Let’s Talk About Sex: An Exploration of Sexual Experiences.

**Participant Information Sheet**

You are being invited to take part in a doctoral research study. Before you decide whether or not you want to participate, it is important that you understand why the study is being carried out and what it will involve if you agree to take part. Please read through this information carefully and take your time to make your decision.

**What is the purpose of the study?**

The main purpose of this study is to explore people’s ***positive and negative sexual experiences*** after drinking alcohol, after taking recreational drugs, after both of these, or when neither of these have been drunk/taken. The study also aims to learn more about the most common characteristics of people who have sex after drinking alcohol or taking recreational drugs.

**Who can take part in this study?**

**You are invited to take part in this study if you**:

* Are currently living in the UK;
* Are aged 18 – 40;
* Are currently sexual active - defined as having had at least one sexual experience (anything more than kissing) with another person(s) within the past 4 weeks;
* Can understand and communicate in written English;

**Additionally you should have:**

* **Previous experience of drug-involved sexual activity** (i.e. a sexual experience under the influence of recreational drugs excluding alcohol on its own, caffeine and nicotine)

**Or:**

* **Previous experience of alcohol-involved sexual activity** (i.e. a sexual experience under the influence of alcohol on its own - excluding any recreational drug **or** a sexual experience under the influence of alcohol in combination with recreational drugs)

**You should not take part if you are:**

• Currently in treatment, currently waiting for treatment or have had any previous treatment for drug or alcohol dependence;

• Attempting to stop your drug or alcohol use;

OR

* Currently in treatment, currently waiting for treatment or have had any previous treatment for drug or alcohol dependence;
* Attempting to stop your drug or alcohol use;

OR

Currently seeking psychological treatment for and/ or are currently experiencing:

* ​A recurrent difficulty with getting or maintaining an erection;
* Uncontrollable ejaculation either before or shortly after sexual experiences ;
* Recurrent difficulties with vaginal penetration, for example: an intense fear/ anxiety in anticipation of/ during penetration, marked tensing or tightening of pelvic muscles during attempted vaginal penetration;
* Compulsive participation or engagement in sexual activity;
* Recurrent difficulty in reaching orgasm when sexually excited.

**Do I have to take part?**

No, taking part is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part.

**What will I be asked to do if I take part?**

You will be asked to complete an online questionnaire. The questionnaires will cover demographic information (e.g. age, gender, sexual orientation), your use of alcohol and (if you use them) recreational drugs, your sexual history (e.g. whether or not you have experienced different sexual experiences including both positive and negative experiences and those before and after age 14; for example, “On how many days in the past month have you had a sexual experience? A sexual experience is anything more than kissing with another person (s). Please enter a number between 0 – 30”, “A man put his penis into my vagina or someone inserted fingers or objects without my consent”). You might be invited to talk about sexual experiences where your consent was not given or asked to rate how much you wanted and were willing to engage in a sexual experience or your reasons for engaging in a sexual experience; for example, “e.g. The person had an attractive face; The person had a desirable body; The person was too physically attractive to resist”. You will also be asked about your alcohol and if applicable, drug-taking behaviour.

The study will involve two stages.

**Stage 1.** You will be asked to complete a few online questionnaires covering:

* different aspects of your personality (e.g. how much you tend to plan what you do; how much you agree or disagree with different statements about sensitive topics such as rape e.g. “if a woman doesn’t physically fight back, you can’t really say that it was rape”; your beliefs about alcohol and recreational drugs; your attitudes towards sexual experiences e.g. “I think that consent should be asked before any kind of sexual behaviour, including kissing or petting”);
* more detailed information about your use of alcohol (e.g. how often drink alcohol) and (if you use them) recreational drugs (e.g. which recreational drugs do you use);
* information about some of your most recent positive and (if applicable) negative sexual experiences (e.g. how much did you want to have the sexual experience; where did this sexual experience take place; how much were you un/willing);
* a few further demographic questions (e.g. relationship status; ethnicity and relationship status).

