in what realities (see, e.g., Law and Singleton 2005; Mol 2002).

Social policy can hardly be nondiscriminatory but must 'attend to the needs of the few by asking for sacrifices from the many' (Karlsson, Holmberg, and Weibull 2020, 107). Consequently, policy interventions aiming to minimize the harms of alcohol and other drug use can result in conflicts of interest. To name but one example, the introduction of drug consumption rooms must balance the interests of service users against those citizens who perceive injecting drug use a public nuisance (e.g. Bancroft and Houborg 2020). Universal policy responses to legal substances must also consider this balancing act (Kleiman 1987). For instance, all citizens are required to abide by state regulations concerning alcohol (e.g. minimum legal drinking ages), regardless of how much they drink and with what consequences (Alcohol and Public Policy Group 2010). There are, however, always limits to tolerable levels of intrusion into people's lives, which, when exceeded, will undermine public support for policies (Karlsson, Holmberg, and Weibull 2020).

This article focuses on a policy initiative that obviously has not exceeded any such limits: the introduction of Responsible Beverage Services (RBS) at Swedish football stadiums or 'Football Without Bingeing' (see https://fotbollutanfylla.se/). It has instead been praised in the international scholarly community (Durbeej et al. 2016, 2017; Elgán et al. 2018; Elgán et al. 2021; Quigg et al. 2019), and a related media campaign won a civil society prize (www.mynewsdesk.com). Football Without Bingeing encompasses several typical features of Western alcohol policy. It assumes a strong link between total consumption and levels of harm (Norström and Ramstedt 2006, 2018), and between alcohol and violence (e.g. Boles and Miotto 2003). It also focuses on the negative consequences of intoxication (Keane 2009; Manton and Moore 2016) and deploys blanket population-level responses to alcohol-related problems (Moore et al. 2017). Moreover, it is 'evidence-based' and supported by the public (Elgán et al. 2018; Skoglund et al. 2017), and targets a distinct group of primarily young men without making this targeting explicit (see Duncan et al. 2020, 2021; Moore, Keane, and Duncan 2020).

In this article, we offer an in-depth analysis of how key stakeholders in the alcohol research and policy field discuss RBS at football stadiums. Our main analytical target is how the analytical, the political and the personal intersect and sometimes clash in alcohol policy.

Alcohol policy in Sweden

In the alcohol policy literature, Swedish alcohol policy is characterized as restrictive (Madureira-Lima and Galea 2018), the state alcohol retail monopoly (*Systembolaget*) serves to reduce alcohol-related harms (Stockwell et al. 2018) and Swedes generally support strict regulation (Karlsson, Holmberg, and Weibull 2020; Leimar, Ramstedt, and Weibull 2013). While there have been concerns that the increased availability of alcohol during the past three decades has increased total consumption (Ramstedt 2010), per capita consumption appears to have stabilized during recent years at around 9 liters of pure alcohol per year, which is somewhat lower than the European average (WHO 2018).

In 1996 a Swedish model for RBS was initiated (Andréasson et al. 1999). Drawing on international studies of multicomponent alcohol prevention (e.g. Holder 2000; Wagenaar et al. 2000), the so-called STAD model (*Stockholm förebygger Alkohol- och Drogproblem* or Stockholm Prevents Alcohol and Drug Problems) was developed, which included community mobilization, staff training and strict law enforcement. In 2000, the first study on overserving at licensed premises in the Stockholm region was published internationally (Andreasson, Lindewald, and Rehnman 2000). Investigating whether bartenders during beverage service situations continue to serve beer to seemingly intoxicated people (played by actors), the study concluded that alcohol service was too permissive (over 90% of the premises served the intoxicated actor-patrons), and that responsible beverage service training programs were therefore needed. Evaluations later showed that the model enjoyed public support (Wallin and Andréasson 2005), was effectively adopted in the community (Wallin, Lindewald, and Andréasson 2004), and successfully reduced overserving (Wallin, Gripenberg, and Andréasson 2002, 2005) and violent assaults (Norström and Trolldal 2013; Ramstedt et al. 2013; Trolldal et al. 2013; Wallin, Norström, and Andréasson 2003). During the past decade, the main features of the program have been implemented in a range of settings including sporting arenas (Durbeej et al. 2016, 2017; Elgán et al. 2018; Elgán et al. 2021), nightclubs (Gripenberg Abdon, Wallin, and Andréasson 2011; Strandberg et al. 2020), universities (Elgán, Durbeej, and Gripenberg 2019; Statens Folkhälsoinstitut 2010) and music festivals (Feltmann, Elgán, and Gripenberg 2019; Feltmann, Gripenberg, and Elgán 2020). The STAD model has also been introduced at the EU-level, called 'STAD in Europe' (Quigg et al. 2019, 3).

