Becoming a clubber: transitions, identities and lifestyles

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Declaration

I declare that none of the work contained within this thesis has been submitted for any other degree at any other university. The contents found herein have been composed by the candidate, Rhoda MacRae.

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My acknowledgements fall into three main categories: first my family and friends from my 'other' life, second friends and colleagues from my post graduate life and third, the people who took part in the study.

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Abstract

This thesis examines how young people identify and affiliate with particular club scenes and how these practices and processes relate to their transitions, identities and lifestyles. It aims to give a sense of the processes and the resources that are required to 'become' a clubber over time. The thesis engages with the recent attempts to reconcile the conceptual and empirical divisions between the two main approaches in the sociology of youth. It suggests that the work of Schutz serves as a heuristic framework to conceptualise data, and when synthesised with other sympathetic conceptual frameworks, links disparate literature to allow for a better understanding of the role of knowledge in the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people. This focus influenced my choice of method: the ethnographic techniques of participant observation and in-depth interviewing were employed to access participants' experiences and knowledge of becoming a clubber. The findings suggest that the process of becoming a clubber is a gendered, dialectical and transformational process: informed by the social heritage and locally situated experiences of clubbing participants. It is a process that manifests itself through embodied practices involving cultural knowledge and taste. Participants place one another on the basis of their participation in and identification with a clubbing lifestyle. These placements appear embedded in the social order: they call not only on old social markers but also on the increasing hierarchies of difference within and across social groups. Social competence, cultural knowledge and consumer activities are all implicated in the placement of others, and the construction of boundaries that clubbing collectives engage in. These are young people who can afford materially and socially to extend both their structural and cultural transitions. The social confidence and adept skills of exchange that 'proper' clubbers develop are resources that help them develop and create social and cultural capital of their own. Becoming a clubber requires competency, skills and dispositions: it is a process that transmits privilege and disadvantage.

Abstract

This thesis examines how young people identify and affiliate with particular club scenes and how these practices and processes relate to their transitions, identities and lifestyles. It aims to give a sense of the processes and the resources that are required to 'become' a clubber over time. The thesis engages with the recent attempts to reconcile the conceptual and empirical divisions between the two main approaches in the sociology of youth. It suggests that the work of Schutz serves as a heuristic framework to conceptualise data, and when synthesised with other sympathetic conceptual frameworks, links disparate literature to allow for a better understanding of the role of knowledge in the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people. This focus influenced my choice of method: the ethnographic techniques of participant observation and in-depth interviewing were employed to access participants' experiences and knowledge of becoming a clubber. The findings suggest that the process of becoming a clubber is a gendered, dialectical and transformational process: informed by the social heritage and locally situated experiences of clubbing participants. It is a process that manifests itself through embodied practices involving cultural knowledge and taste. Participants place one another on the basis of their participation in and identification with a clubbing lifestyle. These placements appear embedded in the social order: they call not only on old social markers but also on the increasing hierarchies of difference within and across social groups. Social competence, cultural knowledge and consumer activities are all implicated in the placement of others, and the construction of boundaries that clubbing collectives engage in. These are young people who can afford materially and socially to extend both their structural and cultural transitions. The social confidence and adept skills of exchange that 'proper' clubbers develop are resources that help them develop and create social and cultural capital of their own. Becoming a clubber requires competency, skills and dispositions: it is a process that transmits privilege and disadvantage.

Chapter One   Introduction

Rationale and focus

This thesis explores the processes of becoming a clubber and whether this process is gendered. Its aim is to examine, through ethnographic methods, the ways in which young people identify and affiliate with particular club scenes and how these practices and processes relate to their transitions, identities and lifestyles. To locate the study and realise its' aims, I engage both with the specific literature on social dance and youth cultures, as well as a wider body of work relating to young people's identities, transitions and lifestyles. This thesis is not concerned with charting the evolution of club culture, or the economies of night-time leisure or the relationship between drug use and clubbing *per se*. Rather it centres on how participants get into, experience, attach meaning to, construct and invest in the processes and practices of becoming a clubber. The thesis examines how these experiences can contribute to our understanding of young peoples' identities, lifestyles and transitions. It aims to give a sense of the processes by which young people become involved in urban dance music over time, as well as the sorts of resources that are required to become a clubber. This focus significantly influenced my methodological approach, which used both participant observation and in-depth interviewing. My analysis involved drawing on a range of conceptual frameworks and theoretical perspectives to help me make sense of the data. These included the work of Schutz (1967; 1970a; 1970b; 1973; 1976), Bourdieu (1984; 1986), Becker (1991), Strauss (1997) and Chaney (1996).

The study was initially motivated by my growing academic interest in gender, an interest that stemmed from previous research (MacRae and Aalto, 2000). I wanted to fuse together my academic and professional interests in young people, gender and drug use. However, I did not want to do substance misuse research per se. I wanted to explore if and how drug use can provide a source of identification in some young people's lives: to understand the relationship between a particular drug of choice, a lifestyle or cultural participation and sense of (gendered) identity. In other words, construct a study that would be unlikely to be conducted outside the auspices of postgraduate research. These issues provided the initial motivation but soon other interests and motivations developed particularly my interest in the relationship between identity and group processes and the relationship between cultural practices and social processes. This latter interest was informed by the debates taking place in the sociological literature; it was during the writing of the thesis that the debates surrounding the two main approaches to studying young people began to appear with increasingly regularity.

Both the structural and cultural approaches to the study of young people have been increasingly critiqued. Many of these critiques have drawn attention to the conceptual and empirical divisions between the two traditions. The cultural approaches have been criticised for neglecting the role of social divisions and status inequalities in lifestyle 'choices'. Structural approaches have been criticised for neglecting the impact of wider social participation on the transitions of young people. Recently there have been attempts to reconcile these different traditions (Ball et al., 2000; Cohen and Ainley, 2000; Cieslik, 2001; Hollands, 2002). It is in the context of these debates that the writing of this thesis has evolved, and I hope that its findings will contribute to advancing these debates further. This is not to

say that this thesis makes clear the relationship, or resolves our theoretical understanding between individualisation processes on one hand, and structured social inequalities on the other: rather it contributes to the existing debates on the influence and interplay of structure and agency within the sociology of youth. Having outlined the rationale and focus of the study, discussed my motivation and situated the development of thesis in its time and context, I now want to expand on the broad aims of the study.

The main aim of this thesis was to examine the processes and practices of becoming a clubber and how these were gendered. The literature on clubbing told me about the character and division of dance scenes (Thornton, 1995), the relationship between femininities, women's clubbing experiences and feminism (Pini, 1997a; 1997b), clubbing experiences (Malbon, 1999) and the relationship between drug use and clubbing (Henderson, 1993a; Merchant and Macdonald, 1994; Forsyth, 1997). The literature, however, did not explore how people became clubbers, what practices this entailed, what kind of young people invested in this lifestyle, the influence this process had on their sense of identity and whether this process was gendered. These are gaps in understanding that this thesis aims to address.

The notion of becoming, an underpinning theme of the thesis is not new. It was Becker's (1991) exploration of becoming a marihuana user that provided the inspiration to adopt, adapt and extend the notion of becoming, not only to how people learn to use 'recreational' drugs but how they learn, through particular practices and interactions, to identify themselves in new or additional ways. Becker talked about how learning the techniques, how learning to perceive and

enjoy the effects of marihuana was subject to cultural codes of conduct, and how those 'in the know' distinguished types of drug users. Similar notions arose in the work of Willis (1978): 'becoming' involved not only cultural knowledge, but also a process of developing group sensibilities, and these sensibilities could be used to identify and differentiate one group from another. Becoming, it seemed, was both an individual and a group process. Becoming also implies a sense of transition, which is perpetual and integrated with other facets of our social lives. The notion of becoming may illuminate how young people engage in processes of transition, affiliate with a culture, lifestyle or social group and invest in additional forms of identification, as well as encounter cultural barriers that constrain participation and processes of becoming.

The literature suggested that young people's transitions might be becoming fragmented, individualised, extended and diverse, in an era of rapid social change (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). It also points to certain caveats in these processes, in that diversification does not mean equalisation. Diversification may obscure underlying class relationships and structured inequalities (Rattansi and Phoenix, 1997). It suggests that the young people more likely to experience extended transitions are those who have access to further education, are affluent, and invest in leisure and individual choice (Wallace, 1987a; Abbott and Wallace, 1990; Wyn and Dwyer, 1999: 17). Therefore I wanted to explore whether the process of becoming a clubber is indicative of an extended youth experience. If so, are the young people involved more likely to be post-compulsory educated, affluent and those who invest in, and value, individual choice.

The literature was at times elusive and contradictory about the relationship between cultural participation and the wider lives of young people. Rave culture was at times portrayed as being a social arena where social divisions were put aside and anyone and everyone mixed together (Henderson, 1993a; Merchant and Macdonald, 1994). Yet, more recent studies suggested that distinctions do operate between 'mainstream' and 'hip' club scenes (Thornton, 1995), that 'nightlife provision exploits existing cleavages in the youth population, and segregates young adults into particular spaces and places' (Hollands, 2002: 153). I wanted participants' experiences of clubbing, and their lifestyle 'choices', to be placed in a context that recognised that some young people are more able than others to engage in particular styles of life, and consumer and cultural activities, such as clubbing.

I also wanted to explore further the relationship between identification with particular club scenes and participants social identities. This meant exploring the nature of boundaries: that is the divisions between 'us and them': the boundary work that we do, how boundaries are constituted in social interaction. In doing so I hoped that the thesis would advance our understanding of the relationship between young people's identities and cultural participation. I wanted to explore this in two ways. First by examining further the practices of distinction that appeared to be operating within club culture. Club cultures are taste cultures (Thornton, 1995:3), but as Thornton herself pointed out, practices of distinction do not just involve taste and cultural hierarchies are numerous. Therefore, I needed to explore what other practices were involved in identification and differentiation processes, both within and between club scenes. Moreover what these cultural divisions could tell us about wider social stratification processes. Second, I

explored how processes of becoming impacted on participants' sense of social identity. Some literature suggested that 'new' forms of identification, such as participation in consumption, cultural and leisure activities, may be becoming more central in providing sources of identification for young people than more persistent social markers, such as occupational status (Hollands, 1998; Miles, 2000b). I hoped that the findings of my study would contribute to this debate.

As stated at the beginning, gendered experiences of clubbing and gender relations were of key interest. The literature suggested that relations between men and women had begun to take a different form in rave and 'hip' club scenes (Henderson, 1993a; Merchant and MacDonald, 1994; McRobbie, 1994; Malbon, 1999). Therefore I wanted to explore whether, and in what ways, processes of becoming were gendered. Additionally, previous studies had not asked men about their experiences of gender and relations. One of my aims to was address this gap in understanding.

Having outlined the rationale, focus and aims of the study I now want to outline the structure of the thesis.

Structure of thesis

Chapter two examines the literature on the transitions of young people. It takes up the idea of successful, linear and normative transitions, as well as the ways young people may be seen to be 'at risk' of not achieving independent adult status. I relate this to the globalisation and individualisation thesis and the ways in which

transitions may be becoming fragmented, individualised, extended and diverse, in an era of rapid social change (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). I discuss the potential implications of de-standardisation and increased individualisation: that the transitions of young people have extended and fragmented. I also discuss the suggested caveats in these processes and ask whether the processes of becoming a clubber could be indicative of an extended youth experience. I point to the increasing body of literature that seeks to re-conceptualise young people's structural and cultural transitions.

Before discussing the re-conceptualisations put forward I examine the literature that explores the transitions we make in order to make manifest our identities. Chapter three explores notions of the self and processes of becoming, symbolic boundaries, group life and joint acts, and discusses the literature on clubbing boundaries. I review the concepts that see group life as a process and how participants can have fluctuating investments. I note how competency is implicated in the construction and maintenance of such boundaries. However, not all boundaries are self-defined, young people are often defined as 'other', so I devote a section to deviance and labelling. I then discuss the gendered nature of deviance, the response to rave, before exploring the literature that illustrates how gender is implicated in identities.

Chapter four reviews the cultural approach to the study of young people, more specifically the relationship between young people's identities and their cultural affiliations. I discuss the work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural studies, University of Birmingham (CCCS), the place of music, dance and gender in subcultures and the specific literature on clubbing. I review the critiques of

subcultural theory, which leads me to examine two other theories that have been put forward to re-conceptualise young people's experiences. I first discuss lifestyles, the ways in which consumption is implicated in the lifestyles of young people and the way the concept has been applied to studies on clubbing. I then examine the concept of capitals, focussing first on cultural and subcultural capital and then on social capital and the way this has been applied to the study of young people. I draw attention to the notion of sociability, how sociability requires social skills of exchange and disposition, and how the formations of social networks can transmit privilege and disadvantage. I also examine how the sociology of everyday life (Schutz and Luckmann, 1974) illustrates the transmission of social capital and how social learning is implicated in that process.

This body of works leads me on to explore how knowledge is implicated in the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people. Chapter five argues the phenomenological work of Schutz (1967; 1970a; 1970b; 1973; 1976) provides a heuristic device to thread together the conceptual similarities between the divergent frameworks often used to understand the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people. I first expand on the literature that is concerned with social learning processes (Allatt, 1993; Cohen and Ainley, 2000; Miles, 2000a; Raffo and Reeves, 2000), and ask how useful these ideas are for understanding how social processes are expressed through cultural means. I then introduce the work of Schutz, (1967; 1970a; 1970b; 1973; 1976) before drawing attention to how some of these notions, albeit couched in different terminology, have been implicated in the conceptualisations surrounding the transitions, boundaries, identities and lifestyles of young people. I highlight how the concepts of Schutz

can make explicit the tacit knowledge, without which our being in the world would not be possible.

Chapter six is concerned with how I got knowledge of participants' knowledge, how I accessed their world and the reasons behind and the implications of engaging in this process. I discuss how I engaged with the process of learning about how to participate in a host culture, to acquire inside knowledge which would supplant my own previous 'external' knowledge (Schutz, 1976). My choice of method was influenced both by the appropriateness of the method to the research question and to the intellectual culture to which it belongs. I first ask why ethnography? I then discuss ethnography in theory, that is the methodology behind the process of fieldwork. I then turn to discuss ethnography in practice, that is the research process itself, how I got knowledge of their knowledge, how I accessed their world and what data was co-constructed as a result of this process.

This brings us to the first of four data chapters. Chapter seven outlines the main findings in relation to the processes by which clubbers come to define not only themselves, but also the clubbing world around them. It primarily explores what kind of clubber they understand themselves to be. The concepts of Schutz provide a heuristic device, when synthesised with other conceptual frameworks, to link the disparate literature on transitions, identities and lifestyles. The process of analysis renders these concepts as 'good to think with'. I call on both the concepts associated with the work of Schutz and the concept of lifestyles to help me understand how clubbers identify and differentiate themselves from others. The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first will look at whether and in what sense participants defined themselves as being clubbers. The second

section explores the theme of identification and the third examines differentiation. More specifically, the chapter examines how participants constructed 'typical' scenes and crowds, what modes of identification and differentiation they used to do so, and how this process impacted on what kind of clubber they identify as or become.

Chapter eight concentrates on exploring how participants become cultural participants. It begins by discussing how participants 'suss out' club culture through drawing on material resources as well as social networks and knowledge (Giddens, 1984). Then I explore how participants begin to try out and experience club culture for themselves. These two sections aim to show how social knowledge and shared affinities direct participants towards particular club scenes. I then discuss the notion of becoming, to illustrate how participants perceive and experience a sense of belonging (or not). The notion of becoming works in sympathy with Schutz's ideas about systems of relevance functioning as schemes of interpretation and orientation (Schutz, 1970a: 120-121). I call on the concept of becoming to chart the process of becoming a cultural participant (Becker, 1991). I then discuss the various ways and means through which young people can become 'proper' clubbers.

Chapter nine explores the processes and practices through which clubbers demonstrate and maintain their cultural identity as a competent clubber. It begins by exploring the notion of honeymoon: a period in clubbers' life when their engagement with clubbing is pivotal and at its peak. The next section, 'everyone knows', takes up the concept of common knowledge: how it can range from the pragmatically limited to the well-informed (Schutz, 1970b: 39). I then take up the

notion of 'at home': how many of the clubbers were now participating in well defined social arenas in which they felt 'at home' (Strauss, 1997). The next section is called 'its not what you do but the way that you do it'. As the title implies, this section discusses how competency was about expressing the spirit, the embodied personification, of someone who is familiar with the ways of being in that cultural community (Schutz, 1970b: 18-19). I then move on to explore the notion of affirmation: how clubbers, through 'we-relationships' (Schutz, 1970b: 33) and gestures of affirmation (Strauss, 1997: 85), reaffirm eachothers' identification as proper clubbers. In the last section, I pull together the ways in which clubbers could be deemed incompetent. Both competency and incompetence were clearly illustrated through 'not quite right' or unbecoming behaviour.

Chapter ten discusses how, through narratives of progression, clubbers make changes in their clubbing lifestyles. I discuss how reduction in drug taking, increased investment in work careers, perceptions of ageing, changing expectations and priorities regarding socialising activities, all served to facilitate a less intense engagement with a clubbing lifestyle. I call on the notion of sociability to conceptualise how participants felt their involvement with clubbing had not only enhanced their social skills, but had provided them with sustainable social and communication skills. I also discuss the gendered dimension to sociability.

This takes us to my concluding chapter in which I bring together the main findings of the thesis and how I used theory to make sense of the data. I also point out the contributions of the study alongside my ideas for future research. Lastly, I highlight the significance of the findings in empirical, methodological and analytical terms.

Chapter Two Youth Transitions

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the transitions of young people, the processes of becoming something or someone else (Oakley, 1979; Coleman and Husen, 1985). Those who embrace a symbolic interactionist perspective view transitions as a process of moving from one stage to another: people's lives and situations are always evolving, adjusting, emerging, becoming (Rock, 1991; Becker, 1991; Plummer, 1991; 1997). These perspectives are discussed in chapter three. For the moment I focus on the ways in which young people can draw on resources to make their transitions successful. Being young is often viewed as a transitional or transformative phase in ones life and indeed these notions are reflected in youth research. I examine how youth transition literature reflects the concern that young people may be at risk of not making these transitions and processes of 'becoming' successfully (Roberts, 2000; Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). Specifically, I investigate the arguments that suggest transitions into adulthood are becoming subject to institutionalised individualisation, that they are becoming increasingly fragmented, individualised, extended and diverse (Chisholm and Bois-Reymond, 1993; Coles, 1995; Jones, 1995; Irwin, 1995; Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). I then discuss and critique the two main arguable trends of this process: that the period of youth is extending, and fragmenting. Last I will discuss the suggestions that have been put forward for a re-conceptualisation of young people's transitions.

Notion of youth transitions: applications, critiques and implications

Notion of youth transition

What is constructed as youth is very much linked to the social, economic and cultural conditions of the day, but how and when did the construct come about? It has been suggested that psychological discourses provided the ideological backdrop for the creation of adolescence (Cree, 2000: 92). The notion of adolescence also came about through the particular social and economic conditions prevailing at the end of the nineteenth century. Adolescence tends to be seen as a phase covering a limited time span, whereas the notion of youth indicates a much broader period of time; extending today from the mid-teens to the mid-twenties (Springhall, 1986). Wallace argues that these psychological notions of adolescence facilitate the idea of a 'normal' and universal model of youth transition (1987b). Youth is very much associated with age. As Coles argues, 'there is no clear end to the status of childhood and no clear age at which young people are given full adult rights and responsibilities' (1995: 7). Some rights and responsibilities are based on age, others are dependent on completion of transitional processes such as school, university or finding employment. I concur with Miles (2000b: 10) when he states 'youth is related to age but not determined by it', that 'youth' is historically, culturally and socially variable. I will use the term young people, however the terms of adolescence and youth will be used as they reflect the author's disciplinary and or conceptual perspective.

Interest in young people's transitions increased during the 1970's when structural influences and social divisions, such as an increase in youth unemployment and changes in education and training systems, became increasingly implicated in young people's social trajectories and life chances. Youth researchers and policy makers became interested in mapping what structural factors impeded or aided young people to become productive, independent adults. The transition approach focuses on 'the way structures affect how young people grow up, how they mange to reach 'adulthood' (Miles, 2000b: 10). Many youth transition studies tend to be large-scale projects, using variables of social class, gender, educational qualifications and ethnicity to highlight how these impact on young people's trajectories and routes into adult life (Goldthorpe, 1987; Banks et al., 1992). Structural approaches adopt a 'structure-down conception of what it means to be a young person and depend on broad discussions of employment and educational trends, that is the process through which young people reach adulthood most often through employment, education and training' (Miles, 2000a: 2-6).

The cultural transitions of young people have also been explored. Cultural approaches are often premised on a model of deviancy, resistance and labelling: they 'seek to address the cultural contexts into which young people escape' (Miles, 2000a: 2). Subcultures have often been viewed as transitional, they are part of a transformation that can be rejected later, and they are adolescent transitions that are symbolic of one's social position (Brake, 1985: 191). These studies are discussed in chapter four.

However both structural and cultural approaches have something in common; they both rely on concepts and categories that are constructed by those that are not

youth. They also tend to see youth as a linear phase with clear boundaries. Young people tend to be perceived as 'other', and presented in such a way as to illuminate, even highlight, the differences between them and 'others'. Both approaches echo wider debates in sociology concerning the 'cultural turn' (Chaney, 1994; Cieslik, 2001; Nash, 2001). They reflect a more general sociological concern with how much we, as social actors, are determined by the structural components in our lives, and how much we are active agents in determining our own biographies. It seems that sociologists still find that 'the relationship between individualisation processes on one hand, and structured social inequalities on the other, both theoretically and empirically unclear' (Chisholm and Bois-Reymond, 1993: 261). The influence and interplay of structure and agency, and the discussions that have taken place around such frameworks, emerge throughout the thesis. I now discuss the literature that examines how and in what ways young people may be 'at risk' of not making successful transitions.

Youth at risk?

It appears that underlying the notion of youth transition is the concern that young people might not make successful transitions. This concern with youth at risk is exemplified in the work of Roberts (2000). Roberts considers some transitions more crucial than others: he argues that the transitions from education to work, and family and housing transitions, are more important than 'becoming independent consumers, becoming legally able to have sex, consume alcohol or getting married' (Roberts, 2000: 4). This is because the 'sub-structure of young

people's lives need to be understood in order to explain what is happening elsewhere' in their lives (Roberts, 2000: 6). Key life transitions have serious implications for young people's futures whereas, the same cannot be said of some other kinds of youth transitions (Roberts, 2000: 4-5). This implies that if young people do not achieve a normative transition, that is one in which they leave school, get a job or go in to further education, get married and move into their own home, they are somehow 'at risk', not only to themselves but to wider society. It would appear that there is an implicit notion that young people who are less locked into structural processes may be seen to be or deemed more at risk of not making transitions successfully.

These normative, linear and 'at risk' tendencies in transitional models of youth experience can be seen clearly in the framework of ESRC youth programmes (Bynner, 1992; Bates and Riseborough, 1993). The notion that young people are at risk of not becoming independent, labour productive adults, as well as examples of youth being defined as 'other', different and as a social problem will be taken up in chapter three. For the moment I will discuss the critiques of the structural studies of youth transitions.

Social change: the risk of de-structuring

Wider theoretical debates about globalisation, rapid social change, risk, de-structuring or de-standardisation processes, and the rise of individualisation in late modernity have raised questions about how best to conceptualise and account for

youth experience, given 'that the life experiences of young people have changed significantly over the last two decades' (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997: 2).

There are suggestions that youth transitions are changing, and arguably losing, their structurally differentiated quality (Chisholm and Bois-Reymond, 1993: 259). This seems to partly stem from the argument that the economic restructuring in the labour market, that has taken place over the last two decades, has impacted significantly on the life experiences and trajectories of young people (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). Many youth researchers have pointed out a host of trends that may affect the life course and experiences of young people. These trends include rising age of marriage and first child, increasing numbers going on to higher education, the increasing importance of education qualifications and training, and the diversification of the labour market (Jones and Wallace, 1992; Chisholm and Bois-Reymond, 1993; Furlong and Cartmel, 1997; MacDonald, 1997). [1] As subjective class affiliations, family ties and traditional expectations weaken, consumption and lifestyles may have become central to the process of identity formation (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997: 9). These notions are relevant to own study because if consumption and lifestyles are now more central to the process of identity formation, we may be able to find evidence of this through the processes and practices of becoming a clubber.

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[1] For more detail on training and employment transitions, see Wallace and Cross (1990), Jones and Wallace (1992); Irwin (1995), MacDonald (1997), Cohen and Ainley, 2000, Ball et al., (2000), Reay et al. (2001), Sullivan (2001), Forsyth and Furlong (2002). The debates concerning the centrality and nature of social class and the notion of underclass is exemplified in the work of Roberts (1995; 1997) and MacDonald (1997). For discussion on young people's domestic and housing transitions see Coles (1995), Jones (1995), Pilcher (1995) and Irwin (1995).