Some questionnaires will also ask you whether or not you agree or disagree with statements that present a broad range of different or strong views on topics such as rape. You may find that you strongly agree or disagree with these statements and we welcome your view on these.

This will take approximately 45 minutes – 1 hour to complete.

You will also be invited to take part in a diary study of sexual experience and/ or drug-taking behaviour. One week after the completion of the background information, we will email you via the email address you have provided with a web link to take part in Stage 2 of the study.

**Stage 2.** You will be asked to complete an online diary for a period of ***12 weeks.*** You will be asked to complete the online diary if/each time you take recreational drugs and/ or have a sexual experience. Each diary entry will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

The types of questions that you will be asked about these events include how the sexual experience started, what happened during the experience, how it ended, how much you wanted the sexual experience, what alcohol you drunk / which drugs you took, and your thoughts on what you were hoping to get out of the drug experience. **We’re not expecting you to change your sexual behaviour, drug-taking behaviour or alcohol consumption just because you’re taking part in the study; we are interested in gathering a ‘snapshot’ of your experiences just as they would happen anyway.**  **At no point will you be asked** to provide any identifying information about yourself, the other person(s) (e.g. names) or the specific location (e.g. an address) in which the sexual experience took place – we’re interested in looking at the overall trends across people, not specific individuals.

In order to prevent any missed accounts of your sexual or drug experiences, an email reminder will be sent to you ***every week (7 days)*** to remind you to complete the diary. This email will contain a link to the online diary and when you click through to the link, you will be asked to confirm whether or not one or more of the above events has taken place in the last seven days, and if so, whether or not you have already logged the experience.

As you can see from the description of what’s involved in the initial questionnaire, and Stage 1 and Stage 2, the questions are of a sensitive nature, covering topics such as your sexual and drug-taking experiences and attitudes towards sex. This is why we have ensured that anyone who takes part in the study is able to remain be completely anonymous. **It is important for you to know that you do not have to answer a question if you don’t want to (i.e. you can leave a question blank). Also, if you wish to take a break at any time, your data will save on the web browser for 4 weeks so you can return to it when you’re ready by simply typing in the web address. Note: this will only work if you use the same device to access the study.**

**What are the possible risks involved in taking part?**

There are no directrisks of being involved in this study; however as mentioned above, you may find that some of the questions are of a personal or sensitive nature (e.g. those which ask about your **positive and negative sexual experiences** and your drug and alcohol consumption) or that you are presented with statements expressing views that are possibly strongly different or similar to your own (and you can indicate how much you agree or disagree with these statements). Details on what’s involved in the study have been given in the section above so that you can decide if you would like to participate or not. Also, you can choose to leave any question unanswered if you prefer without giving a reason. If taking part in the study, you are also free to stop the study at any time.

Although the study is not intended to cause any distress, if you do experience discomfort or distress you can access free and confidential advice and/ or support by clicking [this link](https://leedsbeckettpsych.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bEGo4qXa3TswxX7) to access a list of relevant services. These will be available throughout the study.

**In no way will you be asked to increase or decrease your drug taking, alcohol drinking or sexual behaviour during this study.**

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

Upon confirmation of your eligibility you will gain an entry to win **one of thirty £10 prize draws!** Upon completion of stage 1, you will be given an entry into another prize draw to win one of fifty **£10** prize draws.

If you continue to take part in the diary study you will be entered into prize draws for each week that you participate. **In total there are £700 worth of prizes to be won**. These consist of **10 prize draws of £25**, **1 prize draw of £150** (for those who provide up to 6 weeks’ worth of diary entries) and **1 prize draw of £300** (for those who provide 12 weeks’ worth of diary entries).

You might find the topic of this study interesting and enjoy taking part. Ultimately, your contribution to the research will enable us to have a greater understanding of people’s different sexual experiences after drinking alcohol and taking drugs, which is useful in its own right but also can help to inform future public health strategies.

If you are a psychology student at Leeds Beckett University you will receive **6 points** for completing the first stage of the study and then **2 points for each week** that you decide to take part in the diary study (i.e. 24 points in total over the 12 weeks).