A key theme running through the studies and reports cited above is the identification of harmful drinking environments and drinking behaviors rather than individuals. Football Without Bingeing follows the policy tendency to obscure men's overrepresentation in statistics on binge drinking and the violence associated with alcohol, and to opt for blanket restrictions on alcohol availability that affect all drinkers (Moore et al. 2017). The focus on settings and the gender-neutral stance seen in Football Without Bingeing is evident in a STAD in Europe report explaining the aims of the intervention: 'Reduce alcohol-related harms amongst football spectators, by reducing the level of intoxication at football matches in Stockholm, through decreasing the level of entry and overserving of alcohol to intoxicated spectators' (Quigg et al. 2019, 24).

Alcohol policy reflects the norms and drinking patterns of the population (Wallin and Andréasson 2005). How Sweden came to adopt a restrictive alcohol policy, and why the population appears to accept it (Karlsson, Holmberg, and Weibull 2020), has been explained in a variety of ways: as the legacy of a strong temperance movement during the 19th century and experience of a rationing system during the first part of the 20th century (Österberg and Karlsson 2003), as a familiar social-democratic welfare model focused on solidarity, social rights and equity (Karlsson, Holmberg, and Weibull 2020; Moore et al. 2015), as a response to a tradition of intoxication-oriented drinking patterns (Andreasson, Lindewald, and Rehnman 2000; Rossow and Romelsjö 2006, see also Valverde 1998) and as emerging from a strong belief in the so-called total consumption model, which argues that lowering total alcohol consumption in a population will result

in lower rates of harm (Norström and Ramstedt 2018). While not exhaustive, these explanations provide clues as to why Football Without Bingeing could be successfully introduced in an alcohol-infused setting dominated by males, such as football stadiums.

Aligning ourselves with the tradition of critical scholarship on policy related to alcohol and other drug problems (e.g. Fomiatti, Moore, and Fraser 2017; Fraser 2016; Lancaster, Duke, and Ritter 2015; Moore and Fraser 2013), we identify some of the assumptions advanced and possibilities foreclosed by a set of key stakeholders in the Swedish alcohol policy field. By focusing on how the analytical, the political and the personal meet in narratives concerning Football Without Bingeing, we can begin to understand why this prevention intervention 'got done' in a specific way and not others (Law 2009, 1). It also helps us imagine how alternative narratives might enact other realities that perhaps challenge rather than accept the difference between the subjective and the objective. In this way, the project draws inspiration from Suzanne Fraser's 'ontopolitically-oriented research' (2020, 1), which attempts to 'challenge conventional ontological politics of drugs and drug use, opening up new avenues for action'.

Approach

How should we understand the 'analytical', the 'political' and the 'personal'? In the interviews we conducted, the stakeholders clearly pinpointed the difference between knowing and believing, and between research and policy. According to John Law, such distinctions between facts and opinions are problematic, because they differentiate 'the knower' (the subject) from 'the known' (the object). In his examination of the relationship between the personal, the analytical and the political in storytelling (Law 2000, 2), Law draws on Donna Haraway (1991) and Sharon Traweek (1988) to argue instead that 'there is no important difference between stories and materials', and thus dissolves the ontological distinction between the object, event or situation being narrated and the narrator. The 'distinction between truth and person' is performed and not *a priori* (Law 2000, 11). According to this perspective, there is no single independent reality to be known, and there is no 'unmarked subject'; only subjects marked by situation, location and embodiment. Rather, multiple realities are enacted through material-discursive practices, which include different modes of ordering subjects and objects (Law 2000; Mol 2002). Thus, interacting and interfering with, but also talking about, an object, event or situation are forms of practice that enact realities. Law (2000) maintains that different realities come into being, or 'get done', through the reciprocal process of objectivation and subjectivation. Objects, as well as human beings and their practices, are agentic, which means that they interfere with the world and make differences; they 'do realities' (Law 2009, 2). Applying this frame to the issue here, the relation between RBS at football stadiums and, for example, its target groups or its implementors can be made up in various ways in narratives, thus producing various effects and realities.