Critiques

These trends have prompted many youth researchers to reconsider the theoretical and empirical implications of the transition model and youth experience itself (MacDonald et al., 2001; Hollands, 2002). This has been evident in the most recent ESRC youth programme, which included 'qualifying adjectives', such as 'extended', 'fragmented' and 'disrupted' (Cohen and Ainley, 2000: 80). Although still firmly based on the notion of transition, these adjectives reflect some of the critiques about transitional models of youth research and acknowledge to an extent the theoretical discussions that have taken place regarding the recent period of rapid social change.

The critiques of transitions studies centre on their predetermined and linear character (Cohen and Ainley, 2000). Irwin (1995) and Pilcher (1995) have suggested caution in explaining changes in transitions solely in terms of the labour market. 'The consequent emphasis on production has led to a limited research paradigm focused on transition as a rite of passage between developmental stages of psychological maturity and immaturity, complemented by a sociological transition narrowly restricted to (vocational) maturity and (nuclear) family formation' (Cohen and Ainley, 2000: 80). They can also give the impression that young people's transitions are homogenous. Chisholm and Bois-Reymond seem to agree with these sentiments when they state that 'youth is defined and guided by sets of institutionalised transitions, whose successful negotiation promise the goal

of adult independence and recognition as a full member of the community' (1993: 259).

In response, MacDonald et al. (2001), whilst acknowledging some of the criticisms, point to studies that have examined the cultural dimensions of transitions (Willis, 1977; Hollands, 1990; MacDonald and Coffield, 1991; Cohen, 1997). However, Hollands suggests that these exceptions have focused on disadvantaged young people and other categories of young people, such as service workers, further and higher education students, professional workers and middle class youth have yet to be studied (2002: 160). In the main, transition studies provide a way of conceptualising the 'big picture' (Wyn and White, 1997). But the concept appears insufficient for capturing the complexities of young people's everyday lives (Dwyer and Wyn, 1998; Miles, 2000b; Cohen and Ainley, 2000). I will now discuss the possible implications of youth transitions becoming more variable and individual affairs.

Implications of de-standardisation and individualisation

What are the possible implications of de-standardisation and increasing individualism? The changing nature of youth transitions can be seen in two notions. I discuss the notion that first, the period of youth is extending, and second, that it is becoming more fragmented.

Extended youth experience?

Does having protracted transitions mean that young people are defined as young people for longer, as the changes in age range of the ESRC youth programmes suggest? The notion of extended or protracted youth transition is problematic because it raises questions about the meaning of adult status (Wyn and White, 1997; 15). Is being an adult based on achieving independent housing, employment and income, and no longer engaging in cultural activities associated with being young? Transitions are systematically variable (Abbott and Wallace, 1990), so it is probable that factors such as class, gender and ethnicity will also affect in what ways transitions are protracted as well as who is more likely to have extended youth experiences. Youth researchers have found differences between social classes: working class boys were more likely to have 'accelerated' transitions, whilst middle class young people were more likely to go on to higher education, 'protracting' their transitions (Wallace, 1987a; Abbott and Wallace, 1990). Australian data suggests that relatively affluent and educated youth distanced themselves from a work ethic that placed success in the workplace above all else (Wyn and Dwyer, 1999: 17). It seems that it is the relatively well off educated youth that invest in individual choice, well-being and a valuing of leisure or family responsibilities (Wyn and Dwyer, 1999: 17). It will be interesting to see if we find becoming a clubber is indicative of an extended youth experience. And if so, are the people involved more likely to be post-compulsory educated more affluent and more likely to invest in and value individual choice. However, because some young people are less likely to have protracted transitions, this does not necessarily mean that their experience of youth is less fragmented, it is to this I now turn.

Fragmented youth experience?

Cohen and Ainley argue that fragmentation means that 'images of youth and adulthood have become blurred and confused, so the various phases of life in which age was linked to status have become 'uncoupled' (2000: 81). Chisholm and Bois-Reymond question whether this may mean that the 'sequencing and timing of the *rites de passage* between childhood and adulthood are dissolving and fragmenting', and 'whether the separations, and arguably the inequalities, between the situations and orientations of young people according to their class origin, ethnicity and gender are gradually disappearing' (1993: 259).

Yet, studies have shown that structural factors, to varying extents and in various combinations, can and still do provide powerful frameworks which constrain young people's experiences and opportunities (Wallace and Cross, 1990; Jones and Wallace, 1992; Roberts, 1995; Furlong and Cartmel, 1997; MacDonald; 1997). For example, 'the relationship between social class and scholastic performance has not weakened significantly' (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997: 110). Transitions of youth remain based largely on structural factors (Jones and Wallace, 1992: 142). Many researchers suggest caution in interpreting these changes in such a way as to suggest that the effects of structured social inequalities are diminishing (Chisholm and Bois-Reymond, 1993; Furong and Cartmel, 1997; Wyn and Dwyer, 1999; Cohen and Ainley, 2000). Is it credible that structured social inequalities are becoming less crucial in the life experiences of young people? That social class, gender, ethnicity and educational qualifications have less of a part to play in the life chances and experiences of young people? That young people are able to

construct their own life plans free from such structural and institutional elements? Furlong and Cartmel suggest not, 'capitalism without classes is inconceivable because some groups are always able to monopolise scarce resources and ensure that these advantages are reproduced across generations' (1997: 112). They continue 'although diversification involves the emergence of new experiences and trajectories, it does not involve a process of equalisation nor does it dilute the nature of class based inequalities on an objective level' (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997: 5). These 'institutionalised transitions are generally ordered and experienced in ways which reproduce existing patterns of social differentiation (and inequality), in particular, by gender, ethnicity and class' (Chilsolm and Bois-Reymond, 1993: 259).

Although there appears to be increasing individualisation processes at work, the actions of some young people need to be understood as 'informed choice strategies arising from opportunity and survival strategies arising from constraint' (Jones and Wallace, 1992: 142). Furlong and Cartmel argue that 'processes of diversification within the school and labour market may obscure underlying class relationships and may provide the impression of greater equality and individualisation without actually providing anything of substance' - this is what they call the epistemological fallacy of late modernity (1997: 5). Chisholm and Bois-Reymond posit that social change is more fragmented and contradictory than implied by some youth research, in particular, those studies that have adopted post-modernist concepts (1993). They point to the ways in which transitions are also gendered, it is to this that I now turn.

Gendered transitions

Transitions are also gender specific, and the question of transformation can be seen in the vast body of work exploring the relationship between social change and gender relations. This section can only summarise and signpost this body of work. Many of the themes will be discussed more fully in chapter three.

One of the main themes running through this work is that 'gendered identities are equally subject to transformation in an era of increasing participation in work outside the home and the increasing significance of consumption in identity construction' (Rattansi and Phoenix, 1997: 124). Again we see the notion of rapid social change implicated not only in youth transitions, but in the formation of identities, particularly youth identities, or what some writers call the 'changing modes of femininity and masculinity' (McRobbie, 1994; Rattansi and Phoenix, 1997). The relationship between social change and gender relations, the meanings and experiences attached to femininity and masculinity, and the changing representations and expectations of men and women, have all been explored in a range of social settings calling on a range of theoretical frameworks.

Much of the work on masculinity began around the 1970's, this included a variety of feminist work and responses to feminism (Hearn, 1987; 1989). Masculinity, how it is experienced and what it means to men in differing social positions, is explored by MacInnes (1998), Connell (1987; 1993; 1995; 2002), Morgan (1992), Hearn and Morgan (1990) and Segal (1990). Mac an Ghaill explores the relationship between masculinity and education (1996), whilst McInnes explores whether and in what

ways masculinity may be changing and or coming to an end (1998). The ways in which social structures and masculinities intersect are examined in Macan Ghaill's edited collection (1996). [2] It critically examines the ways in which 'dominant definitions of masculinity are affirmed and authenticated within different social and cultural arenas, where ideologies, discourses, representations and material practices systematically privilege men and boys' (Mac an Ghaill, 1996: 10). Mac an Ghaill argues that it is important to note that the 'interest in masculinity and sexuality is taking place within the broader context of cumulative effects of globalisation and communication systems, the changing nature of labour processes, which includes the collapse of manufacturing and a suggested feminisation of local labour markets, changing family forms and an increasing range of contradictory representations of men and masculinity' (1996: 3). This does not mean that masculinity is being transformed, rather what may have changed is 'not male power as such, but its form, the presentations and the packing' (Brittan, 1989: 2).

Similarly, the ways in which gender has been implicated in the identities and transitions of women can be seen across a breadth of literature. Authors such as McRobbie (1991; 1994), Barker (1998) and Pilcher (1999) have explored femininity and its representations. Whilst education, training and the labour market has provided fertile ground for exploring gender relations and femininities (Crompton

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[2]Mac an Ghaill's (1996) edited collection gives a flavour of the breadth and depth of work on masculinities. It explores the relationship between masculinity and the state (Westwood, 1996), heterosexual masculinities (Heward, 1996), schooling and masculinities (Haywood and Mac an Ghaill, 1996), patriarchy and masculinities (Collinson and Hearn, 1996), the institutionalisation of masculinity (Connell, 1995), unemployment and masculinity (Willott and Griffin, 1996), theorisation of male power (Edley and Wetherell, 1996) and black masculinity (Marriott, 1996).

and Sanderson, 1990; Delamont, 1990 Crompton, 1997; Bradley, 1998; Bottero, 2000). The family too has been a site for exploring the relationship between femininities and social change, particularly in relation to the possible changing patterns in the domestic and paid division of labour. For examples see Duncombe and Marsden (1993; 1995), Morgan (1996), Scott (1997), Silva and Smart (1999), McKie, Bowlby and Gregory (1999) Sullivan (2000) and Baxter (2000).

Much too has been written about the relationship between femininity and sexuality (Butler, 1990; Segal, 1994; Jackson and Scott, 1996; Hawkes, 1996; Holland et al., 1996; Harding, 1998; Jamieson, 1998). Many of these debates have highlighted the relationship between young women, their femininity and sexuality. This literature highlights the gendered nature of young people 'at risk'. Young women are often deemed to be 'at risk' through their sexuality. This is evidenced in the debates about 'teenage pregnancy' (Phoenix, 1990; Phoenix et al., 1991), young women's sexuality (Lees, 1993; 1997; Holland et. al., 1992; 1998), and young women's drug use (which is seen to impinge on their management and control of their sexuality) (Etorre, 1992; Henderson, 1993a; 1993b; Taylor, 1993; MacRae and Aalto, 2000; Wincup, 2001).

The work of Chisholm and Bois-Reymond illustrates clearly the gendered nature of transitions (1993). Young women who saw themselves as permanent full-time homemakers were also those who had been educationally unsuccessful and facing unfavourable school-to-work transitions. These women tended to come from working and lower middle class families' (Chisholm and Bois-Reymond, 1993: 269). They argue that 'continuous labour force participation is a central aspect of self-identity and life plans for all girls except those who face very poor labour

market prospects' (Chisholm and Bois-Reymond, 1993: 269). Their data does not support any fundamental shift in terms of gendered existence: 'regardless of what individual girls may be able to negotiate and achieve, the collective patterns of girls and women's lives remain sharply different from those of boys and men' (Chisholm and Bois-Reymond, 1993: 273). They remind us that 'pluralisation of routes does not automatically mean pluralisation of end points (end points being interim benchmarks)' (Chisholm and Bois-Reymond, 1993: 273).

The notions of protracted and fragmented transitions are also implicated in socialising activities of young people. Wyn & White point out that the transition from youth to adulthood has become less demarcated for many and youth as a symbolic representation can now be more of a continually available social experience (1997:21). Hollands suggests that the socialising activities, and the social meaning of 'going out', is changing from a 'simple rite of passage' to adulthood, towards a more permanent socialising ritual for many young adults (1995:19). Will these suggestions be echoed through the processes and practices of becoming a clubber?

The empirical literature suggests a complex picture. There are fragmented and diverse experiences of youth, yet these are still largely affected by structured social inequalities. It appears that those who are less affluent, who are working class, or who do not go on to further education, are less likely to have extended youth experiences. Conceptually, the structure down concept of transition seems unable to adequately deal with the complex nature of young people's transitions. How and in what ways can the youth transition debate move forward? How can

we find an adequate conceptualisation of youth experience? The next section discusses the suggestions put forward.

Re-conceptualising young people's transitions

Some youth researchers have put forward ideas for re-conceptualising the experiences and transitions of young people (Chisholm and Bois-Reymond, 1993; Furlong and Cartmel, 1997; Cohen and Ainley, 2000; Miles, 2000b; Raffo and Reeves, 2000; Bell, 2001; Hollands, 2002). These relate to empirical findings that point to the different ways in which youth transitions are becoming more variable, that transitions take place in different ways for different social groups at different periods of time, that they are complex affairs (Wallace and Cross 1990; MacDonald, 1997). We need a conceptualisation that accounts for the ways in which transitional processes vary, and may reflect more individual processes at work (Jones and Wallace, 1992). Even though some structures may have fragmented, changed form and become more obscure, many youth researchers are sceptical of post-modernist theories (Chisholm and Bois-Reymond, 1993; Furlong and Cartmel, 1997; Roberts, 2000; Cohen and Ainley, 2000; Cielslik, 2001; Hollands, 2002;). They argue these theories take insufficient account of how social structures; class and gender divisions remain central to an understanding of life experiences (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997: 2).

Furlong and Cartmel (1997) call on Berger et al. (1974) to remind us that Modernity has always involved differentiation, a plurality of lifeworlds, a weakening of communal regulations and a sense of uncertainty (Durkheim, 1947). They

argue that theories of youth experience need to account for social structures, such as class and gender, whilst simultaneously acknowledging and accounting for increasingly obscure and weakened collectivist traditions and an intensification of individualist values (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997: 2). Similarly Rudd (1997); MacDonald (1998); Hollands (2002), and ask for research that takes account of the complexity and uncertainty of young people's lives, both in post school destinations and lifestyle choices, to take account of both the structural and the cultural elements of young people's lives. An example of such is a study by Ball et al., (2000). This study embraces a wider notion of transition through looking at the combined interaction of education, training, labour market, domestic and leisure pathways over four years amongst a socially diverse group of young people (Ball et al., 2000).

Conceptually, there appears to be two main theoretical areas that youth researchers have turned to, the 'individualisation and globalisation' and the 'habitus and capitals' theses. The individualisation and globalisation thesis is associated with the work of Elias (1978; 1982), Giddens (1991) and Beck (1992). Furlong and Cartmel remind us that the work of Elias (1978; 1982) may help us understand how individuals are inseparable from their social contexts and as social figurations change, similar changes are manifest in the constituent parts (1997: 114). This may provide an adequate conceptualisation of the changes and continuities in the lives of young people (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997: 109). However they also reiterate strongly that it would be incorrect to equate processes of individualisation with a weakening of social structures, even though those structures operate in more complex and increasingly obscure ways (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997).

One element of the individualisation argument is however rejected by many youth researchers. Furlong and Cartmel (1997), Miles (2000a), Cohen and Ainley (2000), Ball et al., (2000), Raffo and Reeves (2000) and Chatterton and Hollands (2001), all reject the notion put forward by Giddens that place loses its significance in late modernity (1991; 1992). They all consider area, locally situated experiences and knowledge an important aspect in young people's life experiences and lifestyles. The importance of localised knowledge will be taken up in chapters four and five. Very recently Hollands suggested that the incorporation of spatial analyses could bring together transitional study and cultural analysis (2002: 168). These analyses may help us 'begin to conceptualise contemporary youth cultural identities in the context of social divisions created through differential pathways' (Hollands, 2002: 153).

The second body of work that appears to be increasingly drawn upon are the notions of habitus and capitals (Bourdieu, 1984). Thomson et al., (1999) call on Bourdieu to help understand the relationship between young people's individuals values, their identities and the social environments. Bell (2001) draws on the notion of social capital to understand the ways in which young people develop and use social networks in securing work placements. Allatt uses it to explain the ways in which privilege and disadvantage are transmitted (1993: 156). Bourdieu's notion of capital is seen to be a framework that can account for both structure and agency (Jenkins, 1992; Morrow, 1999; Miles, 2000b; Raffo and Reeves, 2000). The theory of capitals and habitus may provide a useful conceptual framework for exploring the influence of lifestyles and consumption activities in the lives of young people (Bourdieu, 1984).

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the notion of youth transition. I have discussed the literature that suggests that the transitions of young people continue to be structured by factors such as class, family background, gender, race, educational achievement and labour market opportunities despite the recent era of rapid social change (Abbott and Wallace, 1990; Jones and Wallace, 1992; Chisholm and Bois-Reymond, 1993; Furlong and Cartmel, 1997; Forsyth and Furlong, 2002). The youth transitions model emphasises the role of structure in the lives of young people and highlights how some young people may be seen as at risk of not successfully completing their journeys to adulthood, via their school-to-work, and family/housing transitions. It is also argued that 'youth experience is very diverse and highly dependent upon specific personal experiences of social division and inequality' (Miles, 2000b: 10). This argument reflects the wider debates in sociology surrounding the processes of globalisation, institutional individualisation and rapid social change (Giddens, 1991; 1992; Furlong and Cartmel, 1997; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). It is suggested that the increasing individualisation and de-standardisation that has arguably taken place over the last two decades can be seen most clearly through the life experiences and trajectories of young people. The literature indicates pluralisation and diversification taking place in young people's transitions, but it does not suggest an equalisation of such (Chisholm and Bois-Reymond, 1993). Life courses may have become more individualised, but there is still strong evidence to suggest that the social reproduction of class, privilege and disadvantage continues. 'While traditional

sources of inequality continue to ensure the reproduction of advantage and disadvantage among the younger generation, various social changes have meant that these social cleavages have become more obscure' (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997: 10). The notion of young people attaining adult status at a particular point in their lives has been replaced with the notion of continuous and provisional becoming. Some young people may experience extended transitions, in part through their consumption and lifestyles, however this experience would seem to be tempered and more likely to occur in affluent youth, those that have had access to and experience of further education. The gendered nature of these transitions is also still in evidence: in particular through the ways in which young women can be considered at risk of not making successful transitions through a lack of management and control of their sexuality.

In light of these findings and arguments, there has been an upsurge in the calls for a re-conceptualisation of youth experience. One potential conceptual tool that has been put forward is that of habitus and capitals (Bourdieu, 1984). We are reminded that the youth research needs not only to explore how 'young people amass resources for transitions, not only in the formal educational system but also through the patterns of wider social participation and life styles' (Chisholm and Bois-Reymond, 1993: 260-261). [3] Miles argues that 'young people's experience of social life is founded on the intersection of the structural and the cultural, and it is this intersection that needs to be focused upon' (2000b: 9).

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[3] This implies informal education at play.

The identities of young people have also come under increased scrutiny, particularly in relations to their consumption and leisure lifestyles (Miles, 1996; 1998; 2000a and 2000b; Ball et al., 2000; Hollands, 2002). Lifestyle and consumption are discussed in chapter four. The ways in which identities are constructed in late modernity has been a key concern in sociology over the last decade (Giddens, 1991; Lash and Friedman, 1992; Jenkins, 1996; Craib, 1998). Furlong and Cartmel wonder what the extension of youth transitions may have for the construction of young people's identities (1997: 40). It is worth remembering at this point how symbolic interactionism views the notion of transition. Transitions are seen as reflexive, emergent processes that are not always clear or linear. We need to explore the literature that examines the transitions we make in order to make manifest our identities, literature that focuses on the 'strategies of acquiring a sense of self, developing a biography through interaction' (Plummer, 1991: x). Literature that can conceptualise and explain how people may experience a continuous and provisional development or becoming. Becoming also involves learning, it is a 'transformational process which revolves around the acquisition of meanings, motives and perspectives' (Rock, 1991: 237). These issues have been a recurring theme in the work of symbolic interactionists. It is to this body of work that I now turn.

Chapter Three   Boundaries, Becoming and Identities

Introduction

The last chapter looked at the notion of youth transitions. This approach emphasises the impact and implications of structural factors in young people's life opportunities and trajectories. This chapter is also concerned with transitions, but those that are seen to be emergent and adjustable, transitions that are conceived of as processes of becoming. Notions of the self and identity are intimately connected with processes of becoming. Processes of becoming are also related to the boundaries and identities people construct and create by and for themselves. This is relevant because identifying as and becoming a clubber only appears to acquire meaning in relation to and in contrast to those who do not identify as or become clubbers. In other words, those notions of what and who you are, as well as what and who you are not, only become meaningful and significant through interaction with others. I turned to the literature that explores how people define themselves, how and in what ways they construct their own boundaries and how they define themselves as different from others. Symbolic interactionism proved useful as it is expressly concerned with process, how people, through interaction, evolve, negotiate and become (Mead, 1934a; Blumer, 1962; Rock, 1991; Becker, 1991; Plummer, 1997; Strauss, 1997).

The first section explores what the literature has suggested in terms of notions of the self, processes of becoming and how these concepts relate to my own study. I explore the notion of situated identity and argue that we have 'multiple interacting

identities that are staggered over time' (Rock, 1991: 231). Identifying as a clubber is an identification built up through interaction. It changes through time and is situated. Becoming a clubber is a transition, and transitions are emergent and diffuse processes.

My next focus is the literature that has explored symbolic boundaries, group life or how 'people do things together' (Becker, 1986). I explore the concepts that help us understand how groups create their own boundaries, how group life and one's commitment to it is a process, one that ebbs and flows. I explore how young people have a hand in the creation of their own boundaries, how this process is reflexive and works in symbiosis with others imposing and defining young people through their difference. I bring together disparate disciplines, social anthropology and symbolic interactionism, to conceptualise how people come to form into collective groups, groups that construct shared meanings through interaction. This literature is pertinent to my own study as it discusses how we construct communities through symbolic boundaries and the commitment we invest in those is one of process, a process of becoming.

Gender appears absent in many of these discussions. This is an important gap particularly given this is one area of interest and inquiry of my thesis. Before going on to discuss the implications of gender in the formation of identities, I take up the notion that all identities and boundaries are not completely self-defined. I call on symbolic interactionist work to explore notions of deviance and labelling. I adopt the position that deviance is an extension of becoming, becoming deviant, it is a transformational process (Rock, 1991). I discuss how young people have been

often perceived as other, categorised as a social problem and been defined through their deviance and difference.

I then return to the issue and experience of gender, specifically exploring the literature that has discussed gendered identities. I discuss symbolic interactionism conceptions of gender and the 'new' concepts on identity to see how they can shed light on how young people's gendered identities are assimilated in late modernity.

Notions of the self, identity and processes of becoming

Plummer states that 'A key concern for interactionist sociology is the ways in which people go about the task of assembling meaning: how we define ourselves, our bodies, feelings, behaviours and acts; the situations we are in; the wider social order and how such meanings are built up through interaction with others, modified and transformed and evolve through encounters' (Plummer, 1991: x). This does not mean we have unconstrained choices regarding who we become or that there is no pattern to the meanings we attach to the wider social order and ourselves. As Plummer argues 'the habitual, routine and shared meanings we regularly create are always open to reappraisal and further adjustment' (Plummer, 1991: x). The meanings we attach to ourselves, our actions and our situations, evolve and adjust in light of the interactions we have with others. We, and the socialworld of which we are part, are always in a process of becoming. This constant process makes interactionists focus upon the strategies of acquiring a sense of self,

developing a biography, adjusting to others, negotiating order' (Plummer, 1991: x-xi).

Mead (1934a; 1934b) and Rock (1991) emphasise the reflexive, situated and plurality of the self. 'Reflexivity allows an assumption of practical correspondence, for social life to go on and gives some confidence in the existence of a shared world' (Rock, 1991: 232). Within this partly assumed and partly shared social world, the self is a development. It 'arises in the process of social experience and activity, develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process' (Mead, 1934a: 135). We can clearly see that Mead rejects the notion of a given, unitary self. An individual has different relationships with different people; we can be one thing to one person and another thing to another. 'A symbolic self can be projected into all manner of settings, allowing a re-enactment of past behaviour and rehearsal of future behaviour, it allows a person to attain perspective on one's own conduct. There can be anticipation of others' reactions to a crowd of one's own probable selves' (Rock, 1991: 230). 'Being social is an intricate accomplishment, and it demands an imagination of a changing self and its many partners, contexts and liaisons' (Rock, 1991: 231). The knowledge we have about ourselves is incomplete, mediated, situated and emergent (Rock, 1991: 232).

