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Repertoires of distinction:

Exploring patterns of weekend polydrug use within local leisure scenes across the English night time economy

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Abstract

Presented here are the first findings of self report surveys of prevalence of illicit drug use by customers in the night time economy of a large English city. Five random sample surveys conducted with dance club customers and three similar surveys with bar customers identified an association between illicit drug use, entertainment type and venue type. First, club customers were significantly more likely to report lifetime, past month and fieldwork night drug use than bar customers. Second, distinct and prolific polydrug repertoires were associated with the genres of electronic dance music favoured within different clubs, along with evidence of the growing popularity of emergent drugs such as MDMA powder. Such polydrug repertoires support the notion of culturally, spatially and pharmacologically distinct local leisure scenes operating within the contemporary night time economy; rather than the same broad mass of customers choosing different leisure experiences on different occasions, or the more fluid, 'neo-tribal' cultural groupings suggested by some. The article concludes by suggesting that prolific and enduring weekend polydrug repertoires within local leisure scenes increasingly polarize such scenes from drug use in the general population, with implications for policing and governance, alongside the need for a more nuanced understanding of the night time economy as an analytical concept in social research.

Key Words _____

drug use • polydrug repertoires • surveys • night time economy •
dance music • scenes • bars • clubs

Introduction

The expansion of the British night time economy (hereafter NTE) has led to a growing body of research focused on drinking, alcohol-related crime and broader cultural and criminological aspects of the alcohol-focused licensed leisure industry. The role of illicit drug use within the 21st century NTE and its relationship to alcohol-focused leisure has yet to be considered in detail. This article presents the first findings from a series of eight in situ sweep surveys conducted between 2004 and 2008 in venues across the NTE of a large city in the north west of England in order to compare and contrast the prevalence of illicit drug use between customers attending a range of bars and clubs in the same city. The surveys collected data on self reported lifetime, past month and fieldwork night drug use in order to explore the relationship between patterns of drug use, venue type and entertainment on offer. We first consider previous research on the NTE, the clustering of such research into alcohol-focused criminology and drug-focused 'club studies' and the limitations of the enduring 'commercial/mainstream' versus 'alternative/underground' conceptual dichotomy, before discussing some of the methodological challenges of researching drug and alcohol use in situ and presenting key findings on prevalence of illicit drug use from the eight surveys.

Typologies of the NTE

A growing body of work on the British NTE has concentrated on predominately large-scale, corporate, and alcohol-focused licensed leisure venues (e.g. Hadfield, 2006; Hobbs et al., 2003), notably in relation to the problems of alcohol-related violence and disorder (e.g. Hughes et al., 2007; Winlow and Hall, 2006; see Hadfield and Measham, 2009a for review), and largely to the exclusion of other types of 'urban playspaces' (Chatterton and Hollands, 2002). Electronic dance music-focused venues have been the focus of what might collectively be called 'club studies', distinct from the alcohol-dominated NTE literature and located predominantly within epidemiology and public health research (e.g. Fendrich and Johnson, 2005) and cultural studies (e.g. Buckland, 2002; Jackson, 2004; Malbon, 1999), rather than criminology and sociology. 'Club studies' has its roots in the early 1990s British 'rave research' (e.g. Ashton, 1992; Redhead, 1993) which emerged alongside the British acid house, rave and electronic dance music (hereafter EDM) scenes,

with early club studies identifying higher levels of self reported lifetime prevalence and current usage of illicit drugs among young people attending EDM clubs than young people of similar age in the general population (e.g. Newcombe, 1992; Release, 1997).

In the early 1990s the British acid house and rave scene fractured into different genres and subgenres of EDM (McLeod, 2001), compounded by the shift from unlicensed and outdoor dance events to licensed and indoor commercial venues in the aftermath of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (Hill, 2002; Measham, 2004a; Shapiro, 1999), leading to increasingly diverse genres of EDM and correspondingly delineated patterns and repertoires of illicit drug use before, during and after attending dance clubs (Measham et al., 2001). Despite this fragmentation, diversification and globalization of the EDM scene, few studies have systematically explored the relationship between venue type, entertainment type and patterns of illicit drug use.

In attempting to develop meaningful typologies of the British NTE through which patterns of drug and alcohol consumption can be mapped, the concepts of 'commercial/mainstream' and 'alternative/underground' have held enduring analytical appeal, particularly as such divisions reflect the ways in which some participants themselves conceptualize music/leisure landscapes. For example, early club studies which examined the relationship between musical genres and drug use conceptualized EDM genres as dichotomous: Henderson (1997:105), for example, noted the relationship between the 'butch' underground/hardcore clubs and illicit drug use and the 'femme... froth and no substance' mainstream/mellow clubs and alcohol consumption (see also Webster et al., 2002). More recently, Hutton's observational and interview-based research in Manchester characterized clubs as either 'mainstreams' playing popular Ibiza tunes and hardcore dance music (2006: 32–33), or 'undergrounds' playing breakbeat, dub and techno and offering an 'authentic' cultural experience (2006: 30). Echoing Henderson's Manchester study of a decade earlier, Hutton asserted that ecstasy remains the drug of choice within 'undergrounds', producing an 'attitude' more conducive to the friendliness appreciated by the older female clubbers in her study, whereas cocaine, amphetamine and alcohol consumption predominate in 'mainstreams' producing an 'aggressive, macho attitude' (2006: 41). Hutton's typology of 'mainstreams' versus 'undergrounds' relies heavily on partial insider observations of *perceived* differentiated patterns of drug use within these 'mainstreams' and 'undergrounds' however, rather than survey data on customer drug use.

Challenging dichotomies: 'Scenes' in the night time economy

Critiques of this 'commercial/mainstream' versus 'alternative/underground' dichotomy had emerged by the late 1990s (e.g. Redhead, 1997; Thornton, 1995). Thornton's seminal study of 1990s British club cultures showed how

the complex and often contradictory nature of social and cultural groups combined elements of conformity, passivity and competition *alongside* elements of resistance, rebellion and criminality, which in theoretical terms did not map easily onto dichotomous notions of the denigrated, inauthentic 'mainstream' and the cool, authentic 'underground', thus concluding that both the 'mainstream' and the 'underground' are produced and understood through processes of social distinction. Similarly Pini's (2001) study highlighted the contradictory 'liberating' and 'oppressive' possibilities of 1990s club cultures for young female participants, particularly given the feminization of 'mainstream' nightclubs through popular images of 'Sharons and Tracys' dancing to 'handbag house' alongside growing hypersexualization within EDM scenes.