Law's contention is that multiple realities are enacted through practices, of which interview talk is one that enacts realities through the distribution of subjects and objects. Or, as Law (2000, 2) puts it, 'it turns out that the "personal" is not really personal any longer. Instead, it is an analytical and political tool for interfering and making a difference'. What happens if we go beyond the simple idea that there is one reality, one truth, that the individual might or might not know about, and instead assert that the

personal surfaces in many ways and plays many roles in practice? To address this, we assume that the personal, but hence also the analytical and the political, are enacted through different narratives that can intersect and interfere with each other, with specific effects.

Law (2000, 20–23) goes on to outline how narratives can be ordered according to five broad styles or forms:

(1) the 'plain history', which chronologically links dates and events into historical trajectories, producing a 'narrative landscape of facts';
(2) the 'policy narrative', which is similar to the first form, but which also brings with it the corollary that facts have policy implications, distributing 'praise, blame, and responsibility' and making it possible to do better 'next time';
(3) the 'ethical narrative', which performs subjects and objects through a sense of what is right and wrong; 'a way of talking, of living, and of performing the world, that is ethical';
(4) the 'esoteric narrative', common in academia, which performs reality as 'specific, local and analytical'; a narrative that includes specialists and excludes the general public; and
(5) the 'aesthetic narrative', which 'helps to distribute and perform pleasure and beauty'. This narrative presupposes that objects have qualities that can be experienced, felt and enjoyed by subjects.

These 'modes of ordering' involve:

> stories; interpellations; knowing locations; realities; materially heterogeneous sociotechnical arrangements; and discourses . . . [T]hey are arrangements that run through and perform material relations, arrangements with a pattern and their own logic. (Law 2000, 23)

In this article, we identify how stakeholders use these modes in discussions about alcohol policy and consider and problematize the assumptions and 'truths', the so-called 'collateral realities' (Law 2009, 1), that are enacted through the intersection and interference of different narratives. As suggested by Law (2009, 1), collateral realities are assumptions about the world that 'get done incidentally, and along the way', that make the world (or, in this case, a problem such as football-related violence) appear stable, noncontingent and predictable.

Methods

Our case can be seen as a typical alcohol policy initiative. It draws on quantitative research, provides blanket measures, targets the high-profile problems of intoxication and violence, and impacts a range of people: researchers, policymakers, alcohol vendors, football spectators and drinkers of different kinds. Our analysis relies on transcripts from interviews with 12 Swedish researchers (holding positions in different university departments and research institutes) and 12 Swedish policy stakeholders in alcohol prevention (holding positions at state, regional and municipal authorities and NGOs), conducted for an Australian Research Council-funded project on gender, alcohol and violence in Australia, Canada and Sweden. Participants were identified as relevant experts and

practitioners by the project team, and were then invited to participate in face-to-face, Skype or telephone interviews. The semi-structured interview schedules covered topics such as alcohol policy and research, the causes of violence, whether alcohol affects men and women differently, and the role of gender in violence and whether and how this is addressed in research and policy. The project was approved by human research ethics committees at Curtin University (HRE2018-0103), The Australian National University (2018/819) and La Trobe University (HEC19340). The Swedish field of alcohol research and policy is relatively small and participants are often connected through professional networks. To safeguard confidentiality, we have removed potentially identifying personal information from the interview extracts analyzed below. Pseudonyms are used for all participants.

After an initial review of the transcripts, it became apparent that participants often differentiated between what they knew and what they thought, particularly when evaluating different types of policy initiative. Because of its relevance to the main themes of our multisite research project (alcohol, violence and gender), Football Without Bingeing was selected as a policy case for further analysis. This analysis focuses on interviews where 'football' was discussed in depth.

