

Drinking patterns and violent behaviour amongst young people in England and Wales

Secondary analysis of the Offending
Crime and Justice Survey

Dr Carly Lightowlers
Liverpool John Moores University

Young people's drinking patterns in UK

- Lifetime alcohol prevalence decreasing in children (11-15 years)...
 However amount of alcohol consumed amongst recent drinkers (in the last week) remains relatively stable (Fuller et al., 2011).
- Pupils (15-16 years) report more frequent heavy episodic drinking and drunkenness than most of their European counterparts...
 Consequently experiencing higher levels of alcohol-related harm, including violence (Hibell et al., 2012).
- Prevalence of weekly drinking amongst young adults (16-24 years) has fallen...
 However increased proportion drinking in excess of recommended weekly limits for men and women in Great Britain from 1988 to 2006 (Smith and Foxcroft, 2009).

What do we know about drinking and violence amongst young people?

- Interpersonal assault
 - Common amongst young people (WHO, 2006; McVeigh et al., 2005)



- Established cross-sectional association
 - heavy episodic drinking ('binge drinking') (Matthews and Richardson, 2005; Finney, 2004; Shepherd, 1994; Room and Rossow, 2001)



- Pharmacological effects, personal characteristics and contextual factors...
 - Friends, family and peers, settings, expectancies, stage in the life course...



What role do attitudes play?

- Cultural variation in alcohol-violence relationship
(Sumner and Parker, 1995; Plant and Miller, 2007)
- Drinking: cultural and learned behaviour
(Graham, 1980; Sumner and Parker, 1995; Berridge et al., 2007; Quigley and Leonard, 2006)
- Attitudes may mediate the alcohol-violence relationship
(MacAndrew and Edgerton, 1969; Graham, 1980; Graham et al., 1998; Quigley and Leonard, 2006; Sumner and Parker, 1995; Plant and Miller, 2007)
- Distinct attitudes in late adolescence / early adulthood



Why a developmental focus?

- ASB and heavy drinking during adolescence and early adulthood

(Farrington 2003; Huang et al. 2001; Loeber et al 2003).

- Widespread concurrent alcohol use and violent behaviour

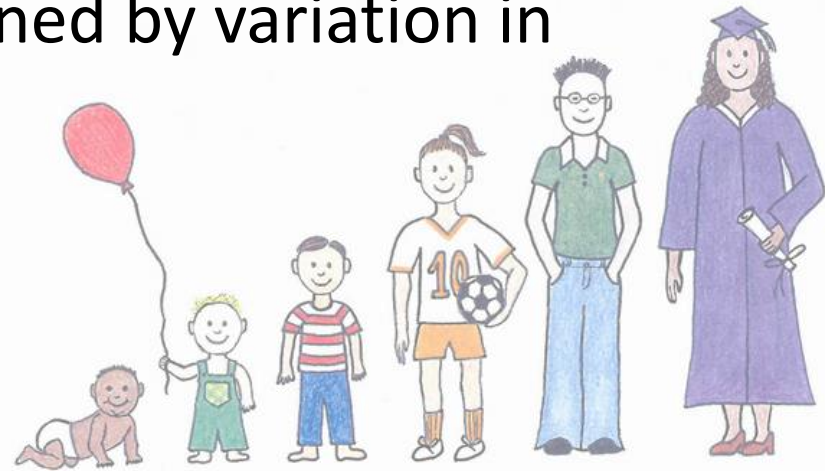
- Mixed evidence on role of earlier drinking on future violent behaviour

(Blitstein et al., 2005; Swahn and Donovan, 2004; White et al., 1993; Huang et al., 2001).

