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DEINDUSTRIALISATION? - HOW DO EX-INDUSTRIAL
WAREHOUSE UNITS CONTINUE TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT
ROLE IN THE TEMPORARY SPATIAL EMBODIMENT OF
DANCE MUSIC CULTURE AND INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY?

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Declaration

'I certify that this is my own original work (unless otherwise specified) and does not exceed 10,000 words (excluding tables, references and appendices)'

Signed.....Rowan Ashcroft Barnes| 02/01/2020

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Abstract

UK dance music culture is not a new phenomena, having been studied since the prevalent rise of the illegal rave scene during the 1990's, however it is one which has developed over time to form its own cultural practices and subsequent contemporary subcultures within those, as different dance music genres breaking away to produce their own individual scenes. This study aims to deconstruct the sensory experience of warehouse raves as a performed cultural practise of dance music culture. This will be explored through the recollections of focus group participants prompted by photo elicitation, alongside a detailed epistolary interview with a warehouse events manager. The intricacies of traversing warehouses as socialized spaces and other privileged cultural discourses will be dissected, exploring ideas regarding performed identity and spatial attachment in the context of raving as a youth subculture in Cardiff.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Context

UK dance music culture is not a new phenomena, having been studied since the prevalent rise of the illegal rave scene during the 1990's. Nevertheless with regards to modern day raving, the subject has all but been abandoned; disciplinary intrigue into 'ecstasy culture' and 'acid raves' fizzled out as new areas of interest such as space and sexuality began to take centre stage on the human geographers agenda. Regardless of academic interest, the popularity of raving and dance music culture continued to grow until the unprecedented outbreak of COVID19. Now, for the first time since Thatcher's Criminal Justice Act (1994), the entire scene has been prohibited; meanwhile the renegade nature of events which continue regardless present interesting parallels to the illegal rave scene of the past. This period, i feel, is an opportune moment to reflect and to explore the integral values at the core of modern day rave culture.

I have chosen to draw particular attention to ex-industrial warehouse venues as I feel they hold both spatial and social significance. I aim to unpack whether there is a connection between raving identity and warehouse spaces, using sensual recollection to produce a detailed Cardiff case study exploring the experiences of dance event attendees. Are the venues used inextricably linked with the character of individuals or are they a mere vessel to allow for desired social interaction to occur? What significance does the dynamic of the industrial warehouse venue hold in the reproduction of cultural capital, and how instrumental will this role be in the future given the current pandemic circumstances?

1.2. Aims of the project

The aim of this paper is to analyse the connection between the young people involved within the electronic dance music scene (ravers) and the spaces used to re-enact their subcultural identity. Through a social constructivist epistemology i will draw upon ravers recollections of emotional and sensual experience at live dance music events to establish how much impact the character of the venue has upon experience. Due to COVID19 restricting autoethnographic methodologies within the field, I have deployed a range of innovative research techniques in order to encourage detailed sensual recollection, including temporal mapping and photo analysis within discussion (see methodology for more detail). I have chosen to not focus explicitly on the current use of warehouses for illegal raves, although I have acknowledged it's cultural significance; I will instead focus upon exploring the role of warehouses as licensed venues pre-pandemic and the sense of place they produced for participants.

My chosen sub-questions are as follows:

1. **To what extent do young people attending Electronic Dance music events feel the attendance of warehouse spaces contributes to their identity as 'raver'?**
2. **Does the spatial dynamic of a warehouse result in a unique sensual and emotional experience or does the venue in question hold little significance?**

3. To what extent does the abundance of space within warehouses represent an opportunity for industry growth in the wake of the Coronavirus Pandemic?

1.3. Structure of the research project

This research project will consist of 4 key sections, broken down into the following categories: Chapter 1 represents a brief disciplinary background introduction, further explored in Chapter 2 through detailed analysis of literature from both geographical and sociological fields. Chapter 3 lays out methodological details and justification of methods, alongside ethical implications and consideration of researcher positionality. Chapter 4 presents research findings broken down according to research question, merging the results of focus groups, interviews and secondary journalistic articles. Chapter 5 concludes by providing a summary in relation to research aims in addition to suggested further research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Subcultural theory

Identity within UK youth culture has long been a popular topic of discussion, from the fashion and identity orientated youth subcultural theory which became of significant disciplinary interest to human geographers between the early 1970's and late 1990s, to the progression towards post-subcultural theory during the turn of the century as academics began to focus more explicitly upon music sounds and 'scenes'. The distinctive relationship between music and its devoted followers has become somewhat a research phenomena, traversing the social sciences and humanities to produce a rich interdisciplinary field with a range of theoretical interventions and empirical studies (Osgerby 2014), branching out further still to produce its own methodological practises of musicology and ethnomusicology.

Sociological research into British dance music culture and its characteristics has previously predominantly focused upon the various sub groups and structures of cultural movements as a part of the fabric of human society as a whole. Work within this field is known as subcultural theory, which first emerged as a result of research by theorists at the Birmingham Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (Connell and Hilton 2015). Spectacular subcultural theory provided an academic interpretation of how and why individuals choose to behave according to the norms and values of groups which have chosen to differentiate themselves from society, often set against a backdrop of class based struggles. Subcultural theory may be seen to provide the foundations which allow human geographers to delve deeper into the connection between both groups and individuals with specific spaces of dance music reenactment; sociology providing an explanation for the formation of subcultures and popular groups, whilst it is up to human geographers to add a spatial dynamic, connecting individuals, soundscapes and sense of place to produce the bigger picture. For example Roy Shuker's 'Understanding popular music culture' (2001) takes an ethnomusicological approach which draws upon the work of music scholars, sociologists, and popular music press to produce a critical analysis of how popular music has been studied in the past, including its consumption and contribution to identity formation. By drawing upon the instrumental work of sociologists such as McRobbie (1976, 1989, 1999) and Middleton (1990) Shuker produces a comprehensive human geographical approach to the construction of youth identity through popular music. He theorises that there are 3 key pillars to musical consumption; musical consumption as a form of cultural capital, as a construction of identity and as a source of audience pleasure.

2.2. Rave as a subculture

By contrast, Hesmondhalg (1998) discusses the idea that dance music is less central to the formation of identity than the likes of pop which is very image central, speculating that there is greater focus upon 'the music itself' as opposed to 'the image', with fans having greater regard for the genre and authorship than the performers identity. Dance music within the UK differentiates itself from popular music in more ways than simply the sound produced, with various genres such as drum and bass, house, and techno music procuring their own distinctive subcultural identities and groups of followers.

Contrary to Hesmondhalg, i would argue that the distinctive fashion choices and use of exclusive language and practises amongst ravers are indicative of the heavily identity orientated behaviour of 'neotribes' (Maffesoli 1996), with dress and identity playing a hugely significant role in construction and consumption of dance music events (Jaimangal-Jones et al 2012). Alternative music scenes offer more than listening practise; those participating engage with social practices of consumption, production and interaction which create a sense of community (Kruse 1993) as well as an awareness of privileged cultural discourses and their level of cultural capital (Jaimangal-Jones et al 2012). Indeed, Frith (1988, 107) states that "Ones choice of music represents a 'cultural expression' and ones cultural expression is increasingly significant in defining who one is".

Although rave may play an important part in the construction of individual identity, it extends further than the individual to offer the prospect of unification and integration between individuals; raving can be viewed as an extension of postmodernism (Smith 1994), through its ability to create a community which diverges race, class and gender divides. The importance of popular culture, and in particular popular music, in bringing about unity and creating a common ground has long been recognised (Shuker 2001), whilst sub-cultures, Osgerby (2014) argues, are no different. Hence the consumption of music has a much wider contextualisation within political and empirical grounds through its ability to unite people, particularly in times of unrest (Wilson 2006).

