

Alcohol industry report denies violence link

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An alcohol industry funded report that claims alcohol is not a cause of violence has been debunked by researchers in New Zealand and Australia.

The report (published in March 2015) from British anthropologist, Dr Anne Fox, focussed on the causes of violence and [anti-social behaviour](#) in night-time entertainment areas in New Zealand and Australia.

Dr Fox claimed that [alcohol consumption](#) was not a cause of violence, but instead, that beliefs regarding acceptable behaviour when drinking were to blame.

She recommended that children were educated regarding proper behaviour when drinking, parents were taught how to talk to their children about alcohol, and the public educated about acceptable drinking behaviour via media campaigns.

Researchers Nicki Jackson from the University of Auckland and Professor Kypros Kypri from the University of Newcastle in Australia, were appalled at the report's recommendations.

They have published a critique in the latest issue of the international peer-reviewed journal *Addiction*, addressing the key claims with reference to the scientific evidence.

Ms Jackson says that "these types of recommended approaches may modify a person's knowledge or attitude, but rarely their behaviour."

"The report is highly selective in the research used to support its recommendations. It fails to acknowledge the huge body of evidence concerning effective strategies for reducing [violence](#), such as earlier cessation of sales in licensed premises," she says.

"Despite failing to meet even basic standards of research the report cannot be ignored, because the findings are being by the alcohol industry to overturn licensing decisions and in submissions on public policy" says Professor Kypri.

"We believe this was simply an effort by the [alcohol industry](#) to raise doubts about the existing evidence, which is strong," he says.

"Employing 'merchants of doubt' is a strategy used by the fossil fuel industry to subvert science on global warming."

"This [report](#) should be viewed in the same way."

More information: Nicki Jackson et al. A critique of Fox's industry-funded report into the drivers of anti-social behaviour in the night-time economies of Australia and New Zealand, *Addiction* (2015). [DOI: 10.1111/add.13149](#)

Provided by University of Auckland

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