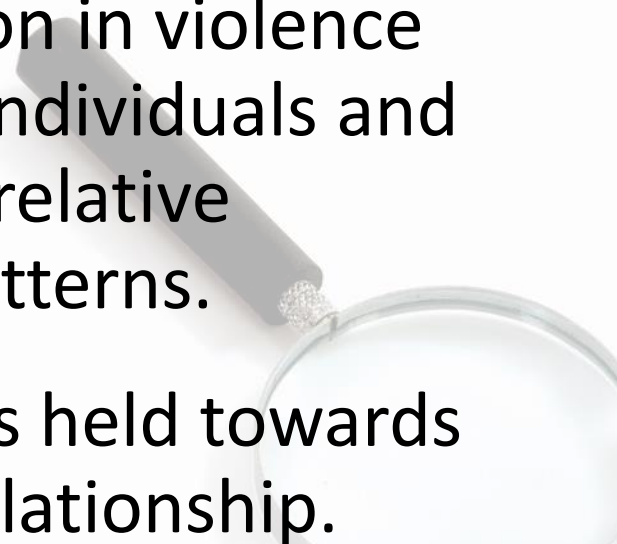


Why a developmental focus?

- Little longitudinal research amongst English and Welsh youth
 - Important given cultural dimensions that influence alcohol-violence relationship.
- Less known about the extent to which variation in violent behaviour can be explained by variation in drinking patterns.

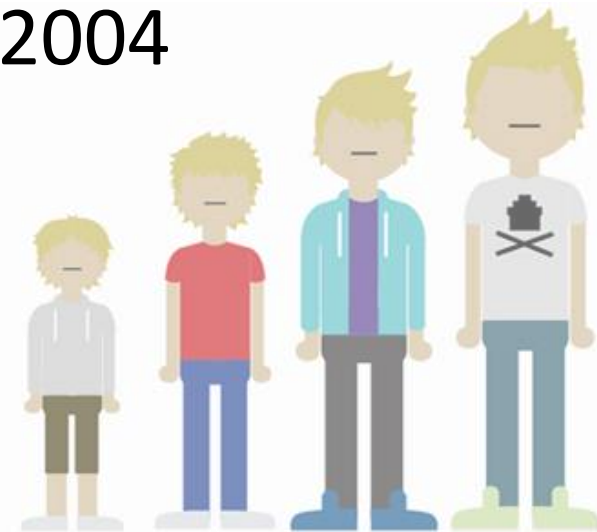


Aims of the study

1. Build on evidence of concurrent behavioural associations between alcohol drinking and violent behaviour identified in many cross sectional studies on English and Welsh youth.
 2. Explore the proportion of variation in violence attributable to change between individuals and within individuals, as well as the relative contributions of their drinking patterns.
 3. Assess mediating role of attitudes held towards alcohol in the alcohol-violence relationship.
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The study: OCJS

- Nationally representative self-report data on young people's offending *and* alcohol consumption between 2003 and 2006
 - ✓ Assault (with and without incurring injury)
 - ✓ 'Binge' drinking measure since 2004
 - ✓ Attitudinal measures
 - ✓ Longitudinal design