2.3. Exploring 'raver' identity during the pandemic

Shuker describes how the term 'raver' can be used as a label for a member of the collective relatively distinct raving cultural neotribe, meanwhile Vandenberg et al (2020) explores further the idea that the individual becomes a raver when immersed in the collective effervescence of ritualistic live music events. However they go on to question

how this role can be stretched and adapted during the pandemic, investigating the role of musical live streams in producing a similar feeling of collective consciousness which doesn't require physical proximity, perhaps questioning the previously perceived importance of place. Similarly i would like to study how socially distanced raves push the boundaries of traditional live music consumption, and whether this is able to provide a temporary stop gap for the struggling music scene, or perhaps a new status quo, whilst maintaining the integrity of the live music venue. Throughout the course of this paper I will refer to the attendees of dance music events as 'ravers', however I aim to dissect the term and its connotations in more depth throughout the research process by building on individual subjective interpretations to produce a more comprehensive image.

2.4. Dissecting the role of venues as places and spaces for identity construction

I would like to critique Shuker's (2001) theoretical perspective of popular music that states the nature of meaning within cultural productions and practises 'must be located within the dynamic interrelationship of the production context, the texts and their creators and the audience' (2001, 241). In saying so, Shuker idealistically neglects to mention the significance of place and space within the notion of popular music. I agree with Halfacree and Kitchin (1996) and Van Klyton (2015) in saying that to neglect physical spaces of consumption is to discard an important part of the equation within the construction of identity, particularly within youth subcultures (Bennett 1999) and queer communities (Drysdale 2015). "Place, both in the imagination (virtual), and on the ground (material), mediates the production and consumption of popular music" state Halfacree and Kitchin (1996, 47).

Van Klyton (2015) goes on to discuss the role of venues as non passive actors, emphasising their short term significance in the creation of atmosphere, but also the much larger role they play in the conscious (or otherwise) inclusion of certain groups and the creation of a vibrant cultural fabric. In particular, the delicate nature of subcultures and neo-tribes means that the creation of a distinctive physical space is important in allowing for the enactment of routines and forms of behaviour which do not clash with the behaviours of rival imaginative geography (Halfacree and Kitchin 1996). For example, Dysdale (2016) explores the intimate relationship between the queer community in Sydney and the deeply embedded sense of place attached to the venues used to enact their drag identities. Through research which focused on sensory experience, it is found that despite the fact that the experience is temporary and short lived, the way that specific events like these touch people deeply means that places become memorable and meaningful. Hence,

“Contrary to the ephemerality that is thought to characterize minority cultures, I (Drysdale) argue that forms of social engagement based on the tactility of their encounters inscribe spaces of the scene.’ (Drysdale 2016 pp. 206).

Indeed, the idea of the venue as providing a stage or setting to allow for the performance of identity to occur is often discussed; ‘Each setting or stage also has its own values, codes and identity performance parameters influenced by the actors (clubbers) present, the directors (promoters, owners, site masters) responsible for the selection and construction of the stage (including the recruitment of actors) and the various media and stakeholders which are central to the construction of wider discourses within dance culture” (Jaimangal Jones, Pritchard and Morgan 2012 pp. 606). Although i am able to appreciate the performance metaphor in its ability to deconstruct the various roles traversed and layers constructed, i feel that in summarising a dance music event as a polished performance there is neglect for authentic and unexpected interactions; for surely what makes an experience truly unique is the element of the unknown? I prefer Butler’s (1999) summation that music offers associations of place that serve to cross boundaries and create multiple and overlapping spaces; which are brought to life through performances. Hence the performance represents the catalyst and not the main event.

Furthermore the comparison of the venue to a stage implies it may present opportunity as a platform but is perhaps resemblant of an empty shell, lacking in its own sense of meaning. This feels more in line with a perspective of commodification, suggesting the venues themselves are insignificant components which allow for the transactional relationship between artist and audience (Hesmondhalg and Pratt 2005).

On the contrary, i agree with Drysdale in saying that ‘venues, too, are mediators or material actants that modify the practices and encounters they enable in specific ways’ (2016, 209). The place itself is not only shaped by the people who use it, but also shapes the experiences of people in return, in a symbiotic relationship between spaces and participants. Hence the need for this study came about; i would like to establish whether, from a personal perspective, the participants of dance music events notice the significance of the spaces they use, or whether it is simply the actions and interactions within that space which are of sole importance. Or perhaps, as is also discussed by Drysdale, it is the case that both are true; scene practises turn the sociality of the moment into an attachment to the venue that supports them.

2.5. The significance of warehouses as event spaces

Although Thrift (2006) argues that all spaces are constantly in motion, never remaining static or stabilised, the spatial dynamic of ex-industrial sites are particularly unique, in that they are transient spaces transcending between practical and recreational purposes; the efficient productivity of commercial industry, merging with the hedonistic vibrancy of urban nightlife. The use of transient warehouse spaces aligns perfectly with the characteristic variation of location which often comes hand in hand with rave culture and contrasts with the stable location of the nightclub (Wilson 2006), merging effectively with the anti corporate rhetoric of dance music culture (Hesmondhalg 1998); hence the popularity of warehouse spaces during the rave revolution of the 1990s and continued popularity as a licensed venue in the modern day. The commercial viability of renting large semi-outdoor spaces has been realised and utilised UK wide, with venues such Warehouse project (Manchester), Printworks (London) and Titan Warehouse (Cardiff) offering key cultural and profitable success stories, consistently selling out tickets to events with capacities of over 5000 people.

Running in contrasting parallel is the recent return of illegal warehouse raves receiving widespread coverage and criticism from tabloid media. The past presents us with a turbulent dynamic between musical culture and power, with many predominant subcultures such as Punk emerging as a result of political expression and playing a transgressive role through youth rebellion; Rave, according to Nehring (2007) and Rinke (2015) is no different. Recent illegal raves situated in the industrial suburbs of major UK cities have been branded 'selfish' by newspapers in the wake of coronavirus regulations (Pickstock 2020), and prove that warehouse venues continue to play a significant role in the illicit and illegitimate rave culture that runs parallel to the commercialisation of live music consumption.

On this note I feel it is important to mention that rather than focusing upon the delicate issues of legality and legitimacy of warehouses within the cultural landscape, I have instead chosen to focus upon the role of the senses within individual experience, to produce a comprehensive yet personal understanding of the reenactment of space. Smith (1994) argues from a theological perspective that the geography of soundscape has been disregarded within human geography, as geographers choose instead to focus solely upon the landscape; what is visually experienced as opposed to audibly. Social geography could be enriched through a greater understanding of the implications of sound and the extent to which it plays an important part in the reenactment of space. Smith goes on to argue that we ought to regard each of the senses on a more equal plane when considering ethnographic approach, a view which is reiterated by Said (2006, 1992) who shines light upon the articulatable nature of music and the significance of its connection to human emotion which is (and has long been) deeply intertwined with Western culture.

2.6. Exploration of research methodology

The primary condition for any study revolving around a cultural field is research conducted in proximity to the culture under examination (Lofland 1971), hence an integrated autoethnographic approach to participant observation is the most obvious solution, allowing the researcher an insight into how individuals interact with elements of their exclusive social world and experiences, as well as how these interrelate with one another (Ervin, 2000). For example, within the research of Jaimangal-Jones et al (2014), Bennett (1999), and Ravenscroft and Gilchrist (2009), autoethnographic study plays a crucial role in allowing for an understanding of performed identity and the traversing of roles within a particular setting, which would otherwise be difficult to fully comprehend. Wilson (2006) discusses how the nature of rave culture as an intensely overwhelming cultural phenomenon surely means we are incapable of capturing the entirety of the experience through empirical and theoretical means.