In order to study how the analytical, the political and the personal were enacted in these interviews, the data were searched for instances that drew on different narrative forms. Following Law's typology, chronologically ordered and seemingly detached accounts of events were coded as 'plain history'. Explicit discussions of the implications for alcohol prevention interventions were coded as 'policy narratives'. Normative statements about what was considered good or bad were coded as 'ethical narratives', and technical discussions on themes such as blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels and the like were coded as 'esoteric narratives'. Finally, accounts of personal tastes and feelings were coded as 'aesthetic narratives', although these were unsurprisingly relatively rare given the professional framing of the interviews. These extracts were then analyzed to identify how and when different narrative forms intersected or interfered with one another, and in these cases, with what 'effects'. We classified accounts where the participants moved apparently seamlessly between different narrative forms, and where such moves contributed to strengthen the overall argument that was being made, as examples of intersections. These were very common in the data. The rarer accounts in which different narrative forms challenged each other, producing arguments that appeared ambiguous or contradictory, were interpreted as interferences. Through this reading of our data, we identified three core assumptions or 'collateral realities' that were produced and reproduced in participant narratives: people should drink less, prevention is effective and men's drinking is not the problem. These collateral realities are considered in turn below.

Analysis

People should drink less

The first collateral reality we identified in the material concerned the importance of encouraging people to drink less alcohol. The participants highlighted problems with alcohol use in general when they discussed prevention interventions. Reproducing the

total consumption model's focus on reducing consumption across the population (Norström and Ramstedt 2018), they presented alcohol use as a problematic behavior that can be reduced, but not eradicated. The association between intoxication and violence was taken for granted, and therefore the focus was on making drinking to excess in specific settings and situations more difficult, rather than on banning alcohol or on encouraging people to cease drinking. Below, Stina (researcher) argues that Swedish alcohol policy should mimic the harm reduction approaches evident in many Western drug policies. She highlights differences in drinking practices across EU countries and maintains that Swedes learn to cherish intoxication early in life. This cultural characteristic could be addressed through, for example, serving alcohol in smaller glasses. As Stina says:

In southern Europe, the glasses are tiny, smaller than the water glasses we have here. So, there it's like, what is it, maybe 200 mL or something like that. And then, of course, they're cheaper. [. . .] I mean in the end, if I would drink two beers here, which would be . . . what is that, 300 mL at least per glass, it would be like one half-liter. Down there [in southern Europe] I would have to do six glasses. Don't do that, it's crazy, don't do that. So, I think these things have . . . these can be small, simple effects, but of course, if you're the first bar owner to do that, what will people think about it? I don't know. But, yeah, maybe we should . . . but there are policies, right. For example, saying how many drinks do you allow per person to buy at a festival or at the football stadium. Is it four that they can buy for themselves and all their friends or is it they have to go [to the bar] again [after buying one or two drinks]? If they only can buy two, you know, you don't have the overserving to other people either.

In arguing that excessive drinking should be deterred, Stina illustrates how a plain history narrative intersects with both an ethical and a policy narrative. She says that glasses are smaller elsewhere, giving no clue as to whether this might differ across countries and alcohol outlets, and that people in these settings are therefore encouraged to be more moderate in their drinking than Swedes. Drawing on an ethical narrative about how people *should* behave, she also concludes that it is possible but 'crazy' to buy six small glasses that would be equivalent to two large (Swedish) beers. This illustrates how personal views are presented as objective facts. At the end of her account, she also mixes in her own preference for reducing overserving by drawing on a policy narrative, suggesting that restrictions on the number of drinks people can buy during a single purchase are effective in reducing harm, thus using several narrative forms to argue that people should drink less.

In the next excerpt, Freya's (policy stakeholder) account of Football Without Bingeing's successful implementation and dissemination to the public also combines plain history, ethical and policy narratives. We enter Freya's interview at the point where she valorizes community mobilization and collaboration in alcohol prevention:

I think the football project is an example that really worked with communication and researchers, having actors going to the football arenas, playing drunk and seeing if they could buy alcohol or if they were let in, and it was not good numbers, and then there was a big education program, working with the clubs, a lot of communication, both mass media and through the football clubs, and also in the arenas before the football games started. It was on the big screens like very good advertising, where bad behavior from the football arena was taken to other environments such as parent meetings in school where the parents

act very badly, and also like in the cinema if people were just standing up and screaming and being drunk, and I think that really did a big change and three years later so many of the employees were, and also the football supporters, were very engaged in this and I think one of the things that was a success was not saying to them, 'Don't drink,' rather saying, 'Drink responsible.' So, if you want to have a beer or two in the football arena, it's fine, but don't get so drunk, and that really worked.