However the self cannot dictate its own environment (Mead, 1934a). The notion of imposed identities will be taken up later in the chapter. The core ideas of Symbolic Interactionist work highlight this social 'other' which always impinges on the individual (Plummer, 1991: xi). As the 'other' manifests itself, its character and content become causally significant to the emergence of the self and its nature

and content' (Perinbanayagam, 1975). Rock argues that 'selves are dependent on the recognition of others who form their environment' (1991: 235). The processes of social order and the development of the self are inseparable, hence the great importance attached to the structure of the group (Mead, 1934b: xxxi). Indeed, social objects assume their meaning and societies are constituted through the symbolic interaction of 'self' and 'others', in joint action (Plummer, 1991: xi). It is to this I now turn.

Symbolic boundaries

Joint acts, group life, and boundaries.

The collective workings of group life were a key concern for Shibutani (1955), Blumer (1962), Cohen (1985) and Strauss (1997). They were concerned with how individuals through interaction come to form collective groups who construct shared meanings that differentiate them from others. These concerns are paralleled in this thesis because, as we shall see, the construction of boundaries tells us something about both the individuals involved as well as the community itself. In this section I call on literature that has explored 'how people do things together' (Becker, 1986). The ways people come to form communities, that is 'members of a group of people who have something in common with one another, which distinguishes them in a significant way from others' (Cohen, 1985: 12). Social anthropology and symbolic interactionism are rooted in different conceptual and disciplinary heritages, yet I suggest they have a common thread. In this

section I highlight their commonalties, the ways in which they can shed light on joint acts, group life and boundaries.

Community seems to imply simultaneously similarity and difference, as well as a sense of distinction, discrimination and boundary (Cohen, 1985: 12). These concepts are central to the thesis as they may tell us something about the ways in which various club scenes are constructed and operate around their similarities and differences. It may also shed light on the how the practices and tastes of clubbers serve to distinguish them from others and how these may structure their personal experience and identity.

But why, asks Cohen is the marking of boundaries necessary (1985: 12)? He argues that 'the consciousness of the community is encapsulated in perception of its boundaries, boundaries which are themselves largely constituted by people in interaction' (Cohen, 1985: 13). However, not all boundaries are objectively apparent or clearly defined, they may be thought of as existing in the minds of the beholders. This means both those on the same side and those on the opposite side of the boundary may perceive the boundary in different ways (Cohen, 1985: 12).

Plummer states that symbolic boundaries have definitional problems, in that, there is no fixed meaning (1991:xi). What these boundaries or identifications mean depends on the 'definitions of significant others whose interaction constitutes its meaning' (Plummer, 1991: xi). This implies that the boundaries of the group are reflexive, that the sensibilities of the group structure personal experience, and personal experience structure the sensibilities of the group. It also seems to imply

that symbolic meaning of the community varies even amongst those who define themselves to part of the same community.

Cohen suggests that symbols rarely represent the same thing to all people, their meaning may vary according to context and those who employ them can supply part of their meaning (1985). We may share a language but meanings are not shared in the same way. Each is mediated by the experience of the individual (Cohen, 1985: 14). Some categories such as love, peace, unity and respect, terms commonly associated with raving and clubbing (Weber, 1999: 326), are difficult to clearly define, but their range of meanings can be glossed over in a commonly accepted symbol. [1] It would seem that 'group life perpetuates itself because members are able to participate because they have shared meanings in common and further shared experience elicits new classifications and points of agreement' (Strauss, 1997: 151).

Shibutani a symbolic interactionist, was also concerned with the workings of collective life (1955). He developed the notion of reference groups to illustrate how people can simultaneously belong to and participate in different social worlds. Strauss adapted Shibutani's concepts to argue that 'these social worlds are diffuse yet recognisable, both to participants and outsiders, through the types of participants and the types of standards, attitudes and status aspirations that members of the group hold' (Strauss, 1997: 164). What I find useful about this notion is the way in which it conceives of group life as a process, one that is not

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[1] For a discussion of the Iconography such as the smiley face see Garratt, 1998, Forsyth, 1997.

linear in character. It accounts for the varying strengths of participants' sense of belonging, the fluctuating investments and status positions of members as well as their experiences and competencies. Will we see evidence of clubbers belongings fluctuating, will we see the ways in which competency can be implicated in notions of status?

Strauss suggests that people's investment in the community or culture that they are part of fluctuates (1997). That there may be periods when people have to invest in the group heavily, when they have to learn, become experienced, 'a status is likely to become a way of being as well as a way of acting' (Strauss, 1997: 105 -126). This conceptualisation accounts for how some people may not have a great sense of belonging and allegiance (or identification) to group life yet participate frequently whilst others may feel immense allegiance yet participate less frequently (Strauss, 1997: 152-153). Strauss suggests that 'the phase like character of status is worth analysing', it is not a linear process, neither is status necessarily accrued, as staying too long may invite criticism (1997: 129).

Lamont in her exploration of Money, Morals and Manners; is concerned with the subjective symbolic boundaries that people construct between themselves and others (1992). Informed by Bourdieu (1984), Weber (1978a) and Schutz and Luckmann (1974), Lamont suggests that 'boundaries emerge when we try and define who we are: we constantly draw inferences concerning our similarities to and differences from others, indirectly producing typification systems' (1992:12). 'Boundary work is also a way of developing a sense of group membership, it creates bonds based on shared emotions, similar conceptions of the sacred and the profane' (Lamont, 1992:12). Boundaries not only create groups, they also

potentially produce inequality because they are an essential medium through which individuals acquire status, monopolise resources, ward off threats, legitimise their social advantages, often in reference to superior lifestyle, habits, character or competencies (Weber, 1978a: 306/307). Although Lamont draws heavily on Bourdieu (1984), she does not presume cultural differences automatically translate into hierarchies of domination and repression (1992: 177). She suggests that only strong boundaries, created through consensus on the nature of cultural hierarchies, can generate inequality and that differentiation does not necessarily lead to hierarchy (Lamont, 1992: 178). [2] Boundaries may constitute a system of rules that guide interaction by affecting who comes together to engage in what social acts (Lamont, 1992: 12). Again we find issues of competency being implicated in the production of boundaries. It would seem the more coherent and consensual the boundaries, the clearer patterns of cultural competence become, thus 'the action of others, their willing, feeling and thinking is a constant problem for the practical hermeneutics of everyday life' (Schutz and Luckmann, 1974: 114).

Boundaries are also apparent in some of the work that has explored rave, club culture or urban dance music. Much of this work calls attention to how clubbers mark the similarities and differences between them and others. The next section discusses what the clubbing literature tells us about joint acts, group life, similarity and difference, group and individual sensibilities, and the ways in which boundaries are implicated in processes of becoming.

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[2] Abbott in his examination of professional boundaries, suggests that what is interesting about boundary work is what happens at the edge of boundaries when the distinctions between 'us' and 'them' are blurred (1988).

Rhetoric of otherness and belonging: clubbing boundaries

This section discusses the various conceptual frameworks that have been used to account for the symbolic boundaries that characterise contemporary social dance scenes, particularly club scenes. It explores how the identifications we make appear to be central to our sense of belonging. Furthermore, how there appears to be a reflexive relationship between the sensibilities and identifications of the group and the sensibilities and identifications of the individual.

Bennett argued that the 'rhetoric of otherness' was a defining feature in the organisation of dance scenes in Newcastle (2000: 94). It appears that this is about the construction, maintenance, perception and experience of boundaries. Similar notions can be seen in other studies that have explored club culture and nightlife provision (Thornton, 1995; Pini, 1997a; Malbon, 1999; Weber, 1999; Hollands, 2002; Pilkington, 2002). The concepts used to explain these boundaries have varied. Thornton (1995) used the notion of subcultural capital, an adaptation of Bourdieu's (1984) notion of cultural capital, to illuminate the boundaries and hierarchies operating with club culture. She found that despite diversity of scenes, there remained distinctions between what she called 'mainstream' and 'hip' clubbing (Thornton, 1995: 5). Malbon utilises an eclectic body of work, which includes Maffesoli (1995) to explore the practices, experiences and spaces of going clubbing (1999). Malbon found distinctions between clubs primarily occupied by office workers and/or 'tourists', who wanted to consume large amounts of alcohol, and the clubs occupied by 'clubby types' and the 'real'

clubbers who were dedicated to dancing, often under the effects of ecstasy[3] (Malbon, 1999: 67-68). Bennett also turns to Maffesoli's (1995) notion of tribal sociality and neo-tribes to explore the identities of young people in relation to urban dance music (1999, 2000). Boundaries are not exclusive to British club culture, similar boundaries manifested themselves in Russia (Pilkington, 2002) and in Canada (Weber, 1999). In studies exploring identities, identifications and clubbing experiences the 'other' was also visible, these 'others' were people and places who were to be avoided in the 'management of positivity and the policing of negativity' (Pini, 1997b: 162). Boundaries were manifested through a host of practices, tastes, values and knowledges. Whatever the specific differences and contexts, they all appear to serve a similar purpose - to construct and maintain a sense of shared sensibilities amongst the group, as well as to construct and maintain as sense of difference and distinction from 'others'.

The constructions of 'hip' and 'mainstream' (Thornton, 1995), 'underground/alternative' and 'townie/traditional' (Bennett, 2000), 'cool' and 'other' (Malbon, 1999) are not entirely fixed and dichotomous. As Pilkington explains, 'these are not labels for definitive sets of people, as there were internal divisions, various and diverse manifestations within each group' (2002: 194).[4] Moreover, 'dichotomies such as mainstream/subculture and commercial/alternative do not relate to the way dance crowds are objectively organised as much as to the means

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[3] Ecstasy is the common name for MDMA (3,4-Methylenedioxy-N-methamphetamine). It is associated with stimulating empathetic, euphoric feelings in its users. For more see Beck and rosenbaum (1994), Forsyth (1997).
[4] The Pilkington (2002) text is in press, the page number refers to the proof version of the book.

by which many youth cultures imagine their social world, measure their cultural worth and claim their subcultural capital' (Thornton, 1995: 96).

'Otherness', distinction and boundaries are not new in clubs and night- time leisure. Clubs appear to have a history of operating around boundaries and notions of exclusivity and inclusivity. [5] This has occurred from the origins of Chicago house music events of the seventies through to the superclubs of the nineties where door policies operate for the purpose of either exclusion or inclusion (Garratt, 1998). Despite this, raves were enveloped in 'discourse of utopian egalitarianism: they were events without door policies where people from all walks of life were welcome' (Thornton, 1995: 56). Clubbing boundaries may be diffuse but nevertheless recognisable.

Thornton states that she could not and did not find a typically 'mainstream crowd', as there were always some features about each of the scenes that served to distinguish them from one another (1995: 107). Despite this, clubbers were 'generally happy to identify a homogenous crowd to which they don't belong and most clubbers and ravers see themselves as outside of and in opposition to the mainstream' (Thornton, 1995:99). Very recently Hollands advances the notion of the mainstream (2002). He attempts to show the structuration of youth cultures: illustrating the many sub divisions based on intra-class hierarchies, age, gender

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[5] Thornton has illustrated how discos and clubs, the precursors to rave, were meant to be both exclusive and egalitarian, classless but superior to the mass market institutions that preceded them (1995: 56). Specifically, Acid House and early rave was an alternative to and sometimes constructed as being in opposition to the disco club based scene of the 1980's (Garratt, 1998). These musical/cultural alternatives were not designed to attract anyone and everyone. Rather, as Garratt has argued, they operated on the basis of attracting a particular kind of crowd (1998).

and locality (Hollands, 2002: 163). The mainstream was characterised by smart attire, commercial chart music, circuit drinking and hedonistic behaviour, often within largely corporate owned bars and nightclubs (Hollands, 2002: 163). In contrast, musical taste and knowledge was consistently sited as being both a cohering and dividing force amongst most club scenes (Thornton, 1995; Malbon, 1999; Bennett, 2000). Scenes such as 'mainstream', 'townie', 'normal' or 'tourist' were associated with commercial and popular chart tunes, whereas the 'hip', 'real', 'progressive' scenes were associated with pioneering and progressive dance music (Thornton, 1995; Weber, 1999; Hollands, 2002). The latter were more associated with being 'in the know', having the social networks and knowledge to gain access (Thornton, 1995: 56; Malbon, 1999; Pilkington, 2002). Moreover, in 'alternative' night-life scenes, Hollands found there was exchange of ideas and values, business deals and networks of trust and reciprocity (2002: 167).

Crowds manifested on the basis of taste, taste in people, media and music (Thornton, 1995: 3). Progressive or alternative scenes are more associated with illicit drug use, whereas the mainstream scenes associated with alcohol use (Forsyth, 1997; Weber, 1999; Measham et al., 2001). [6] Thornton argued that club cultures are taste cultures (1995: 3). Bennett argued that underground scenes were organised around musical taste and perceived shared sensibilities that were illustrative of a show of collective defiance against townie clubber sensibilities (Bennett, 2000: 86-87). Hollands concurs that 'alternative' spaces associated with

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[6] For more on drugs, particularly Ecstasy, see Davies and Ditton (1990), Beck and Rosenbaum (1994), Forsyth (1996), Dalgarno and Shewan (1996), Henderson (1997), Akram (1997), Howe (2000), Shewan, Dalgarno and Reith (2000), Measham et al. (2001) and Hammersley et al. (2002).

particular identity groups based around genres of music are identifiable, but reminds us that minority cultural identities do not negate that urban night-life is organised around social and spatial divisions, inequalities and hierarchies (2002: 167).

Boundaries were not always about practices or tangible tastes. As Malbon argued, 'clubbers develop embodied techniques and competencies – in the form of sociality – to manage a 'cool identity' (1999: 58). Drawing on Goffman's (1968) notions of impression management and spoiled identity, he illustrates how clubbers develop confidence and competence through demonstrating their embodied understandings and taste (Malbon, 1999). But more specifically through knowing how to embody the rhythm, express happiness, interact through dancing, deal with others who are extremely close, to gaze and be gazed upon (Malbon, 1999: 100). Being cool or hip was about embodying the 'right' attitude. This was in part about avoiding negative vibes or refusing to acknowledge 'difference' or tensions (Pini, 1997b: 162). Malbon agrees that although clubbers have identifications in common with one another and they can identify themselves as a group, 'what is shared may temporarily become more significant than what is distinct' (Malbon, 1999; 51).

Those who were constructed as 'other' or mainstream by the hip and 'progressive' clubbers were perceived as unable to embody the 'right' attitude (Malbon, 1999). They were made visible through not being adept at employing the 'right' ways of being, the cultural codes of conduct that could signal their identification with 'hip' clubbing (Thornton, 1995). Hollands found recently that the mainstream were easily distinguished and identified by their particular dress styles and demeanour,

despite the mainstream being inhabited in different ways by different groups from across the social spectrum (2002: 163). He adds that the mainstream was largely populated by working class youth that were disparaged by their counterparts: disparagement that took a gendered character (Hollands, 2002: 163). He also found that the mainstream increasingly provides more exclusive gentrified spaces, which provide an atmosphere conducive for networking, socialising and meeting other social climbers (Hollands, 2002: 165). Whatever clubbers perceived sensibilities were based around and whatever they represented or were in opposition to, it would seem that the notion of mainstream plays the role of 'the other' for clubbers, it is everything that their clubbing experience is not about (Malbon, 1999: 59). Other crowds are seen to be homogeneous whilst their own are seen to be heterogeneous despite being similar or like-minded. Yet, clubs and raves are *ad hoc* communities with fluid boundaries that come together and dissolve over a summer or endure for a few years (Thornton, 1995: 111). The construction of 'other' appears to contribute to the perceptions of belonging that many clubbers feel. Pini suggests that these perceptions do not come naturally, they are something that clubbers have to work for (1997b: 162). Will we see evidence of such constructions in this thesis?

The last two sections have focused on symbolic boundaries; the ways in which symbolic interactionism has contributed to our understanding about individual and group identities and how boundaries have been conceptualised in the specific literature on contemporary dance cultures. However, symbolic interactionist work tends to understate the structural factors that impact on people's lifeworlds such as economic forces and institutionalised power. It has been criticised for prioritising social actors agency in the formations of identities whilst paying scant attention to

how structural factors of people's social positions may impact on those processes. [7] Moreover, theoretically interactionist work has been criticised for not being cumulative (Plummer, 1997). Glaser and Strauss go some way to counteract that criticism by demonstrating generic social processes at work through moving from substantive theory that informs the specific, and moving to more sustained analyses of common processes (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). I also explored the various ways that group life and symbolic boundaries have been conceptualised in the specific literature on club culture. The next section is also concerned with boundaries, becoming and identities, but those that are more defined and imposed upon by others.

Deviance and labelling

In this section I explore briefly the concepts of deviance and labelling, as these notions are connected to processes of becoming as exemplified in Outsiders (Becker, 1991). As seen in chapter two young people are often viewed in terms of their difference, thought of as a social problem or at risk through their behaviour. Defining categories, such as young, old and woman are linked to and often reflect wider relations of power. Significant, more powerful others may force an identity not of our choosing upon us. Young people can become defined through their deviance and difference.

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[7] There have been calls for social theory to see structure and action as complementary perspectives (Giddens, 1984).

One purpose of this small section is to point out that club culture has been subject to moral and legal regulation as a result of being deemed potentially subversive to the moral fabric of young people. I also raise the possibility that identifying with something that has been deemed publicly deviant may impact on the management of a clubbing identity and lifestyle.

Becoming deviant

Labelling Theory is largely but not wholly the extension of symbolic interactionism into the arena of rule breaking and social control and the sociology of deviance (Rock, 1991: 228-237). Symbolic interactionism has been blended with other forms of sociology, but whatever the blend, one should find an interest in 'reflexivity as a central attribute of social life' (Rock, 1991: 228). 'It is out of the idea of reflexivity and the folding back of consciousness on itself, that labelling theory flows' (Rock, 1991: 228). Becker argued that deviant behaviour was the product of social labelling, that 'social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance and by applying those rules to particular person and labelling them as outsiders' (1991: 9). He posited that the 'moral entrepreneurs', those with a significant voice in dominant society, react negatively and forcefully to those individuals or groups they perceive to be deviant (Becker, 1991).

Learning to become deviant or criminal involves all the mechanisms that are involved in other learning and becoming processes such as learning to become a mother, a nurse or a schoolteacher. It is a transformational process that revolves around the acquisition of meanings, motives and perspectives (Rock, 1991). It

occurs over time, 'assisted and sometimes forced by the significant others who populate the environments through which the emerging deviant moves' (Rock, 1991: 237). What makes it special is that deviance is a morally devalued and discredited status (Goffman, 1963: 146).

Becoming deviant is not wholly the result of outside forces; it is a reflexive process. Becker illustrates how the labelling process is not always imposed by external agencies, it is subject to a reflexive dialogue between the groups own internal standards, rules and expectations and those of wider society (1991). Interactionist theories of deviance, like interactionist theories more generally, 'pay attention to how social actors define each other and their environments' (Becker, 1986; 204). They pay particular attention to power differentials, the way in which one group can use power to define how other groups will be regarded, understood and treated. The attack on hierarchy begins with an attack on definitions, labels and conventional conceptions of who's who and what's what (Becker, 1986; 205). Becoming publicly deviant may be very fateful, 'it may involve a public response evoked by the rule breaking, through a process of identification the applied label may be incorporated into the identity of the person concerned' (Rock, 1991: 238). Being labelled and cast as deviant in the public eye can have consequences both for the group and the individuals within it, as illustrated by Cohen (1987). Young people are no strangers to having labels imposed upon them; it is to this I turn next.

Gendered risk and the response to rave

Young people have frequently been presented as troublesome, posing a potential threat to society and the *status quo* (Pearson, 1983). Seeing young people as a potential threat and social problem is reflected in the amount of research, social policy and youth work attention that is focused on 'troubled teens' (Hudson, 1988; 1989; Griffin, 1993; MacIntyre and Cunningham-Burley, 1993; Lees, 1997; Jamieson et al., 1999)

Moreover the problems, threats or risks associated with young people are gendered in nature (Hollands, 2002). Hudson suggests that as a society we expect trouble from male youths, 'delinquency provides the means for developing an identity as a man' (1988: 37). Young women have contrasting expectations; they are expected to learn for a life of passivity, servitude and domesticity. If they deviate from this, their behaviour is interpreted on the basis of sexuality (Hudson, 1989). Youth and music cultures have also come under surveillance and constraint. McRobbie notes how dancing, particularly dancing girls, has evoked concerns about sexual display (1991; 2000). Dancing has provided ammunition for moral panics about young people, although often it is the activities associated with dancing (drinking, drug use, sex and violence) that come under attack (McRobbie 1991: 194). And indeed we can find evidence of this in the development of and reaction to rave and club culture.

I do not intend to provide a detailed discussion on the evolution of rave culture, the media responses to it or the legal constraints it has been subject to. [8]However, it

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[8] For more details on responses to rave please see Thornton (1994), Collin with Godfrey (1998), Henderson (1997) and Forsyth (1997).

is worth noting that the media and political response to rave could be seen as an example of a 'moral panic' (Cohen, 1987). By 1988, 'Acid house' and rave culture was portrayed as a site of risk and something potentially subversive to the moral fabric of society. It seemed that it was the activities associated with raving, such as drug use, as well as the unpredictability of the events that provided at least some of the ammunition for this kind of response (McRobbie, 1991). McRobbie and Thornton suggest that the response to rave helped construct it and its music as oppositional (1995: 565-6). Critcher argues that raving constitutes a challenge to leisure studies, as rave culture, now club culture, is a case study in the moral regulation of leisure (2000).[9]

In chapter two I summarised and signposted the ways in which gender has been implicated in young people's transitions and drew attention to the gendered nature of deviance. Because this thesis is concerned about the processes of becoming a clubber and whether these processes are gendered, I want to discuss the literature that has explored how gender may be implicated in these processes and identities. I now return to symbolic interactionism, specifically the body of work that sees gender as a 'profound source of self-identification' (Goffman, 1987: 54). I also want to briefly discuss the notion of 'doing gender' in social interaction (West and Zimmerman, 1991) and gender as performance (Butler, 1990; 1993; 1996; 1999; Skeggs, 1997) before turning to some of the literature that has discussed young people's gendered identities.

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[9] Although clubbing is very much part of the leisure and night time economy O'Connor and Wynne, 1995; Smith and Maughan, 1998; Critcher, 2000; Chatterton and Hollands, 2001; 2002; Hollands, 2002 it is very much neglected in the field of Leisure studies.

Gendered identities

Symbolic interactionism has at its heart a pragmatic hope for social change; it challenges what appears to be given or natural and shows that the social world and the relations we have are historically located, reflexively constructed, learned and invested with meaning. Mead saw gender as a social classification (1934a). 'The self...is essentially a social structure, and it arises in social experiences' (Mead, 1934a: 140). Gender is more than learned social behaviour associated with each anatomical sex. It involves the entire person in a process of becoming human, this learning process is called socialisation (Mead, 1934a). [10]These notions seemed to provide a springboard for a host of studies concerned with processes of becoming and gender.[11]

Goffman's piece 'The arrangements between the sexes' provoked renewed interest in gender (1977). Goffman argues that in all societies humans are sorted into two classes that are subject to different socialisation (1987: 53). Every society elaborates gender in its own fashion, all having their own conception of what is 'essential' to and characteristic of the two sex-classes; the ideals of masculinity and femininity. Gender refers to 'sex-specific ways of appearing, acting and

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[10] See studies on becoming a mother (Oakley, 1979; Reinharz, 1987; Mosse, 1993), becoming a woman (Alexander, 1994), becoming an adult (Coleman and Husen, 1985), becoming female (Kopp and Kirkpatrick, 1979), becoming deviant (Matza, 1969).

[11] Symbolic interactionism's concern for social change meant its concepts had affinity with some of the issues being raised by the women's movement at the turn of the century (Deegan, 1987: 6-15). However, work that expressly concerned itself with gender lost prominence and it wasn't until the re-emergence of feminism during the 1970's and 1980's that a second wave of symbolic interactionism with gender at its centre began to materialise with robustness and regularity (Deegan, 1987).

feeling (Goffman, 1977: 303). These understandings provide the basis for identifying the person, the basis for excusing, justifying or criticising the individuals' behaviour (Goffman, 1987: 53).

West & Zimmerman draw on Goffman to argue that gender is constituted through interaction, 'doing gender' is unavoidable and segregation is entirely a cultural matter (1991: 23-24). They also propose an ethnomethodological understanding of gender as a routine, methodical and recurring accomplishment (West & Zimmerman, 1991: 13-14). 'Doing gender' involves a complex of socially-guided perceptual, interactional and micropolitical activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine 'natures' (West & Zimmerman, 1991: 14). This position suggests that whatever we do we will always communicate with notions of masculinity or femininity, that we cannot be gender free but we can have and live with various and changing understandings of gender. 'Doing gender' is a situational, interactional and culturally variable composition; it is likely to take a different form at work and in a club, as we require different social and cultural skills in order to be seen as competent feminine or masculine beings in differing cultural contexts.