**What if there is a problem?**

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, please feel free to contact the researcher team using the contact details below. We will do our best to answer any of your questions. **If you wish to seek help and advice throughout the study there is a hyperlink on every page which will take you to information on the relevant charities and organisations which you may wish to contact.** Additionally you can contact the research team for this information should you wish.

**Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?**

Yes, all information from the study is confidential.

Your data will be stored securely at all times under the provisions of the 1998 Data Protection Act. All data collected during this study will be securely archived for a minimum period of 10 years. Arrangements for destruction will then be made. If the results of the study are published all data will be anonymised. Other academic researchers that would like to gain access to the data would require approval from the Research Ethics Committees at Leeds Beckett University, and would be granted access to **anonymised data only**.

**You will not be asked to provide any identifying information about yourself alongside the data (e.g. names, addresses) at any point. As long as you remain anonymous (i.e. you do not provide identifying information) your data will always be completely confidential.**

There will be an opportunity at the end of the survey for you to indicate that you want to take part in the diary study. At this point you can provide your email address in a separate window. **This will not be linked to your data!**

**What will happen if I don’t want to carry on with the study?**

You are free to stop taking part at any time. You are also free to withdraw your data from the study at any time without giving a reason for doing so. If you wish to withdraw your data from the study, please notify the research team. If after completing the study you decide that you would like to withdraw your data, you are free to do so up until **31/07/2018. To withdraw your data** all you need to do is contact the research team on the email address below. Since you will have used your anonymous email address to log into and complete the study, we will then find the data for that email address and remove it from the study.

**Please note that simply exiting the web browser will stop the study but it will not withdraw your data. If you wish for your data to be removed you must contact the research team who will withdraw all of your data.**

**What will happen to the results of the study?**

The results of this study will be published as part of the principal investigator’s PhD thesis. Findings may also be published in a scientific journal or presented at academic conferences. The data will be anonymous and none of your personal details will be identifiable in any report or publication. Any quotes taken from the research will be anonymised when presented in the principal investigator’s PhD thesis and in any report or publication. If you would like to see a summary of the results of the study, please contact the research team. If you have any concerns over your personal identity being revealed as a result of taking part in this study, please be assured that **YOUR PARTICIPATION WILL REMAIN COMPLETELY ANONYMOUS.**

**Who has reviewed the study?**

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Psychology Ethics Committee at Leeds Beckett University.

**Contact for further information:**

This study has been approved by the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, Research Ethics Sub-Committee at Leeds Beckett University.

**Contact for further information:**

You are encouraged to ask any questions before, during, or after the study has taken place. If you have any questions about the research, or if you have any concerns whilst taking part in the study, please contact the research team at the email address below.

**Email: letstalkaboutsex@leedsbeckett.ac.uk**

If you wish to talk to an independent representative outside of the research team please contact:

Dr A Wilson, Psychology Research Ethics Co-ordinator at Leeds Beckett University – [a.d.wilson@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:a.d.wilson@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

**What should I do if I want to take part?**

Thank you for taking the time to read the information sheet. If you would like to take part in the study, please continue with the study.

**Free and confidential advice and support services:**

***Talk to Frank:***

Helps you find out everything you might want to know about drugs.

Talk to FRANK offers friendly, confidential and anonymous advice. They offer live chat, email, SMS and telephone support.

[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

SMS: 82111

Telephone: 0300 123 6600

***Relate:***

UK's largest provider of relationship support, and every year they help people of all ages, backgrounds and sexual orientations to strengthen their relationships.

RELATE offers relationship counselling for individuals, couples and families. They also offer sex therapy. They offer free live chat (with a trained counsellor), an anonymous support helpline and face-to-face counselling.

[www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk)

Telephone: 0300 100 1234

***GMFA:***

The Gay Men’s Health Charity (GMFA) is the UK's leading charity dedicated to gay men's health. Visit their website for advice and information on: sex and sexual health, living with HIV and clinics and support.