The questioning of the conceptualization of, and relationship between, 'commercial/mainstream' and 'alternative/underground' has become even more pertinent given both the global commercial success of EDM and the rapid expansion of the NTE in many cities. Enduring globalized British EDM brands—such as *Cream*, *Gatecrasher*, *Fabric* and *Ministry of Sound*—are multimillion pound businesses, actively promoting their large scale events through an 'underground' aesthetic based on the cultural value of 'authentic' subcultural experiences (Lynch and Badger, 2006). The commercialization and criminalization of EDM has therefore produced a seemingly contradictory combination of 'mainstream' businesses, 'underground' aesthetics and transgressive spaces in which illegal drug use is culturally sanctioned, if not expected (Moore, 2009, see also Hunt et al., 2009).

Both the commercialization of EDM and the segmentation of the NTE challenge mainstream/underground dichotomies, and link to broader critiques of subculture as a symbolic form of working class 'resistance through rituals' (Hall and Jefferson, 1973) to the dominant, middle class cultural hegemony. Mainstream culture and subculture have been criticized as rigid and homogeneous conceptions of society (Bennett, 1999), dominated by representations of 'authentic' subcultures of working class young men to the neglect of, for example, women (McRobbie, 1991), non-spectacular style groups (Miles, 2000) and the social and cultural diversity of so-called 'mainstream' nightlife (Hadfield and Measham, 2009b). Moving away from notions of class-based youth subcultures in the 1990s, Bennett (1999), drawing on the work of Maffesoli (1996), emphasized the flexibility and hybridity of youth cultural forms to argue that they are better conceptualized as postmodern 'neo-tribes'. Post subcultural studies by Redhead, McRobbie, Thornton and Bennett questioned the existence of subcultures as cohesive, coherent collectivities and instead emphasized postmodern notions of fluid, fragmented and multiple individual and collective expressions.

More recently, however, Muggleton has suggested that, just as the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) overstated their case for collective, coherent and group-centred subcultures; post-modernists also overstated their case for fluidity, hybridization and individualization (2005). Muggleton notes that while youth cultural groupings

such as ‘ravers’ or ‘clubbers’ may be more nebulous than CCCS conceptualizations of subculture allowed, they remain segmented and ‘characterized by at least a minimum degree of distinctiveness from other, less similar, types of liminal subcultures’ (Muggleton, 2000: 73). Critics of post subcultural approaches to youth cultures (e.g. Blackman, 2004; Hodkinson, 2002; Hollands, 2002; MacRae, 2004) have suggested that the postmodern emphasis on consumption and identity formation over production and material exclusion is equally simplistic and has obscured important structural and ethnic inequalities. Youth researchers have re-emphasized the enduring significance of occupational class and other social inequalities in British youth cultures, reasserting the usefulness of the concept of subculture (Shildrick, 2006; see also Williams, 2007), although shifting the spectacular, rebellious and ‘underground’ from the preserve of the working class to those in ‘more advantaged social positions’ (e.g. Shildrick and Macdonald, 2006: 136). While it is true that some club studies focused on more student-oriented, white and middle class venues (Shildrick and Macdonald, 2006: 129), this is as much a reflection of club researchers themselves pre-dominantly comprising of club-going postgraduates and younger career researchers as a lack of socio-economic and ethnic diversity within British club cultures themselves. To reinstate a simplistic dichotomy—this time advocating the ‘mainstream’ NTE as the authentic working class cultural form and club cultures as a spectacular ‘underground’ scene of the privileged middle class—merely reverses the original subcultural analysis and does a disservice to the nuances of the contemporary British NTE.

This new subcultural dichotomy is problematic, firstly, in terms of the so-called ‘underground’. Although notably neglected by club studies, processes of inclusion and of socio-economic and ethnic diversity¹ are apparent in the production and consumption of EDM, including genres such as *speed garage*, *bassline*, *grime* and *dubstep* across the UK,² with black and white inner city urban young people having produced and participated in *jungle/drum and bass* since the early 1990s (Headon, 1994; James, 1997), with jungle characterized as a ‘truly indigenous Black British music ... contrasted with the mostly white audience for trance, techno and ambient’ (Reynolds, 1997: 247–8). Secondly, in terms of the so-called ‘mainstream’, processes of exclusion are evident in ‘mainstream’ licensed leisure with the marketing and management of West End night clubs aimed at identifying and reinforcing commercial elites of glamorous, high spending customers (Hadfield, 2008), by comparison with the exclusion from corporate licensed leisure of lower socio-economic groups and minority ethnic customers (e.g. Böse, 2005; Talbot, 2007).

The work of Chatterton and Hollands (2002, 2003) provides the most robust typology of the contemporary British urban NTE while carefully engaging with these ‘mainstream’ and ‘underground’ discourses. Their critique of ‘flexible’ postmodern consumption in ‘entrepreneurial’ cities highlights the ways in which market segmentation, gentrification and branding further homogenize the increasingly corporatized NTE, notably

through the exclusion and criminalization of 'flawed' consumers and non-consumers. Through their spatial political economy analysis of night-time leisure consumer markets, Chatterton and Hollands produce a typology of 'urban nightscapes' (2003: 6) which is used to analyse the production, consumption and regulation practices associated with 'mainstream', 'residual' and 'alternative' nightlife spaces. Importantly, however, Chatterton and Hollands note that 'there is no "single" mainstream, but a variety of mainstream scenes' (2003: 94) while 'the mainstream, the residual, and the alternative and resistant margins are constantly shifting entities, with rather nebulous boundaries' (2003: 5). This more nuanced view enables NTE researchers to explore the making and remaking, regulation and experience of participation in such leisure spaces, while acknowledging broader trends such as the growing corporatization and sanitization of the NTE.

What is less clear, perhaps, is how patterns of licit and illicit drug use may be mapped onto these fluid boundaries of urban leisure space. To what extent do patterns of consumption relate to entertainment type and venue type, as well as the socio-demographic profile of customers, and the socio-cultural, geographical and stylistic distinctions of, and relationships between, individual leisure premises? Focusing more clearly on the dynamics ongoing in the production, regulation and consumption of NTE leisure spaces and 'scenes'³ opens up a space for the exploration of relationships between elective yet structurally-constrained identities (Hodkinson, 2002, 2005), commitment to and participation in local, global and virtual aspects of cultural, musical and stylistic scenes (Greener and Hollands, 2006), and most importantly for our purposes, patterns of licit and illicit drug use, including the meanings, motivations and social, economic and legal consequences of polydrug consumption in NTE contexts. This develops NTE research beyond both its predominant focus on alcohol-based leisure patterns and problems, and the prevailing dichotomous conceptualizations of 'commercial/mainstream' and 'alternative/underground'.