In this extract, Freya begins with a plain history of the chronology of Football Without Bingeing. She initially describes how the intoxication problem was first identified through actor studies (see Wallin, Gripenberg, and Andréasson 2002, 2005), follows this with a description of the launching of the multicomponent STAD model, and later notes that it was considered successful in producing a 'big change'. This plain history is made more convincing by Freya's introduction of an ethical narrative, in which she implicitly argues that the serving of high numbers of drunken people at football stadiums is 'not good', thus implying that people ought to drink less and that interventions are needed. The ethical narrative also brings with it a personal judgment of behavior. When the 'screaming and being drunk' seen at football stadiums is transferred to other settings (schools or cinemas) where families gather, as it was in campaign advertising, it can be understood as objectively 'bad'. The emphasis on intoxication in this excerpt is apparently not warranted by making explicit its link to violence, but by linking it to bad behavior in general. To determine and explain the effectiveness of the intervention, Freya also combines plain history and policy narratives. The intersection of these narrative forms makes it possible to state that certain intervention techniques are more successful than others. The advertising campaign is described as 'very good' perhaps because it reaches both the general public and football spectators, and because it highlights the negative aspects of intoxication. The intervention was successful because it: received public support, avoided the introduction of prohibition to solve football-related alcohol problems, and emphasized moderate, responsible and therefore acceptable drinking. This illustrates how intersections between narratives (such as mixing plain history with ethical narratives to determine acceptable drinking levels and how to behave) helped to make up a collateral reality (Law 2009) in which people should always drink less. By hiding the personal in such narratives, normative judgments could hence be made up as 'truths'.

Prevention is effective

The second core assumption or collateral reality we identified in participant accounts concerns the effectiveness of prevention. Our first example focuses on William (researcher), who draws on the narrative forms discussed above and also introduces an esoteric narrative to accentuate this effectiveness. The excerpt below is from a section of the interview in which he discusses the outcomes and implications of the STAD model for various stakeholders:

We saw that for every Krona [Swedish currency] you invested in the RBS model, 39 were saved. In Stockholm we had a policy change, so the licensing board in the municipality, they now strongly recommend that [if] bars and restaurants are open after 1 in the night, they should send their staff to the RBS training [. . .]. I mean it's a strong recommendation, but in reality, almost all restaurant owners send their staff to training. Between 550 and 750 staff are trained each year in Stockholm, so that's how they see policy implications. At the

football arenas, after the first baseline measurement in 2015, the restaurateurs and the football clubs, they concluded that . . . so previously, you were allowed to buy four beers at once, so one person can buy four beers. You cannot drink four beers at once, so they were for friends I guess, but so after our baseline assessment in 2016, they announced that you could only buy two beers at the arenas.

In William's esoteric narrative, intervention outcomes are objective and quantifiable, measured through calculations of financial costs and benefits, staff attendance at RBS training and number of drinks sold at football stadiums. This narrative is intersected by a policy narrative, which suggests that municipal policy recommendations drawing on research are also generally adopted in practice, making STAD projects worthwhile. It is also intersected by plain history (which incorporates personal values): William frankly concludes that four beers 'cannot' be drunk at once, which suggests that restrictions regarding alcohol purchases are reasonable and not intrusive. On that note, William argues that alcohol vendors willingly send their staff to training and make efforts to decrease beer sales, which implies that the RBS model's results are closely aligned with its techniques and interventions. That the success of the project should be evaluated not through reductions in violence at football matches, but through baseline and follow-up studies of intoxication levels, overserving practices and staff training, is also picked up by Freya. She draws on a policy narrative to conclude that there was 'a very nice and good change as long as the work was done, but when it stopped, it goes back'.

In the next excerpt, William further illustrates how the esoteric narrative can be used to divert attention from an important point: that although Football Without Bingeing focused primarily on reducing the violence associated with drinking, it has not, as yet, included violence as an outcome measure. His narrative works to emphasize that variables such as intoxication can be used as proxies for other more specific variables, such as violence, and are therefore helpful in assessing the project's achievements:

Violence has not yet been looked upon at the football arena, but in terms of intoxication levels, we have seen a reduction in Stockholm. A statistically significant reduction, and also a reduction in the proportion of people who have an intoxication level of 1 per mL or more [i.e. a blood alcohol concentration of 0.10 g of alcohol for every 100 ml of blood or more], which is quite high. So, from baseline measurement, we saw that 10% of all spectators had an alcohol intoxication level of 1 or more per mL [. . .] Yes, so what we have seen . . . there are no studies of breath alcohol concentrations among the patrons at restaurants and nightclubs in Stockholm, but actor studies using professional actors show at the baseline in 1996, before STAD's RBS work, the rate of . . . or the proportion of overserving . . . so in 5% of all the attempts where the intoxicated actors tried to purchase a beer, they were denied a beer. And since 2001 I think, this denial rate has been up to about 70% and there was a 20-year follow up a few years ago and it's still around 70%.

