Can a person experience a blackout and not know it the next morning?

- That's not going to happen with en bloc, because there is too large of a missing gap for a person to overlook. But it can happen with fragmentary (Goodwin 1969, White 2004, p. 4)
- Let's say Bob has gone to a party and ingested a lot of alcohol quickly. He experiences fragmentary blackouts but remains conscious the entire night until he drives himself home and goes to bed at 3am. Throughout the evening Bob is talking with others, dancing, and hitting on a number of women with no success. He is not slurring his speech, not stumbling around, and he is not passed-out drunk. But friends can tell he's got a good buzz going. What they can't tell is that Bob's hippocampus is intermittently turning on and off. Remember, there are no external signs of blackouts and no one at the party can see inside Bob's brain to notice his hippocampus is turned off. So, the next morning Bob wakes up with a hangover. He has enough recollection from the night before to know that he talked with four interesting people, hit on three beautiful women, and drove himself home. What he doesn't know is that he actually had conversations with nine people, flirted with five women, and threw up on his best friend's shirt. He doesn't know that he doesn't know. And unless one of his buddies reminds him of a missing conversation or event, Bob will remain blissfully unaware there are memory gaps from the night before.

CAUTION: Sometimes the complaining witness will use the phrase "*I went to sleep*" when s/he actually slipped into blackout. For example, I recently assisted in a trial in which the complaining witness testified that she could remember a sergeant, whom she didn't know that well, helping her back to her dormitory from the bar. She couldn't recall how she got into her apartment, but she "*woke up*" and could see the sergeant in her kitchen, which confused her. She then went back to "*sleep*". Next, she recalls waking up and he was sitting beside her on the bed with his hand on her breast. She was annoyed and then *"I went back to sleep."* She then recalls waking up and he was having coitus with her. Then she went back to "*sleep*". When she woke up in the morning, she was confused and her friend down the hall told her she was raped.

Imagine the juries' skepticism regarding her testimony – here's a stranger in her kitchen, then hand on her breast, and then having sex with her; with no shock or screams from the victim coming out of sleep. My testimony was her description was consistent with moving in-and-out of blackout. But that experience is novel for her. So, she references something we all are familiar with – going to sleep and waking up. I see this phrasing come up in a number of cases.

Is Behavioral Tolerance Learned?
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Abstract

Both scientific and anecdotal evidence indicates that social drinkers can develop resistance (i.e., behavioral tolerance) to alcohol's impairing effects over time. Although repeated exposure to alcohol is thought to explain tolerance development on a physiological level, the acquisition of behavioral tolerance appears to involve additional factors. In particular, learned associations between a drinker's behavior following alcohol consumption and the subsequent consequences may play an important role. When favorable consequences result from displaying unimpaired (i.e., tolerant) behavior after drinking, a drinker learns to develop behavioral strategies to compensate for alcohol's effects. In contrast, if a drinker does not receive a reward for unimpaired behavior—or finds that a more favorable outcome follows the display of intoxicated behavior—tolerance does not develop. Studies show that subjects also can develop behavioral tolerance to alcohol when they practice a task while

impaired by factors other than alcohol or when they mentally rehearse task performance while under the influence of alcohol.