The empirical data for this study was gathered in Manchester, the third largest city in the UK, which has a total of approximately 500 licensed premises—including clubs, pubs and bars—and which attracts up to 125,000 visitors to its city centre every weekend (Making Manchester Safer, 2006; Manchester City Council, 2008). One hundred and sixty-four of these licensed premises are defined as nightclubs, incorporating a diversity of venues and entertainment types, varying between 100 and 1500 in capacity, reflecting both fluctuating demand for different musical and stylistic preferences and historical precedents in terms of music and door policies. Some venues (e.g. *Sankeys*) and some club nights (e.g. *Tangled*) were established towards the tail end of the 'Madchester' acid house era and retained the aesthetics of industrial warehouse 'raving' (Haslam, 1999). Indeed, more recent additions to Manchester's NTE such as the *Warehouse Project*⁴ explicitly draw on such discourses to market the warehouse rave 'experience' to younger club goers. Thus small to medium sized venues or 'mid-market clubs' (Owen, 2006: 2) such as the clubs surveyed for this study cater for a broad

range of EDM scenes; juxtaposed in urban centres like Manchester with the larger 'corporate nightclubs' (Owen, 2006: 2) and dance bars playing pop, chart R&B, and chart dance music.

Challenging locations: Fieldwork in the night time economy

Young people tend to have the highest levels of illicit drug use in the general population, yet once out of the formal education system, it becomes increasingly difficult to access this age group in order to obtain prevalence data due to high employment mobility, leisure time sociability and transitory housing arrangements. The best contemporary data on prevalence of illicit drug use by young adults comes from a handful of questions in the British Crime Survey (BCS); an annual national self report survey of adults aged 16–59. It has been suggested, however, that the BCS may be both an underestimate of drug use in general and unrepresentative of young people in particular due to the sampling of private households and the non-random non-response patterns experienced (Reuter and Stevens, 2007). Young people are more likely to live in shared accommodation, student halls and hostels; they are more transient than the general population or, if they do live in private households, their active social lives means they are more likely to be out of the house at times when surveys are conducted (Roe, 2005: 9). Given that the BCS data also shows that respondents who more frequently attend bars and clubs are also more likely to take illicit drugs (Chivite-Matthews et al., 2005), the BCS is likely to be an underestimate of drug use, particularly young people's drug use (Newcombe, 2007).⁵

The challenge addressed by this study is how best to conduct drug prevalence surveys with the young adult population active in the NTE, many of whom have left full time education, are under-represented in household surveys and are no longer accessible via school or college. This study utilizes in situ fieldwork across a range of NTE venues supplemented by virtual methodologies to capture this challenging-to-reach population (Greener and Hollands, 2006; Stetina et al., 2008).

Conducting research with participants who may have consumed alcohol and/or illicit drugs is an inevitable aspect of field research in the NTE. This raises two questions; first, how to maximize data collection methods for research participants when they are likely to be in their least intoxicated state, and second, how to maximize the validity of the consent process with such research participants given that intoxication may affect judgement and compromise notions of informed consent. In relation to levels of intoxication, timing of data collection is a key consideration. In this study respondents were approached at or near the entrance to leisure venues, so that for most people it was the earlier stages of their evening out and also the earlier stages of intoxication. The data collection period was during the main flow of customers into venues: for bars at approximately 8–10pm and in all but one club at 10pm–12.30am. Data was not collected from bar and club

customers later in the course of the evening, although researchers continued to conduct fieldwork observations until venues closed. It should be noted that significant numbers of customers had already consumed alcohol or drugs before entering the survey venues (see Table 3). For example, 42% of club customers reported already having taken drugs before the survey: 26% had taken cannabis, 20% ecstasy pills and 12% cocaine before being interviewed. Given these levels of pre-loading with drugs, it is therefore beneficial to conduct in situ club surveys as early in the evening as possible, with lower levels of respondent intoxication.⁶

Secondly, given both the importance and the challenges of conducting in situ fieldwork with young adults, as Aldridge and Charles have noted (2008), such research involves 'of necessity' the participation and therefore the consent of intoxicated respondents. Yet intoxication influences the consent process. Stockwell and colleagues found a higher refusal rate among more highly intoxicated drinkers (Stockwell et al., 1992); whereas, conversely, Measham and colleagues found a greater willingness to participate among intoxicated club customers: drinking alcohol was positively associated with consent to interview and ecstasy use appeared to make respondents 'disproportionately co-operative, even compliant' with the research (Measham et al., 2001: 76). A study of the relationship between subjective assessments of drunkenness and blood alcohol concentration (BAC) by Perham et al. (2007) also found a greater willingness to participate in the study among more intoxicated drinkers than (relatively) more sober drinkers.

This study attempted to maximize the validity of consent from research participants by piloting innovative use of internet websites, as well as follow-up interviews with a subsample at a later date in their own homes (Moore and Measham, 2008). Unlike Aldridge and Charles (2008), however, we would suggest that assessment of respondent intoxication by researchers may not be unproblematic. While Perham and colleagues found a relationship between researchers' subjective assessment of intoxication (slurred speech, glazed eyes and particularly staggering gait) and BAC, there were gender differences in the BAC at which these physical characteristics of drunkenness became noticeable to researchers, leading them to conclude that 'in the absence of a precise definition of drunkenness, or valid methods for determining this, ascertaining who has had too much to drink is not possible' (Perham et al., 2007: 377). Indeed, despite increased police powers to reduce public drunkenness, increased vendor obligations to refuse service to drunken customers and increasingly detailed guidance to both,⁷ both law enforcement and vendors struggle to precisely define drunkenness, hence resulting in very few prosecutions for sales to knowingly drunk persons (see review by Hadfield and Measham, 2009a). A recent undercover survey of nearly 600 licensed premises across England found that the law was widely flouted and that the sale of alcohol to intoxicated individuals occurred frequently despite stringent penalties (Home Office/KPMG, 2008). Thus, for researchers as well as police and vendors working in crowded

social environments with subdued lighting and significant background noise, the opportunity for comprehensive physical assessments of customer intoxication may be limited.

Dialogue between researchers and research participants while conducting in situ NTE research is typically limited not only because of intoxication with alcohol and/or illicit drugs but also ambient background noise and the associated difficulty of assuring confidentiality when conducting interviews in a semi-public setting with friends, venue staff or possibly law enforcement/security staff within earshot. All of these practical aspects of the fieldwork environment limit the potential time and content of any interactions, as well as raising questions about informed consent. In order to enhance sampling, response rates and the validity of informed consent in this study, various internet sites were utilized, including specialist dance club/music websites and the cyber message boards of the individual dance clubs where surveys were conducted. The partial insider status of the authors was pertinent to the utilization of these virtual methodologies (Halstead, 2001; Hine, 2000).⁸ Both authors were pre-existing members of specialist dance websites (trance, hard dance, house and drum and bass) for a combined total of 12 years (Measham for four years, Moore for eight years). Before each club survey, except the first drum and bass club, the authors posted a notice about the forthcoming survey on the associated dance club/music website(s) of relevance, along with details about the background and wider aims of the research, links to the authors' websites and a special clubbing research website set up by the authors (www.clubbingresearch.com), as well as to other research of relevance. This is an important methodological distinction from *all* earlier surveys of club drug use (e.g. Deehan and Saville, 2003; Measham et al., 2001; Release, 1997).