William's plain history of the variables used to assess RBS outcomes is intersected by an esoteric narrative. He argues that although there is no research on possible reductions in football violence, other studies of relevant phenomena show promising results, from which it can be concluded that the intervention at issue here may also be effective. The quotation is replete with scientific terms, such as 'intoxication levels', 'statistically significant' and 'baseline measurement'. These work to bolster the message to people well versed in the policy field that RBS is effective, even if there is little available knowledge about decreases in violence at football arenas. The plain history narrative in

William's account is also intersected by an ethical narrative which assumes that some levels of intoxication are to be considered 'high', hence bad, and that rising denial rates for those attempting to purchase beer when intoxicated (whether acting or otherwise) are positive. Added to this is the intersection of a policy narrative suggesting that similar interventions can be assumed to have similar effects in different settings, thus strengthening the relevance of the original RBS model and meriting its subsequent application in other settings. The politico-scientific focus on the total consumption model in Sweden emphasizes problems with drinking as such and concurrently deemphasizes individual drinking patterns (Sulkunen and Warsell 2012). From this follows a tendency in alcohol policy to conceal causes of problems other than drinking, and to impose restrictions on the personal freedom of citizens, which are understood and framed as unavoidable by-products of effective policy. Still, evaluations of policies are never conducted by 'unmarked subjects' able to capture a singular truth (Law 2000, 10). This makes it relevant to ask to what extent the operationalization of intervention effects into measures of declines in total consumption, intoxication levels, overserving and the like are relevant in studies of Football Without Bingeing. Do these operationalizations emanate from stakeholders' analytical, political or personal considerations?

Men's drinking is not the problem

The final collateral reality we identified in the interview data is that men's drinking is rarely considered to be the problem. This finding is consistent with our previous analyses of the 'gendering practices' of Australian alcohol policy, in which the role of men and masculinities tends to be obscured or side-lined (Duncan et al. 2020, 2021; Moore et al. 2017). Although males are understood to be overrepresented at football matches, and in binge drinking and alcohol-related violence, RBS is primarily cast as a solution to the more gender-neutral phenomenon of excessive drinking at football stadiums. The importance of male gender was latent in some accounts and explicitly obscured in others. William illustrates this by intersecting plain history with an esoteric narrative about what is known from research regarding the associations between drinking and violence. As he says:

I mean there are other projects. I mean for instance, at the football arenas 85% of the spectators are male, but when we look at females at the football stadiums they too drink a lot, so yeah, I'm sure there is a problem among females also, but I'm not sure if it's also associated [with] violence.

William thus notes that most football spectators are male, that excessive drinking occurs among both males and females, and that women also experience drinking problems, but is unsure whether females engage in drinking and violence. He does not refer to male involvement in drinking and violence. This account legitimizes RBS as a relevant intervention for female, as well as male, football spectators. It does so also by referencing STAD projects in other settings that similarly focus on alcohol use rather than gender, but where the gender ratio is skewed heavily toward women (e.g. Strandberg et al.'s 2019 study of risky alcohol consumption, illicit drug use and risky sexual behavior, in which 89% of the sample was female).

Like William, Marta (policy stakeholder) avoids talking about male conduct when she discusses drinking at football stadiums:

One thing is that it's causing problems, it's causing alcohol-related problems, violence, everything from really serious events of violence to language that is not appropriate when you have children around, so as a family event because when people drink, they then use language that can scare children. [. . .] Why should we have to drink alcohol when we're watching sports and shouldn't sports be a family event, and why should young people learn that in order to watch sports, you people drink alcohol? I don't think it goes together. And then there's the safety issue, that's another thing. If you have tens of thousands of people at an event and people are being drunk, if something happens, if there's a fire, if there's a terror attack or something, and people are drunk, we found in research, and we did a baseline at the football matches in the Swedish Premier Football League, that 10% were highly intoxicated, having a BAC level about 1 and in that group of 10%, the average BAC level was 1.35. So, yeah, say for example, you have 30,000 people at the stadium in Stockholm, that means that 3000 people have an average of 1.35 BAC levels. If something happens, you won't be able to get out safely.