Dramaturgical connotations are also apparent in Skeggs' examination of the cultural representation of women (1997). Skeggs states that 'femininity is very much a public performance dependent upon validation by others' which suggests 'that femininity is a carefully constructed appearance and form of conduct that can be displayed' (1997: 107). Skeggs draws on Goffman (1963; 1967; 1971; 1977) and Butler (1990; 1993) to illustrate how women perform dominant or normative representations of heterosexuality and femininity to legitimatethemselves and their

use of space in cultural spaces they participate in (1997). Butler argues that performitivity should not be understood as an act, but as a reiterative and citational practice (1993:2). It is not something that can be put on or taken off, as Skeggs suggests, 'appearances are much more than just surfaces, they are intimately linked to valuations of oneself, to knowing oneself and to being an accepted part of the group' (1997: 107). [12]It is suggested then that appearances are linked to valuations of oneself and others, being part of a cultural or social group, having the cultural knowledge and skills to achieve the desired or accepted 'look' and ways of being. Skeggs also treats femininity as an active and knowledgeable accomplishment or how women 'do femininity' (1997). This perspective appears similar to that of West and Zimmerman's notion of 'doing gender' (1991). Skeggs argues that the process of becoming feminine, the being, becoming, practising and doing femininity is different things for women of different classes, races, ages and nations (1997: 98). Women 'do femininity' in order to create an acceptable appearance according to the current norms of femininity, and in order to do this women must possess specialised knowledge (Skeggs, 1997).

Conceptualisations of gendered youth identities have been discussed by Phoenix (1990), Phoenix et al., (1991), Rattansi and Phoenix, (1997), Whitehead and Barrett (2001), Frosh et al. (2001). Rattansi and Phoenix suggest that youth researchers need to understand identities as multiple, developing and operating in relation to other identities, so any particular identity such as 'young' only acquires

[12] Skeggs also explores how women negotiate their femininity, sexuality and respectability. For more on sexuality see Gagon and Simon (1973), Plummer (1982), Bordo (1989), Barkty (1990), Segal (1994), Jackson and Scott (1996), Richardson (1996), Holland and Adkins (1996), Hawkes (1996), Harding (1998), Holland et al. (1998), Skeggs (1999a; 1999b), Jackson (1999) and Brackett-Milburn and McKie (2000).

meaning in relation to difference, to what it is not (1997: 127). These identities and positions are seen to derive from one's class, gender and ethnicity as well as from the interactions, relations and practices of being in the world. Rattansi and Phoenix argue that this does not imply that we have 'free floating identities as vulgar postmodernism implies', rather that multiple positioning allows us scope to explore the contradictory positions and practices of individuals (1997: 129). These range of identities are seen as being in process, the social too is always in the process of becoming, it is not a closed totality, it is subject to fragmentation and contingency. This way of conceptualising identity seems to be more useful for exploring not only contradictory practices but also processes of becoming, be they formal or informal. It moves away from positioning people as essential and static; it offers space for social change. Rattansi and Phoenix suggest that these conceptualisations are recent developments in sociological theorising (1997). But as we have seen, symbolic interactionists saw identity formation as a process, not fixed, rather that we have varying and multiple identities, which are formed and adjusted through continuous social interaction (Strauss 1997: 11). Furthermore, the notion of becoming as applied to identities seems to have considerable overlap with the work of Becker (1991) and Becker et al., (1961). It maybe that some of these conceptualisations are similar to or have their roots in concepts that have been around for some time.

Conclusion

Conceptualising identity in a way that accounts for the intersection of multiple identities that are always in a relative state of formation and always conditioned by

and situated in specific social and local contexts offers potential for understanding social processes and social change. A gendered identity is an identity that is very much assigned but that does not mean that gendered identities are not subject to change. This literature provides us with concepts that allow us to explore and expose the construction of identities, the ways we construct boundaries through a reflexive interactional process between the sensibilities of the individual and the sensibilities of the group.

When the different perspectives of social anthropology and symbolic interactionism are brought together they seem to offer an adequate way to conceptualise and give insight into the reflexive workings of group and individual sensibilities. The literature exposed how investments in cultural groups may fluctuate, how the maintenance of strong boundaries is implicated not only in differentiation but also in social hierarchies, and how the competency of social actors contributed to perceptions of status. These notions were reflected in the studies exploring club culture. This literature has called on a range of concepts to highlight the difference between 'mainstream and hip' (Thornton, 1995), 'underground and townie' (Bennett, 2000) and 'real and tourist' (Malbon, 1999). But it seems that these are examples of the symbolic boundaries and communities we construct in reflexive interaction with others. These boundaries are mediated within the context of social divisions, inequalities and hierarchies. It was argued that the moral reaction to rave and club culture served to construct rave as oppositional (McRobbie and Thornton, 1995), thus it could be argued further strengthening the construction of cultural boundaries.

The literature that examined the gendered nature of identities drew on Goffman's argument that gender was a 'profound source of self-identification' (1987: 54). 'Doing gender' (West and Zimmerman, 1991) and 'doing femininity' (Skeggs, 1997) was a routine and recurring accomplishment. The more recent conceptualisations in youth research regarding young people's identities suggest identities are multiple. They develop in relation to other identities, deriving from one's class, gender and ethnicity, as well as from the interactions, relations and practices of being in the world. Seeing identities as a process is useful for understanding the ways in which young people's identities are assimilated. These notions sit well with the idea put forward in chapter two about young people's transitions being more akin to a continuous process of becoming (Cohen and Ainley, 2000). Yet, it maybe that these notions are rooted in ideas that have been around for some time.

Chapter Four   Subcultures, Lifestyles and Capitals

Introduction

The last chapter discussed how identities are reflexively constructed through interaction, they are multiple and transformational. I also discussed the notions surrounding boundary work, the relationship between individual and group sensibilities. This chapter follows these ideas to explore how young people have been defined, and defined themselves, as 'other', as different through their cultural affiliations and style-based identifications. It suggests that involvement with youth cultures are implicated in the formation of some young people's identities. That many young people are utilising extended transitions and cultural participation to explore the possibilities of alternative identities and sexualities through a range of music, drug and dance based cultures (Henderson, 1993a; 1993b; McRobbie, 1991; 1994; Merchant & MacDonald, 1994; Whittle, 1994; Pini, 1997a; 1997b).

In order to interrogate the notion of culture, I discuss the work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham (CCCS): a significant influence on studies into youth leisure and culture since the 1970's. The CCCS was concerned with how young people's structural position influenced their cultural affiliations, their style-based identifications and whether these signified resistance to the dominant order. I focus on work that explores the place of women in subcultures, the differences between youth and 'others' and the practices and boundaries that young people construct to differentiate themselves from others.

The second part of this chapter is concerned with status based concepts (Weber, 1966; 1978a; 1978b). The concepts of capitals and lifestyles are underpinned by the notion of status, the way in which we use the resources around us to identify and differentiate ourselves from others (Bourdieu, 1984; 1986). Both these theories have been put forward as being potentially useful for overcoming the dualism between structure and agency, particularly in an era of rapid social change, where rigid distinction of social difference may become harder to sustain (Chaney, 1996:6). I explore the theory and study of lifestyles; 'the ways in which we appropriate commodities in order to mark ourselves off from wider society by establishing distinctive forms of collective identity' (Chaney, 1996: 51).

The third section examines the concepts of habitus and capitals (Bourdieu, 1984; 1986). The habitus significantly determines people's social trajectories, their economic and cultural resources, their tastes and preferences (Bourdieu, 1986). It provides the conditions for lifestyles and the reproduction of existing hierarchical structures (Jenkins, 1992: 141). Bourdieu is concerned with the ways in which forms of capital interact to reproduce wider social inequalities and posits that economic capital underpins the other forms of capital such as cultural, social and physical (1986). I focus on social and cultural capital. First, studies that have adapted the notion of cultural capital to examine club culture (Thornton, 1995). Second, studies that have used the notion of social capital to explore how young people negotiate and construct their life experiences and transitions.

Subcultures

The notion of subculture

Culture is something learned and shared, it is the signifying order through which social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored (Williams, 1981). The meanings, values and systems of belief in cultures undergo change through a reflexive process that generates new cultural forms, meanings and conditions. Within this shifting process we all share, to varying extents, aspects of cultural knowledge. This knowledge may manifest itself through our manners, dress, language, belief systems, or behavioural norms. A subculture is a group which is either small in size or holds subordinate status through their participation in subterranean or deviant activities from those normally associated with wider society (Thornton, 1997b). The subordinate social status of a subculture can manifest itself through its members' social characteristics and positions. They may be deemed as the marginal or troublesome 'other' in relation to their class, ethnicity, race, age or sexuality, through the values they hold, or the activities they participate in.

Some see subcultures as attractive to people with less positive social connections or those who feel in some way different from the 'prevailing set of norms' (Brake, 1985: 19; Wyn & White, 1997). The notion of subculture highlights the ways in which people come together on the basis of having something in common. Commonalities include background, class, education and neighbourhood (Brake, 1985: 15), shared material existence (Willis, 1978: 2), problems adjusting to the social order (Cohen, 1997), shared perspectives and values (Shibutani, 1955) or through having shared taste and knowledge (Willis, 1978). What they have in common serves to differentiate them from some form of other, be it another youth

scene, wider society, dominant or parent culture. It is also a source of collective cultural identity for those involved: a reference point for individual identity that provides material for an 'alternative script, a script which can be performed outside the socialising forces of work or school, before those of marriage become important' (Brake, 1980). He argued that the transitional nature of subcultures explained why members could give up this identity; it was part of a transformation and could be rejected as adolescence (Brake, 1980).

Subcultures have also been interpreted as social spaces in which people, through a process of comparing and negotiating cultural patterns, can maintain cultural boundaries (Irwin, 1997: 68). They have been interpreted as being symbolically resistant to the conventions of wider society, a response to socio-economic hardship, and as being an arena where identities and ideas can be experimented with, and possibilities for social change considered (Brake, 1985: 26).

Youth Subcultures and the CCCS

The CCCS has significantly shaped the form and focus of youth and cultural studies. It was concerned with the relations between young people's ideologies and the form that they took. In other words, they focused on whether young working class men used their subcultural affiliations and formations to express a collective reaction or resistance to their class position and or the structural changes taking place in post-war Britain. Conceptually, youth subcultures were situated in relation to broader cultural categories, such as the working class or parent culture, the dominant and/or mass culture. This meant that almost all CCCS work studied working class youth subcultures. They argued that these

style-based subcultures were in opposition to the 'dominant' culture. Resistance was conceptualised in two main ways: as an attempt to recreate a working class community (Clarke, 1993: 99), or to give meaning to their social plight through symbolic dressing up (Jefferson, 1993: 86). They argued that these style-based subcultures were indicative of a new youth consumerism as well as being a response to the socio-economic conditions of their class position. They also argued that working class youth subcultures 'won space' through their creative agency, and that this creative innovation, agency and resistance was largely situated in the field of leisure, rather than the work place.

A classic piece is the Learning to Labour study by Willis (1977). The conceptual framework of this study has some affinity with symbolic interactionism. Willis argued that the 'lads' utilised subterranean values to challenge the school system. However, these subterranean values served to prepare them for labour rather than challenging the system and disrupting the wider class relations (Willis, 1979).

The CCCS rarely considered the place of girls in subcultures. McRobbie and Garber's (1976) study was the only piece to place gender at the heart of youth experience. They argued that some subcultures offered girls more scope for participation and cultural identification than others (1976) They found that girls' participation in the working class and masculine culture of motor bikes was largely dependent on being the girlfriend of a bike boy. Mod culture offered more opportunity for participation, it was dependent on wearing the right clothes, having the right hair-style and going to the right clubs. Girls' participation was related to increased opportunities for living away from home and taking up new occupations. Participation in the hippy culture was largely accessed through university life. It

gave middle class girls some space to engage with an alternative youth culture (McRobbie and Garber, 1976). From this they posited that 'bedroom culture' offered girls the only autonomous arena that teenage women were allowed, this they argued was symbolic of their future subordination (McRobbie and Garber, 1976: 221). Although this work broke away from the male bias in cultural studies and highlights the structural and cultural conditions that seem to underlie girls' participation, it tells us little about the meanings girls attach to such experiences.

The work of the CCCS and the notion of subculture have been subject to much criticism. These critiques have significance for this thesis, for as we shall see it has been suggested that the notion of subculture and the concepts of the CCCS are ill-suited for conceptualising club culture (Merchant and MacDonald, 1994; Thornton, 1995).

Critiques of the CCCS and the notion of subculture

The CCCS has been subject to three main criticisms. First, that it is preoccupied with interpreting youth subcultures as a response to social class position, and that these responses always symbolised something larger than themselves (Gelder, 1997: 89). This led Stanley Cohen to question whether the identities of those studied actually coincided with what they were supposed to stand for (1997: 160). Conceptualising youth subcultures as a response to class position implies that subcultural identities are largely based on individuals sharing the same social class, locality and coherent values that are embedded in their past common experiences. It also implies that youth subcultural identities are at the same time adolescent and transitional, yet symbolic of their social position. Viewing

subcultures in this way neglects what meaning subcultural participation has for the young people involved. Little account seems to have been taken of the ways in which identification with a subculture may ebb and flow, the times when identification with the group is valued and invested in heavily and the times when it is less central.

The next criticism is again related to the lack of emphasis given to the meanings and intentions of the young people themselves, this time at the expense of style. An example is Hebdige's study into the subcultural meaning of punk style (1979). Hebdige focused less on class based subcultural formation and more on the ways in which immigration and ethnicity were implicated in the formation of subcultures, through the way in which punks appropriated and adapted ethnic immigrants cultural traditions (1979). He posited that the borrowing of styles dislocated them from their normal context, this 'bricolage' effect could be read as a sign of refusal to convention (Hebdige 1979).

The third main criticism of the CCCS was that it celebrated the coolness and rebelliousness of heterosexual masculinity at the expense of neglecting 'normal' young men, and all women (Brake, 1985). Stanley Cohen argued an example of this was Willis's (1977) Learning to Labour study, which focused on the spectacular minority 'non-conformist 'lads' thus rendering the majority of 'conformist' boys and all girls invisible (1997). McRobbie, an original member of the CCCS, has consistently argued that women were either seen as peripheral or were left out of the resistance equation altogether (1984 1994). Youth studies have also neglected women and women's ability to use fashion, music and social dance for their own pleasure and fantasy (McRobbie, 1984: 134).

Despite the CCCS's concern with class based resistance, many of the studies ultimately concluded that subcultures did not really challenge the dominant order. They could be rebellious (Brake, 1985: 26) and they could violate the conventional (Hebdige, 1979: 91). However, their empowerment, creativity and resistance were situated in the realm of youth culture and leisure, so it was argued that it was unlikely to have little impact on their work related prospects and conditions, material existence or wider social system. Brake concludes that subcultures 'offer space where identities and ideas can be experimented with and possibilities for social change considered, they are rebellious, but usually no more than this' (Brake, 1985:26).

Despite the critiques of the CCCS approach, the term subculture has survived (Bennett, 1999: 599). It has come under heavy critique for the contradictory ways that it has been used and the various analytical meanings it has been supposed to represent (Irwin, 1997: 67; Bennett, 1999: 599). Miles argues that a 'Marxist delinquency-based theoretical framework is becoming less and less relevant to what it means to be a young person today' (2000a: 4). And Bennett queries the notion of subculture as a valid framework for the study of youth, music and style (2000). First, there is a problem of clarity: the 'concept imposes lines of division that are very difficult to verify in empirical terms. Second, there is very little evidence that even the most committed groups of youth are in any way as coherent or fixed as the term implies' (Bennett, 1999: 605). He argues that the term of subculture has 'arguably become little more than a catch-all term for any aspect of social life in which young people, style and music intersect' (Bennett, 1999: 599).

Merchant and Macdonald take up this argument in relation to rave (1994). They argue that rave is both quantitatively and qualitatively different to other subcultures studied so far (Merchant and MacDonald, 1994:18). It is not a small or minority phenomenon; it has mass appeal to young people from a range of social classes: it is not essentially working class (Merchant and Macdonald, 1994: 32). Rave, although associated with a do-it-yourself ethos of musical production, an anti-capitalist focus, New Age Traveller philosophies and quasi-spiritual elements, did not appear to overtly seek to change the dominant order (Merchant and Macdonald, 1994:31). Macho and machismo styles of behaviour did not dominate, gender relations appeared more egalitarian, and the air of latent violence and sexual threat often found in more traditional night-clubs seemed to have evaporated (Merchant and MacDonald, 1994: 32). The subcultural theory of the CCCS seems ill suited to understanding rave culture, new conceptualisations were required if the rave phenomenon was to be understood (Merchant and MacDonald, 1994: 33).

The next section concentrates on how music and dance are central to many youth collectives. It discusses the ways in which gender has been considered and experienced in subcultures, before turning to the more recent literature on club culture.

Music, dance and gender in subcultures

Music and social dance

The association between music and young people goes back further than the studies into subcultural youth. Listening to and investing in particular kinds of music has long been a marker of social status, cultural affinity and lifestyle (Weber, 1975: 22). Young people have often utilised music to express their emotions, tastes and affinities as well as create solidarity, however temporary, with one another. Lewis has illustrated how 'we pretty much listen to, and enjoy, the same music that is listened to by other people we like or with whom we identify' (1992: 137). One of the most prolific writers on popular music has argued that music plays a central role in the constitution of identities and communities (Frith, 1996). In particular, young people have used music to situate themselves historically, culturally and politically (Frith, 1992). Frith suggests that 'music provides us with an intensely subjective sense of being sociable. It both articulates and offers the immediate experience of collective identity and can have the effect of intensifying shared experiences (1996: 273).

Social dance has been neglected despite it being a favoured and frequent mass popular leisure activity (McRobbie, 1984; Ward, 1993). Ward argued that since rock and roll, subsequent youth dance cultures, such as teddy boys, mods, skinheads, punk and northern soul, were largely male dominated dance cultures (1993: 23). However, as the critiques of these studies have shown, this may well be related to the way in which these groups were interpreted and conceptualised, rather being related to women's lack of presence in, and engagement with, social dance. The meaning of social dance has been interpreted in various ways: as a convention of courtship, dating and sexual bargaining, and means to sexual

encounters (Mungham and Pearson 1976: 85), as a means of resistance (Brake 1985), or a means of escape (Frith 1988). McRobbie suggests it can be a form of bodily expression; a form of sexualised ritual and a purveyor of fantasy and pleasure (1984; 1991). When music and social dance come together in a dance club, they can articulate 'an embodied sense of social identity through the conspicuous and differential display of taste. This renders explicit the distribution of knowledges and forms of cultural capital across the vectors of gender, race and class' (Straw, 1997: 500).

As we saw in chapter three, boundaries appear to be central to our understandings of collective group life. Willis's examination of the differences between two forms of collective youth cultures is of key interest (1978). Willis takes up a recurring theme of CCCS work: how subcultural formations such as bike boys and hippies were seen to be illustrative of the oppression of working class youth and the alienation of middle class youth (Willis, 1978: 1). Willis explored how musical taste and knowledge, gender relations and drug use are all means through which the groups can construct shared identifications whilst simultaneously constructing differentiations between their group and others. He argued that the bike boys were conservative and conventional in regards to their musical tastes, as well as in relation to the values they held about women (Willis, 1978: 44). On the other hand, he found that the hippies had progressive and alternative musical tastes and musical knowledge was valued highly (Willis, 1978: 107). Furthermore, the hippies build a sense of community on the basis of shared understandings, rather than as some kind of alternative (Willis, 1978: 111). He argued that the culture of hippies operated around exclusivity, they only welcomed those who looked right, those who were not just 'day trippers' (Willis, 1978: 136). Drugs were central and had to

be consumed and experienced in culturally appropriate ways, drugs provided the lever for a symbolic cultural passage, again differentiating between the real 'heads' and the day trippers (Willis, 1978: 136). This classic study draws our attention to the processes and practices of boundary construction. The ways in which boundaries serve to cohere one group whilst simultaneously differentiating themselves from others, and how cultural knowledge is implicated in such processes and practices. However, the neglect of gender is apparent, so I want to turn to the literature that discusses how gender is manifested and experienced in the cultural arena of rave and club culture.

Clubbing and Gender

This section discusses those studies that have incorporated gender into their analyses. But before turning to the more recent literature on rave and club culture, I first want to visit one of the first studies to examine the differing experiences of young men and women in both cultural and subcultural scenes. [1] McRobbie examined the experience of gender in relation to two cultural scenes, that of punk

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[1] Irwin suggests that the term scene came into being when there was a generalised increase in awareness of subcultures and styles of life (Irwin, 1997: 67). He points to three connotations of the term. First, a scene is an explicit, shared and popular style of life that is recognised. Second, there are various styles of life as there is always more than one scene. Third, that one's commitment to a particular scene is potentially tentative and variable (Irwin, 1997: 67-68). Straw similarly suggests that a scene 'is a cultural space in which a range of musical practices co-exist, interacting with one another in a process of cross fertilisation' (Straw, 1997: 494). The term scene implies that individuals have an awareness of the diversity in subcultural formations and styles of life. They can explicitly recognise commonalities in taste, attitudes and cultural codes of conduct which can articulate their own and others social/cultural identity, although the commitment to such identity may be variable. This suggests that participation in or identification with a particular youth musical scene may render explicit participants access and ability to demonstrate their cultural knowledge and capital. Moreover, that one effect of this diversity is that one's values, beliefs and actions are not longer taken for granted and second that a person is consciously involved in comparing, negotiating and sharing these things with others (Irwin, 1997: 69).

and disco (1984). She explores the relationship between social dance, music and women's participation in cultural processes and practices. McRobbie argued that disco was not subcultural, it was a 'mainstream' scene, a stopgap between 'youth and settling down', participation was limited to Saturday nights and it primarily catered for those under 25 years (McRobbie, 1984:146). The underlying purpose of the disco scene was to attract and meet a sexual partner, it was fashioned around 'more traditional gender patterns' (McRobbie, 1984:132). It was associated with the prospect of finding romance, this backdrop meant that the young women involved were required to negotiate and manage their enjoyment of dancing whilst at the same time maintaining 'some notion of respectability and minimising the danger of sexual violence' (McRobbie, 1984: 47).

The punk scene had differing cultural codes of conduct and gender relations and seemingly offered a 'deviant lifestyle' (McRobbie, 1984: 132). Punks spent less time on chatting up, they got drunk and danced in large groups (McRobbie, 1984: 148). Dancing was less about sexual allure and more about 'the pleasure of being illicit and dancing to the right music' (McRobbie, 1984:148). 'In this cultural arena the rigidity of categories such as age, class, and ethnicity were less demarcated, gender was blurred and sexual preference less homogeneously heterosexual' (McRobbie, 1984:146). McRobbie argued that subcultural scenes such as punk did not seek to prolong adolescence, rather they sought to 'overturn relations marking out singleness as a short period of excitement before real life, hard work and settling down sets in' (1984:149).

The more recent literature on gender and social dance reflects the notion that gendered identities, like youth transitions, have been subject to transformation in late modernity (Chaney, 1996; Furlong and Cartmel, 1997; Giddens, 1991; McRobbie, 2000). One possible arena for these changes is the culture of rave (McRobbie, 1994). Henderson suggested that the reasons why young women go out dancing may be changing – they were going out to dance and use drugs, not to find a sexual partner (1993a: 48). Henderson argued this was a move away from traditional 'ways of being' for women (1993a). Rave seemed to provide a space for young women to enjoy night time leisure activities, such as dancing on their own, taking drugs, engaging in social interaction characterised by feelings of friendship, togetherness and warmth, without the 'language of romance' and without feeling sexually harassed by men (Henderson, 1993a: 44-48). It was at raves, rather than at traditional night-clubs, that the above egalitarian gender relations and behaviour were to be found (Henderson, 1993a). This study raised a number of questions. How and in what ways were women implicated in the cultural production of rave? What did young men have to say about gender relations? (Henderson, 1993a: 52).

Masculinities seem to have taken on a new and slightly different quality in rave (McRobbie, 1994; Merchant and MacDonald, 1994; Pini, 1997a; 1997b; Malbon, 1999). Merchant & MacDonald suggested that rave culture did not appear to be dominated by machismo and masculine styles of behaviour, unlike previous subcultural groups such as mods, punks or bikers, and in this sense women appeared to be less marginalised (1994: 32-33). They also found that the 'air of latent violence' often found in conventional night-clubs was gone, replaced with 'mutual care and self-help' (Merchant & MacDonald, 1994: 23). McRobbie too

observed changes in masculinity, she suggested that rave could provide a forum for 'working class boys to lose their 'aggro' and become 'new men' (1994: 168). [2] She argued that some men undergo a conversion to the malleable and the sociable, they enter into a different relationship with their own bodies, more tactile and less focused round sexual gratification (McRobbie, 1994: 168). However the changes we see in men may be more related to using Ecstasy than any fundamental shift in masculinity (McRobbie, 1994: 168).