Methods

Focus on those aged between 16 and 29

LCA: identify classifications of individuals who held similar attitudes

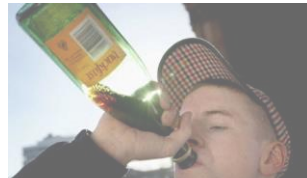
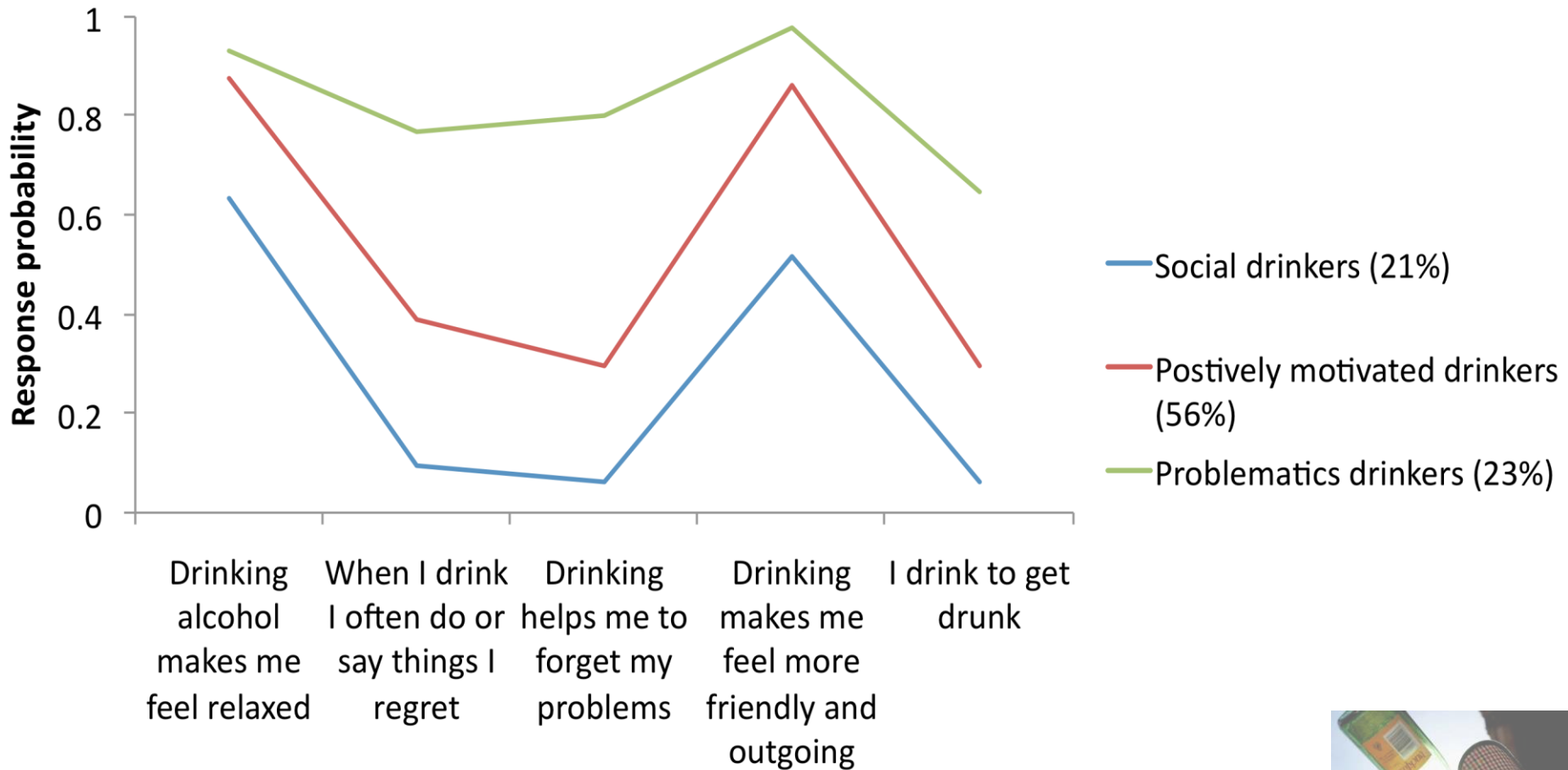
Lagged regression models: current and *earlier* drinking and violent behaviour

- as well as drinking attitude classification, age, age² and gender





MLM: variation *within* and *between* individuals propensity to commit assault, controlling for drinking behaviour