Here, we see the intersection of plain history with both an ethical and an esoteric narrative to emphasize the negative consequences of alcohol use. Marta first concludes that the gender-neutral phenomenon of alcohol use is 'causing' serious problems such as violence and encourages 'people' to use inappropriate language. She draws on an ethical narrative to question the appropriateness of drinking at sporting events attended by families. For her, it is unethical to allow innocent bystanders to be affected by other people's alcohol use. This theme is then elaborated on as a safety issue, when Marta argues that intoxication makes safe evacuation of large crowds in an emergency difficult. She also intersects this plain history with an esoteric narrative that highlights BAC levels and numerical estimates to underline that excessive alcohol use poses a problem for both drinkers and nondrinkers at Swedish football stadiums. While later in the interview she formally mentions that 'the majority of the people at the arena are men', she mainly targets other issues when discussing the relevance of RBS.

The obscuring of gender in alcohol policy was here naturalized through esoteric narratives about intoxication prevalence and harm, coupled with policy narratives about how to effectively prevent it. In no instances were such, or other, narratives used to discuss the potential reasons for men's overrepresentation in alcohol-related violence, or to imagine alcohol policies that target causes and not symptoms of problems.

Finally, we turn to the narrative forms employed by Jan (researcher) to explain his skepticism about the intervention. During the interview, Jan used an aesthetic narrative – he is a 'big football supporter' – and also drew on a plain history of how violence at football stadiums had decreased in recent decades to the point where there 'are no big problems any longer'. In his reasoning, 'football violence' was mainly related to the fighting among 'hooligans' that largely takes place in other social settings, and he also drew on a policy narrative to conclude that the RBS project was therefore unnecessary and misdirected. In the excerpt below, he elaborates on these themes by showing how an aesthetic narrative about football culture can interfere with dominant policy narratives about what ought to be done:

Well, I'm a big football supporter and you probably have heard about this STAD project, working with the big football clubs here in Stockholm. And they want to decrease the alcohol use in the arenas, in the football arenas, when a football match is going on, but . . . and I mean, of course, it's better that people drink less, of course, I'm into that, and

especially when you talk about teenagers. [. . .] What I say now is more me as a private person, but more because this is more speculation and my belief more than something I really know, but I can see that there is a class problem here that I mean . . . watching football has become more a middle-class thing today, previously it was more like working class, but still there is this picture about football, like going to football and cheering and being a supporter. It has this picture of being a working-class thing, and I think it's easier too if you have this excellent project to approach this group than others in society [. . .] there's also a culture in football – going to the stadium and cheering for your [team] . . . that it's okay to scream, yeah, it's okay to scream a few bad words. I mean that's part of the game and everyone there knows it, and it's okay to behave like that within limits, of course, when you're at the stadium, but then you go out into society and behave more as a decent person, but that's part of the culture, showing emotions, being angry, being happy, take a beer, it's a culture.

Jan opens here by characterizing what he has to say as more personal than analytical, which appears to signal that it is less reliable than his previous comments about declining hooliganism. What is striking about the excerpt, however, is that he draws explicitly on an aesthetic narrative to offer insights into football culture. In his view, it is both misunderstood and an easy target for policy interventions because of class differences between those participating in football culture ('previously it was more like working class') and those who do not (for a discussion on how being 'inside' or 'outside' affects views on social class standing, see Lott and Bullock 2007). Whereas for Marta, poor drinking comportment (inappropriate language and violence) are understood as public order and safety issues, for Jan, they are expected and largely accepted styles of behavior and social interaction within the football community, as long as they remain 'within limits'. In Jan's account, it is not male behavior or intoxication at football stadiums that are problematic, but rather public misconceptions about what it means to show heightened emotion and drink beer during football matches. For a football supporter like Jan, drinking is 'part of the game' and RBS at football stadiums is poor policy. While Jan's explicit reference to personal preferences and cultural belonging is exceptional in this interview material, it illustrates how aesthetic narratives in policy discussions signal irrelevance and inappropriateness, but that they can, should they anyhow be introduced, interfere with assumptions about the problem being in the bottle.