Pini is also cautious about rave providing a space for changing masculinities (1997b: 153). She contends that the 'mainstream' may be indicative of not only what is 'naff' but it may also be indicative of women's discomfort with sexual relations and predatory modes of masculinity. Pini argues that the perceived absence of particular kinds of masculinity is part of raves' appeal for women (1997b: 160) and that women challenge predatory and machismo behaviour assertively (1997a: 252). Malbon suggests that it is not that women become desexualised or men lose interest in sex, rather sexuality becomes differently important: gender relations are of a different quality (Malbon, 1999: 45), at least in rave and 'hip' club scenes. Pini concludes that men can 'simultaneously engage themselves with practices traditionally associated with femininity and maintain their masculinity intact' (1997a: 98).

Experiences of gender on the dancefloor and experiences of gender in the politics and production of music may need to be distinguished (Bradby, 1993). Rave

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[2] see Redhead (1993; 1997) for post-modern readings of club cultures, sub cultures, masculinity, football and Ecstasy use and for critiques on these readings see Hollands (2002).

organisers tended to be older, male and with some experience in club promotion and Djing, girlfriends do the till, the bar or the 'PR' by distributing fliers. This division led McRobbie to conclude that women appeared to be less involved in the cultural production of rave (1994: 168). Thornton argued that this was related to many female clubbers 'literally and symbolically investing less in their taste in music and participation in music culture' (1995: 104). Moreover, many women 'acknowledge the subcultural hierarchy and accept their lowly position within it' (Thornton, 1997a: 204). Some women, however, 'refuse this defeatism and are usually careful to distance themselves from the degraded pop culture of Sharon and tracy'; they emphatically reject and denigrate a feminized mainstream' (Thornton, 1997a: 204). So Thornton presents us with two kinds of women, both who have 'less subcultural capital' than men. She argues that many academics 'conflate the feelings of liberation and freedom that many women feel whilst clubbing, with substantive political rights and freedoms' (Thornton, 1995: 21). Rave culture produces the same division of labour that exists not only in the music industry more generally but in most other types of work and employment (McRobbie, 1994: 170).

Pini has taken issue with some of Thornton's arguments. She acknowledges that, as with previous youth cultures, women are not located at levels of music production, event organisation and drug distribution, yet women do feel centrally invested in the identities the rave scene affords (1997b: 153). Ravers may simultaneously believe that rave is about freedom and unity whilst at the same time acknowledging the cultural features which contradict this (Pini, 1997b: 95). Pini challenges Thornton for not acknowledging that 'political rights and freedoms' may not take a recognised traditional form. She argues that Thornton is

theoretically preoccupied with the notion of subcultural capital, that it doesn't reflect the varied experiences of femininity that can be both positive and negative, enabling and disempowering (Pini, 1997a: 64).

McRobbie picks up on the possible relationship between femininity and social change when she suggests that 'new femininities enter into social and sexual relationships from a different position than they did fifteen years ago – friendship, equality and difference are all now part of the vocabulary of relationships, alongside love, romance and pleasure (McRobbie, 1994: 173). Pini argues that women's participation in rave can encourage 'new understandings of the 'self', women can be freed from the traditional associations of dancing with sexual invite, and in this sense rave seems to represent an 'alternative' space (1997b: 166). Being a clubber appeared central to how many of these women understood themselves (Pini, 1997b: 256). These women, like the men and women in Malbon's study, valued the experiences of clubbing – the sensation of being able to identify a 'true self' (Pini, 1997b: 261) or perceive their 'real identity' (Malbon, 1999: 127), often on Ecstasy. On this basis Pini argued that rave provides a space for new modes of femininity, identity and physical pleasures (Pini, 1997b: 154). She argues that, through women dancing unescorted, not being harassed and treated as sexual objects, not having to be concerned about their reputations and using drugs, they challenge traditional notions of femininity. It is these circumstances that generate what Pini calls a 'text of excitement', an intense desire for pleasure through the sociability of the event (1997b: 156). McRobbie suggests that there is also a 'text of avoidance', related to young ravers needing and wishing to avoid the responsibility of, and dangers in, their wider lives (1994: 172).

Social dance has often acted as a yardstick by which female liberation has been gauged, and unescorted female occupation of the dance floor is seen by many women to be a significant marker of sexual progress (Pini, 1997a: 253). Yet this seems to be an area of tension for women, a tension McRobbie argues is about remaining in control and at the same time losing themselves in dance and music (1994: 169). Despite this, Pini's interviewees were insistent about rave providing a new space in terms of sexual 'progressive' relations (1997b: 160). But their notion of 'sexual' did not clearly fit into the standard, patriarchal definition of sexuality (Pini, 1997b: 167). Malbon suggests that clubbing appears to have a liberatory aspect to it for some women. They can play down or exaggerate their sexuality; they can construct themselves as 'sexy' for themselves, it is a social space, unlike many others, that is conducive and safe to do so in (Malbon, 1999: 45).

This section has explored the work of the CCCS and in particular the studies that have considered the place of both young men and women in subcultures; the differences between two forms of youth collectives as well of the place of music and social dance in the lives of young people. The literature suggests that subcultures offer a deviant lifestyle, one that is based on exclusivity, notions of shared taste superior to that found in the 'mainstream'. Music, social dance and styles are all vehicles through which young people can illustrate their taste, knowledge, sexuality and cultural identifications, and all are implicated in the construction of boundaries. Some have argued that rave and club culture may be a social space in which 'new femininities' (Pini, 1997a; 1997b) and masculinties are to be found (McRobbie, 1994). They also suggest that rave and club culture provides a 'safe space' for young women's pleasure, that activities such as

dancing and using drugs are becoming more separated from local moral discourses (McRobbie, 1994; Pini, 1997a; 1997b). Others, such as Thornton suggest more caution and urge us not to conflate these changes with 'substantive political rights and freedoms' (1995: 21). It would seem that women and men have qualitatively different experiences of rave and although dance floor relations may have become more egalitarian there remains a gap between the social position of men and women. This is most keenly observed when one looks at the cultural production of clubbing, an arena that remains the preserve of men. It seems that the experiences of femininity and masculinity in club culture, as in society more generally, are not without their contradictions and tensions.

With the critiques of the CCCS work, the notions that surround late modernity as discussed in chapter two, the expansion of youth consumption, extension of youth transitions and the notion of subculture itself being questioned, some sociologists began to turn to alternative concepts to explore youth experience and identities. Moreover, it has been argued that subcultural theory is inadequate for conceptualising the relationship between youth, music, consumption and style, and some have proposed that the concept of Lifestyle may offer a more satisfactory theoretical framework, and it is to this I now turn.

Lifestyles

The notion of lifestyle

Lifestyle theories are ways of explaining social status and patterns of consumption. The concept first appeared in the work of Weber. For Weber class was a feature of market societies and he posited that the social order was determined as much by status as by class (1966; 1978a; 1978b). Chaney suggests that the notion of lifestyle may be particularly useful in an era of 'rapid social and physical mobility particularly where rigid distinctions of social difference may become harder to sustain' (1996: 6). In other words, status and consumption may be a more fruitful basis than class to conceptualise and explore youth identities and lifestyles, particularly in an era where class may be becoming more obscure, youth collectives less bounded, and where young people's transitions may be more individualised and prolonged.

However, Jenkins' (1983) interest with and use of the notion predates discussions surrounding 'late or high modernity' (Giddens, 1991; 1992; Beck, 1992). The work of Bourdieu seems to have contributed to the re-emergence and increasing popularity of the concept (1980; 1984; 1986). Jenkins attempts to produce a 'non-contradictory account of cultural reproduction, placing equal emphasis on individual practice, institutions and the reciprocal significance each has for the other' (1983: 12). He finds the theories of Giddens (1976; 1979), Willis (1977; 1979) and Bourdieu (1979; 1980) problematic, contradictory and ultimately deterministic. Jenkins turned to the concept of lifestyles in preference to subcultures because it allows for an analytical exploration of distinctive cultural practices whilst also acknowledging the wider, more common cultural practices in which the distinctive, collective cultural practices are played out (1983: 41).

Lifestyle and consumption

Much lifestyle research is concerned about the relationship between young people and the commodities they acquire. There is also an interest with the ways in which consumption activities are implicated in young people's identities.

Chaney suggests that 'lifestyles are intrinsically members categories, this means that people use lifestyles in everyday life to identify and explain wider complexes of identity and affiliation' (1996: 12). They are 'actively constructed by particular social groups whose appropriation of certain commodities enable them to mark themselves off from wider society by establishing distinctive forms of collective identity' (Chaney, 1996: 51).

Miles suggests that lifestyles may offer sociology another way of exploring and understanding how young people use cultural arenas to navigate through aspects of structural and social change (Miles, 2000b: 17). He suggests that sociologists should focus on the 'construction of youth as a way of life or a lifestyle constructed through social processes such as family relationships, the labour market, schooling and training but often expressed through cultural means' (Miles, 2000a: 9). [3] Bennett also sees the concept useful for bridging gaps, it 'allows for dual significance of cultural commodities, so that commodities can have global significance whilst their precise meanings become bound up with the local scenarios within which they are appropriated' (Bennett, 2000: 27).

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[3] Hollands suggests that although Miles (2000b) is careful to avoid an individualistic argument, his attempt to show how lifestyle is structurally influenced is not well developed (2002: 157). See Cieslik (2001) for critiques on the work of Miles (2000b) and Bennett (2000).

Hendry et al. argue that what is important about lifestyles is that they set a group apart, they make statements about a hierarchical order in taste and preferences (1993: 163-165). They are rooted in what Brake called the 'symbolism of appearance' (1980: 14), through which individuals assert their identity and make statements about their social and cultural environment' (Hendry et al., 1993: 164). Styles of life and their corresponding modes of consumption become the means through which honour, prestige and social standing can be perceived and affirmed; conspicuous lifestyles legitimise the divisions within the social order (Hendry et al., 1993: 164). They can be means for creating hierarchical distinctions both between and within groups, they can reflect and legitimise divisions within the social world (Hendry et. al., 1993; Hollands, 2002).

Hollands (2002) and Hendry et. al., (1993) demonstrate how youth consumption is implicated in cultural distinction, distinction which legitimises existing social divisions. Miles argues that consumption provides young people 'an arena within which common meanings can be used as a means of locating the individual in a cultural context. In effect, as a means of signifying membership or allegiance to the peer group' (1996: 42; 1998). Indeed, much lifestyle research prioritises the ways in which consumer activities are implicated in the construction of identities, hierarchies of difference, and the ways in which young people use resources and consumable goods (Miles, 2000b). It is suggested that leisure activities and consumer habits may have an increasing role to play in the construction of social identities (Chaney, 1996: 112; Ball et al., 2000; Hollands, 2002). It is also suggested that 'lifestyles are expressive of a collective identity, one that differentiates the group from some wider audience. This audience could be real or

imagined, or it could be an abstract notion that need never be personified (Hendry et. al., 1993: 165). Hollands sees patterns of consumption and leisure lifestyles as central to the establishment of masculine and feminine identities (1995). What all these studies draw attention to is the agency (to varying degrees) of young people in the construction of their own cultural identities through participating in particular and distinctive lifestyles.

This brings us to the question of whether the consumer choices of young people are active and independent choices or whether they are dupes in the ongoing commodification of society. Miles suggests that 'young people can simultaneously accept to follow the crowd whilst pursuing their own avenues of freedom within the broad parameters that consumer capitalism provides' (Miles, 2000a: 10). He found that young people were aware that they used consumer goods to create images which identified their allegiances to a style of life, however their acquisitions were not solely based on sign value, they were also based on use value (Miles, 1996).

The experiences and effects of consumer activities are likely to significantly vary amongst young people (Hollands, 2002). [4] Milligan and Smith explored 'the effects of consumer culture' on young people from 'advantaged and disadvantaged backgrounds' (2000). Those from disadvantaged backgrounds were more likely to be negatively affected by consumer culture, they felt more pressure to have the 'right' clothes, which were often designer labels (Milligan and Smith, 2000: 18-36). Those that did not have the 'right' clothes were more prone to bullying, they felt a

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[4] see Hollands for a discussion of how more socially excluded young people have their consumption choices increasingly limited with the rise of gentrified and middle class city spaces (2002: 166).

sense of insecurity and a lack of confidence (Milligan and Smith, 2000:36). Following on from this – how has the concept of lifestyles been applied in relation to clubbing?

Clubbing lifestyles

Bennett is one of the few to apply the concept of lifestyle to what he calls contemporary urban dance music (2000: 68). He illustrates how through 'participation in select club events and informal parties, the members of this scene share an underground sensibility that is in part based on opposition to other 'official' local night-time music scenes (Bennett, 2000: 68). Bennett uses the concept to show how groups of young people employ forms of clubbing as a resource to identify with one another and to culturally distinguish themselves from other groups (2000). Hollands similarly suggests that young people are able to establish identities by virtue of the crowds with which they congregate, the types of places they go, the types of music they listen to and the appearances they cultivate (1995: 23-89). It may be that young people can signal to others their taste, knowledge, cultural allegiances and consumer choices to enhance or detract social standing (Hollands, 2002; Chaney, 1996). Malbon also calls on the concept of lifestyle to suggest that clubbing is an example of 'experiential consuming', what 'clubbers purchase can be thought of as the imaginative and emotional spaces that clubbing provides' (1999:183). The 'constitutive practices of clubbing' provide sources of identification and space to experience others and 'otherness' (Malbon, 1999: 183).

These studies suggest that for some young people, night-life and its associated consumer choices and styles of life may provide an arena for the cultivation of collective identities. However, Eygendaal points out that some consumption based identities are more consequential than others, many are just Friday and Saturday night fun (1992). Furthermore, 'lifestyle practices and objects can be interpretative resources and forms of local knowledge, they can also be donned and discarded at will and therefore can be acted out with some degree of self-irony and self-satire' (Bensman and Vidich, 1995: 239). Recently Hollands suggested that consumption in 'alternative' nightlife spaces tend to be related to a conscious identity rather than passing consumer fancies (2002: 167). Roberts refutes the idea that leisure and young people's consumption are used to establish their identities (1997: 1). He argues that although it may be plausible that young people use their leisure and subcultural affiliations to establish who they are, this plausibility is not proven and misleading (Roberts, 1997: 10). Roberts calls for clear evidence of 'young people 'placing' each other and defining themselves according to their lifestyles rather than using the old social markers' (1997: 3).

Roberts' (1997) criticism of lifestyle centres on its tendency to neglect the more persistent ways of life (Chaney, 1996: 7). Yet, if we look at some of the lifestyle studies, they would argue that patterns of action, ways of using resources to establish, display and legitimate social differences is informed by social class differences (Hendry et al., 1993; Jenkins, 1983; Bourdieu, 1984; Di Maggio, 1994). Despite lifestyle being a nebulous concept (Chaney, 1996: 4), they are not just about displays of consumer competence (Chaney, 1996:97). Lifestyles are embedded in the social order of modernity, they flesh out the general contours of class structured distinction (Chaney, 1996: 11-12). Moreover, 'ways of life based

on socio-structural forms such as occupation, gender, locality, ethnicity and age do not disappear because new forms of identification such as lifestyles become more significant' (Chaney, 1996: 93). The concept and/or its application has, however, been criticised for being voluntaristic, emphasising the choice and agency of social actors. Hollands asserts that what we do not know, from available research on cultural lifestyles and tribes, is whether there exists fragments of older social divisions, or if they represent the creation of new forms of social hierarchy and distinction (2002: 158). Although Jenkins (1983), Wynne (1990), Hendry et al. (1993), Milligan and Smith (2000) and Miles (2000) have shown that the concept of lifestyle can and often does reflect and legitimise existing divisions in the social world. Research of this kind leaves important questions unexamined: it gives little sense of the processes over time by which young people become involved in urban dance music and then possibly drift into other pursuits and forms of association (Cieslik, 2001: 40). Nor does it give a sense of the access or resources required to be a Goth or Punk (Cieslik, 2001: 36).

In contrast, Bourdieu's (1984) conception of lifestyle is not neglectful of the more persistent ways of life, rather the meaning and validity of lifestyle choices is determined by habitus. Bourdieu sees lifestyles as a product of, and determined by, habitus, which itself is seen as the product of 'objective' structures (1984 1998).

Capitals

The notion of capital and habitus

As noted in chapter two, the notion of capitals has become more popular in the study of young people. The concept of capitals is associated with the work of Bourdieu (1984; 1986). Capitals are the economic, cultural, physical, social and symbolic resources or knowledge that social actors can utilise to increase their social standing and contribute to the reproduction of the relations of domination (Jenkins, 1992: 90). Jenkins argues that Bourdieu often confuses and frustrates the reader by 'saying he is doing one thing while actually doing something else' (1992: 175). Bourdieu's central concern is with the reproduction of the social order, the ways in which we mobilise our capitals in order to gain social recognition and status.

Bourdieu developed the notion of habitus, a conceptual arena that is situated between the agency and structure, the habitus is determined by 'different conditions of existence, differential conditioning and differential endowment of capital' (Bourdieu, 1984: 170). The habitus is the 'everyday knowledge or cultural capital that reflects the routine experience of appropriate behaviour in particular cultures and subcultures' (Miles, 2000b: 21). Both Miles (2000b) and Raffo and Reeves (2000: 150) suggest that the concept of habitus comes close to resolving the dualism between agency and structure. This is because the habitus, which is a socially, historically situated condition, instigated from early childhood through interaction with the family and significant other social agents, is the embodiment of the cultural dispositions and sensibilities which structure group behaviour (Miles, 2000b: 22).

Wynne uses both the concept of lifestyles and capitals to explore the distinctions within class structure (1990). He illustrates how two middle class groups develop different styles of life to differentiate themselves from one another and display their social status through their use of differing leisure activities. Wynne illustrates how the 'drinkers' use their leisure to celebrate their degree of social mobility, whilst the 'sporters' invest in displaying their cultural skills and tastes (1990). As such 'their leisure practices, particularly their involvement with the 'learning mode' are essentially attempts at 'becoming' (Wynne, 1990: 34). [5] Again, as in chapter two and three, we see the notion of becoming arising. In Wynne's study we see how the process of becoming and the learning of cultural practices is implicated in cultural and social stratification. Notions of learning and knowledge in Wynne's work echoes Bourdieu's interest in knowledge, which is inherent in his notion of capitals, I will take up these notions in chapter five. For now I want to focus on cultural capital, the ways in which it has been used to explain shared cultural style and how it is related to the reproduction of class structure. The next section also takes up the adaptations of the concept, the ways in which it has been applied to club culture.

Cultural and subcultural capital

Cultural capital or knowledge is accumulated through education and upbringing, which bestows social status. So it follows that cultural boundaries are drawn on the basis of education, intelligence, manners, tastes and command of culture (Lamont, 1992). Bourdieu argues that social class determines and differentiates

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[5] New class factions in urban contexts have also been examined by Savage (1992),

cultural consumption (1984). Cultural taste, knowledge and style is a key signifier of social identity, taste, according to Bourdieu, is a marker of social class (1984).

Lamont (1992), like Bourdieu, argues that shared cultural style contributes to the reproduction of class structure. She also argues that a person needs access to networks of camaraderie, informal training and learning, and that access to these informal resources is largely dependent on sharing a valued cultural style (Lamont, 1992: 1). Individuals who share similar tastes and preferences tend to like one another and exclude those who have different taste (Bourdieu, 1989). Consequently, when we select friends – people who resemble ourselves – we indirectly contribute to the reproduction of class structure (Lamont, 1992: 182). However Lamont, like Jenkins (1992), Chaney (1996) and Raffo and Reeves (2000) find Bourdieu's theory overly deterministic. He underestimates the importance of moral boundaries, exaggerates the importance of cultural and socio-economic boundaries (Lamont, 1992: 5), and generalises perhaps too readily from his French sample (Lamont, 1992; Jenkins, 1992). Lamont also points out that cultural differences do not always translate to hierarchalisation, it depends on their strength (Lamont, 1992: 181).

Bourdieu's work has been adapted for the purposes of exploring club culture by Thornton (1995). She developed the notion of 'subcultural capital' because she argues it is less class bound than cultural capital (Thornton, 1995: 11-12). [6]

Bourdieu (1984) Wynne and O'Connor (1998) and Ball et al. (2000).

[6] Thornton uses the term subculture to identify taste cultures that are labelled by the media as underground, she does not adopt the theoretical definition associated with the CCCS (1995: 8).

Thornton argues that class is wilfully obfuscated by subcultural distinctions; that subcultural capital or knowledge is not learned at school; it is less easily convertible than cultural capital because it operates in a less privileged domain (1995: 11-12). Thornton takes account of the media's influence in the definition and distribution of cultural knowledge, an aspect that Bourdieu neglects (Thornton, 1995: 13-14). Despite these differences, subcultural capital, like cultural capital, puts a premium on the 'second nature' of their knowledge. This is embodied in the form of being 'in the know' (Thornton, 1995: 11-12). Thornton argues that subcultural capital is the 'linchpin of an alternative hierarchy in which the axis of age, gender, sexuality and race are all employed to keep the determinations of class, income and occupation at bay' (1995: 105). Yet the mainstream 'other', the Teds, Sharons and Tracys 'are trapped in their class, they do not enjoy the classless autonomy of 'hip' youth' (Thornton, 1995: 101). It appears that the class basis of subcultural capital is still revealed.

Recently, Hollands advanced these arguments, suggesting that a 'dominance of a 'mainstream' form of night-life provision exploits existing cleavages in the youth populations and segregates young adults into particular spaces and places' (2002: 153). This adds weight to the suggestion from Thornton (1995), who draws on Bourdieu to suggest that clubbers have a distinct 'sense of place but also a sense of the other's place (1990: 131). And like Bourdieu's (1984) cultural capital, 'subcultural capital seems to be a currency which correlates with and legitimises unequal statuses (Thornton, 1995: 104). Contrary to Lamont, but like Bourdieu, she argues that difference is hierarchical, the 'hip and the mainstream' signals 'veiled elitism and discrimination between social groups' (Thornton, 1995: 5). In her discussion of gender, Thornton suggests that some female clubbers recognise

and accept that their musical taste is low in the subcultural hierarchy (1995: 13). However, Thornton does not engage in a discussion of the other forms of capital that Bourdieu puts forward, in particular social capital, which is increasingly used in the study of young people and the transitions they make.

Social capital

At the end of chapter two I introduced some of the re-conceptualisations that have been put forward to elucidate the transitions and experiences of young people, one of which was Bourdieu's notion of social capital (1986). Social capital consists of social networks and connections: 'contacts and group memberships which, through the accumulation of exchanges, obligations and shared identities, provide actual or potential support and access to valued resources' (Bourdieu, 1993: 143). However, as already noted, Bourdieu's framework of capitals has been criticised for being overly deterministic (Jenkins, 1992; Lamont, 1992; Chaney, 1996). Some youth researchers have adjusted Bourdieu's framework to allow for 'individualised transitions, incorporating elements of agency, resistance and accommodation' (Raffo and Reeves, 2000: 148).

Both Rudd and Evans (1998) and Raffo and Reeves (2000) introduce the notion of structured individualisation. The agency of young people is recognised, but individual development is heavily dependent on the way the individualised system of social capital evolves for each individual, and that, in turn, this is conditioned by the material and symbolic resources available to these networks or constellations (Raffo and Reeves, 2000: 147). This may be a useful framework for capturing the complexity of youth transitions, complexity that is reflective of economic

restructuring, changing labour market requirements and processes of becoming. It is a framework that acknowledges 'access and opportunities are still structured by gender, family backgrounds, income and ethnicity. However young people's transitions also involve elements of agency, agency that is conditioned to a large extent by their evolutionary and adaptive characteristics of their individualised systems of social capital, rather than prescribed social characteristics' (Raffo and Reeves, 2000: 148). Morrow argues that studies using the concept of capital tend to neglect the broader social context (friends, social networks, out-of-school activities) of children and young people's lives (1999). She suggests that 'one possible way forward might be to conceptualise social capital not as a measurable 'thing', rather as a set of processes and practices that are integral to the acquisition of other forms of capital such as human and cultural capital' (Morrow, 1999: 744). Both adaptations emphasise the evolutionary and processual nature of capital development and interaction.