However, given the current climate surrounding the COVID-19 crisis, alternative research methodologies have been considered in order to reduce physical contact, whilst ensuring an equally comprehensive piece of research is achieved. Turning to virtual online ethnographies is the most obvious solution; the internet, Hine (2000, 44) argues, provides the potential to explore the possibility for a 'reconceptualization of ethnographic authenticity that incorporates mediated interaction on its own terms'. The use of email and instant messaging systems proved a successful medium for both Debenham (2007) and Gaiser (2009) in conducting epistolary interviews with individuals who had complex needs, whilst also proving effective and efficient in reducing the need for the lengthy process of transcribing audio interviews. Furthermore the use of conferencing software such as Zoom or Facetime holds great potential to produce virtual synchronous group interviews (O'Connor and Madge 2003) although it requires a well considered level of ethical handling at both the research level and data analysis. I will discuss research methods in greater depth during the methodology section of the paper (pp.16).

2.7. Conclusion

In conclusion, i aim to establish through the sensual recollection of soundscape (Smith 1994) to what extent warehouses used as live music venues play an instrumental role in reinforcing subcultural identities for individuals. Whether, as is the case with queer communities (Drysdale 2015) and World Music venues (Van Klyton 2015), the uniqueness of venues holds meaning and significance for participants, or whether the reality is more in line with Shuker's (2001) theory that place represents a component of the relationship,

but is not a make or break factor. There is currently little to no research into the role of transient multi use spaces as music venues and how this affects the nature of the experience, as well as the logistical ability of these high capacity venues to support the socially distanced events which may play a vital role in ensuring the continuation of cultural scenes in the future, hence my study aims to bridge that gap.

3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction and epidemiological approach

The Coronavirus pandemic and subsequent social distancing measures created a somewhat restricted research climate which meant flexibility and adaptation were key. Nevertheless, I strived for an exploratory epidemiology that investigated how individuals interact with elements of their exclusive social world and experiences, as well as how these interrelate with one another (Ervin, 2000). The resultant study draws heavily from a social constructivist approach, allowing me to explore Smith's (1994) idea of soundscape through focus groups which place emphasis on sensory ethnography. Further qualitative primary research in the form of an epistolary interview, and secondary article analysis provide a firm background of context into the construction of the electronic dance music scene.

3.2. Sampling technique

Voluntary participants were taken from a sampling frame of individuals with a predetermined affinity to raving identity (recruited through a private Facebook page, 'Techno/DnB Ravers Cardiff'). From the original selection of volunteers I used further snowball sampling to involve their peers with similar interests, resulting in a mixed-gender representative sample of 15 people between the ages of 18 and 26. Although selection bias presents an obstacle for any sampling method using virtual networks (Fabiola and Ignasi 2012), the sampling method allowed for the expansion of geographical scope across the city and for the identification of a niche group of hard to reach individuals.

3.3. Focus group research strategy

The main research strategy was based upon Drysdale's (2016) study on tactile places which draws attention to the multi-sensory economy which circulates within scene participation. Similarly, I used an ethnographic approach which considered the active engagement between cultural objects, including the movements and interactions between people, practises and arrangements. The key obstacle here was participant recollection of events which took place over 6 months ago; Maruyama and Ryan (2014, 170) state 'memory failures are more likely for events which are further in the past or more trivial or routine'. Hence the key reason for choosing focus groups was in order to trigger memories through conversation.

I began each Zoom focus group by encouraging participants to physically sketch out a timetable of the night's events from beginning to end. By adding a dimension of temporal

discussion, participants were forced to think past blurry recollection and focus upon the finer details of how interactions unfolded. Although the reliance of my research upon memory was at first observed as a barrier, i was also conscious that it narrows down experiences so that only the stand-out moments remain; unusual interactions and moments of emotional intensity were most likely to protrude in participants long term memory (Marchewka et al 2016) and were the elements i was most interested in.

Furthermore, photo elicitation also acted as a visual cue to memory. Participants attributed different social and personal meanings to a collection of photographs taken of the Cardiff rave scene over the course of the past 3 years by award winning photographer Aiyush Pachnanda, which enhanced the richness of data 'by discovering additional layers of meaning, adding validity and depth, and creating knowledge' (Glaw et al 2017, 3). Bignante (2010) describes how photo elicitation generates insights that do not necessarily or exclusively correspond to purely verbal inquiry; the meanings attributed to photos, the emotions they arouse in the observer and the information they illicit all add another dimension to understanding personal space place relations.

Focus groups were semi-structured (see appendix 3) although organic conversation and interaction between participants was encouraged. I was reliant upon the strong community feeling within rave culture (Wilson 2006, Nehling 2007) to ensure that participants felt they were in a safe space to disclose sensitive information in front of strangers, however participants were also made aware of how to contact me if they had any further comments they didn't wish to disclose publicly. The conversation was voice recorded to allow for a transcript to be produced and analysed through detailed qualitative analysis, highlighting key quotes and producing a comprehensive narrative for each participant.

3.4. Epistolary interview process

I carried out an epistolary interview with the events manager of Frontal Lobe Warehouse in Cardiff, after particular attention was brought to the venue during focus groups. Epistolary interviewing is a form of asynchronous textual communication in which a framework of open ended key questions leads the way for rapport between interviewer and respondent, allowing both time to digest messages and consider what issues might usefully be probed with further questions or answered through explanation (Debenham 2007). By using a messaging app as the primary source of contact there lies the obvious benefit that it removes 'tedious business of accurately transcribing audio recordings of face-to-face interviews' (Debenham 2007, 2) which was particularly important during this section of research, as i was striving for lengthy, in depth responses.

3.5. Ethical issues and researcher positionality

My positionality was in a sense auto-ethnographical, in that I was an academic researcher studying a group/social circumstance that I was already part of (Butz and Bezio 2009), hence I was able to access the private Facebook page that provided me with my chosen sampling frame. It is regretful that I was not able to partake in participant observation at an event in situ to witness and record interactions first hand, however my previous participation in such events provided me with a good basis of understanding which allowed me to relate to the experiences of participants. Furthermore this meant I was more conscious of the ethical issues which required 'sensitivity to the expectations of people from diverse moral communities and acknowledgement of the webs of physical and social relationships within which the work is conducted' (Hay 2016, pp.62). Hence I was able to adapt questions regarding sensitive issues such as substance abuse accordingly, acting with caution and consideration.

I felt it was important to cultivate a very informal and laid back environment for conversation throughout the research process and for myself to maintain a good balance between observation and engagement in order to make people feel comfortable. I strived to ensure my own narratives did not interfere with those of my participants by taking a reflexive stance on my own emplacement within discussions and the wider research process.

In terms of procedural ethics, all research methods have been reviewed by my dissertation supervisor and the Research Ethics Committee. I have ensured participants remain anonymous, are aware of research aims, and agree to the information and statements within the participant information sheet (Appendix 2). Particularly as statements were likely to be personal and may divulge illegal activity, participants were repeatedly made aware of their autonomy to remove themselves at any point should they not feel comfortable.

4. Empirical data analysis - Interpretation and evaluation

4.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to interpret empirical findings using the theoretical perspectives explored during the literature review. By breaking down participant narration and collected interview data into key themes, I aim to produce detailed analysis for each, before bringing findings together within a conclusion that answers my overarching fundamental research question.