- as well as drinking attitude classification, age, age², sweep year and gender

Findings: LCA



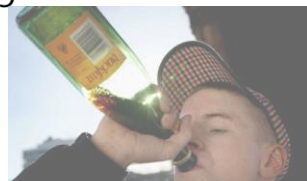
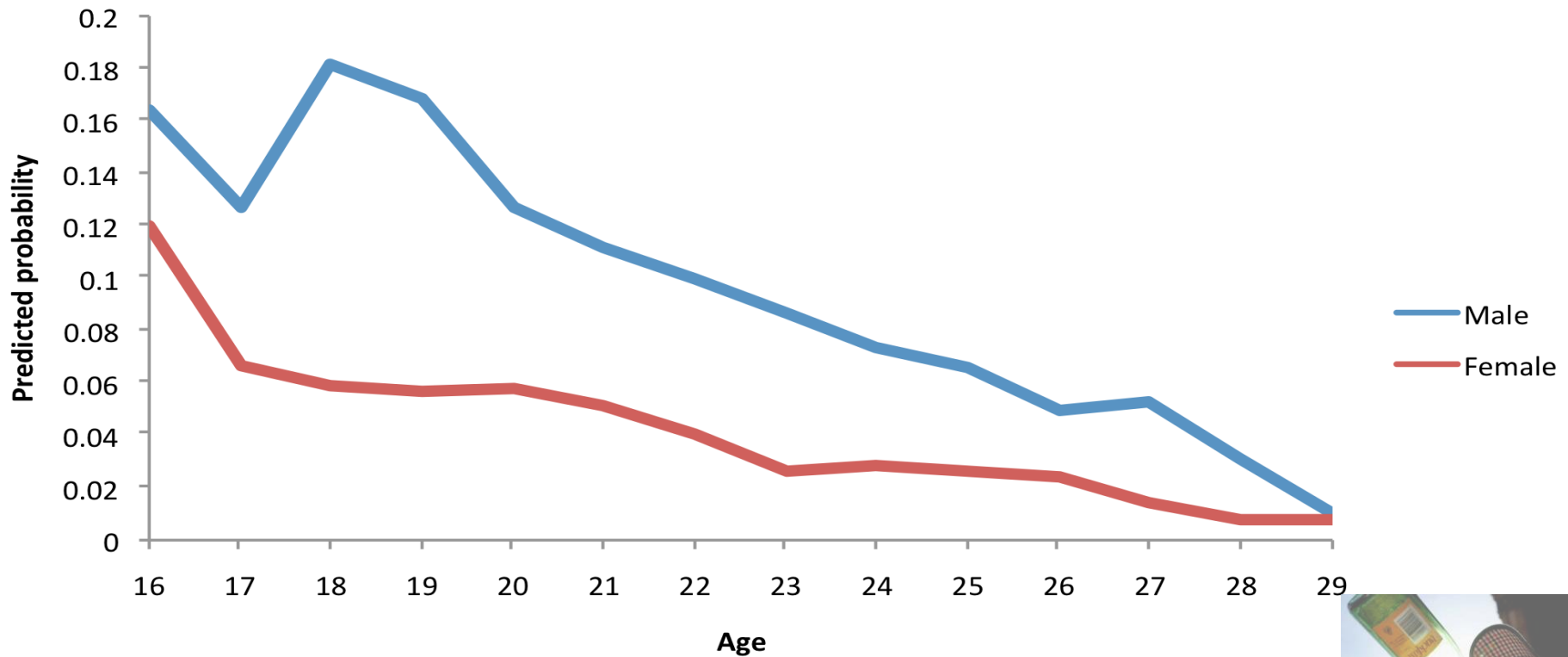
Findings: lagged models

- Drinking pattern in same year  Assault ✓
- Drinking pattern year prior  Assault ✗
- Prior violence  Assault ✓
- Drinking attitude (ML class membership)  Assault ✓