This can be see clearly in Raffo and Reeves argument. They suggest that 'based on the process of developing social capital through trustworthy reciprocal social relations within individualised networks, young people are provided with an opportunity to gain information, observe, ape and then confirm decisions and actions with significant others and peers' (Raffo and Reeves, 2000: 151). This also implies that young people need to learn the 'skills of exchange (sociability) which sustain these relationships, but also the skills which enable them to create social and cultural capital of their own' (Allatt, 1993:154). Sociability requires skills and disposition, it is the means through which networks are sustained. Allatt found that young people and their families were aware of the value of such social activity for the development of the cultural capital of social competence (1993: 155). They

developed their cultural capital of confidence and skill, and their social capital, which was embedded in appropriate social networks (Allatt, 1993: 148). They were aware of its role in the formation of social networks that might later be drawn upon to transmit and reproduce both privilege and disadvantage (Allatt, 1993: 155 -156).

Raffo and Reeves also bring concepts from the sociology of everyday life to illustrate how social capital is transmitted (2000). It is the active, subjective practical knowledge, created through situated social contexts of these constellations that enable individuals to attempt to solve some of their everyday tasks and at the same time, facilitates their development of competence, self confidence, self-esteem and identity (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). Raffo and Reeves draw on educationalists, Lave and Wenger (1991), to argue that the extent of social learning is dependent on the level of social capital that inheres within the individualised social contexts where situated learning takes places (2000: 151). They found that in situations where the individualised systems of social capital is weak, and material and symbolic resources few, agency and choice can be heavily constrained (Raffo and Reeves, 2000: 156). Young people learn about survival techniques; to appreciate and take advantage of opportunities, however constrained they may be and ultimately develop their own individual identities (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). These systems are embedded within loyalties, mediated by gender, ethnic and social class issues, and affected by their ability to access external material and symbolic resources. Those young people who are able to develop strong, effective and fluid individualised systems of social capital, stand the greatest chance of long term survival and ability to ride the currents of post industrial change (Raffo and Reeves, 2000: 154). Their adaptation of social capital shifts away from the arguments of Bourdieu (1986), who suggests that

there is homogeneity of a group or class habitus because of the homogeneity of the conditions of existence (Raffo and Reeves, 2000: 152). Their framework allows for the 'possibility of individuals having aspirations and developing and engaging in practices which are outside of and incompatible with the objective conditions, young people can and do have aspirations that transcend their objective reality' (Raffo and Reeves, 200: 150). In other words their habitus, or class position, does not totally determine their life opportunities, transitions and experiences.

Conclusion

This chapter drew attention to subcultural theory, much of which suggests that collectives of young people are coherent, marginalised and resistant, that the empowerment, creativity and resistance that can materialise within these collectives cannot impact on young people's social position or work related prospect and conditions. I discussed the influence and criticisms of the CCCS, suggesting that the CCCS paved the way for researchers to further examine the ways in which young people's consumption activities are implicated in both collective and personal identities.

The concept of Lifestyles, in contrast, does not presuppose coherence, marginalisation and resistance, and moreover is suggestive of lifestyle choices impacting on the identities of young people. The concept of lifestyle has been used to examine the ways in which social groups use the resources around them to mark themselves out from others, as well as to construct and communicate their social status. It is a conceptual tool for exploring expanding forms of distinction,

the ways in which we use not only commodities, but also a whole range of resources and capitals to construct hierarchies of difference, within and across social structures and groups. It can illuminate how social and/or cultural status manifests itself through particular styles of life, allowing for an exploration of distinctive group formations, without isolating them from wider and more common cultural practices. The concept of lifestyles can capture the distinctions both within and between class structures, they can reflect and legitimise the practices, divisions and hierarchies within the wider social order. Lifestyles are vehicles through which people can generate and display, not only their economic status, but also their social or cultural status. They are 'public practices – ways of discriminating, including and excluding – they are also invested with private meaning' (Chaney, 1996: 120).

However, not all youth researchers believe that lifestyles, particularly consumer activities, are strongly implicated in the construction of young people's identities. Chaney pointed out not everyone will have or want a lifestyle (1996: 4). Whether the studies from Hendry et al. (1993), Hollands (1995) Miles (2000b) or Milligan and Smith (2000) or amount to 'clear evidence that young people are placing each other and defining themselves according to their lifestyles rather than using the old social markers' (Roberts, 1997: 3) remains arguable. It has been argued that young people's styles of life and modes of consumption could be expressive of a collective identity (Hendry et al., 1993: 165). It is also argued that consumption has an increasing part to play in the establishment of identity, although they do not argue that consumer goods and associated lifestyles are crucial to identity formation (Hollands, 2002; Miles, 1996). Rather, they seem to suggest that consumer activities and lifestyles are visible markers of social status and that

young people can and do place one another, at least in part, on the basis of their lifestyles. Hollands reminds us that even non-work identities are, in part, defined against employment categories, and most young people come to recognise that their eventual status will be crucially influenced by such occupational categories (2002: 161). Indeed, this placement seems to be in combination with other social markers such as class, educational routes and achievements or what Bynner and Ashford have called the 'old' social markers (1992). Neither concept, however, takes sufficient account of whether, and in what ways, the empowerment and creativity that young people associate with involvement in youth cultures may impact on their wider lives. Neither concept seems to allow that space for involvement with a lifestyle or subculture may ebb and flow, may mean different things to a person at different times. Nor do they explicitly set out what sorts of material and social resources enable or constrain young people's ability to participate.

The concept of Lifestyle provides a useful framework for exploring social change in the lives of young people. Both subcultural and lifestyle theory neglect the other resources, capitals and knowledge that young people may have. Bourdieu's work seems to be increasingly used in youth research, in particular his concepts of cultural and social capital. And Jenkins work on youth cultures seemed to indicate that 'cultural classifications systems are rooted in the class system' (1992: 137). Thornton adapted the notion to show how class and status were concealed by the cultural distinctions within club culture (1995).

Bourdieu's notion of habitus determines the meaning and validity of lifestyles choices, this makes his notion of reflexivity impoverished (Chaney, 1996: 66). He

is nevertheless 'good to think with' (Jenkins, 1992: 141). Because he is concerned with 'the manner in which the routine practices of individual actors are determined, at least in large part, by the history and objective structure of their existing social world, and how '...those practices contribute – without this being their intention – to the maintenance of its existing hierarchical structure' (Jenkins, 1992: 141).

We can see the contribution Bourdieu's theoretical frameworks make to youth research, particularly when adapted, and more recently emphasising the ways in which young people learn (Cohen and Ainley, 2000; Miles, 2000a; Raffo and Reeves, 2000). The notions of 'cultural learning' (Cohen and Ainley, 2000) and 'informal social learning' (Raffo and Reeves, 2000) are both concerned with the transmission of knowledge, learning the skills of sociability (Allatt, 1993) and learning how to 'culturally labour' (Cohen and Ainley, 2000: 93). Knowledge appears to be increasingly implicated, not only in cultural and social capital, but also in the identities and transitions of young people. It is this I take up in the next chapter.

Chapter Five   Knowledge

Introduction

In this chapter I argue the phenomenological work of Schutz provides a heuristic device to thread together the conceptual similarities between the divergent frameworks often used to understand the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people. I expand on the literature that is concerned with social learning processes (Allatt, 1993; Cohen and Ainley, 2000; Miles, 2000a; Raffo and Reeves, 2000). I then introduce the work of Schutz, (1967; 1970a; 1970b; 1973; 1976; Schutz and Luckmann, 1974), before drawing attention to how some of these notions, albeit couched in different terminology, have been implicated in the conceptualisations surrounding the transitions, boundaries, identities and lifestyles of young people. I highlight how the concepts of Schutz can make explicit the tacit knowledge without which our being in the world would not be possible (Bauman and May, 2001: 147).

Knowledge

Learning and becoming

In the last chapter I introduced the notion of cultural learning (Cohen and Ainley, 2000: Miles, 2000a) and informal social learning (Raffo and Reeves, 2000). These ideas are concerned with learning processes, learning the skills of sociability (Allatt, 1993) and learning how to 'culturally labour' (Cohen and Ainley, 2000: 93). In this section I expand on these suggestions for understanding better how, where

and what young people learn, how young people's cultural labour can be turned into realisable forms of cultural capital, how this relates to social capital, their trajectories and transitions (Cohen and Ainley, 2000). It is suggested that cultural studies have the 'elements of a cultural learning theory, that is a theory of the cultural processes and practices through which subjects of learning are articulated as objects of the desire to know' (Cohen and Ainley, 2000: 92). Yet, this theory of identity formation is seldom applied to show the ways in which young people actually learn (Cohen and Ainley, 2000: 92). I also discuss the suggestion that 'the construction of youth as a way of life or a lifestyle is constructed through social processes such as family relationships, the labour market, schooling and training, but often expressed through cultural means' (Miles, 2000a: 9). The socio-cultural approach that Miles puts forward suggests that lifestyles are 'not entirely individualised but are constructed through affiliation and negotiation a process dependent on the active endowment of meaning by young people' (2000a: 9-16).

In this endeavour, Miles (2000a) and Cohen and Ainley (2000) turn to educational concepts, particularly the work of Lave and Wenger who suggest that any kind of learning involves investment in personal meanings, which in turn shape the sense of self (1991). Miles favours the development of a theory of learning as cultural practice, one that prioritises locally situated knowledge in young people's lifestyles (2000a: 19). Cohen and Ainley suggest examining how locally situated knowledge is acquired and transmitted, and the kinds of identity work this entails – they want to know how people learn to culturally labour? (2000: 92). Drawing on Lave and Wenger (1991), they suggest that what is learnt is not just a skill, but a form of identity work, for example if you cannot see yourself as a clubber, you are not likely to take the steps necessary to become one (Cohen and Ainley, 2000).

Second, unless you enter into the community of practice (whateverform it takes) where that potential identity is available, you will do little more than play imaginary games. Third, if you cannot tolerate initial peripheral participation, you will be likely to drop out. Fourth, you need to be able to move from your initial position of surface understanding to a position of creative engagement, otherwise you will never learn the tricks of the trade. And lastly, unless there are institutional structures to support progression from informal to formal cultures of learning, then many people will never take any of these steps (Cohen and Ainley, 2000: 92).

These ideas offer some conceptual mileage to help us understand how the capitals young people have in local informal contexts can be transformed to more formal social learning processes. Although this framework emphasises the importance of localised knowledge, it neglects the ways in which cultural and social capital are differently embodied and endowed, and implicated in social and cultural stratification. We cannot assume that learning new skills will propel us in an upward trajectory (Bauman and May, 2001: 149). Knowledge, as day to day experience of the social world, is nevertheless a key aspect of processes of becoming. Processes of becoming and the learning of cultural practices are implicated in cultural and social stratification processes (Wynne, 1990: 3). The sociology of everyday life also prioritises the local and situated, and highlights how knowledge is differently embodiment and endowed within wider hierarchies of power (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Bourdieu, 1986; 1989).

In the next section I want to highlight how the work of Schutz (1967; 1970a; 1970b; 1973; 1976; Schutz and Luckmann, 1974) can provide a heuristic framework to analyse the ways in which knowledge is implicated in processes of becoming – the

ways in which young people experience transitions, navigate social change, invest in lifestyles and construct their identities and boundaries. Before doing so, I want to point out that it was the process of analysis that drew my attention to this body of work. It became apparent that knowledge was a key feature in the processes and practices of becoming. I had not initially envisaged using Schutz's work but it proved fruitful for thinking about and understanding the data, and offered a conceptual thread to link together the literature on the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people. I do not propose that the work of Schutz can do this on its own, rather it provides a conceptual bridge to link otherwise disparate schools of thought. Moreover, in focusing on knowledge, I do not want to imply that the process of becoming is a wholly cognitive process, rather that systems of meaning are embodied in language, gestures, movements and material objects (Schutz, 1967: 78).

The thread of knowledge

Although I apply many of Schutz's ideas in the data analysis chapters, I want to briefly introduce some of his work in order to gain a fuller understanding of the nature of his sociological enterprise (1967; 1970a; 1970b; 1973; 1976; Schutz and Luckmann, 1974). I will then draw attention to how some of these notions (albeit couched in different terminology) have parity with, or have been synthesised with, other conceptual frameworks used to understand the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people.

Schutz was consistently concerned with the subjective meaning of social action, observational and motivational understanding, subjective and objective

interpretation, all of which have their roots in Weber's work (1970b). Both were concerned with and wanted to develop an objective science which could both explain and understand subjectively the complexes of meaning that social actors assemble and employ. Although Schutz is commonly thought of as a phenomenologist, these fundamental concerns came before his selective use of Husserl and range of other theoretical perspectives (Thomason, 1982:18). He called on the work of Simmel, Bergson, Heidigger and Husserl, and after going to the United States he made increasing references to William James, George Herbert Mead and Charles Cooley (Schutz, 1970b: 1; Thomason, 1982: 22). Schutz was non-committal about social ontology; he was not uncomfortable in holding on to what has been criticised for being incompatible philosophical premises. He drew on a range of perspectives, selectively and eclectically. Instead of distancing scientific knowledge from everyday ways of knowing, Schutz emphasised differences within the natural attitude (taking for granted the existence of an external world); the common-sense attitude and the theoretical or scientific attitude (Cuff et al, 1998: 152). Schutz expanded on Weber's conception of ideal types to argue that all our knowledge of the world is in the form of ideal typifications. Weber viewed the construction of ideal types as a heuristic device (1949: 90-106). Schutz saw the work of Weber as a bridge between phenomenology and sociology (1970b: 8).

Within these broad themes there are a number of concepts that have particular relevance to this discussion: the life-world; stocks of knowledge; the natural attitude; systems of relevance and typifications; the social distribution of knowledge; we-relations and reciprocity of perspectives.

The notion of the life-world, or the world of everyday life, is the total of an individual's experience; the subjective experience of daily life and the interpretation of the world that springs from it (Schutz, 1970b: 12). Schutz suggests that all our interpretation of this world is based on a stock of previous experiences in it, our stocks of knowledge (1970b: 73). The position we find ourselves in is a biographically determined situation, it involves history, time, physicality, social status, role and our ideological position; it is the sedimentation of all previous experiences, organised in the habitual possessions of our stocks of knowledge (Schutz, 1970b: 73). Schutz and Luckmann argued that it is both past and present stocks of knowledge that are important to our perception and intention, as well as a knowledge of expression and interpretation (1974: 66). These are drawn from our heritage and education, from the influence of tradition and habits (Schutz and Luckmann, 1974: 72). This knowledge is not coherent or homogenous, but for members of a particular group can take on enough similarity to communicate understanding (Schutz, 1970a; 1970b). Thus, our subjective understanding of the social world is very much informed by our position within it and our experiences of it.

Schutz argued that we take the social world for granted – although each culture and society will have its differences, everywhere we find hierarchies of power, divisions based on sex and age, relations arranged by social distance, an accepted way of life (1970b: 79). The taken-for-granted character of everyday life is what Schutz calls the paramount reality (1973: 226). Drawing on James and Mead, Schutz suggests that although we have several finite provinces of meaning, different worlds (play, art, religious experience) and multiple realities, each world has its own cognitive style, and the one that stands out it is the paramount reality,

this is the one that orientates us to everyday life (1973: 226-233). Thus the knowledge we acquire is incoherent, inconsistent and partial, however for members of the in-group (those who have a similar social heritage), it appears coherent and consistent, thus giving an opportunity for understanding and being understood (Schutz, 1970b: 81). The group then has recipes of knowledge for interpreting the social world. The subjective meaning of the group consists in their knowledge of a common situation, and with it a common system of typifications and relevances. This description holds for groups who share a common social heritage and for groups joined or formed by ourselves. The difference is that with groups joined or formed the systems of typifications are not ready made, they have to be built up by members and are always in a process of dynamic evolution (Schutz, 1970b: 83).

Schutz posited that only a small part of our social knowledge is based on personal experience, the greater part is socially derived, handed down by significant others in the life-world (1970b: 96; Schutz and Luckmann, 1974: 13). [1] Stocks of knowledge include a network of typifications. Much of our knowledge comes in the form of typicalities transmitted through language, we take these schemes for granted until we are given reason to question them. It is our interest at hand that motivates all our thinking, these systems of relevance can be thought of a continuum moving from the immediately relevant to the absolutely irrelevant, the more irrelevant they become the less we can immediately observe, experience and change them (Schutz, 1970b: 111-112). Systems of relevance and typifications have a number of functions, only some of which I will discuss here.

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[1] This is a contradiction as previously Schutz asserts that all our stocks of knowledge are based on personal experience (1970a: 73).

They function as schemes of both interpretation and orientation (Schutz, 1970b: 120-121). We know things without thinking, we base face to face encounters on the knowledge we have acquired about individuals and social types (Schutz, 1967). Reality construction is a dialectical process, the social world is a humanly produced reality that acts back upon and influences the human producers (Schutz, 1967: 78). Moreover, knowledge is socially distributed. Schutz uses the ideal types of expert, man in the street and well-informed citizen to demonstrate the social distribution of knowledge (1970b: 239). Expert knowledge is clear and distinct but limited to a certain field; the man on the street has a working knowledge of many fields, recipes that are not necessarily clearly understood, vague but sufficient for the purpose at hand; whilst the well-informed citizen stands between the two (Schutz, 1970b: 241). In our everyday world we can be simultaneously all three, but in respect to different provinces of knowledge. Thus knowledge is implicated in our micro and macro understanding of the social world – it is derived, experiential, reflexive and socially distributed.

The embodied nature of knowledge is rendered more explicit in Schutz's discussions of social interactional relationships, which consist of we-relationships. These are only reciprocal if the parties are mutually aware and have a sympathetic participation in each others lives, however brief that may be (Schutz, 1970b: 186). In face to face interactions the body is a perceivable and explicable field of expression, which makes one's conscious life accessible to the other (Schutz and Luckmann, 1974: 62). We have direct experiential relationships with our fellows or consociates, as described above (Schutz, 1970b: 186), and distant relations with our contemporaries (Schutz, 1970b: 218). Bauman and May articulate this idea

well: from any individual point of view, all other members of the human race may be plotted against an imaginary line – a continuum measured by social distance – which grows as social intercourse shrinks in its volume and intensity (2001: 29). This ranges from personalised knowledge to knowledge limited to an ability to assign people to types: the rich, politicians, hooligans etc. The more distant from ourselves, the more typified is our awareness of the people who occupy the point on the continuum, as well as our reactions to them (Bauman and May, 2001: 29). Schutz's distinction between fellows and contemporaries illuminates the nuanced relationship between similarity and difference (Jenkins, 1996: 116). So, in the absence of knowledge based in direct personal experience, one relies on more superficial, less individualised knowledge, such as the person's collective identifications – gender, ethnicity, class etc. Whilst our knowledge of fellows, based on direct experience and personal identifications, is more relevant, we do not disregard collective identifications (Jenkins, 1996: 116).

Schutz uses the notion of reciprocity of perspectives to illustrate that we assume that others have the same typifying constructs that we have – that they know what we know (1970b: 184). He suggests that reciprocal mirroring is of fundamental importance for the processes of socialisation (Schutz, 1973: 66). Schutz sees our interactions, knowledge and understanding as always subject to revision, a constant dialectical process that informs our stocks of knowledge and systems of typifications and relevances. The work of Schutz expressly explicates how knowledge is implicated in our subjective understandings, experiences, actions and identities.

Having set out some of the basic principles of Schutz's work, I now want to point out how some of these notions have already implicated in the divergent frameworks used to conceptualise the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people.

The concept of lifestyles and the notion of capitals were both identified as potential conceptual tools to take the transitions debate forward. The notion of young people attaining adult status at a particular point in their lives has been replaced with the idea of transitions being reflexive, emergent in a continual process of becoming. Furlong and Cartmel, (1997), Miles, (2000a), Cohen and Ainley (2000) and Raffo and Reeves (2000) reject Gidden's suggestion that place loses its significance in late modernity (1991: 1992). Like Schutz, they suggest that locally situated experience and knowledge is an important aspect in young people's transitions.

Symbolic Interactionist work showed how the meanings we attach to the social world were partly assumed and partly shared, these notions can clearly be seen in the work of Schutz. These were not free floating identities uninfluenced by social positioning, but identities accommodated into and in a dialectical relationship with our existing sense of self and place within the social world.

Processes of becoming are gendered in nature and involve more than learning, they are informed by what Schutz would refer to as our biographical determined situation, our social heritage, our collective and personalised knowledge of what we understand to be feminine and masculine beings (1970a; 1970b). Schutz did not talk explicitly about gender, though the work of West and Zimmerman (1991) and Skeggs (1997) work well alongside his ideas.

These processes and practices were evident in the discussion on clubbing boundaries. Boundaries were not always tangible but nevertheless crucial in demonstrating embodied understandings, knowledge and taste, making visible those not adept at embodying the 'right' ways of being. The studies into subcultures and lifestyles draw out the importance of local cultural knowledge in young people's sense of identity, affiliation and difference, how through knowledgeable practices groups can maintain a sense of 'us' and 'them'.

Parity can again be found in the work of Bourdieu and Schutz. They provide a complementary framework for conceptualising the boundary work that we do in everyday life. Bourdieu's notion of capitals can also be thought of as resources or knowledge, but although his concepts are 'good to think with' (Jenkins, 1992: 141), they are overly deterministic. Bourdieu's concepts, although couched in different language, have parity with those of Schutz. For example, the habitus, the domain of habit, is both collective and individual and definitively embodied (Jenkins, 1996: 22). It is a socially, historically situated condition, instigated from early childhood through interaction with the family and significant other social agents; it is the embodiment of the cultural dispositions and sensibilities which structure group behaviour (Miles, 2000b: 22). Moreover, Wynne demonstrated how processes of learning and becoming are implicated in cultural and social stratification (1990: 3). However the concern with determinism prompted researchers to adapt Bourdieu's concepts (Lamont, 1992; Rudd and Evans, 1998; Morrow, 1999; Raffo and Reeves, 2000). The notion of structured individualisation (Raffo and Reeves, 2000; Rudd and Evans, 1998) takes more account of the broader social context of young people's lives. It is particularly relevant when synthesised with the

sociology of everyday life to illustrate the transmission of social capital and how social learning was implicated in that process (Morrow, 1999). This adaptation breaks the link between homogeneity of class habitus and the conditions of existence, allowing space for social change (Raffo and Reeves, 2000: 152).

Conclusion

This chapter suggests that the work of Schutz can provide a heuristic device that links the disparate frameworks used for conceptualising the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people. When synthesised with some other sympathetic conceptual frameworks, it illuminates how the process of becoming is a gendered, dialectical and transformational process that is informed by our social heritage and locally situated experiences, a process which manifests itself through embodied practices involving cultural knowledge and taste. The typifications we construct contribute to the boundary work we do, the distinctions and divisions between 'us' and 'them'. When the notions of habitus and capitals (Bourdieu) were synthesised with the sociology of everyday life, the determinism between the class habitus and the conditions of existence was fractured and highlighted how social learning is implicated in the transmission of privilege and disadvantage. We also see parity between the work of Schutz and the notion of lifestyle, 'lifestyles are intrinsically members categories, this means that people use lifestyles in everyday life to identify and explain wider complexes of identity and affiliation' (Chaney, 1996: 12). The correspondence between them is unsurprising, given that the work of Weber provides the bedrock and inspiration for both strands of sociological thought.

As alluded to in the text, it was the process of analysis that prompted me to explore how knowledge had or had not been implicated in the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people. Phenomenological concepts are often discussed in terms of their theoretical or methodological contribution, (Thomason, 1982; Cuff et al., 1998; Sokolowski, 2000; Moran, 2000; Maso, 2001) yet seem seldom used as a heuristic device for analysing data and linking disparate areas of literature. Exceptions to this are Berger and Luckmann's (1966) classic text and Charlesworth (1999). Yet the notions of Schutz seem to complement many of the other frameworks taken up in the literature. This was particularly noticeable when discussing the symbolic interactionist work on identities, processes of becoming and the construction of boundaries. It was apparent again in Willis's 1978 study, which highlighted beautifully not only the processes and practices of boundary construction but also how knowledge was a key feature in such practices. Complementary perspectives arose again in the discussion of lifestyles as well as the concepts associated with Bourdieu, in particular when these ideas were adapted and or synthesised with notions surrounding the transmission of knowledge. I found the work of Schutz good to think with, it complemented the other conceptual tools I was using to analyse, particularly the work of Strauss, Becker, Chaney and Bourdieu, together they provide the conceptual backdrop for analysis. However, before moving on to the analysis chapters, we need to look at how I got the data - how I got knowledge of their knowledge and how I accessed their world.