4.2. **To what extent do young people attending Electronic Dance Music events feel the attendance of warehouse spaces contributes to their identity as ‘raver’?**

4.2.1. Dress, expression, and differentiation: Exploring ‘raver’ identity as a social construct

I felt it was first important to explore the perceptions of what a raver was, investigating whether or not there existed a stereotype, and to what extent participants felt this aligned with their own values. I was intrigued to find out to what extent my own findings echoed the research of Halfacree and Kitchin (1996) and Jaimangal-Jones et al (2014) into rave culture and its subsequent individual identities; whether opinions had changed with time and as a result of studying a different case study location, or whether feelings were much the same.

Focus group responses could typically be deconstructed into 4 key raver characteristics; either participants felt the raver identity was constructed by the cultural capital gained through events attended, clothes worn, amiability of the individual in question and/or the connection between the individual and use of recreational substances.

The idea that ‘rave seems to be no longer just music but a whole way of life; clothes, attitude, language’ (Halfacree and Kitchin 1996, 53), became increasingly apparent when analysing the views of my participants on identity. In particular, participants reiterated views that clothing is a symbolic tag (Maffesoli 1991) or ‘style-related identity negotiator’ (Wilson 2006, 108). The majority of interviewees, when asked to describe a raver immediately revealed that it conjured images of a fluorescent-clothing-wearing stereotype, complete with indoor sunglasses, baggy trousers and retro sports brands. Attention was also drawn to bold branded trainers as a status symbol; an article of particular importance and intrigue that when worn in everyday

life signalled to others at a hidden raving agenda, and when worn to raves projected trendy intentions and 'insider' cultural awareness. "Everyone looks at each other's shoes, and you always wear your best ones even though you know they'll get trashed", laughed Amy.

On the other hand, interviewees counter argued that despite the existence of a physical stereotype and archetypal 'image', raves were a place where "anything goes" (Lucas) and stylistic preferences are varied; participants agreed it was equally as acceptable to throw on a t-shirt as it was to wear heavy makeup and big brands ("people just wear whatever they are comfortable in, if you want to dress up then that's cool just so long as you can still dance comfortably. That's the main thing" - Jade). The general consensus appeared to be that what makes a person a raver lies not in what they wear, but in a passion for the music and a desire to attend raves for their own sense of enjoyment and not for the gratification of others within their social arena.

A discussion between 2 participants in focus group 3 contested whether or not you could tell from someone's clothing in everyday life whether or not they went to raves, drawing to the forefront of the discussion whether raver identity is overt or covert. Ellie commented "Some people you meet you would never guess that they go to raves in their spare time." perhaps suggesting that identities within youth subcultures have 'pluralistic and shifting sensibilities of style' (Bennett 1999, 601), and are only enacted within certain spaces (Halfacree and Kitchin 1996). Shay countered with "Yeah but if i saw you walking down the street i would definitely say you look like a raver!" "What do you mean?!" "(Laughs) I don't know, just the way you dress and stuff!", explained Shay. This suggests not only that there is a certain style associated with raving as a cultural practise, but that it is the individual's choice whether or not they choose to project this outwardly to others in an everyday context. Furthermore the girls summary of dress and the assumptions it produces, as well as their ability to alter their appearances in order to communicate cultural identity, is suggestive of the fluid behaviour of neo-tribes; neotribal identity is free-flowing and often multidimensional as young people switch between groups, as opposed to the fixed binary affirmation inferred by subcultural identity (Maffesoli 1996).

Comments from participants on the diversity of the scene provided me with a useful standpoint to improve my research in the future. Following on from Lucas' point that at a rave "anything goes", it was mentioned on multiple occasions just how

heterogeneous the crowds of attendees are; “I remember going to undertone and seeing a load of 50 year old guys at the back just come from work at the law office or something and they're all enjoying themselves next to the sweaty 18 year olds!” (Fenton). Focus groups 1, 2 and 3 all at some point mentioned how comfortable they feel with the mixed age demographics and characteristics of the crowd, which may in another scenario have been considered odd or unusual, but under the circumstance creates a harmonious and less image-centred atmosphere in line with Smith’s (1994) idea of raving as an extension to postmodernism. In this respect if I was to undertake this study again I would like to speak to a group of participants from a much broader spectrum of ages; prior literature wrongly gave me the impression that raving was a youth subculture (Wilson 2006, Nehling 2007, Rinke 2015), however I am only now beginning to acknowledge the extent to which a part of what makes rave culture special is its ability to see beyond age and class. My research was restricted somewhat by my own assumptions drawn from the literature, and I have concluded that it would be insightful to repeat the research using an older group of participants who may have contrasting views, as well as insights into how dance music culture and venue use has changed over time.

Much of the narrative built upon by interviewees was constructed around how raving differs to the conventional clubbing experience; participants repeatedly chose to focus upon what a rave is not, rather than what it is; in effect the idea of defining oneself in relation to the real or imagined other (Colley 1992). Part of the appeal of the scene is the contrast in practices and behaviour that create an experience unique in comparison to regular ‘going out’; Electronic dance music as opposed to pop, dressing down as opposed to dressing up, recreational drugs as opposed to alcohol. Interviewees felt there was less pressure on projected physical appearance than ‘a typical night out’, and suggested this is partially down to the lack of sexual expectation and a difference in desired experience; ‘in some clubs on nights out you might try and find someone to get with, but absolutely with DnB (Drum and bass) I have never felt like that - it's about enjoying yourself. With your friends around you’ (Olly).

4.2.1. Identity in relation to space

Despite points mentioned in section 4.2.1 and contrary to the findings of Jaimangal-Jones et al (2014), I found it somewhat surprising that the defining factor for calling oneself a raver was not image dependent but more focused on practice; the attendance of raves was considered what was most important. Despite the fact that all participants were recruited from a site for dance music enthusiasts, those who attended raves less frequently were hesitant and somewhat diffident to label themselves ravers. Zoe, Dan and Hector all said that they would like to be considered ravers but didn't feel as if they had earned the title having not attended events as frequently as other participants, or in comparison to their own friends who they felt profoundly upheld the raver image. Those whose venue attendance is an exercise of familiarity appear to withhold a greater sense of entitlement to the identity label of a 'raver', as the repeated reenactment of interaction between space and individual creates an accumulation of cultural capital.



Figure 4.1 – Vaults entrance hallway (Aiyush Pachnanda 2020)

There were certain venues which came up again and again in terms of raver identity and insider 'know how'. It became apparent that talking about specific venues is a performance in itself; an indication of insider knowledge and proof of integration into the scene. Similarly to discussing events attended, discussing venues allows participants to share stories and connect with one another through collective

recollection. The language used by participants heavily featured ostentatious mentioning of specific venues, with participants becoming animated in the discussion of the various foibles and hidden elements of venues like Vaults, Tramshed and Frontal Lobe warehouse, especially when presented with photographs of their familiar settings (see figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.4). One gritty underground Cardiff club named 'Undertone' closed its doors for the last time in January 2020 and since then has obtained iconic status; a cacophony of anecdotes and memories spring forth when you mention its name, as participants glorify the venue as something of a relic that only ravers of a certain age remember. Hayden summarised a discussion in focus group 3 by saying that only the 'real ravers' will remember Undertone. In this sense venues contribute to raver identity not only through attendance, but also as part of the contemporary vocabulary and knowledge of the scene which defines an 'insider' from an 'outsider'. The interactions that infuse spaces with a sense of identity not only transform them into sites of music consumption but also become a means of communication and cultural capital as venues 'produce and reify the identities of the people who interact within the space' (Van Klyton 2015, 101).



