

Inhibition Conflict and Alcohol Expectancy as Moderators of Alcohol's Relationship to Condom Use

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Inhibition conflict theory predicts that alcohol will decrease condom use only among individuals who are highly conflicted about using a condom, whereas expectancy theory predicts such an effect only among individuals who hold strong beliefs about alcohol's effects on sexual risk taking. In Study 1, the first of these two theories was tested using a newly developed measure of conflict. Data from 308 college students who reported on the first time they had sexual intercourse with their most recent partner (FMRP) supported the utility of this measure and showed that quantity of alcohol consumed was negatively associated with condom use only among high-conflict individuals. In Study 2, 17- to 25-year-old respondents reported on their first sexual intercourse, FMRP, and last intercourse ($n_s = 465, 1136, \text{ and } 984$, respectively). In a simultaneous test of both inhibition conflict theory and expectancy theory, amount of alcohol consumed was found to be negatively associated with condom use at first intercourse among individuals high in both conflict and expectancy, at FMRP among high-expectancy individuals, and at last intercourse among high-conflict individuals. These results lend partial support to both theories of alcohol's effects and suggest that an integration of these two perspectives will ultimately be required if researchers are to model adequately alcohol's effects on human social behavior.

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