The aims of these website postings were to provide a forum in which to inform club goers about the aims, objectives and design of forthcoming club surveys; to provide an opportunity for potential respondents to ask questions about the surveys and wider study directly of the researchers *before* the fieldwork took place, from a vantage point of anonymity and sobriety; to address concerns about confidentiality and reassure potential respondents about the bona fide nature of the study; to facilitate broader discussion about illicit drugs between the researchers and internet users, and to disseminate findings promptly and appropriately to user groups with varying degrees of knowledge about illicit drugs. We cannot be certain of the impact of these advance postings and discussions of the club surveys on websites. However, it is worth noting that many customers approached us upon entry into the club, convinced of the bona fide nature of our study and willing to participate. Also worth noting is that the four clubs where postings and discussion occurred had refusal rates ranging between zero and seven (mean 4.3) whereas the one club without any advance notice or discussion on the website (drum and bass club #1) had 17 refusals. Thus virtual methodologies *may* provide opportunities to improve ethical

and methodological procedures when conducting in situ NTE fieldwork by facilitating a dialogue between researchers and potential participants beforehand, and at a time when they are likely to be (relatively) sober, improving not only response rates for this challenging-to-reach yet often cyberliterate group of young adults, but allowing more detailed discussion of the project than possible in many licensed premises, and therefore a more resonant 'informed consent'.

In order to address the relationship between illicit drug use, entertainment type and venue type, the study included sweep surveys of customers in 2005–8 at city centre venues that were chosen for their contrasting genres of dance music. Five monthly club nights of similar size, location and appeal to each other were chosen within a limited geographical area in Manchester city centre. Surveys were conducted for each of the four main EDM genres, where the dance nights could be characterized as playing predominantly *trance*, *drum and bass*, *funky house* and *hard dance* music. Permission was sought from both venue management and club promoters for each event in advance. The original research was designed so the four genre surveys occurred at dance events all held within a single licensed venue in order to reduce venue influences and isolate the relationship between customer drug profiles and entertainment on offer.⁹ As noted above, however, there is no agreed typology of clubs or categorization of dance music genres and hence the insider knowledge by the authors of EDM genres, dance clubs and the city itself—as longterm Manchester residents and regular club goers—was utilized in order to satisfactorily categorize them, although it is recognized that these categorizations are open to contestation related to the unavoidable partiality of insider knowledge (Hodkinson, 2005).

The drug profiles of club customers were collected—lifetime, past month and on the fieldwork night—and compared with the drug profiles of customers interviewed at the entrance to bars in 'drinking destination' bar clusters in the same city centre as part of the summer 2004 'binge' drinking study (see Measham and Brain, 2005 for further discussion of the three drinking destinations)¹⁰ to compare drug profiles between venue types, as well as entertainment types, in the same city.

The bar surveys involved a team of four to six researchers (at least two females each evening) who conducted a short interview with people entering and leaving bar premises in three main clusters of licensed leisure venues in Manchester city centre in the summer of 2004. The club surveys involved four researchers (two female, two male) conducting a similar short questionnaire with club customers after having entered premises in the period from November 2005 to May 2008 (avoiding December/January as the atypical holiday and post-holiday season). All bar and club surveys were conducted on Friday and Saturday evenings. Researchers were instructed to stop all customers during the allotted time period with no socio-demographic quotas or sampling imposed.

Results

Tables 1–5 present self reported prevalence of illicit drug use—for lifetime, past month and fieldwork night—for the eight surveys conducted at five dance clubs and three drinking locations.

(1) Comparisons between drug profiles of bar and club customers within the night time economy

Experimentation with illicit drugs is very high among customers across the NTE in 21st century Britain, with almost all club customers and over two-thirds of bar customers in this study reporting having tried a drug at least once (Table 1), and eight in 10 club customers and over a third of bar customers reporting having had a drug within the last month (Table 2). Lifetime and past month drug use was higher among club customers than both in the general population and among bar customers, however, with club customers statistically significantly more likely to report lifetime and past month drug use (98%, 79%, respectively) than bar customers (69%, 35%, respectively),¹¹ while 42% of club customers had already had drugs when interviewed on the fieldwork night and 49% planned to take drugs later that evening, compared with 10% of bar customers already having had drugs and 13% planning to take drugs later (Tables 3 and 4). Table 5 combines Tables 3 and 4, containing all respondents who either had already consumed or planned to consume drugs on the fieldwork night. In total, one in five bar customers and nearly two in three club customers either had taken, or anticipated taking, illicit drugs on the fieldwork night. This confirms the findings of the British Crime Survey that young people active in the NTE in both bars and clubs are much more drug experienced than the general population of a similar age, in terms of both experimentation and current usage, with 45% of 16–24 year olds in the general population reporting lifetime prevalence of drug use and 15% reporting past month drug use in 2005/6 (Roe and Man, 2006: 53–5).

Concern has been voiced about the increased popularity of cocaine across all age groups (Chivite-Matthews et al., 2005: 19–20), particularly regarding possible increased toxicity when consumed in conjunction with alcohol (Pennings et al., 2002), and its relationship to violence in the NTE, with a significant minority of those arrested for violent offences in Manchester testing positive for cocaine (Daly, 2009). From our survey results it is apparent that cocaine use is widespread across the NTE but, perhaps surprisingly, that club customers are significantly more likely to report lifetime and current cocaine use than bar customers (83% compared with 36% lifetime use, 51% compared with 13% past month use, 22% compared with 5% use/planned use on the fieldwork night, for clubs and bars respectively).