Figure 4.2 – Frontal Lobe Warehouse (Aiyush Pachnanda 2020)

George and Zoe discuss the idea that where you choose to be within the crowd can be an indicator of the group dynamic you conform to, as identity becomes constructed

by practises that engage with the spatiality of the venue. The 'acquaintance with the spatial dynamics of the site' (Drysdale 2011, 210) means that ravers traverse the space in different ways, forming resultant clusters and familiar routines. George describes how the crowd is loosely divided into "zones of people". "The people who go heavy and absolutely love the music as well as the drugs, they're right at the front headbanging next to the fence, then the people with their groups of mates who've ran out of water in the middle, and the old boys at the back who're more mellow now but they still enjoy the music, and like, all the memories they've got from it." Meanwhile when presented with figure 4.2 (above) Rosie described her own positionality by explaining how she inscribes her role as "more of a sides and edges, stay at the back kind of girl" who feels more comfortable with "the people who like room to dance". Hence participation within the rave scene is a socialised practise which requires attention to the "specific kinetic negotiation of movement between people, practices, objects and arrangements" (Drysdale 2011, 209) in order to explore how identity within subcultures becomes fragmented further, broken down into specific roles within the performance dynamic.

4.3. Does the spatial dynamic of a warehouse result in a unique sensual and emotional experience or does the venue in question hold little significance?

4.3.1. Individual perception

It is important to remember the theoretical basis upon which our understanding of space is based; Space is created and shaped through the eyes of the people who experience it and the world made up of 'things brought in to relation with one another by this universe of spaces through a continuous and largely involuntary process of encounter' (Thrift 2006, 139). Hence the perceived importance of the warehouse venue will be shaped by the eyes of those who encounter it and their interactions relative to individual experiences and encounters; when asked what makes Frontal Lobe Warehouse memorable the Director of Events commented "I don't suppose any of us really in the position to say exactly what makes the experience special, I would hope that would come from a totally personal place of anyone who steps through the doors.". Indeed, each focus group participant shaped their perceptions of various venues upon the stand out moments and encounters which are tinted by their emotional state in situ, therefore producing a contrasting range of recollections for the very same event. We must also exercise an awareness of the impact of

recreational drugs in the creation of distorted perception and exaggerated emotion that further widens the gap between subjectivized interpretations. Hence what George describes as “one of the best nights I’ve ever had!” was to Hector “a bit dead, I really wasn’t feeling it at all”.

4.3.2. The authenticity of warehouse space

Participants in focus group 3 drew attention to the qualities that resonate with them as a part of their favourite venues; a large part of the draw to ex-industrial venues is their unique spatial and visual dynamic which contrasts with the monotony of 21st century clubbing. The Director of Events at Frontal Lobe Warehouse said “The industrial side of rave music in the UK, established in the 90's largely by various venues like the Hacienda in Manchester gave an opportunity to Promoters, Ravers and DJ's alike to explore old buildings in a new way”. Amongst focus group participants individuality and quirkiness are valued highly, the more unique the venue the better. Zoe pointed out that the correlation between the most popular rave venues in the UK is the fact that the physical structures were intended for an alternative use; Halo in Bournemouth was an abandoned church, Motion in Bristol features an ex container yard and marble factory, and Printworks in London (Figure 3) was a fully functioning printing plant up until 2012. The fact that they used to be something else makes them unique; the spatial dynamic, visually, acoustically and sensorially is unlike any experience you can find elsewhere. Jenkins (2020) describes how the appeal of Cardiff's music scene is in the originality of the venues on offer:

“Cardiff has been stripped of its purpose-built club venues one-by-one. Instead it offers a strange range of repurposed locations. The Vaults (see figure 4.1), for example, is an intense subterranean cellar that once stashed gold bars for wealthy dockland merchants. Fluidity, meanwhile, masquerades as a rave spot at night but is a trampoline/sports park by day. Elsewhere small bars are flipped into impromptu jungle sessions, there are several major party warehouses – including Titan Warehouse, the biggest warehouse event space in the UK – and a healthy free party scene. It seems no matter how many obstacles the authorities put in the way, the city always finds a way to rave.”

Jenkins (2020)

Perhaps it is the case then that ex-industrial sites are selected based upon their character; the gritty, air of abandon or neglect echoing something of the tumultuous

emotion of youths; warehouses located out of town an ironic echo of the boom in gleaming out of town shopping and housing developments in the late 80's. For the youth of today, the thrill of venues in obscure and unusual locations aligns with the image of individuality discussed by Rinke (2015); the need to seek out a pursuit or material good not undertaken by the masses provides a feeling of fulfilment or a badge towards an aspired identity.



Figure 4.3 – Printworks London (Printworks 2020)

Focus group research revealed that perhaps even more prominent within the rave scene than the warehouse, is the presence of underground venues; cramped basement clubs and even restored bank vaults, complete with underground tunnels and spiral staircases. The warehouse and the underground represent counter opposites of the same scene; the stark contrast between the high ceilings and wide open spaces of industrial warehouse units versus the heat and density of below ground, and yet are united by their gritty urban appeal. Dan summarised that in both cases it was the air of illegitimacy in line with what Hesmondhalg (1998, 236) describes as the 'anti corporate rhetoric of dance music culture' that makes venues more thrilling and therefore alluring; "it gives you that illegal sort of vibe... it's not illegal but it feels like it could be. Almost like you shouldn't really be there". Jade added that nightclubs are so 'put together' that the 'roughness' of warehouses is refreshing and 'cool'.

Van Klyton (2015, 101) explains how different locations are intentionally selected to supplement the character of the scene and produce the conditions most compatible with the socialized practises of specific subcultures; 'Venues are not arbitrary selections but represent the deliberate efforts of cultural gatekeepers (Bourdieu, 1993) to establish 'rules aimed at maintaining a particular social vibrancy'. Hence there appears to be a unique compatibility between the identity of ravers in relation to industrial spaces, which may have begun in the 1990's but never quite went away.

4.3.3. 'Culminations of sights, smells, and sensations'

Focus group participants recounted their emotional and sensory experiences of space by appealing to their established knowledge of my own scene practises, whilst questions about sights smells and sounds prompted participants to 'narrate sensory recollections' of events alongside more 'systemically framed accounts' (Drysdale



Figure 4.4 - Titan Warehouse, Cardiff (Aiyush Pachnanda, 2020)

2011, pp.211). Photo elicitation helped participants recall and describe sensations that coexisted exclusively with warehouse venues; high ceilings exaggerated beams of stage lighting into psychedelic arrangements (figure 4.4), the heat of bodies in a large

crowd made people feel 'safe' and 'surrounded by friends' and participants experienced the feeling of nervous anticipation whilst following the sound and vibrations of the music through industrial estates and suburbs to find the venue.

Jade and Ellie discussed how different venues, both through their spatiality and subsequent physical intensity of experience, and through the different crowds of people they attract, can provide very different events. They compared a rave they attended in the Students Union in 2019 to warehouse venues they attend frequently;

*“In frontal lobe it was everyone standing there, everyone was vibing having a good time, whereas bedlam at the SU felt a lot more intense. It was a hot cramped room full of sweaty aggressive people with their shirts off bashing into each other, whereas with frontal lobe it was more like everyone appreciating each other. A lot more considerate, everyone was just having a good time. Whereas it felt like in the SU a f*cking festival mosh pit which isn't really what i look for when i go to an event like that”*

“Yeah exactly i feel like in vaults what we saw was people were likeminded, people enjoyed the sound but also enjoyed substances on the side, and they obviously pair really well together. But i think the same thing happened in titan warehouse, where you see alot more of the younger people who just go for the status and the drugs, they don't really care what music is playing.”