Chapter Six   Learning to Dance

Introduction

This chapter describes how I got knowledge of each participant's knowledge, how I accessed their world.   It describes the reasons behind these methods and the implications of engaging in this process.   I wanted to explore the processes and practices of becoming a clubber, to engage in the process of learning of how to participate in a host culture, to acquire inside knowledge, which would supplant my own previous 'external' knowledge (Schutz, 1976).   I needed to spend time with participants, to interact socially, learning about their language, tastes, values and norms, as well as to inquire about the meanings and significance of clubbing in their everyday lives.   I turned to ethnography because it is a method that allows scope for the process of moving from being strange to being familiar (Becker, 1971; 1998; Schutz, 1976).   'Ethnography exploits the capacity that any social actor possesses for learning new cultures, and the objectivity to which this process gives rise' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 8).   My choice of method was influenced both by the appropriateness of the method to the research question and to the intellectual culture to which it belongs.   In this chapter I first ask why ethnography?   I discuss both the theory and the practice of ethnography.   How I got knowledge of their knowledge, how I accessed their world, and what data was co-constructed as a result of this process.

Why ethnography?

I wanted to understand and learn about how people become clubbers. I needed to adopt a learning role, to move from having some 'knowledge about' to having intimate understanding of the culture of the group (Rock, 2001:30). This meant I would need to engage with participants in the context of their own lives. To learn 'what you know in the way that you know it....will you become my teacher and help me understand? (Spradley, 1979: 34). Not only did I need to interact socially, observe and participate, but I also needed to converse in a purposeful manner with a sample of clubbers. I wanted these interactions to allow participants to speak in and on their own terms, to give participants space to reconstruct detailed descriptions of their experiences and practices as well as the meanings they attached to them. I needed a methodology that was sympathetic to this kind of research process, one that would allow scope for participation, interaction, observation, reflection, respectful and reflexive in-depth interviewing, collaboration, purposive and theoretical sampling and on-going analysis.

Ethnography has many definitions; it can mean different things to different people depending on their discipline and theoretical affiliations (Reinharz, 1992; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Atkinson et al., 2001). There appears to be significant overlap in the terminology used to describe the various methods used in both qualitative and ethnographic research (Hamersley and Atkinson, 1995; Reinharz, 1992). For the purposes of this thesis I want to focus on the deployment of ethnography within sociology and highlight the methodological arguments that had a bearing on how I engaged with the research process.

Skeggs suggests that there is no one ethnography, its boundaries are permeable: it has to call on a range of methods in order to have the flexibility to adapt to the

culture of the participants and the context of the study (2001: 426 Pearson, 1993). This view, one that I concur with, differs from a naturalistic one: a perspective that assumes that you can know about people through their 'natural' settings and that you can provide a truth about those people. Naturalist ethnographies are more associated with social anthropology, whereas it was the Chicago School and symbolic interactionism that significantly shaped the form that ethnography has taken in sociology (Rock, 2001; Heyl, 2001). The Chicago School sociologists recognised that there are many different layers of cultural knowledge within any society. The value of ethnography as a social research method is founded upon the existence of variations in cultural patterns across and within societies, and their significance for understanding social processes (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 9). Ethnographic research does not presume too much in advance, but neither is it presuppositionless, it sees the social world as a place of process and interaction. Therefore, its findings will be tentative, situated, empirical, interpretative, illuminating patches of the world and suggesting further paths of inquiry (Rock, 2001: 29-30; Heyl, 2001: 371-372). [1] Ethnography has also intersected with feminism. Many feminists suggest that when qualitative and particularly ethnographic research is co-opted with feminist concerns, the result can challenge previous research, render assumptions about gender explicit and generate theory more suited for exploring the complexities of gender, race and class (Skeggs, 2001: 428). [2]

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[1]For a fuller discussion on interactionism and ethnography, please see Blumer (1969), Becker (1970), Hammersley (1989), Silverman (1993), and Rock (2001).

[2] For a fuller discussion on the intersection between feminism and ethnography please see Roberts (1981), Stacy (1988), Pilcher and Coffey (1996), Reinharz (1992), Ribbens and Edwards (1998) and Skeggs (2001).

Although ethnography is a diverse, permeable and changing medium of social research, many ethnographies have central concerns in common. I draw on the literature that suggests, in keeping with the interpretative tradition of social research, that ethnographic research (and this thesis) is centrally focused on cultural meanings, the meanings participants place on their life experiences and circumstances, expressed in their own language (Becker, 1970; Spradley, 1979; Rock, 2001: 31). Ethnographic research is centrally concerned about conducting research within the context of people's lives; this will involve a level of participation on the part of the researcher (Schutz, 1976; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Skeggs 2001; Heyl, 2001; Rock, 2001). Ethnographic research is also concerned with providing a reflexive account of the research relationships, the effects of the researcher on the data and an explicit account of the production of knowledge (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Oakley, 1998; Skeggs, 2001). Not least, ethnographic research is concerned about developing respectful and on-going relationships with participants (Heyl, 2001; Skeggs, 2001). The nature of research relationships; the way in which we interact and participate with participants, and the effect of that participation in the co-production of knowledge is pivotal and needs to be rendered explicit.[3] Rather than reviewing these texts, I want to give a flavour of how some of the issues raised in these texts impacted on the methodology of my thesis. It is to these issues I now turn.

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[3] There are many texts devoted to the various methods employed in ethnographic work and the issues that these raise, including Spradley (1979), Oakley (1981), Finch (1984), Douglas (1985) and Heyl (2001), all of whom discuss ethnographic interviewing. Plummer (1983), Miles and Huberman (1994), Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) and Lofland and Lofland (1997) discuss the process of data analysis. Bell and Roberts (1984), Bell and Newby (1977), Spradley (1980), Jorgenson (1989) and Devine and Heath (1999), provide reflective accounts of the research process. Whilst Opie (1992), Stacy (1988), Ribbens

Ethnography in theory

Conducting research in the context of people's lives, participating in the everyday (or night) lives of the group is commonly referred to as participant observation, although the degree of participation varies greatly amongst ethnographic projects (Reinharz, 1992; Skeggs, 2001: 427). Ethnographic research begins in the library (Rock, 2001: 33). The literature informs the relationship between theory and practice, this type of fieldwork is very much a process, not a linear one but a spiral of understanding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998: 158-159). The fieldwork, the analysis and review of the existent literature are conducted simultaneously. Interpretations are developed from observations and filtered back in to the research process to guide the collection of further data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998: 158-159).

Rock suggests that 'interactionist research hinges on participant observation: that it is only by attempting to enter the symbolic lifeworld of others that one can ascertain the subjective logic on which it is built, to feel, hear and see a little of social life as one's subjects do' (2001: 32). In fieldwork such as this there is a balance to be struck 'between the roles of participant – learning the experiential world from within – and the role of observer – analysing it from without' (Rock, 2001: 32). Learning about the experiential world from within implies that the researcher is a novice or stranger in the cultural world of the group and, through interacting with those who belong and are involved in that world, the researcher learns about the cultural meanings, boundaries, tastes and experiences of the

(1989), Ribbens and Edwards (1998) and Coffey (1999), discuss the issue of research relationships.

members. As Hammersley and Atkinson point out 'ethnographic researchers are in much the same position as Schutz's stranger' (1995: 8-9).

Although not explicitly concerned with the methodology of ethnography, Schutz takes up the experiences of those who, by profession, try to both engage with and distance themselves from learning about a culture that is to various extents strange to them (1976). Schutz suggests that the stranger can place the culture of the new group within the interpretative framework of his own culture, that is, the stranger will have enough common knowledge to get by. However this translated understanding is not sufficient for the stranger to participate competently, it is only after collecting a certain knowledge of the interpretative possibilities of the new culture can the stranger start to adopt the cultural schemes of interpretation as his own (Schutz, 1976). The stranger can only be seen as a true member of the group when 'his acting shows all the marks of habituality, automatism and half consciousness' (Schutz, 1976: 101). Schutz makes the point that a real member would not have an objective sense about the culture in the way that an acculturated stranger would have, as real members will hold assumptions and take for granted the world in which they live (1976: 92). Although the member and stranger have been treated as dualistic entities, Schutz reminds us that both the stranger and the member can have experiences of being a stranger within their own cultures. Schutz's essay illustrates how the stranger or the researcher can acquire a certain objectivity not normally available to cultural members, the stranger can render explicit some of the fundamental presuppositions that shape their vision, many of which are distinctive to that culture (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 8-9). The crucial difference between the novice and the ethnographer is that the latter attempts to maintain a self-conscious awareness of

what is learned, how it has been learned and the social transactions that inform the production of such knowledge (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:101).

The ethnographer is the instrument of data collection. They look, listen, participate and write down their experiences, this requires investment in terms of time and energy, developing relationships with people who the researcher may have little personal affinity with (May, 1993:16). The researcher and the researched are likely to have different social locations, cultural assumptions and experiences, and this diversity can be fruitful for inquiry both methodologically and theoretically (Hammersley, 1992b: 193). There will always be differences such as gender, ethnicity and social position, between the researcher and the researched. Rather than eliminating those, 'there is a need for explicitness on the part of researchers about what is done to whom and how' (Oakley, 1999: 165; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Hammersley argues that by making explicit how research is done, reflecting on and discussing the strategies we use, we can come to some tentative conclusions about which strategies are more appropriate for particular purposes in particular circumstances' (1992a: 192). [4] Although the process of participant observation was about enhancing my understanding of the cultural settings, becoming familiar with the ways of being and developing relations that would allow me further access, I did not want to treat those I met as solely information-giving objects (Stanley and Wise, 1983: 170). I was a guest, albeit one with a purpose. I was there to do my research, but they were not there for me 'to do research on' (Stanley and Wise, 1983: 170). Ethically, I wanted to be open

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[4] See Hammersley (1992a), Ramazanoglu (1992) and Gelsthorpe, (1992) for debates around validity of experience against method.

about what I was doing, engage with those I met in a respectful and reciprocal manner.

As well as participant observation, I would need to form relationships with people who could mediate my access to interviewees. These individuals would be, in effect, sponsors who could provide a bridge for me to meet with other potential participants (Lee, 1993). Access is a process of continual negotiation, renegotiation and developing non-exploitative and trustful relationships with key contacts and participants (Lee, 1993). Access is not only about getting physical access but also social access. Hammersley and Atkinson suggest that the process of negotiating access is akin to progressive initiation, in which management of self-disclosure may be a crucial feature, particularly if members of stigmatised groups require reassurance that the ethnographer does not harbour feelings of disapproval (1995: 92). I anticipated that I would have a level of social proximity with both key contacts and participants. I hoped that my 'social proximity and familiarity would provide the social conditions of 'non-violent' communication' (Bourdieu, 1996: 20). Hammersley and Atkinson suggest that 'The value of sociability in establishing one's identity as a normal decent person should not be underestimated' (1995: 89). [5]

Although the study could have no predetermined sampling frame and sampling would be emergent, it could not be arbitrary or divorced from methodological consideration. Hammersley and Atkinson argue that when sampling it is best to

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[5] For further discussion on power relations and the ethical considerations in research, see Roberts (1981), Oakley (1981), Stanley and Wise (1983), Cook and Fonow (1986), Eichler (1988), Stacy (1988), Ribbens (1989), Reinharz (1992), Heyl (2001) and Skeggs (2001).

have combination of self-selecting and researcher selected participants (1995: 137). Where the concern is with eliciting information rather than documenting perspectives or discursive practices, the ethnographer may target those who have the desired knowledge and be willing to divulge it to the researcher (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 137). The strategic selection of participants draws on assumptions about the social distribution of knowledge. For strategic sampling the researcher needs a range of informants sensitive to the area of concern (Dean et. al., 1967: 285). Informants are grouped into types depending on their position within the cultural setting, for example the outsider, the rookie, the nouveau statused, the reflective and the objective (Dean et al., 1967: 285).

As I would be negotiating access to potential interviewees through key contacts, I intended to use snowballing and networking as the main sampling method. These techniques are commonly used in qualitative and ethnographic research. Snowballing is a method often deemed the most suitable for sampling hidden or hard to reach populations (Jorgensen, 1989:50). Snowballing may be one of the few methods available to the researcher of contacting people who are participating in illicit activities such as drug using (Plant, 1975). Purposive snowballing and the use of key contacts is often the only viable way to contact hidden populations, even in larger scale studies (Hammersley et al., 2002). Forsyth argues that the use of key informants is not in the strictest sense a true snowball, rather a chain develops from one participant to the next which 'produces a network of individuals who were in the social orbit of the key contact' (1997:67). So rather than only having a downward chain, a sideways spread of new recruits is also developed.

Along with networking and snowballing, I aimed to incorporate 'theoretical sampling'; a process guided by selecting participants who will maximise theoretical development (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). For example, I aimed to include participants whose participation in club culture was primarily on the production rather than the consumption side of the industry (those in the business such as promoters and DJ's, as opposed to clientele or participants), in order to develop further analytical insights. Theoretical sampling would also be employed to sample for a cross section of participants that were thought to reflect the known diversity of the population. The diversity and characteristics of people clubbing in Scotland has been estimated through prevalence studies into dance drug use (Forsyth, 1997; Hammersley et al., 2002). I planned to continue interviewing until I found similar instances repeatedly coming up in the data: this is known as theoretical saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Adopting epistemologies, which allow the researched to express themselves in their own frame of reference, was important not only whilst interviewing but also in the process of recruitment (Oakley, 1981; Finch, 1984; Mishler, 1986; Reinharz 1992; Opie, 1992). I wanted to talk with people who identified themselves as clubbers. These are what Lofland would call member identified categories (1976). These are not categories identified by the researcher. Rather they are typifications that members employ themselves, 'folk categories' that are normally encapsulated in the 'situated vocabularies' of a given culture (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 50). Allowing participants to identify themselves through folk typifications is inextricably linked with the development of analytical ideas and the collection of data (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 51). A balance between unsolicited

(participant observation) and solicited accounts through asking questions allows for the generation of data, each kind of account can illuminate the other (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 126-131).

Ethnographic interviewing has been utilised in sociology as a way of shedding light on the personal experiences, interpersonal dynamics and cultural meanings of participants in their social worlds (Heyl, 2001: 372). What participants choose to share with the researcher is reflected in the conditions of their relationship and the interview situation (Heyl, 2001: 370). Moreover, 'whose territory (the interview takes place in) can make a big influence on how the interview goes, it will affect how they respond' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 150-151). Interviewing style would consist of directive and non-directive questioning, careful and active listening, much like a directed conversation taking place within a social event (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 153-156). Oakley advocates that the way to achieve non-exploitative research relationships is through investing some of one's own identity and developing friendship with the researched (1981). However other feminist researchers point out that to divorce this methodology from its moral and epistemological basis may result in increasing the exploitative nature of the research process (Stanley & Wise, 1983; Finch, 1984). Hammersley and Atkinson (1995: 91) pragmatically suggest that drawing on similar experiences can help to establish mutuality, thus the researcher is involved in impression management, the requirements of interaction ritual (Goffman, 1967). Drawing on Powdermaker (1966: 115-19) and Everhart (1977) they suggest that in interviews, the ethnographer needs to be intellectually poised between familiarity and strangeness (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 112). They argue that there is 'no question of

total becoming, some social and intellectual distance needs to be maintained for the analytical work' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 115).

Giving participants opportunity to talk in their own frames of reference is also important for illuminating expressions that may provide analytical insights into the way in which the culture operates (Brake, 1980). Flexibility can also enhance the researcher's ability to capture the complexities of the participants' stories and explain contradictions between accounts by asking for clarification and using contrast questions. As the researcher learns more about the individuals, group and culture under study, the interviews with subsequent participants will include this knowledge. In this way the researcher can use subsequent interviews to check out, expand on, and add depth to information collected in the previous interviews.

Researchers are not presuppositionless, they will have read literature, reflected on preliminary fieldwork and generated some sensitising concepts (Blumer, 1969) or pre-emptive assumptions (Schutz, 1967). Generating concepts – making sense of the data in an analytical fashion – can provide a novel perspective on the phenomena or may promise to tell us something about other phenomena of similar types (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 209). Through employing some of our existing knowledge, careful and repeated readings and looking for patterns and irregularities, analytical ideas emerge and are developed (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 210). Each analytical foray will consist of a 'series of linked questions, a lattice of problems that lead into one another, these will be pursued until one is satisfied that one knows enough' (Rock, 2001: 35). Howard Becker called this process 'sequential analysis' (1971). As analysis becomes

progressively more focused, some categories become more central, these are constantly compared to the other categories, this is know as the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Developing typologies are ways of sorting out the relationship between categories of course the context of the data must be accounted for in this process (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 220-223).

Having discussed the theory of ethnography, I now want to discuss the practice of ethnography. I hope to reflect the dialectical relationship between the methodology, the process, the literature and the analysis through my own fieldwork experiences.

Ethnography in practice - fieldwork

Participant observation

Between November 1998 and October 1999 I undertook 10 participant observation trips in Scotland. [6] These events ranged from a large 'dance festival' arranged by a national radio station, which plays popular chart orientated music aimed at a primarily teenage market, through to small niche musical venues catering to more marginal and musically specific tastes. Contemporary club culture is not a unitary culture, rather it comprises of profusion of musical scenes that have their own set of affiliations centring around music, style of dancing, code of dress, use of drugs/alcohol and social and interactional etiquette (Henderson, 1997; Thornton,

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[6] Scotland was deemed an appropriate setting for this study as no other study of this nature as yet been done on the Scottish club scene. Much of the data pertaining to

1997; Merchant & MacDonald, 1994). This meant it was important for me to get a sense of the various scenes that could be located under the umbrella of club culture. I kept a field diary, in which I wrote about how I got to the event and with whom, my feelings during the night, interactions and behaviours I observed, as well as more reflective analytical notes after the event. It was not possible to take notes on the spot but I always took pen and paper with me so I could write down a word or two to remind myself of an event, situation, interaction that I would write more about immediately after the event. Then, on the following day, I made more extensive notes (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2001). There were two different kinds of participant observation carried out, as a paying customer and as an invited outsider.

Paying customer

Eight out of the ten participant observation trips were done in the company of other clubbers, these were people who I already knew or knew of. As Rock states, 'it is usually best to start with those at hand...networks are important and much ethnography turns out to be a social anthropology of one's own kind' (2001: 34). I approached them and told them that I was doing a PhD on club culture, the study was about how men and women experienced the culture and that any participation would be confidential. Because I intimated to them that I wanted to join in: the understanding was that I was there to dance, to become part of the crowd, experience what they experienced, to participate rather than observe. As a newcomer to this environment I took my social cues from them. At each event

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contemporary dance scenes in Scotland comes from drug prevalence studies such as Forsyth (1997), Riley et al. (2001) and Hammersley et al. (2002).

there was a period of acclimatisation, we put our coats away, went to the bar, got a drink and chatted. This chat centred around what kind of crowd was in, 'were they up for it', how busy it was or likely to get and how the music was sounding. Sometimes people took some ecstasy before going into the club they told me that the timing of consumption was important to get maximum effect during the peak hours of dancing. Dancing together in a cohesive group was not the done thing with the clubbers I went out with. After acclimatising, the group began to disperse and go 'walkabout'. This was partly about getting one's bearings (toilets, chill out room, back room) but if in a known club walkabout was more about interacting with the crowd, and getting 'in tune' with the music or, as one key contact explained, 'counting yourself into the beat'. During these initial periods I was able to do most of my observing, but once the tempo of the music began to pick up and the crowd began to focus on the music and dancing, my ability to observe dissipated.

On the occasions I tried not to participate, to instead stand back and observe, I was approached within a few minutes and encouraged to dance. Sometimes people would be concerned about me and asked whether I was okay, had I lost my mates? The social pressure to join in, be part of the crowd, to show enjoyment was felt in no uncertain terms. It was not that you had to dance, but unless you were chatting, in company, moving around or smiling you weren't behaving as if you were part of the crowd.

I began to realise how incompetent I was as a cultural participant, I was a cultural stranger in so many ways: I was naïve to the accepted social etiquette that governs the interactions and behaviour of participants at clubbing events. I had to learn how to dance, how to interact with other participants and how to experience

the event itself. It was a process, moving from being strange to becoming familiar (Schutz, 1976; Becker, 1991). This process is best explained by an example. During fieldwork I was immediately struck by the intensity and frequency of eye contact. I felt as if I was being stared at, this puzzled and at times intimidated me and I initially reacted by looking away. This marked style of interaction differed from other public domains, it ran contrary to a studied lack of interest, minimal eye contact and management of physical proximity, what Goffman called 'civil inattention' (1967). I soon realised that this was the predominate style of interaction in many club settings – when I returned eye contact people smiled at me, approached me and initiated conversation. Dancing was different, men did not ask women to dance, there were no large single sex groups, rather people tended to dance in lines facing the DJ, nobody asked anyone to dance and there often appeared to be no clear-cut designated dance area. It took me a couple of fieldtrips to feel confident enough to get up, find a space and dance when I felt like it. As a paying customer it was difficult not to dance: after all that is what you are meant to be there for, which meant I had to participate fully unless I had another form of access, a different reason for being there.

Invited observer

I did two fieldtrips as an invited guest of people who had privileged access. The first of these was as the guest of a promoter, whose name and number had been passed on to me during fieldwork. After many attempts at contacting him we arranged for me to come along to the night he organised. He put me on the guest list and showed me around. Being a promoter appeared to have a certain cultural status, when showing me round he was approached on numerous occasions by

people offering their congratulations, or asking to get on the guest list. He introduced me to the staff, told them I was a researcher, here as his guest and could have open access to the club. He then left me behind the stage where the DJ was playing, saying to give him a ring if I wanted to come again. This kind of privileged access offered me a more holistic perspective, I could move between back and front stage (Goffman, 1971: 109-140). Even backstage I was encouraged to dance and demonstrate my appreciation for the music and atmosphere.

The second of these trips was with an agency that provides safer drug use information. Here I called on my previous experience of being a drugs worker to facilitate contact. The plan was to visit five clubbing venues during one night in order to distribute packs of safer drug use information. I was an extra pair of hands and in return I got to visit five different clubbing venues in one night. We spent 30–60 minutes in each club handing out packs to the club goers and letting them know of the agency's whereabouts and services. In this role I was not expected to participate but it did afford me the opportunity to see first hand a variety of scenes in one night. Mediating access as a participant would not only have taken a great deal more time and effort, but as a participant my social and aesthetic make-up would have come into play in a different way. It is to these issues I now turn.

No entry

My access was very much mediated by what kind of person I was, what I looked like, how I dressed, my age, and having the social contacts to go with. My social

make-up allowed me access to particular kinds of dance events but excluded me from others. The dress code, price and hours of opening of most club venues and nights are listed in the press. The listings however, tend not to impart the 'folk' categories attached to the various club nights. For example, I wanted to visit one of the bigger clubs which was often described in the listings as a 'beautiful club' where the dress code was 'cool and clubby' (Mixmag, 1998; 1999). But during fieldwork I heard clubbers describe it in slightly different terms, it was 'flash', the crowd were 'posers' who wore designer clothing. Already I had began to exclude myself as I felt that I would not fit into that crowd or club, but decided to watch the queue one evening to see if I could possibly get in and subsequently fit in. Quickly I realised my chances of getting in, far less fitting-in, were remote. I was older than most, I did not have the right clothes, the required look or attitude and I was not in with a regular crowd. These factors, as well as the issue of not knowing anyone who went to the club, served to stop me attempting to get in. This is one example of exclusivity but exclusivity also appeared to operate in different ways. For instance, some of the smaller promoters and DJ outfits run sporadic nights and tend to cater for a niche crowd. These nights tend not to be listed and operate away from the regular venues; they rely on word of mouth and postal mailing lists to attract their customers. In these instances one can only get access to these events via being in and around certain clubbing social networks.

Participant observation informed the study in two main ways: it impacted on the methods themselves and gave me analytical insights that were fed into the interview prompt.

Implications

Methodological

Initially I had planned to recruit interviewees through my participant observation activities. This was in part because clubbers have little visible point of contact, other than the clubs and events themselves. However, attempting to either conduct or to facilitate interviews within a clubbing environment was practically impossible. First, it was very difficult to conduct a conversation due to the noise, particularly a conversation that would require a level of attention that would be disruptive to their clubbing experiences. Second, clubbing is a night time activity, associated with pleasure, a space not to think or at least not to think about organising an interview with someone whom one has have never met before. Third, many of the people I encountered had consumed intoxicating substances and were not in a position to be fully aware of what they were agreeing to participate in, which ran counter to the ethical considerations discussed earlier. Further, whether they would remember and follow through on any arrangements was unpredictable. I needed to consider other ways of contacting and recruiting potential interviewees.