Discussion

Inspired by a long tradition of critical scholarship on policy relating to alcohol and other drug problems, this article has examined how the relevance of Football Without Bingeing was enacted during interviews with policy stakeholders, as well as the assumptions that were advanced and excluded through different narrative forms. By intersecting plain histories and esoteric narratives about events, conditions, causes and effects, with ethical and policy narratives about how to evaluate facts and learn from experience, the participants enacted realities in which Football Without Bingeing benefits both drinkers and nondrinkers. Aligned with current valorizations of evidence-based policy, such narrative intersections masked the personal as analytical or political. While surfacing

only briefly in one aesthetic narrative about cultural belonging (Jan), the personal was thus exchanged with and thereby hidden by ethical narratives about how to judge behavior, and by seemingly objective policy narratives about how to develop prevention.

Taken together, the results show how the analytical, the political and the personal influenced discussions about the development, implementation and evaluation of alcohol policy. Through the intersections of narratives, three collateral realities (Law 2009) were produced that reinforced the causal link between alcohol and violence, necessitated blanket population-level measures to reduce alcohol use and rendered gendered behavior as irrelevant to policy: 'people should drink less', 'prevention is effective' and 'men's drinking is not the problem'. This helped to stabilize and shore up the relevance and value of Football Without Bingeing as a viable policy response to drinking at football arenas, even as it tends to ignore the primary problem: male drinking and violence. This also foreclosed other assumptions and knowledges. For instance, that problems attributed to alcohol use might have other origins, that alcohol can be considered an important part of culture, that most alcohol users do not behave in ways that warrant interference, that preventive measures can be costly in terms of restrictions on bystanders, and that interventions directly addressing the behavior of drinkers causing violence might also be effective and more just. This list could be made longer, and endlessly variegated. For our purposes, it suffices to say that other narratives than those surfacing in this study would produce other collateral realities, in which other alcohol policies were made relevant.

This study has a limited scope in that it encompasses a set of stakeholder discussions about a demarcated case of Swedish alcohol prevention. The analysis relating to collateral realities is therefore representative of local professional alcohol policy only, and obviously not Swedish football culture in general. It should also be noted that the participants were interviewed as professionals. They were not encouraged to express personal thoughts and feelings, which may have promoted their reliance on other narrative forms to express their views. Yet the study nevertheless identifies several key assumptions built into this practice and implies how interventions could be more equitable and less negligent about the gendered norms that shape and are shaped by harmful drinking practices (see also Duncan et al. 2020, 2021). Discussions about how realities are enacted and with what material effects are obviously ontopolitical (Fraser 2020) in that they stress alternatives to current modes of ordering subjects and objects, and ways to approach the analytical, the political and the personal. Showing how different narrative forms intersect in policy discussions – producing and reproducing 'truths' about the severity of alcohol problems at football stadiums, the adverse effects of excessive drinking and the success of RBS in diverse settings – this study suggests that the personal is interrelated with the analytical and the political, and that this complex relationship also comprises tools for interfering and making a difference (Law 2000, 2). The question is, then, how can we bring the personal into policy without opening the door to laissez-faire situations, relativism and undemocratic interventions? As made evident through the intersections of narrative forms in this study, a first step would be for alcohol policy stakeholders to acknowledge that the personal is already present, regardless of how people feel about it. A second would be for them to problematize the plain histories and esoteric narratives that mask its existence and material effects in epidemiological alcohol research. A third step would be for them to integrate or at least take seriously the multitude of aesthetic narratives about alcohol that cultures produce;

not only those that cite the joys of moderation. This and other critical studies illustrate how alcohol policy and research tend to naturalize men's violence and intervene in the lives of those whose drinking is unlikely to cause problems (see Moore et al. 2017). We suggest that it is time to acknowledge that 'evidence-based interventions' are inevitably imbued with the personal preferences and values rejected in the name of science.

Acknowledgements

We are very grateful to the anonymous reviewers at CPS, to the Swedish alcohol policy stakeholders interviewed for the project and to Gina Mejdell Bjerland and Nicklas.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This work was supported by an Australian Research Council Discovery Project Grant: Analysing Gender in Research and Policy on Alcohol-Related Violence among Young People: A Comparative Study of Australia, Canada and Sweden (DP18010036).

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