Table 1. Self reported lifetime prevalence of illicit drug use by bar customers^a and club customers^b % (n)^c

Drug use	N	Any drug	Cannabis	Cocaine	Ecstasy pills	MDMA powder	Speed	Mushrooms	Ketamine	LSD	Heroin	GHB	Crack
<i>Fieldwork</i>													
<i>Venue</i>													
Canal St	(136)	80.9	75.0	40.4	46.3	0.7	42.6	24.3	10.3	21.3	5.1	8.8	6.6
Deansgate	(137)	61.3	56.9	36.5	35.8	0.0	21.9	14.6	1.5	10.9	0.7	0.7	3.6
Printworks	(77)	59.7	57.1	28.6	19.5	0.0	20.8	14.3	11.7	20.8	1.3	9.1	1.3
Bar total n	(350)	240	224	127	127	1	104	64	25	60	9	20	15
Bar total %		68.6	64.0	36.3	36.3	0.3	29.7	18.3	7.1	17.1	2.6	5.7	4.3
Trance	(76)	98.7	96.1	85.5	86.8	n/a	75.0	61.8	52.6	46.1	9.2	15.8	7.9
DB #1	(78)	97.4	96.2	85.9	82.1	52.6	56.4	60.3	28.2	46.2	7.7	7.7	9.0
DB #2	(70)	95.7	95.7	77.1	80.0	44.3	54.3	35.7	28.6	32.9	0.0	4.3	5.7
Funky House	(50)	98.0	84.0	80.0	84.0	48.0	70.0	54.0	48.0	44.0	2.0	34.0	16.0
Hard Dance	(49)	98.0	89.8	87.8	93.9	65.3	85.7	57.1	73.5	51.0	6.1	46.9	14.3
Club total n	(323)	315	301	269	274	128	216	174	142	141	17	61	32
Club total %		97.5	93.2	83.3	84.8	39.6	66.9	53.9	44.0	43.7	5.3	18.9	9.9

^a The drug use profiles of those attending three high density clusters of bars in Manchester city centre were collected in summer 2004 (see Measham and Brain, 2005). The three fieldwork locations were Deansgate Locks, the Printworks and Canal Street (total n = 350).

^b The drug use profiles of those attending clubs in Manchester city centre were collected in 2005-08 (total n = 323). Sample size in the trance club was n = 76 (51 males, 67%; 25 females, 33%; 4 refusals). Sample size in the first drum and bass club was n = 78 (64 males, 82%; 14 females, 18%; 17 refusals) and in the second drum and bass club was n = 70 (44 males, 63%; 26 females, 37%; 7 refusals). Sample size in the funky house club was n = 50 (36 males, 72%; 14 females, 28%; 6 refusals). Sample size in the hard dance club was n = 49 (35 males, 71%; 14 females, 29%; 0 refusals). The trance club was surveyed in November 2005, the first drum and bass club was surveyed in February 2006, the second drum and bass club was surveyed in October 2007, the funky house club was surveyed in April 2006 and the hard dance club in March 2008. All club nights officially opened their doors at 10pm, in practice somewhere between 10 and 10.30pm. The drum and bass events ended at 3am, the trance and hard dance events ended at 3:30am, whilst the funky house event ended at 5:30am. All club surveys were undertaken between their doors opening and 12:30am except at the funky house night where the survey was conducted between 12:30am and 1:45am at the request of the club promoter.

^c All percentages given in tables are calculated from total sample, including system missing.

Table 2. Self reported past month prevalence of illicit drug use by bar customers and club customers % (*n*)

Drug use	N	Any drug	Cannabis	Cocaine	Ecstasy pills	MDMA powder ^a	Speed	Mushrooms	Ketamine	LSD	Heroin	GHB	Crack
<i>Fieldwork</i>													
<i>Venue</i>													
Canal St	(136)	45.6	33.8	14.7	16.9	0.7	12.5	0.7	5.9	0.0	1.5	4.4	0.7
Deansgate	(137)	30.7	24.1	13.1	7.3	0.0	1.5	2.2	0.0	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.7
Printworks	(77)	26.0	23.4	7.8	7.8	0.0	1.3	3.9	2.6	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0
Bar total <i>n</i>	(350)	124	97	44	39	1	20	7	10	1	3	7	2
Bar total %		35.4	27.7	12.6	11.1	0.3	5.7	2.0	2.9	0.3	0.9	2.0	0.6
Trance	(76)	82.9	61.8	50.0	60.5	n/a	27.6	9.2	23.7	3.9	1.3	0.0	1.3
DB #1	(78)	82.1	64.1	41.0	52.6	10.3	6.4	5.1	6.4	1.3	1.3	0.0	0.0
DB #2	(70)	75.7	60.0	51.4	34.3	27.1	2.9	2.9	5.7	1.4	0.0	0.0	1.4
Funky House	(50)	70.0	46.0	50.0	56.0	14.0	20.0	4.0	22.0	4.0	0.0	8.0	0.0
Hard Dance	(49)	83.7	53.1	67.3	71.4	26.5	28.6	6.1	40.8	8.2	2.0	14.3	2.0
Club total <i>n</i>	(323)	256	188	164	174	47	52	18	58	11	3	11	3
Club total %		79.3	58.2	50.8	53.9	14.6	16.1	5.6	18.0	3.4	0.9	3.4	0.9

^a Regarding MDMA powder/crystal, bar surveys included a section for respondent-nominated 'other drugs' – only one respondent reported use of MDMA powder in the bar surveys, a past month user.

Table 3. Bar customers' and club customers' self reporting having already taken illicit drugs on fieldwork day % (*n*)

<i>Drug use</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Any drug</i>	<i>Cannabis</i>	<i>Cocaine</i>	<i>Ecstasy pills</i>	<i>MDMA powder</i>	<i>Speed</i>	<i>Mushrooms</i>	<i>Ketamine</i>	<i>LSD</i>	<i>Heroin</i>	<i>GHB</i>	<i>Crack</i>
<i>Fieldwork</i>													
<i>Venue</i>													
Canal St	(136)	15.4	11.0	2.9	0.7	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.7
Deansgate	(137)	7.3	4.4	3.6	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.7
Printworks	(77)	6.5	3.9	1.3	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bar total <i>n</i>	(350)	36	24	10	4	0	3	1	0	0	2	0	2
Bar total %		10.3	6.9	2.9	1.1	0.0	0.9	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.6
Trance	(76)	32.9	18.4	10.5	18.4	n/a	5.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0	1.3
DB #1	(78)	35.9	30.8	10.3	9.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
DB #2	(70)	45.7	34.3	14.3	10.0	7.1	0.0	1.4	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Funky House	(50)	44.0	22.0	20.0	30.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hard Dance	(49)	57.1	20.4	24.5	40.8	14.3	8.2	0.0	14.3	0.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Club total <i>n</i>	(323)	135	83	48	63	14	13	1	9	0	2	1	2
Club total %		41.8	25.7	11.8	19.5	4.3	4.0	0.3	2.8	0.0	0.6	0.3	0.6

Table 4. Bar customers' and club customers' self reported planned illicit drug use later in fieldwork evening % (*n*)