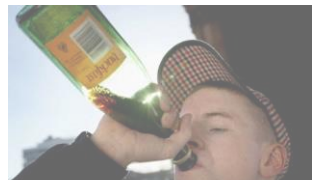
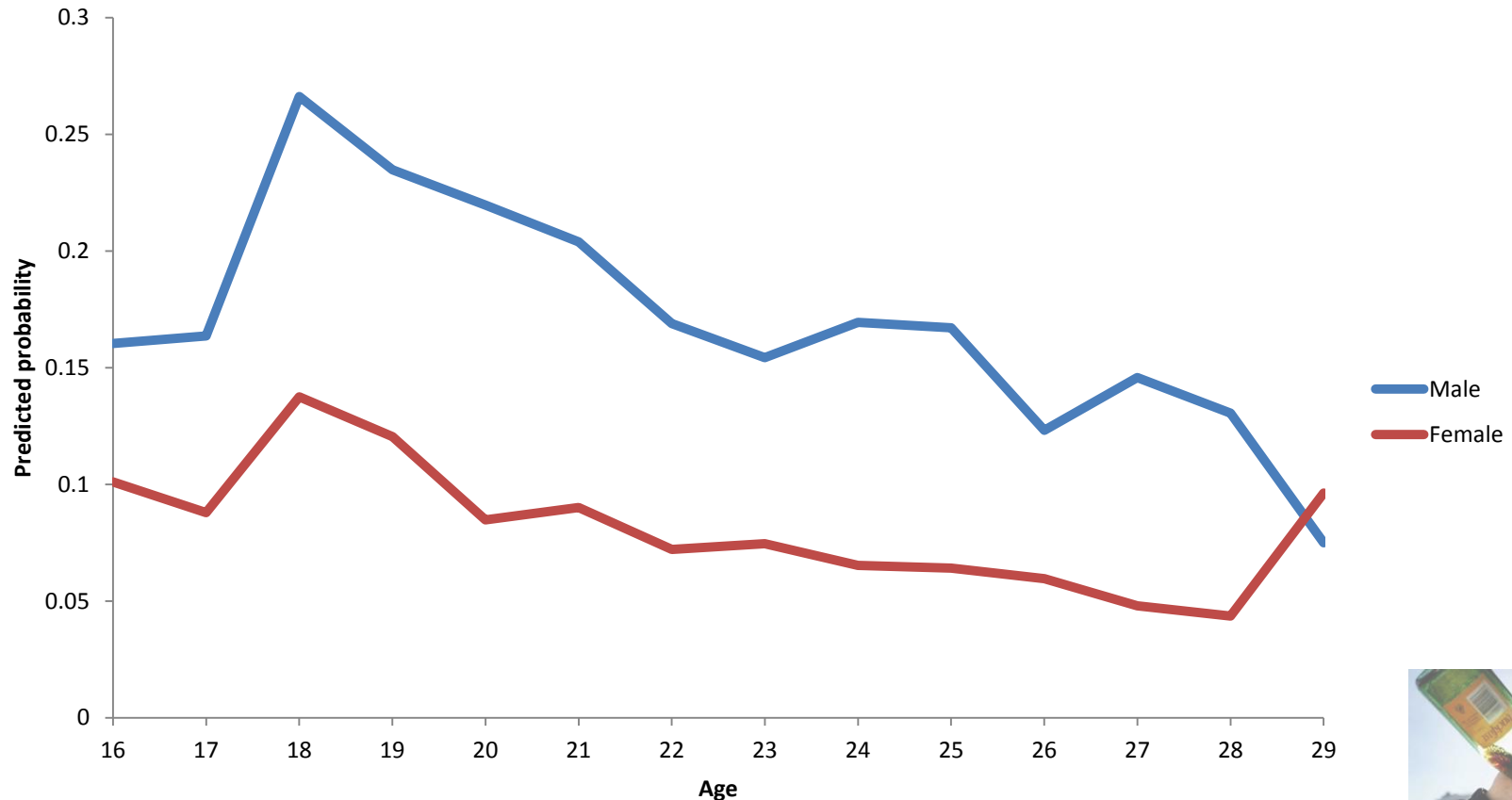
Findings: multilevel models