Hence i feel it is important here to address the key point made by Drysdale (2011, 214) 'The spatial specificity of the venue is constituted in part by how participants articulated the scene's characterization as a socialized practice. Crucially, these same accounts that detail its social function also demonstrate how these encounters are generated by the space itself'. Hence Jade and Ellie's experience in the SU occurred as a result of the spatial characteristics of the venue itself paired with the behaviour of those who attended. They felt that despite the events status as a rave, because of the music being played, the people who attended weren't reflective of the raving 'community' (Kruse 1993) whilst their 'moshpit' behaviour showed a lack of awareness for privileged social discourses of the scene (Jaimangal-Jones et al 2012).

Participants discussed the traversing of warehouse spaces with a clear sense of 'acquaintance for the spatial dynamic of the site' (Drysdale 2011, 213), relaying their actions and interactions throughout the course of the night with relative clarity in comparison to the vague notion of chronological sequence in which encounters

occurred. Specific spaces associated with, but not confined to, the venue were designated by social practices (Drysdale 2011). Of particular interest was the smoking area of each venue. Participants described how the smoking area allowed for interaction by operating as a separate entity from the main arena with a completely different atmosphere which cultivated conversations and introductions in a quieter environment. Participants described how leaving the venue to go to the smoking area becomes no longer about smoking and ‘fresh air’, but about the conversations, sharing of lighters, non-verbal gestures inviting interaction and becoming friends with strangers (“I don't smoke but if anyone's going to the smoking area i'll always offer to go with them!” - Millie). Focus groups discussed how the majority of designated smoking areas are laid out like something of an afterthought; an enclosure made from corrugated fencing, a pavement by the roadside watched over by security or some haphazard stools made from wooden pallets. It appears that event organisers fail to recognise the significance of these mundane spaces, or have simply accepted that these outdoor interactions will occur inevitably, and therefore there is no need to designate any particular attention to attractive spatial design. Is it the case that conversations will occur no matter how inhospitable the outdoor setting, and simply through the provision of a quiet outdoor space, you are enabling these interactions to occur?

But of overwhelming significance was of course the dancing area itself. Participants described how the soundscape was experienced not only through hearing but through physical sensation; “The feeling of bass vibrating in your chest is incredible, it feels like nothing else!!” (Fenton). The immediate feelings and memories prompted by figure 4.4 included bright lights in people’s eyes, silhouettes of figures against strobe lighting, physical feelings of bass vibrations and body heat, the smell of sticky beer and sweat, air thick with excitement and smoke from vapes and cigarettes. Dylan said “you feel connected with the music. Not just emotionally but physically”.

4.4. To what extent does the abundance of space within warehouses represent an opportunity for industry growth in the wake of the Corona virus Pandemic?

4.4.1 Supporting the culture

Although in some respects the venue is felt to be important, the transient nature of locations selected as rave spaces and the unpredictability and infrequency of events which makes the scene exciting, somewhat prevents the intimacy between participant

and venue that is similar to that highlighted within the Drysdale (2011) study. There is a sense amongst interviewees that each rave brings something different and unpredictable. It is the sense of community, a mutual respect and a shared passion for the music which provides consistency and maps the meta-sociality of the scene; 'Space is a pressing matter precisely because it matters which bodies, where and how, press up against it' (Probyn 1995, 81). The focal point of focus groups was the attention drawn to relationships, as opposed to locations; focus group structure naturally flowed into a sequence of relayed interactions with other people, punctuated by details on the surroundings which served only to provide a background.

If this is the case, then it appears that the role of the venue remains in the balance. Unlike focus group participants who expressed enthusiasm and exaggerated the connections built by collective raving identity within the Cardiff scene, promoters took a dubious approach: "There is a large crowd who love going out and dancing to DnB, but that's all they're happy doing. Going out, getting drunk, dancing to it. Most of them aren't interested in following and supporting the culture on another level." (Lubi J in Jenkins 2020). This suggests that on the contrary to raving as a form of self identification, perhaps the reality is that many people choose to attend events purely for the emancipatory experience of inebriation as a source of 'audience pleasure' (Shuker 2001). Hence the consumption of dance music becomes neither for the accumulation of cultural capital nor as a form of identity but as an exercise in individualistic hedonism. In this context, the delicate illusion of community and subcultural identity begins to shatter, as the focus shifts from the music, the place, and the people, to the pursuit of individual satisfaction devoid of shared commonalities with others and regard for spatial context.

4.4.2. What next?

The future of raving and ravers remains uncertain, but you may argue that this is no different to any other element of our personal lives upturned by the emergence of an unprecedented pandemic. Participants had varying views on the future of dance music culture but the consensus was that there was an expectation raving would return to 'normal', a view which was seconded during the epistolary interview with Frontal Lobe warehouse. "It (social distancing) may be around for a year or 2, but beyond that there is no room for social distancing in the long term night time economy".

In the short term though, warehouses lend themselves well to adaptation and the transformation of space to accommodate for social distancing. The simplicity and obvious abundance of floorspace which comes hand in hand with industrial buildings lends itself well to the 'two metre rule' and one way systems recommended within government policy (Cabinet Office 2020), hence warehouses have transitioned from an obscure solution to club closures into one of the only remaining options in terms of spaces where drinking and dance music culture may be allowed to continue in line with current government guidelines.

However participant views on socially distanced events are generally unenthusiastic; it is felt that so much of what makes spaces come alive is the crushing physical proximity to strangers that allows for shared emotion. Dan illustrates this point by explaining his own term for losing oneself in the music, a point at which you are completely absorbed in the consciousness of the moment, and surrounded by other people who feel the same as yourself - he describes it as 'scatting out'. And the problem with socially distanced raves, is that this is absent. Hence the 'collective effervescence of ritualistic live music events' (Vandenberg et al 2020, pp.2) becomes dulled, and the future of raves uncertain.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Introduction

I began my research project aiming to investigate the intricacies of traversing warehouses as socialized spaces, exploring 'how scene practises turn the sociality of the moment into attachment to the venues which supported them' (Dysdale 2011, 206). By utilising my positionality within the scene I was able to construct narratives through conversation which connected themes surrounding youth subculture (Osgerby 2014, Bennett 1999, Wilson 2006), performed raver identity (Vandenburg et al 2020, Halfacree and Kitchin 1996, Jaimangal-Jones et al 2014) and the role of venues in facilitating such performances (Van Klyton 2015, Drysdale 2011). This conclusion will break down findings and suggest possible further avenues of enquiry.

5.2. Research Reflections

Research was conducted on a small scale which focussed upon a Cardiff case study, chosen because of the significant presence of a raving community unusual for a medium sized city. Ideally further research could be enhanced greatly by replicating my study at a broader scale, conducting case studies of different UK cities and investigating the commonalities and differences between participant opinions and the various venues on offer in each location. Furthermore, the deliberate recruitment of participants with a much larger age range through selective sampling would allow for greater variances in opinion and circumstance, and also encourage participants to draw comparisons between present and past, discussing temporal changes in cultural practises.

The relatively small number of participants, although gender representative, made up only a very small proportion of Cardiff's raving population, hence a greater volume of focus group participants may have produced a broader range of data. Similarly an interview with management staff from a number of different Cardiff venues, followed by participant observation, may have revealed similarities and differences in the way event spaces are frequented by the same groups, allowing me to study raver behaviour using the group of attendees as the independent variable and different venues as dependent variables.

The biggest limitation was of course the unprecedented occurrence of COVID 19 and subsequent regulations. In the future, autoethnographic participant observation would be the perfect accompaniment to my study, by filling in the gaps left by narrative conversations and allowing for the documentation of raver behaviour in situ as individuals interact with elements of their familiar social worlds, the venue itself creating the material space necessary for the engendered routines and behaviour associated with raving to be enacted. Furthermore focus groups held in person would also have been preferable, allowing for a more natural flow of conversation, and easier translation of body language and subtle physical interactions between participants.