[www.GMFA.org.uk](http://www.GMFA.org.uk)

***London Friend:***

London Friend is the UK’s oldest Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans charity. They support the health and mental well-being of the LGB&T community in and around London. They offer counselling and support around issues such as: same-sex relationships, sexual and gender identity. They are also home to Antidote – the UK’s ***only*** LGBT drug and alcohol service which offers confidential drug and alcohol telephone support.

[www.londonfriend.org.uk](http://www.londonfriend.org.uk)

Telephone: 0300 330 0630

***Rape Crisis England & Wales:***

Rape Crisis England & Wales is a national charity and the umbrella body for a network of independent member Rape Crisis organisations. It is a feminist organisation that exists to promote the needs and rights of women and girls who have experienced sexual violence. Rape Crisis England and Wales offers confidential support and/ or information about your nearest services.

[www.rapecrisis.org.uk](http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk)

Telephone: 0808 802 9999

***Support after Rape and Sexual Violence Leeds (SARSVL; Rape Crisis Centre for Leeds):***

Organisation that exists to support all women and girls who have been affected by sexual violence of any kind at any time in their lives. SARSVL offers free and confidential helpline, face-to-face, SMS and email support.

[www.supportafterrapeleeds.org.uk](http://www.supportafterrapeleeds.org.uk)

Telephone: 0808 802 3344

SMS: 07797 803 211

***Survivors UK:***

Survivors UK helps men from anywhere who have been sexually abused. Survivors UK provide confidential web chat and SMS/text chat services, and run both individual counselling and group therapy from our base in Shadwell, London.

[**www.survivorsuk.org**](http://www.survivorsuk.org)

***The Samaritans:***

The Samaritans offer free and confidential support to any person who wishes to use their service. This service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Samaritans offer telephone, email and face-to-face support.

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

Telephone: 116 123 (UK); 116 123 (ROI)

***Mind:***

Mind provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. Mind offers two confidential mental health information services, the Mind Info line and the Legal advice service. You can also use their website to find your local ‘Mind’ where you can access support such as: counselling, advocacy and housing.

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

Telephone: 0300 123 3393

SMS: 86463

***Yorkshire MESMAC:***

Yorkshire MESMAC are a community based social wellbeing, sexual and mental health services across West and North Yorkshire. They are predominantly a service for gay and bisexual men. They have four offices in Bradford, Leeds, York and Wakefield and these offices provide: consultancy, counselling, information and resources, outreach, support and training.

[www.mesmac.co.uk](http://www.mesmac.co.uk)

***Men’s Advice Line:***

Men’s advice line is a men’s only service for those who have or are experiencing domestic violence. They provide free and confidential support via: helplines and email.

[www.mensadviceline.org.uk](http://www.mensadviceline.org.uk)

Telephone: 0808 801 0326

***Respect:***

The main focus of the Respect Phoneline is to increase the safety of those experiencing domestic violence by engaging with the abusers to reduce the risk. The free phoneline and email service offers information and advice to help stop domestic violence.

[www.respectphoneline.org.uk](http://www.respectphoneline.org.uk)

Telephone: 0808 802 4040

***Leeds Mental Health Directory***

Leeds Mental Health Directory aims to give up to date information about what services are available in the city and how to access them. It also provides links to fact sheets and self-help information about maintaining good mental health and wellbeing.

[www.leedsmhdirectory.co.uk](http://www.leedsmhdirectory.co.uk)

***Pink Butterfly***

Pink Butterfly Is a social networking site aimed at Transsexual, Intersexed and Transgender People. Pink Butterfly offers friendship, advice, information and guidance for its members.

[http://yahoo-pulse-friends-worldwide-network.webs.com](http://yahoo-pulse-friends-worldwide-network.webs.com/)

***Yorkshire Trans Support Network***

Yorkshire Trans Support Network is an umbrella network committed towards improved awareness, equality, support and resources for Trans people throughout Yorkshire.

http://www.ytsn.org.uk/