When considering those who drink

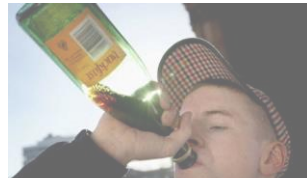
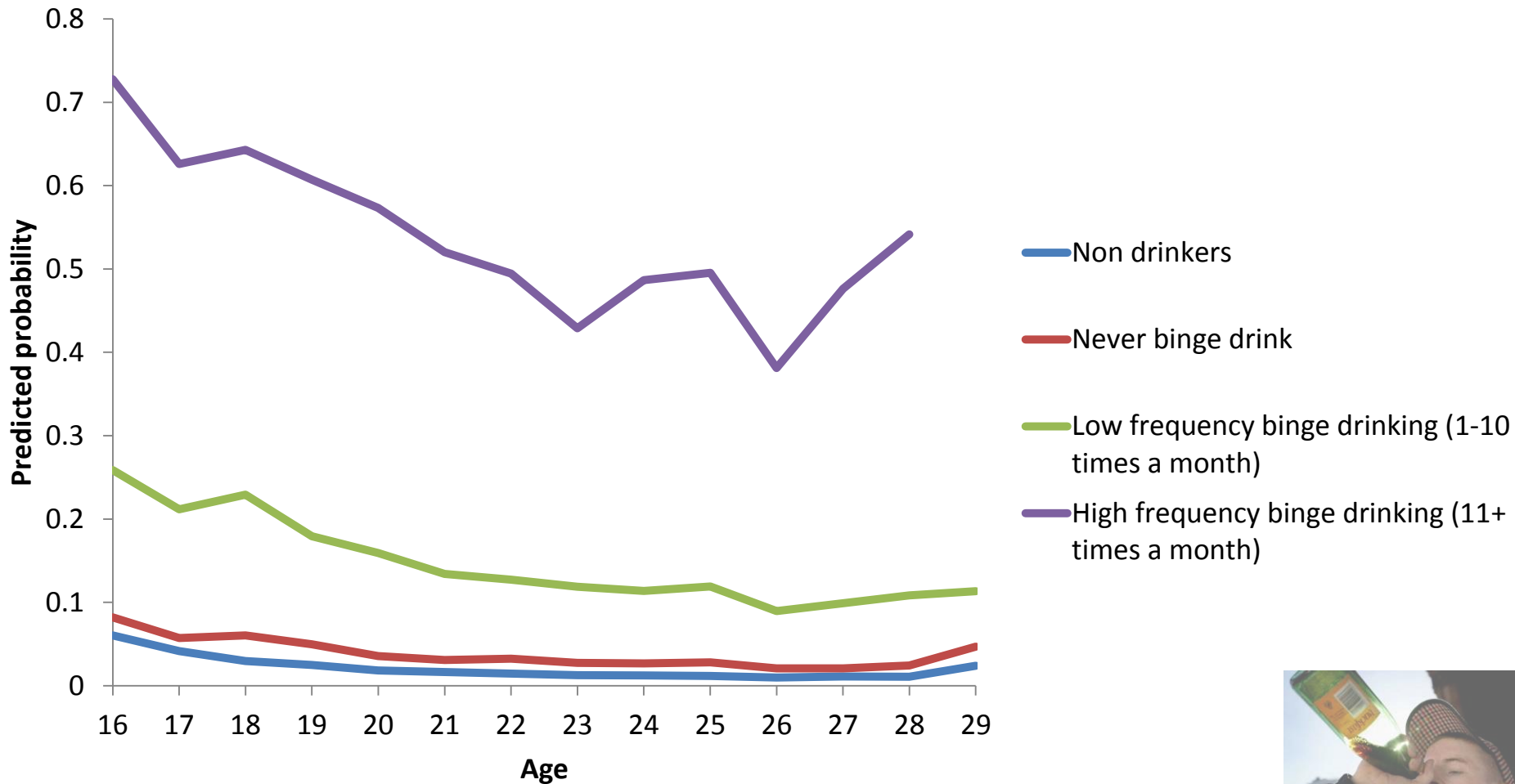