5.3. Summary of findings and concluding statement

5.3.1. To what extent do young people attending Electronic Dance music events feel the attendance of warehouse spaces contributes to their identity as ‘raver’?

The attendance of various events is viewed by ravers as a form of social currency and a means of connection between individuals who find familiarity in others with shared experiences. Although there are other factors in play, such as choice of dress, the overwhelming factor which unites ravers is the act of attending events, whilst the event in question is shaped by the spatial dynamic and the constitution of the crowd, but is nevertheless subject to the lens of individual perception.

5.3.2. Does the spatial dynamic of a warehouse result in a unique sensual and emotional experience or does the venue in question hold little significance?

The tactile engagement between participants and venues leaves a lasting imprint on the memories of individuals. The atmosphere of the warehouse venue, although enjoyable due to characteristic lightshows and a dynamic interface with the outdoors, is not entirely unique. Rather, the affinity lies with any venue which captures something unusual in the imagination of event goers, whether this is an underground basement, abandoned church or old factory, which act as cultural capital through attendance and draw in particular crowds depending upon the reputation they uphold.

5.3.3. To what extent does the abundance of space within warehouses represent an opportunity for industry growth in the wake of the Corona virus Pandemic?

Despite how effectively the industrial capacity of the warehouse lends itself to COVID 19 friendly adaptation, there is an overwhelming consensus that ravers and event organisers alike are adamant things will eventually return to ‘normal’. Socially distanced raves are seen as a compromise and not a solution, and the

enthusiasm amongst participants for the venues they feel passionate about reassures me that the spaces of the scene will hastily be returned to and supported once the government allows it.

5.3.4. Concluding statement

The fragments of dance music culture and the raves which are it's socio physical manifestation have frequently been studied in relation to individual identity and subcultural relations, however this study breaches the gap between raving as a social practise and attachment to sense of place. The use of warehouses for live music events is to this day significant, as ephemeral cultural practises inscribe the venues within the scene with memories and sentimental value, reinforcing their role as spaces critical to the re-enactment of individual identity.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Ethical Approval Form

CARDIFF UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY AND PLANNING

Ethical Approval Form

Student Projects (Undergraduate & Taught Masters)

When undertaking project and dissertation research, you must comply with Cardiff University's Research Integrity protocol. This is why it is essential that you complete this form.

It is **YOUR** responsibility to discuss your research ethics with your supervisor, and to submit this form to them at least **TWO WEEKS** before you intend to start any data collection. Before you start collecting any data, **your supervisor must sign it off** (this can be using an electronic signature). You must keep a copy for your records, and submit it as part of your final dissertation. **Any data collected without ethical approval cannot be included in your dissertation.**

All research involving human participants or data must have ethical approval. If making use of information about human participants that is publicly and lawfully available e.g. census data, government population statistics, personal archives held in public libraries etc you must still complete this form to demonstrate your engagement with the university's research integrity strategy.

Before completing the form, you must read through the following guidelines and sign to indicate that you have understood them.

Recruiting Research Participants

All participants in your research must enter into it freely and willingly. They must know and understand what they are agreeing to by taking part. Participants must not be put under duress to participate and should be made aware that their involvement is entirely voluntary. Refusal to participate will have no consequences and they will not be required to provide a reason.

If they do agree to participate, they are free to withdraw at any time without providing a reason. If required, anonymity and confidentiality must be maintained throughout the research process.

Information Sheet and Consent Form

Informed consent requires giving sufficient information about the research to ensure that potential participants can make a clear and informed decision about whether to take part. This should be supplied in written form (the 'information sheet') and signed off (the 'consent form') by the research participant and researcher. The key idea is to conduct your research openly and transparently.

The information sheet should make it clear that this research is for a student project. It should be written in an accessible way so that a member of the general public can easily understand it. The information must be accurate, concise and appropriate to the socio-cultural context in which it is being given. You must give participants sufficient time to read, process, and consider their participation, as well as ask any questions. You should also consider whether they will be able to engage with a written document and consider how you may deal with problems of illiteracy or when engaging with people for whom English/Welsh is not their first language.

Examples of information sheets and consent forms will be provided but can be adapted to the specific requirements of your research. They should include:

1. the name of the researcher(s)
2. an explanation of what you, the researcher, is hoping to achieve by the research
3. what is going to be done by you, the researcher
4. an explanation of the risks, pain or discomfort, if any, that the participant may experience
5. a clear explanation of what the participant is expected to do during the study
6. a statement that the participant is not obliged to take part, and may withdraw at any time
7. contact information for you and, where applicable, your supervisor
8. consent statement (this can be separate to the information sheet)

If applicable, a copy of your consent form and information sheet must be included with your ethics form.

Whilst these guidelines are not exhaustive, they indicate a set of obligations to which students should adhere. Responsibility for both interpretation of, and compliance with, these guidelines rests with the student.

Declaration

I have read the above information and agree to abide by it in my research practices.

I understand that I should be willing to answer any questions from potential participants.

I understand that consent is only valid for procedures set out on the information sheet. Should any of the information change during the course of the study, new consent should be sought; participants are free to refuse consent and withdraw from the study if they wish.

I understand that I must be clear as to how far I can afford participants anonymity and confidentiality, and that they have a right to refuse being recorded.

I understand that I must be clear as to whether participants will be able to see and amend interview transcripts and other research materials.

I understand that I must take appropriate measures to store my research data in a secure manner and retain it according to the university data retention guidelines.

I have read and understood the data protection guidelines and will keep data securely during any travel (either on an encrypted device or in a locked case, if in paper form).

I will take all reasonable steps to ensure that no physical, social and psychological harm comes to participants through their participation in this research.

I understand that any data collected that falls outside of the research design/methods presented in this form cannot be used, analysed, or published and must be destroyed. This means that it cannot be included in the dissertation.

Name: Rowan Ashcroft Barnes

Signature: 

Date: 21/10/2020

Title of Project: Deindustrialisation? - Why warehouse units continue to play an important role in the temporary spatial embodiment of dance music culture and individual identity

Name of Student(s): Rowan Ashcroft Barnes

Name of Supervisor/ Module Leader: Gary Bridge

Degree Programme and Level: Geography and Urban planning (Bsc)

Proposed dates of field work: 4/11/2020

Date: 21/10/2020

Dissertation Summary:

The aim of this paper is to analyse the connection between the young people involved within the electronic dance music scene (ravers) and the spaces they re-enact their subcultural identity. Through the recollection of emotion and sensual experience I aim to establish whether the character of the venue is of significance to the participants, or whether the venue acts purely as an inane

The aim of this paper is to analyse the connection between the young people involved within the electronic dance music scene (ravers) and the spaces used to re-enact their subcultural identity. Through the recollection of emotion and sensual experience I aim to establish whether the character of the venue is of any significance to the participants, or whether the venue acts purely as an inane space for social interaction to occur. I will also focus upon the dynamics of industrial units such as warehouses, and their potential significance towards to survival of the dance music 'scene' given the current circumstances of the pandemic.

What are the research questions?

To what extent do young people attending Electronic Dance music events feel the attendance of warehouse spaces contributes to their identity as 'raver'?

Does the spatial dynamic of a warehouse result in a unique sensual and emotional experience or does the venue in question hold little significance?

To what extent does the abundance of space within warehouses represent an opportunity for industry growth in the wake of the Corona Virus Pandemic?

Who are the proposed participants?