<i>Drug use</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Any drug</i>	<i>Cannabis</i>	<i>Cocaine</i>	<i>Ecstasy pills</i>	<i>MDMA powder</i>	<i>Speed</i>	<i>Mushrooms</i>	<i>Ketamine</i>	<i>LSD</i>	<i>Heroin</i>	<i>GHB</i>	<i>Crack</i>
<i>Fieldwork Venue</i>													
Canal St	(136)	17.8	8.8	3.7	9.6	0.0	2.2	0.7	2.2	0.7	0.7	1.5	0.7
Deansgate	(137)	10.0	6.6	4.4	3.6	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Printworks	(77)	7.8	5.2	1.3	1.3	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0	1.3
Bar total <i>n</i>	(350)	45	25	12	19	0	5	1	3	1	2	2	2
Bar total %		12.9	7.1	3.4	5.4	0.0	1.4	0.3	0.9	0.3	0.6	0.6	0.6
Trance	(76)	52.6	32.9	14.5	35.5	n/a	10.5	0.0	13.2	0.0	1.3	0.0	1.3
DB #1	(78)	50.0	33.3	7.7	35.9	1.3	1.3	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
DB #2	(70)	52.9	40.0	20.0	18.6	11.4	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Funky House	(50)	38.0	24.0	16.0	30.0	0.0	2.0	0.0	14.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hard Dance	(49)	46.9	20.4	14.3	28.6	6.1	10.2	2.0	24.5	2.0	0.0	4.1	0.0
Club total <i>n</i>	(323)	158	101	46	97	12	15	1	32	1	1	2	1
Club total %		48.9	31.3	14.2	30.0	3.7	4.6	0.3	9.9	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.3

Table 5. Self reported drug use on fieldwork day^a at bar venues and club venues % (n)

Drug use	N	Ary drug	Cannabis	Cocaine	Ecstasy pills	MDMA powder	Speed	Mushrooms	Ketamine	LSD	Heroin	GHB	Crack
<i>Fieldwork</i>													
<i>Venue</i>													
Canal St	(136)	23.5	14.7	5.9	9.6	0.0	3.7	0.7	2.2	0.7	0.7	1.5	1.5
Deansgate	(137)	13.9	8.0	6.6	3.6	0.0	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7
Printworks	(77)	10.4	7.8	2.6	2.6	0.0	5.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0	1.3
Bar total n	(350)	59	37	19	20	0	7	2	3	1	2	2	3
Bar total %		19.9	10.6	5.4	5.7	0.0	2.0	0.6	0.9	0.3	0.6	0.6	0.9
Trance	(76)	61.8	35.5	17.1	44.7	0.0	15.8	0.0	13.2	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0
DB #1	(78)	59.0	42.3	12.8	38.5	3.8	1.3	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
DB #2	(70)	62.9	50.0	25.7	22.9	12.9	0.0	1.4	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Funky House	(50)	60.0	36.0	28.0	50.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	16.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hard Dance	(49)	71.4	34.7	32.7	59.2	18.4	16.3	2.0	26.5	2.0	2.0	6.1	2.0
Club total n	(323)	202	130	71	134	21	26	2	35	1	2	3	1
Club total %		62.5	40.2	22.0	41.5	6.5	8.0	0.6	10.8	0.3	0.6	0.9	0.3

^a Table 5 combines Tables 3 and 4: ‘fieldwork day’ includes both those who reported having *already taken* drugs during the fieldwork day and those who reported *planning* to take drugs later during the fieldwork evenings.

While self reported drug use ('any drug' and Class A) has declined slightly both in the general adult population and among 16–24 year olds during the fieldwork period 2004–8 (Kershaw et al., 2008: 53–54), this study illustrates both the dynamic nature of contemporary weekend 'recreational' polydrug repertoires and the enduring relationship between club cultures and ecstasy. Lifetime use of ecstasy pills was 85% and 36% for club and bar customers respectively, with past month use of ecstasy pills at 54% and 11%, and use/planned use on the fieldwork night 42% and 6% for club and bar customers respectively. The highest lifetime, past month and fieldwork night ecstasy pill consumption among bar customers was reported at Canal Street in the gay Village, where some respondents also planned to visit a dance club later. Lifetime, recent and current consumption of ecstasy pills was much lower for the two drinking 'destinations', with customers at the Printworks leisure complex having the lowest levels of illicit drug use of all eight surveys.

The fieldwork period also charts the increased 'recreational' use of MDMA powder/crystal and ketamine in the 2000s NTE. MDMA powder was added to the four club surveys from 2006 onwards as the use of MDMA powder became increasingly apparent during the fieldwork period (Measham, 2004b; Smith et al., 2009). For example, by the last (hard dance) club survey, 18% of respondents either had taken or planned to take MDMA powder on the fieldwork night. Club customers also reported a significantly higher prevalence of lifetime, past month and fieldwork night ketamine use (44%, 18% and 11% respectively) than bar customers (7% lifetime, 3% and 1% respectively).

Ketamine remains less popular than ecstasy overall, however, suggesting that ketamine has not *displaced* ecstasy as the club drug of choice as suggested by some commentators (e.g. The Guardian, 2005; see also Drugscope, 2005) but instead has been *added* to the weekend polydrug repertoires of about one in 10 club goers. While ecstasy pills are taken both before entering clubs (19% reported having already taken pills) and also planned for later in the evening (30%), a higher proportion prefer to take ketamine later in the evening, with only 3% already having taken ketamine compared with one in 10 planning to take it later. A sub sample of club respondents who were interviewed in-depth confirmed this preference to take ketamine at 'chill out' after parties rather than inside clubs (Moore and Measham, 2008).

(2) Club comparisons—the relationship between illicit drug use and electronic dance music

While these eight surveys suggest that experimentation across the NTE is generally high, illicit drug use remains especially high among 21st century English club goers, with almost all club respondents (98%) having tried a drug at least once. Lifetime use of cannabis (93%), ecstasy pills (85%) and cocaine (83%) was similar across the five clubs with at least eight in 10 customers at all five clubs having tried cannabis and ecstasy pills and over three-quarters having tried cocaine (Table 1). Lifetime usage of drugs such as

amphetamines ('speed'), ketamine, psilocin ('magic mushrooms'), LSD and GHB was more varied, with customers at the hard dance, trance and funky house clubs generally having higher lifetime prevalence of self reported use of these drugs than customers at the two drum and bass clubs. The hard dance customers had the most prolific drug use with lifetime prevalence of 86% for speed, 74% for ketamine, 57% for mushrooms, 51% for LSD and 47% for GHB. Less than one in six club customers had tried crack and less than one in 10 had tried heroin in any of the five club surveys, suggesting that their use remains distinct from the 'recreational' use of 'club drugs'.

Past month use of any drug (Table 2) was highest among hard dance customers (84%) and lowest among funky house customers (70%). In general past month use of cocaine, ecstasy, speed, mushrooms, ketamine, LSD and GHB was highest among hard dance customers, then the funky house and trance nights, whereas past month cannabis and MDMA powder use was at least as high among drum and bass customers.