Findings: multilevel models

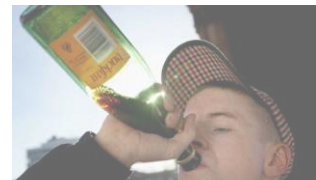
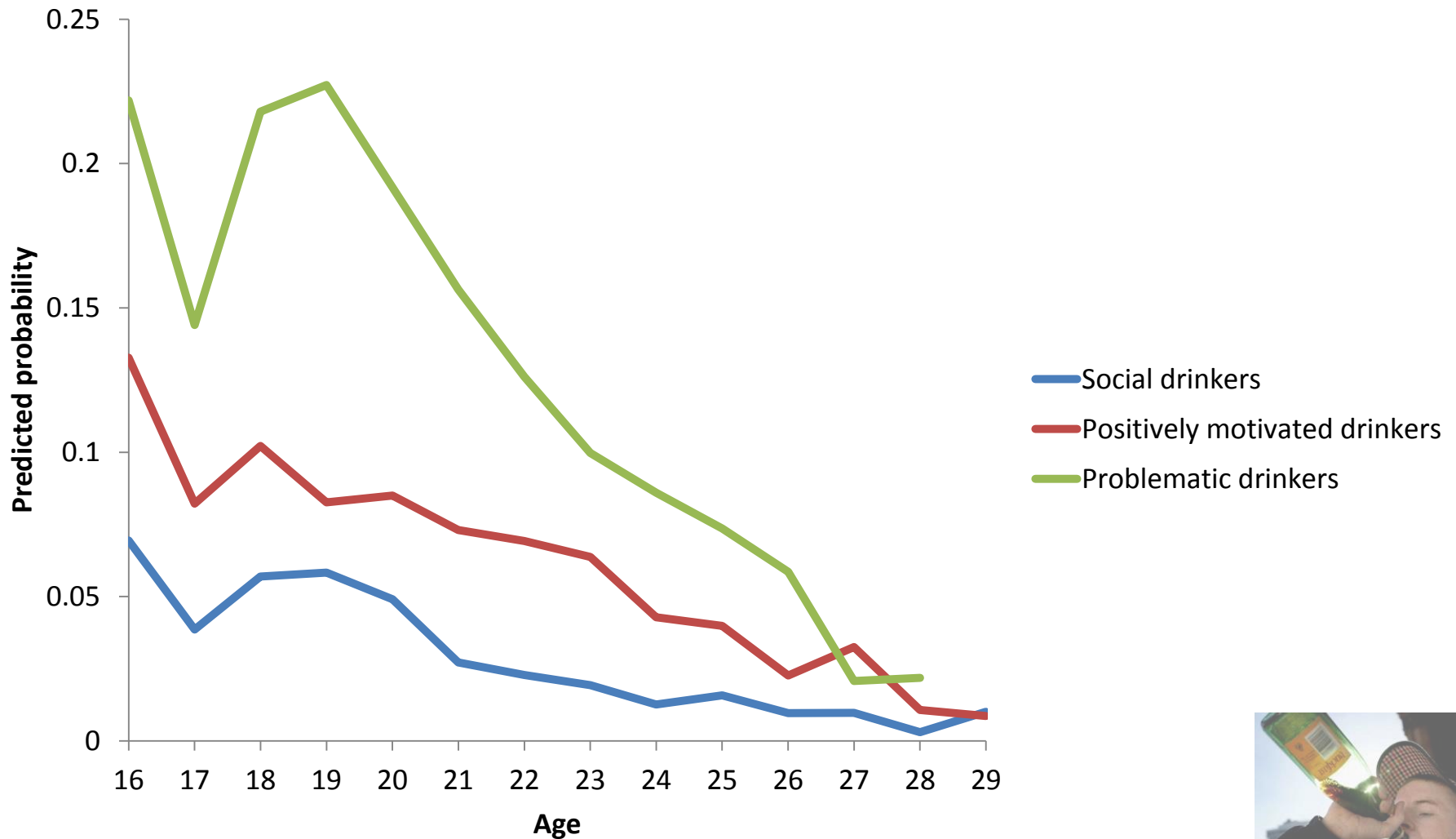
When also considering those who do not drink



Findings: multilevel models



Findings: multilevel models



What are the key findings?

Heavy drinking frequency associated with increase risk of violent offending

- risk for males higher than for females
- although gap narrows as age increases

Contemporaneous association between drinking and violence

- times when young people are drinking more they are more likely to behave violently
- group of individuals who continue to drink heavily and perpetrate violence

Attitudes mediate the alcohol-violence relationship

- problematic drinkers more likely to commit an assault offence

What does this mean for policy?

Reducing drinking

- Situational crime prevention
- Structured programmes in CJ setting

Increase in drinking

- Trigger for prompt intervention

Work with young people to address their difficulties and drinking attitudes/motives



Acknowledge differential risk for males and females

Thank you

Dr Carly Lightowlers
Liverpool John Moores University
c.l.lightowlers@ljmu.ac.uk