People aged 18-30 who frequently attend electronic dance music events

How will the participants be recruited?

Appeals for participants will be posted on 'insider' facebook groups that the author has access to, for example 'Techno/DnB Cardiff Ravers', 'DnB Talk' and 'EDM community'. I aim to recruit approximately 12 focus group participants.

Interview participants will be directly contacted via their social media pages to request an interview

What sort of data will be collected and what methods will you use to do this?

Detailed qualitative data will be gathered through focus groups of up to 6 people held through Zoom as an online medium, alongside 1 on 1 zoom interviews with warehouse event management teams

Where are you undertaking this research?

All research will be conducted online in light of recent COVID regulations

All ethics forms should be completed in discussion with your supervisor. If you tick 'Yes' in any of the red boxes below, your supervisor may refer your project to the School Ethics Committee if they deem it to be of significant concern. They will review your project and proposed responses, working with you and your supervisor to address any potential, outstanding ethical issues. Only once these have been resolved, can your supervisor sign off the research (this can be an electronic signature). You should include a signed copy of the completed form as an appendix to your submitted dissertation.

If you subsequently change your methods, you must re-submit an updated ethics form before you collect your data.

Recruitment Procedures:

		Yes	No	N/A
1	Does your project include children under 18 years of age?		X	
2	Does your project include people with learning or communication difficulties?		X	
3	Does your project include people in custody?		X	
4	Is your project likely to include people involved in illegal activities?	X		
5	Does project involve people belonging to a vulnerable group, other than those listed above? Please provide details in the box on p6.		X	
6	Does your project include people who are, or are likely to become your clients or clients of the department in which you work?		X	
7	Does your project include people for whom English / Welsh is not their first language?		X	
8	Does your project include field research outside of the UK?		X	

Consent Procedures:

		Yes	No	N/A
9	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	X		
10	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	X		
11	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	X		

12	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reasons?	X		
13	Will you give potential participants a significant period of time to consider participation?	X		

Possible Harm to Participants:

		Yes	No	N/A
14	Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress or discomfort?		X	
15	Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing a detriment to their interests as a result of participation?		X	

If there are any risks to the participants you must explain in the box on page 4 how you intend to minimise these risks

Data Protection:

		Yes	No	N/A
16	Will any non-anonymised and/or personalised data be generated and/or stored?		X	
17	Will you have access to documents containing sensitive ¹ data about living individuals?		X	
	If "Yes" will you gain the consent of the individuals concerned?			

If any of the shaded boxes have been ticked you must work with your supervisor/module leader to explain how the potential ethical issue(s) will be handled (see below).

If there are any other potential ethical issues that you think your supervisor and/or the Ethics Committee should consider please explain them in the box

¹ Sensitive data are *inter alia* data that relates to racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, physical or mental health, sexual life, actual and alleged offences.

below. It is your obligation to bring to the attention of your supervisor/the Ethics Committee any ethical issues not covered on this form.

Supervisor's declaration

As the supervisor/module leader (*please delete as necessary*) for this student project, I confirm that I believe that all research ethical issues have been dealt with in accordance with University policy and the research ethics guidelines of the relevant professional organisation.

Date 02/11/20

Name Gary Bridge Signature



Please explain how the identified potential research ethics issue(s) will be handled.

It is important to reinforce the fact that participation will be completely anonymous as it is likely that participants may divulge in statements surrounding illegal drug use, which is somewhat embedded within the context of rave culture as a whole. Given the context, I do not feel that the discussion of illegal material will in any way cause harm to the participant or the researcher and is necessary in order to construct a cohesive contextual understanding.

Appendix 2 – Participant information sheet

Rowan Ashcroft Barnes
3rd year Geography and Urban Planning Student

Focus group participation information sheet

The project ‘‘Deindustrialisation? - Why industrial units continue to play an important role in the temporary spatial embodiment of dance music culture and individual identity’’ is being undertaken by myself as part of a dissertation research project for the School of Geography and Planning, at Cardiff University. The aim of the project is to collect data on individual experience in order to establish whether the character of the venue is of any significance to the participants, or whether the venue acts purely as an inane space for social interaction to occur. I will also focus upon the dynamics of industrial units such as warehouses, and their potential significance towards the survival of the dance music ‘scene’ given the current circumstances of the pandemic.

As you have agreed to participate in the above project, please read the declarations below and then print your name, and add the date before returning the form to me digitally via the following email address. If you have any comments, questions or concerns about the research, please contact Rowan Ashcroft Barnes at ashcroftbarnesr@cardiff.a.c.uk.

I hereby confirm that i:

- Agree to voluntarily participate with this project
- Understand that i am able to withdraw from participation at any point in the process
- Understand that all data will be withheld by the researcher and not passed on to any other sources
- Agree to remain anonymous throughout the process
- Understand I have the opportunity to ask questions about the project, including additional details as requested
- Understand that this project has been reviewed and received ethical clearance according to Cardiff University's Research Integrity Protocol

Print name

Date

Appendix 3 – Focus group research outline

Focus group research outline**Deindustrialisation? - Why warehouse units continue to play an important role in the temporary spatial embodiment of dance music culture and individual identity**

The key aim of the focus group is to establish through the recollection of emotion and sensual experience whether the character of the venue is of any significance to the participants, or whether the venue acts purely as a neutral space for interaction.

The entire conversation will be voice recorded to allow for a transcript to be produced and analysed. Participants will be made aware of the purposes of the research etc through the attached participant information sheet

- 1. To what extent do young people attending Electronic Dance music events feel the attendance of warehouse spaces contributes to their identity as 'raver'?**
- 2. Does the spatial dynamic of a warehouse result in a unique sensual and emotional experience or does the venue in question hold little significance?**
- 3. To what extent does the abundance of space within warehouses represent an opportunity for industry growth in the wake of the Coronavirus Pandemic?**

The structure of the focus group will be as follows although organic conversation and interaction between participants will be encouraged, in particular the comparison of experiences and sharing of opinions. Participants will not be pressured to answer questions if they do not wish to and emphasis will be placed upon the fact that anonymity will be maintained (see participant information sheet for more information) particularly as statements are likely to be personal and may divulge illegal activity.

1. Begin by establishing which events participants have attended in the past 2 years. Encourage discussion and record who has attended what.
2. Using one of the above mentioned events, participants are invited to take 5 minutes to think about and draw out a visual cue of the sequence of events over the course of the evening. If they shared this experience with another participant they are invited to discuss their experiences with them.
3. Participants invited to discuss their experience further, adding sensory experiences and emotions along the timeline
4. As the person initiating the conversation I will be asking questions like
 - a. Can you describe what the space was like as you approached it? How did you feel? Security etc?
 - b. What was the space like inside? How did you feel? Sounds, sensations, people
 - c. Are there any specific parts which stick out in your mind?
5. Attention moved to the wider cultural dance music scene.
 - a. Do you consider yourself a 'raver'?
 - b. What do you think it is that constitutes being a 'raver'? What is a raver?
 - c. Do you consciously wear different clothes to what you would wear on a clubbing night out when you attend dance music events?
 - d. Are there certain venues you associate with certain types of music? Cardiff and UK wide

6.

- a. Do you have a favourite venue? UK wide? If so why? Its okay to say that they don't, just explain why
- b. Does where you go have a big impact on the kind of night you have? Do different people go to different places?
- c.

7.

- a. How do you feel about sit down raves? Do you feel they can save dance music culture?
- b. Are you prepared to take more risks now? Would you rather rave legally and socially distanced or find a more authentic but potentially risky alternative? Do you think your response might change in the future?

1. Open agenda inviting participants to discuss any other experiences or information they feel is relevant