In terms of drug use on the day of the fieldwork (Table 3), over four in 10 club customers reported already having had drugs before being interviewed, varying between one third of trance customers to nearly six in 10 hard dance customers. Pre-club cannabis use was highest among drum and bass customers (34% and 31%). Pre-club cocaine use was highest among hard dance and funky house customers (25% and 20%) and lowest among drum and bass customers (10%), with a similar pattern occurring for ecstasy pills. Pre-club ketamine use was significant among hard dance customers (14%) but negligible among others. In terms of planned drug use later that evening (Table 4), nearly half of club customers anticipated taking drugs at some point later that evening. For three in 10, they envisaged having cannabis and ecstasy pills, again with higher planned cannabis use among drum and bass customers.

Table 5 (combining Tables 3 and 4) shows overall drug use on the fieldwork night, both planned and already consumed. The biggest distinctions in drug use on the fieldwork night were between the two drum and bass clubs, and the three other genres—trance, funky house and hard dance. For example, only 3% of drum and bass customers reported using ketamine on the fieldwork night compared with 27% of hard dance customers. Despite such high self reported consumption of 'club drugs' such as ecstasy, cocaine and relatedly cannabis, use of psychedelics, heroin and crack was negligible by customers at all clubs on the fieldwork night, suggesting that discerning if prolific polydrug repertoires exist among club goers across the NTE.

In summary, there is generally higher self reported drug use on the fieldwork night, both planned and already consumed, among hard dance, trance and funky house customers in comparison with drum and bass customers. The exception to this was higher cannabis use among drum and bass customers. This supports international research on differences in drug use between EDM clubs, with higher cannabis use but lower ecstasy, amphetamine and ketamine use at Hungarian drum and bass clubs compared with trance, techno and house clubs (Demetrovics, 2009). Furthermore, despite being

conducted over 18 months apart and in different venues, the drug profiles of customers at the two drum and bass clubs were closer to each other than to the trance and funky house customers' drug profiles surveyed within the same premises, suggesting distinct groups of club goers attend the different EDM genre events hosted within an individual venue. Notably, however, drug use remains exceptionally high across a range of EDM events, calling into question notions of the 'death of dance' and the decline of 'recreational' drug use in 21st century Britain. Indeed, *higher* levels of use of ecstasy pills and particularly cocaine (although lower use of speed and LSD) were reported on the fieldwork night in Manchester dance clubs in 2005–8 than in similar surveys conducted in Manchester dance clubs in 1998 during the so-called 'decade of dance' (Measham et al., 2001: 107).

Discussion

Four conclusions may be drawn from this study's data and related to contemporary empirical work on, and theorization of, the NTE: regarding drug use across the NTE; diversity within EDM scenes; pre-loading; and the wider context of regulation and policing. Firstly, regarding overall prevalence rates, this study provides evidence for enduring, prolific but distinct weekend 'recreational' use of illicit drugs by young adults out and about in a range of different venues across the English NTE, along with evidence of a complex relationship between such drug use, drinking, venue type and entertainment on offer, a complexity which both NTE research and club studies have tended to obscure. Significant differences in the polydrug profiles of customers in diverse urban playspaces were apparent, with those at drinking destinations significantly less likely to be lifetime, past month and current drug users than those at EDM-focused venues. This difference was greatest for the two 'drinking destination' bar clusters—Printworks and Deansgate Locks—and less so for those drinking in the late opening (gay and mixed) dance bars and pre-club feeder bars in Manchester's gay Village. The disparity in lifetime prevalence rates and diversity of weekend polydrug repertoires lends support to the notion that the NTE comprises of socio-demographic groups operating within culturally, spatially and pharmacologically distinct local leisure 'scenes' who are committed to their cultural groupings in the NTE and beyond; rather than the same broad mass of customers choosing different leisure experiences on different occasions, or a more fluid, free flowing or 'neo-tribal' conceptualization of young people's leisure time practices. However, while 'young people form their identities through consumption' and 'purchase their identities in the market place' (Measham and Brain, 2005: 276–277), they also operate under the material, cultural and symbolic constraints of contemporary consumer society. Such segmentation and differentiation within the NTE supports Chatterton and Hollands' typology of residual, mainstream and alternative nightlife spaces,

combined with broader changes in the production and regulation of the NTE.

Secondly, this study highlights the relationship between diverse yet distinct patterns of drug use and consumption of different entertainment types. Significant differences were found in the weekend polydrug repertoires reported by customers attending clubs playing different EDM genres within the umbrella term 'dance'—even at the same premises in the same city on different nights—with diversity apparent in terms of associated stylistic and cultural practices (Ferrell, 2004). Although based in a single city, we have no reason to believe that these findings would not be replicated elsewhere in the UK, suggesting that binary conceptualizations of EDM genres, alongside dichotomous understandings of a 'commercial/mainstream' and an 'alternative/underground' may miss the nuances of the NTE. With one in 20 bar customers consuming ecstasy and cocaine when 'out on the town' and one in 10 having cannabis, and almost all club customers drinking alongside their prolific polydrug use, we would suggest the need for greater complexity in typologies of the NTE which go beyond the dichotomous construction of a 'mainstream' involving simply drinking, and an 'underground' involving simply ecstasy use, with destination drinking bars feeding national chain night clubs and club feeder bars featuring both more diverse and more prolific polydrug scenes, alongside the incorporation of underground aesthetics into mainstream corporate leisure and the commercialization of specialist cultural forms. Furthermore, if, as the findings presented here suggest, drug use among club goers remains as high during the noughties as it was during the nineties, and yet, as the BCS figures suggest (Kershaw et al., 2008: 53–4), drug use in the general population has declined slightly since 2004, we may see a polarization of young people's drug use in a similar way to the suggested polarization of young people's drinking (Measham, 2008), with increasing numbers of abstainers, light and occasional users, alongside a consolidation of these prolific weekend polydrug repertoires within distinct scenes, with associated implications for targeted health promotion and harm reduction.

Thirdly, this study has highlighted the practice of pre-loading with illicit drugs as well as alcohol before entrance to urban playspaces. Exploring these patterns of pre-loading both helps to identify levels of respondent intoxication during the research process, but also, more importantly, identifies patterns of drug use across time and space, alongside associated health and social issues. With *higher* levels of self reported use of ecstasy and cocaine in this study than in similar surveys conducted during Manchester's 'decade of dance' 10 years earlier, yet experiencing a reduction in the funding and availability of drug services available to them (Hunt and Stevens, 2004, Smith et al., 2009), 'recreational' drug users face a vacuum in service provision precisely because they are not considered a major threat to wider society. Yet as Hughes et al. (2007) identified, those NTE customers who pre-loaded with alcohol were also more likely to be involved in alcohol-related violence, disorder and other problems, with similar concerns raised

regarding the association between cocaine and violent crime in the NTE (Daly, 2009). However, recent research comparing samples of young people consuming club drugs with those predominantly drinking alcohol suggests that British club drug users, and in particular ecstasy users, are less likely to be involved in violent crime in the NTE both at home (Forsyth, 2009) and on holiday (Hughes et al., 2009) than their drinking peers.

Finally, the dynamic nature of these weekend polydrug repertoires, evident in the changing trends and emergent drugs within the course of the fieldwork period, has implications in terms of the wider regulatory framework of prohibition. It is worth highlighting that in relation to the two surveys of drum and bass clubs, the surveys were conducted 18 months apart and in different venues yet had many of the same customers (evident in the online club website discussions), suggesting these surveys captured an apparent increase in availability and use of (higher priced) MDMA powder, coupled with a slight reduction in use of (lower priced) ecstasy pills in the north west of England during 2006–8, raising questions about the perceived relationship between price, purity and popularity in the illegal drug market. Beyond this particular trend, the extended fieldwork period in this study suggests that longitudinal research, alongside localized, partial insider and micro level studies, can play a valuable role in exploring trends in weekend polydrug repertoires, their relationship to scenes within the differentiated NTE and the impact of legislative change in terms of deterrence, displacement and desistance from drug use.¹² Alongside other, more longstanding, popular illicit drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, cocaine and amphetamines, this study suggests that recently criminalized substances such as ketamine and GHB increasingly appeared in the weekend polydrug repertoires of some young people during the mid to late 2000s. The implication of this is that while growing evidence suggests that drug taking club goers are less likely to be involved in violent crime, aggression and anti-social behaviour within the NTE than some other groups, they are increasingly vulnerable to the active policing of prohibition. Recent law enforcement activities aimed at clubbers attest to this vulnerability.¹³ Thus the UK government's prohibition programme continues to expand, tracking the expanding polydrug repertoires of customers across the NTE, with the resultant 'criminalization of intoxication' (Measham and Moore, 2008) shaping the production and consumption of the contemporary NTE, producing ongoing conflicts and tensions in relation to the differential governance and regulation of local leisure scenes.

Notes

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- 1 See Measham et al. 2001 for discussion of the relationship between socio-economic class, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and 1990s British dance culture and dance drug use.
- 2 These 'scenes' are often located in marginal 'residual' urban NTE spaces rather than in the centre of regenerated cities, although for some of the more commercially successful dubstep and bassline brands this is changing.
- 3 In terms of 'recreational' drug use and 'scenes', D. Moore (2004) highlighted both a notable diversity and a lack of subcultural coherence within certain social groups of drug users who nevertheless interact in a shared, sustained and systematic social and stylistic 'scene'. Moore suggests that scenes are 'cultural, social, temporal and spatial zones in which diverse people interact and contest the meanings of their actions. "Scene" tries to encapsulate the cultural diversity, fluidity and heterogeneity of social entities' (2004: 201). Less rigid than the concept of subcultures, yet recognizing enduring socio-economic, cultural and ethnic divisions more fully than 'neo-tribes', the notion of social scenes takes account of the existence of 'specific groups pursuing specific practices, but within broader pathways of practice and cultural contestation' (2004: 202–3; for further discussion of scenes see also Anderson, 2009; Hadfield, 2008; Hodgkinson, 2002, 2005; Irwin, 1977).
- 4 See <http://www.thewarehouseproject.com/>
- 5 Figures for 2003/4 show that among respondents aged 16–29, those who had been to a nightclub at least once in the last month were twice as likely to have taken illicit drugs in the past year as those who had not been to a nightclub in the last month (34% compared with 18.5%, Chivite-Matthews et al., 2005: 51). Respondents aged 30–59 who had been to a nightclub at least once in the last month were three times more likely to have taken drugs in the last year as those who had not been to a nightclub in the last month (16.5% and 5.8% respectively, Chivite-Matthews et al., 2005: 51). In this context, the 'lifestyle factor' of visiting nightclubs is reframed as a 'risk factor' in relation to the 'misuse' of illicit drugs (Chivite-Matthews et al., 2005: 55; see also Deehan and Saville, 2003).
- 6 Successful completion of questionnaires also becomes more challenging once stimulant drugs start to take effect and the music picks up in pace and volume, with club customers gravitating away from seated areas towards the dance floor.
- 7 Office of Public Sector Information (2006), Licensing Act 2003, 2005, Section 141, Office of Public Sector Information, TSO: London. Available at: <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2003/>
- 8 The authors have noted elsewhere that this insider knowledge has tended to be implicit rather than explicit, mirroring a more general pattern in the field of contemporary drug studies characterized as 'reluctant reflexivity' (Measham and Moore, 2006).

- 9 The venue for the trance, funky house and second drum and bass surveys was a mid-market sized licensed venue holding regular weekly and monthly events for a wide range of EDM events organized by different club promoters. Unfortunately in early 2008 the host venue (at which three surveys had already been conducted) closed down, resulting in all events—including the hard dance night—relocating to other late licensed venues across the city centre and therefore necessitating that the fifth and final hard dance survey be conducted at the new venue. The first drum and bass club was chosen to provide a comparison between two different premises offering entertainment of the same EDM genre.
- 10 A similar random sample survey of bar customers was conducted by Hughes et al. in 2005 (2007) in Liverpool city centre and provides a point of comparison for the bar surveys discussed here, conducted in Manchester city centre. Hughes and colleagues' random sample of 380 customers in the Liverpool NTE in 2005 was 52% male with an average age of 24 years. Measham and colleagues' random sample of 350 customers in the Manchester NTE in 2004 was 51% male with an average age of 25 years (Measham and Brain, 2005).
- 11 Chi squared tests were used to test independence between drug use and establishment. Statistical significance is reported in this article at the 95% level: i.e. where there is less than 5% chance of observing the data if there were no association between drug use and establishment.
- 12 In recent years various psychoactive drugs have been brought under the control of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, including GHB (2003), fresh psilocin or 'magic mushrooms' (2005), ketamine (2006) and this year the ACMD is advising on the control of GBL, BZPs and synthetic cannabinoid receptor agonists.
- 13 Recent activities have included the use of torches to search nasal cavities for cocaine by police in Blackburn (BBC News, 2009); drug testing of customers before entry to licensed venues by police in Aberdeen (BBC News, 2008); and the sentencing of a club owner and a DJ for allowing the sale and use of illicit drugs on their premises in Plymouth (Mixmag, 2008).

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