As a primary carer for a young child, my personal responsibilities soon began to clash with the late nights and high levels of energy that were required of a sustained and intense period of participant observation. I could not have become a clubber socially or intellectually, I would have needed to change my lifestyle considerably to be able to begin to identify as a clubber. It would require more than going to a club every now and then, to actually identify with and feel part of a

member of a cultural group (Schutz, 1976: 92). These circumstances impacted on how often I went clubbing and drew my attention to how difficult it would be for many people to become or remain involved with club culture if they were a primary carer for any dependent, due to the time and energy both activities require. Nevertheless, from the position of paying customer I went through an experiential process of negotiating entry to club culture, becoming familiar with the cultural practices, interactions and values and, to an extent, developing my own cultural tastes and affiliations, this process informed my analytical thinking.

Analytical

One of my first analytical insights was related to how people built up their knowledge of the culture, began to engage with the culture, develop social networks and affiliate with a particular scene. This progression seemed akin to a 'process of becoming' (Becker, 1991). This notion seemed potentially useful for conceptualising how people move through club culture, as they develop their musical tastes and participate in clubbing activities from different social locations within changing social networks.

During participant observation I could not help but compare my present and past experiences of social dance, which drew attention to the different practices and interactions found in 'dance drug culture' (Henderson, 1993a; 1993b) and other night-club environments. I began to notice how clubbers attached meanings to the various scenes, how they compared and prioritised the various attributes of their club scene. The cultural boundaries that people constructed which seemed to inform their sense of belonging, values and tastes. My experience of being an

invited guest and shown around a club by a promoter made me think about what and who was accorded status and whether there was a cultural hierarchy in place within the culture.

These insights were noted in my fieldwork diary as the participant observation progressed, they provided the initial thematic ideas for my interview prompt. For instance, regarding the notion that there may be a 'process of becoming' a clubber, I constructed a question around whether interviewees had ever felt novice and whether they now felt practised in some way. To explore the notion of boundaries, I constructed a comparative question that would prompt them to compare different scenes and crowds. By this stage in the fieldwork I was ready to start interviewing and began in earnest to go about the process of generating interviewees.

Ethnography in practice – interviews

Generating participants

The process of participant observation and interviewing overlapped. It led me to generating participants not only from key contacts but also from pre-club bars. These premises are city centre café bars serving food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. They are, in the main, what Hollands (2002: 165) calls gentrified or exclusive mainstream spaces. [7] Clubs and pre-clubs are described in The List, a

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[7] See Hollands (2002) and Chatterton and Hollands (2001; 2002) for further discussion on the segregation, gentrification and segmentation of urban night-life provision.

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fortnightly magazine listing cultural events in and around Glasgow and Edinburgh. Previous research have recruited from these venues before (Akram, 1997), but that work involved the use of on-the-spot questionnaires rather than attempting to arrange in-depth interviews at another time and place. I identified five pre-club bars and visited each of them on two occasions. I would buy a drink, sit at the bar and watch and listen for clues that would prompt me whether or not to approach someone. However, as there is no discernible style this proved difficult. Moreover, filtering may have excluded potential participants, so I began to approach more or less all the customers that came into the premises during the time I was there.

I introduced myself as a student researcher looking into club culture and asked them whether they were into clubbing. About half of those approached answered in the negative, most others said they were going clubbing that evening but they weren't 'clubbers', they were only going to a club because it was someone's birthday or an office night out. The few who did identify as clubbers were happy to chat or complete a questionnaire but did not want to arrange a follow up interview. Only two people gave me their telephone number to arrange an interview, but despite numerous calls neither number was ever answered.

These visits made me aware of the extent of flier advertising and thought that many people I approached may have assumed that I was recruiting for a mailing list or promoting an event or club. Fliers are a commonly used publicity medium in the dance music industry to advertise events, clubs, acts and unlicensed parties and I decided that it may be useful to have some fliers to advertise the study. I produced 200 fliers using iconography associated with club culture (see appendix

one) and distributed them where my key contacts suggested: in club clothing shops, specialist music shops and pre-club bars. I made contact with the staff and invited them to help me recruit by drawing clubbers attention to them. I distributed over 100 fliers in six premises over a period of two months and although I had to restock, not one person contacted me via this route.

Two of my six key contacts came from existing social networks and four were generated through participant observation. They put me in touch with their friends, and their friends put me in touch with theirs. This meant that some participants were recruited directly via a key contact whilst others were recruited indirectly via other participants. Contacting people in this way can mean you get clusters of people belonging to similar cultural, demographic groups. This did happen to an extent and it could be argued that the sample was biased with key contacts and participants nominating people like them (Cohen, 1989). However, because interviewees were recruited both through key contacts and other interviewees, there was both a sideways and a downward movement which was part snowballing and part networking (Forsyth, 1997: 68). This meant that, although key contacts and participants introduced me to people they knew, some of these people belonged to different musical scenes and social networks to themselves. For example, whilst interviewing I was introduced to bar staff, one of whom was prepared to introduce me to customers he knew to be clubbers. He became one of my most productive key contacts, what Rock likened to 'fairy godmother emerging to help the forlorn ethnographer' (2001: 34). I dropped into his place of work on regular occasions where he introduced me to customers, acquaintances and his own clubbing social networks. From this situation, I was able to set up and conduct further interviews as well as socialise with some of the customers, many

of whom were clubbers, on an informal basis. I also asked key contacts and participants to put me in touch with a range of people who were not necessarily involved in the same scene as they were. For example, those who just started clubbing; had not been to University or who they knew from another aspect of their lives such as work.

Mutuality, through social proximity and similar agendas (neither parties wanted to focus on the sensationalistic aspects of drug use), seemed an important aspect of recruiting through key contacts. [8] In terms of making the practical arrangements of interviewing, I found it best for key contacts and participants to speak to their friends, ask them if it was okay to pass their telephone number on to me rather than relying on potential participants to phone me, despite their good intentions. There were four potential individuals who did not want to take part, they had concerns about confidentiality and did not want to be asked about their drug use. Their non-participation may have also been related to the key contact not being a clubber themselves, whilst all other key contacts were active in the club scene. One participant was recruited through an agency but snowballing and networking was the most productive way of recruiting participants. It could be argued that its success was linked to the way in which club culture operates around the strength and extent of the cultural groupings and social networking of those involved.

Interview phases

These concerns were also found by Hammersley et al. (2002).

Interviews were done in two phases. In the first phase between October and December 1999, 15 recorded interviews were carried out, and in the second, between March and April 2000, a further ten were completed. The first phase was generative, providing me with a range of data from which to build on and explore in subsequent interviews. I stopped interviewing for two months to reflect on my interview data to date. During this time I fully transcribed all the interviews, read them as entities to provide me with a preliminary impression of the data. I looked for emerging themes, patterns and inconsistencies. This preliminary analysis was used to revise my prompts, omit unnecessary lines of questioning and add more fruitful lines of enquiry. I also revisited some literature, particularly literature that now appeared to be more central to my developing lines of enquiry, which again helped me frame subsequent interviews.

For the remaining ten interviews I became more selective in my lines of inquiry and my sampling strategy. The sampling became more focused and guided by theoretical considerations, centring now on people from particular cultural scenes, geographical areas and/or educational groupings that had not been represented in the first phase of interviews (Hammersley, et al., 2002). I continued interviewing in this manner until I began to hear similar stories – until the same issues continued to arise in a consistent manner. This is what Glaser & Strauss call theoretical saturation (1967).

Sample generated

Measham et al. suggest that it is practically impossible to achieve representativeness in club research (2001: 92). Nevertheless, I wanted to collect

demographic information such as the participant's age, sex, type and location of living arrangements, education, occupation, supplementary income or work, children, and the age they started clubbing. I could then use this information to both monitor and place my sample within existing demographic profiles (see appendix two).

Scottish data comes in the main from Forsyth (1997) and Hammersley et al. (2002). These studies have considerable overlap in terms of sample, although the former incorporate data from a follow-up study. This data is similar to my own. Similarities were found in terms of mean age, ethnicity, occupational groups, economic participation, education attainment, relationship and parental status. Although I attempted to strategically sample for those who had not been to university, this had limited success. Forsyth indicated that around 80% participating in the dance drug scene have been through the higher education system (1997). Although I did not gather such detailed information, their data sets compare with the more anecdotal information I gathered about the participants housing, financial support and social location. It would seem that my sample, like that of other researchers, had a middle class skew, or could be deemed as middle class (Forsyth, 1997; Hammersley et al., 2002). (see appendix three for snapshot of participants' characteristics)

Interviewing ethics, setting, consent and guide

Both the ethical issues discussed earlier, and The British Sociological Association guidance notes on ethical practice, informed the ethical choices I made during this study. These notes are not prescriptive but serve to draw the researchers

attention to the personal and moral relationships they enter into with research participants (BSA, 1996).

I felt that some clubbers would feel dubious about participating if they were not reassured as to the confidential nature of the research process. With this in mind, I offered all potential participants the opportunity to meet with me before deciding whether or not to take part. Most did not and were happy to hear what the study was about and the process I would use to anonymise the data over the telephone or via email discussions. A small number of people took up the offer to meet with me, they had two main concerns: confidentiality, and the nature of the study itself. These people talked about the way in which the dance culture had been portrayed negatively by politicians, police or, to use Becker's terminology, some 'moral entrepreneurs' (1991). They seemed to want to ascertain whether I was interested in hearing about the impact (both positive and negative) that dance culture had on their lives rather than focusing on sensationalistic aspects of drug use. [9] In addition, they did not want their participation to become public in case it would be detrimental to their relationships at work and, in turn, their career prospects.

During this initial contact with the potential interviewees we arranged to meet on a day and time that suited them and allow a couple of hours for the interview in order for it to be as relaxed and congenial as possible. I offered participants an opportunity to see any material I used from their interview (if any) before my work entered the public domain. If they felt they could be identified through the material used I would alter the context or positioning of the material in order to protect their

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[9]These concerns were also found by Hammersley et al., (2002).

identity. I could not, however, guarantee that they would agree with the arguments I made. We made arrangements to meet either at participants' homes or in a convenient public place, most being in centrally located café bars or pre-clubs.

All interviews began with arranging drinks and seats, chatting and 'getting to know you' talk. The conversations became progressively more focused with me taking time to explain the process of making the participant non-identifiable: assigning a code to each transcript, extracting any names and locally identifying information such as the names of clubs and using pseudonyms. I reiterated again that the study was primarily about gender and culture: that I wanted to look at how men and women get into, fit-in to and experience club culture. I also showed them my prompt sheet (see appendix four) and explained that the interview would take the form of a guided conversation, with them doing most of the talking. I ascertained how much time they had, so as to pace the interview, explained how the recording equipment worked and checked whether they were still happy to go ahead.

Interviews lasted from 40–90 minutes, most being approximately 70 minutes in duration. Interviewees were generous in giving their time, sometimes interviews were arranged two weeks in advance often in a place suggested by the interviewees. The interviews always started with the same question 'How did you get into clubbing?' This question was a good opener, as it was designed to be non-threatening, broad and allowed interviewees to talk in their own terms. It also allowed me to get a whole range of information that I could later return to for more detail. I asked my questions in such a way as to link them to what the interviewees were talking about. This flexibility allowed me to probe for more in-

depth information or guide them in another direction if the interview was losing focus. I also used comparative and reflective lines of inquiry, as discussed earlier. This enabled me to build up a picture that was 'not compartmentalised but related to other past, present, future or important experiences' (May, 1993: 98). Sometimes I returned to a point previously made in context of new information, this reflecting back allowed me to confirm, challenge or seek elaboration of the participants' account (May, 1993: 100).

Relationships

Relationships varied from brief, 'official' type of contacts to more prolonged, reciprocal relationships where we both got a sense of knowing the other. Most were characterised by affinity, mutual participation, humour, co-operation and some shared understandings. I had social proximity with many, I had lived and socialised where they did, I had an interest in music and social dance and I was at university. I would not say we developed friendships, rather we developed friendly relations. This did not necessarily make the relations between us less hierarchical and more egalitarian, but it seemed to make the interviewing process less fractured and more amenable to both parties. However, as indicated in the theory of ethnography, relations such as these may serve to hide the power differentials operating in the relationship. [10]

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[10] This was in stark contrast to my previous experience of research relationships. Exploring the needle-sharing patterns amongst drug-using couples generated very different relationship dynamics (MacRae & Aalto, 2000). I had little in common with the participants in terms of life experience and was generally seen to have influence and/or authority; these relationships seemed characterised more by social distance than social proximity. The gender of the interviewer may have resulted in some men feeling less able to discuss the dynamics of needle sharing and sexual relationships. Although they did not explicitly voice concerns, many were nevertheless quite reticent to talk in any depth about a host of

Participants, for the most part, were assertive and confident during the interview itself. Their enthusiasm for clubbing was palpable, some wanted to use the prompt themselves, others wished to talk more about some aspects rather than others and appeared to feel confident enough to disagree with or qualify any hypothesis I put forward during the interview. Most participants appeared to take on the role of teacher or guide. I felt participants were comfortable with taking an assertive stance either by challenging me, disputing what other people had said about the culture or in qualifying and framing their replies. Most participants told me that they had enjoyed taking part; some had found the interview reminded them of why they had got into clubbing in the first place and how their involvement with clubbing had impacted on their lives. Others noted with amusement and irony how their tastes in music, dress and friends had changed over the years.

Analysis

The process of analysis was not done during a single period nor was it linear. It was inductive, on-going from the beginning of fieldwork to the end-stage of writing. It was informed by participant observation, interviewing, transcribing, the literature and the writing up process. Initially the analysis was impressionistic, getting a sense of the various scenes in club culture, who participated in them, how the

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issues. Gender it seems was more keenly felt by both parties. Yet in this study, the interview relationships were qualitatively different. Both the men and women seemed equally forthcoming about their experiences and talked about them in similar ways. This is not to say they have the same experiences, but rather that my gender did not seem to impact on the relationships I had with participants to a great extent. It may be that the interviewees' concepts of gender had influenced the interview as much, if not more than, the interviewers' (Padfield and Proctor, 1996).

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various scenes were defined by participants. The preliminary analysis was undertaken through the process of listening to tapes, typing, checking through the transcripts and reading them as entities. Transcribing was done in tandem with interviewing and this allowed me to pick up on early themes and explore them in subsequent interviews. There are advantages to having the full transcript, as the reader gets a 'feeling' for the data, pieces of information that one thought not important or relevant sometimes link or clarify inconsistencies or ambiguities in the data (Langford, 1995).

The interviews lacked a comparable structure that made the process of analysis more complex and messy. I employed the software package NUDIST to assist with the storage and management of data. I coded to make sense of the raw data and constantly compared these until central themes began to emerge. I developed working categories that allowed me to ask questions of the data and examine the relationships between categories. It was a reiterative process that was shaped by and conducted in the spirit described in the theory of ethnography. I also tried to get some feedback on my preliminary findings through contacting those who took part in interviews. Most contact numbers were no longer in operation or individuals had moved on. For the ten I did reach I gave them an overview of the data chapters, and told them in what respect and context I had used excerpts from their interview. All were comfortable with that and did not wish to see each individual excerpt. Two participants want to see the completed thesis. Feedback was positive and enlightening, in that they found my interpretations compatible with their own, interesting and reflective of their own experiences. We chatted about 'where they were now'; this information was fed back into the analysis so the process of analysis was merged with the process of writing.

Indeed, it is in the data chapters that the analytic themes unveil themselves most clearly. It is to this part of the thesis that I now turn.

Chapter Seven   **Identification and Differentiation**

Introduction

This chapter brings us to the second half of the thesis; it is the first of four data chapters. In it I aim to outline the main findings in relation to the processes by which clubbers not only come to define themselves, but also the clubbing world around them. It explores what kind of clubber they understand themselves to be. As stated in chapter five, the concepts of Schutz (1967; 1973; 1970a; 1970b; 1976; Schutz and Luckmann, 1974) provided a heuristic framework, that when synthesised with other conceptual frameworks discussed by Bourdieu (1984), Becker (1991), Chaney (1996), and Strauss (1997) linked the disparate literature on transitions, identities and lifestyles. I also use the concept of lifestyles, as discussed by Chaney (1996), to help me understand how clubbers identify and differentiate themselves from others. The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first will look at whether and in what sense participants defined themselves as being clubbers. The second explores the theme of identification and the third, differentiation. The chapter explores how participants constructed 'typical' scenes and crowds, what modes of identification and differentiation they used to do so, and how these processes impacted on what kind of clubber they identify as or become.

What kind of clubber am I?

During fieldwork and interviews it became increasingly noticeable that participants assertively expressed their views on what it meant to them to be a clubber. I began to realise that going clubbing was something that many people did on a regular basis but that did not necessarily mean that they identified as being a clubber. The criterion for participation in interviews was whether a person identified himself or herself as being a clubber. Whilst recruiting, I was met with responses such as 'yes I'm going clubbing tonight but I'm not a clubber', 'I'm not a proper clubber' or 'I do go clubbing but I'm not really a clubber'. In that situation it was difficult to clarify what these individuals meant but these kinds of notions also arose when I met some participants prior to interviewing. On reflection it may have been that participants were checking out their own eligibility for inclusion. Whatever the reason, many were keen to qualify and clarify whether and in what way they identified as being a clubber. It emerged that participants distinguished between what they perceived to be 'proper' or 'real' clubbing opposed to just going out clubbing.

The following quotation from Cath shows how she begins to recognise that there are various forms of clubbing, some more 'proper' than others Whilst the local rave provided her with her first experience of club culture, it also provided a social experience from which to anticipate more similar but possibly better experiences that would be accessible to her once she got to university and the city. Through university she was exposed to various kinds of music new to her but it was not until she went to a techno club that she perceived it to be 'proper' clubbing.

Cath: 'There was a supposed rave in the Town Hall and it's a tiny little village and I went along with some friends. That was my first

experience of a rave and I think it was the first time I saw people dancing to techno music and dancing in that particular way, they're not doing that Cliff Richard dancing that your Mum does and you've always done up to that point (laughs). I was 16 and thinking it was very cool but obviously thinking that the city must be a lot better. Then I came to Glasgow, I first started going to clubs, proper techno clubs in second year, in first year it was more other types of music like rare groove and jazz clubs.'

On the other hand some people do not recognise themselves to be 'proper' clubbers. The quote below begins to illuminate why people who go clubbing regularly may not necessarily identify as being a clubber. Andy had being going clubbing in some form or another for 14 years but only recently identified himself as a clubber. This seems related to refining musical taste and accruing knowledge. He also suggests that there is a difference between going out to a club in order to continue drinking and going out to a club to hear a particular kind of music, music that is not 'commercial'. As will be illustrated later in the chapter, participants' identification is further delineated through choice of substance use; in this case Andy identifies more with drug use rather than alcohol use. There is an implicit association between drug taking and love of music, implying that those participating in alcohol fuelled environments do not or cannot fully appreciate or identify with the essence of clubbing, 'proper' clubbing. These 'others' seem to have their own clubbing practices and spaces.

Andy: 'Clubbing provided a focus for my musical interest as well as a social interest. I wanted to know the DJs I was going to see, I always want to look through their record collections and see what they have. It's only really in the last couple of years that I would

call myself a clubber, even although I've been going to clubs as far back as 1986.'

Rhoda: 'So why is it just recently that you would call yourself a clubber?'

Andy: 'Well a lot of the students and that go out to clubs, but it's just because it's somewhere that's open late and where else do you go if you don't go to a club? Like maybe identifying yourself as a clubber is something slightly different to just going out at the weekends and going to a place where there is dance music, you know.'

Rhoda: 'So what's different about going out because it's open and it's there, opposed to....?'

Andy: 'I suppose there is some element to which you think you are maybe onto something that most people are missing, like when you get into a particular scene. You think an awful lot of people are missing the picture. Because its not quite as commercial the kind of music they play and it's something to do with drugs as well obviously, but its more about the love of music that brings all these people together at the same point. Whereas if you go to a lot of other clubs in Glasgow where like the majority of students are going I just know I'm not going to have a good night if I go to places like that. Its much more drink fuelled atmosphere, I've never been a big drinker, always preferred when I go out to have a good time to take drugs than drink a lot, specially at the weekends. Clubbing does provide an outlook specifically to do that, to go out and take drugs.'

There appear to be layers of identification, some identified very strongly with the notion of being a clubber and participating in 'clubbing clubbing' or 'proper'

clubbing. Others, despite being involved what was perceived as a 'proper' club scene, identified less with the notion of being a clubber. Others, despite identifying strongly to a particular scene, often a 'cheese' or 'chart' scene, saw themselves as clubbers but not 'proper' clubbers. In addition to these groups, there were the small number of participants who tended to 'club hop', they could shift from 'cool' to 'naff' mode and participate in both what they saw as 'proper' clubbing and 'fun' or 'cheesy' club scenes. The layers of identification seem related to what scene you are involved in, where you go, what social network(s) you are part of, the music you like, the substances you use, your embodied appearance and the purpose behind your clubbing experiences. It does not appear to be related to how often you go out clubbing. This suggests that participants do not always identify with the 'complete package' of cultural affiliation (Roberts, 1997: 9). It is worth mentioning that although some clubbers may not define themselves as 'proper' clubbers, they may still be seen as such by 'others' who 'just' go clubbing'. The notions of 'just' and 'proper' illuminate both the perceptions and definitions of self and 'others', as well as the hierarchical flavour of such definitions. In other words, those who define themselves as being 'not really clubbers', may be defined as 'real' clubbers by others lower in the clubbing hierarchy.

This is not to say that those who fall outside of the clubbing hierarchy discussed define themselves in its terms. (Notions of hierarchy will be taken up in more detail throughout the chapters). For example, the quotation from Maria below shows how; despite going out clubbing every weekend, she does not see herself as an 'intense' clubber. This appears related to three issues. First, despite having attended clubs that are associated with dance music and drug taking, she does not

use drugs. Second, the purpose of her night out is to have a laugh with her girlfriends, and third, her musical taste is not techno or dance music.

Maria: 'Pubbing, clubbing and home at dawn but I was never like the girls who were right into their music, the thumping techno, dance, dance, dance. It was more out for a good laugh and a chat and a giggle with the girls, it wasn't well, I suppose I'm not an intense clubber. But it was out every weekend. I've been to Passion a couple of times 'cos it's a good laugh and it's friendly but Amnesty is so drug orientated. And I'm not into that, it's not that I think it's awful it's just I don't want to do it. Quite a lot of my friends take drugs, folk can do it around me and fair enough that's your night out but it's not mine. It's never been a part of my clubbing.'

It would seem 'proper' clubbing and 'proper' clubbers identify more with drug use than alcohol, more with dance music (techno, trance etc.), rather than 'chart' or 'cheesy' music. The purposes of their clubbing experiences seem to be prioritised differently. In other words 'proper' clubbers and club scenes seem to have adopted and adapted more of the ethos associated with the rave scene than those who just go clubbing. Processes of identification do not work discretely from processes of differentiation; rather they have a symbiotic relationship with one another. Clubbers make further identifications and differentiations, the processes of which will be explored in the next two sections.

Identification

As participants became more involved with club culture, some began to make further identifications, often related to the types of scene they were involved with.

These understandings are illuminated by the notions of Schutz (1973) and Chaney (1996).

Why participants identified with one scene more than another would appear to be related to the social networks they were part of and/or their style of life. For instance, participants who identified with and were involved in a student lifestyle were more likely to be involved in a student club scene, a scene in which they found 'family likeness' (Chaney, 1996: 92). Chaney argues that local knowledge is a shared knowledge, it is a way of framing relevant features, features that can be thought of as a family likeness or a reflection of who you are (1996: 92). In other words the features and characteristics of the club scene, and the people who populate it, are compatible with your own. However, not all participants who were students identified with the student scene, some had crossed over scenes through identifying more strongly with other features of a different scene. The scenes were not discrete entities; rather they overlapped and had varying levels of intensity. Participants often socialised in groups of people who were very similar to themselves, they also sought out scenes which mirrored that. Similarities were numerous and operated on various levels.

Typifications

The notions of Schutz are useful for conceptualising why clubbers sought out places where they were likely to find many people who had similar modes of identification (1973). Schutz argues that people organise and categorise their 'stocks of knowledge' which are both common and biographical past experiences (Schutz and Luckmann, 1974: 66). From these, 'typical constructs' are created

and assembled (Schutz and Luckmann, 1974: 66). Typical constructs could be constructions such as student, alternative or designer. These provide meanings that Schutz and Luckmann would argue are embodied in language, gestures and material objects (1974: 66). 'Typifications' can be thought of as patterns of action and knowledge of expression and interpretation – a language (Schutz and Luckmann, 1974: 66). They suggest that language is important as it can impose culturally significant distinctions upon the way we make sense of things. It would seem that those involved with club culture, like many other cultural groups, typify objects, experiences, events and fellow beings into types, such as 'friends', 'clubbers', 'posers' and 'neds' [1] (Schutz, 1973). I would argue that these typifications are not static; rather they are loose constructions that serve to highlight different cultural affiliations and lifestyles.

Anyone and everyone?

Following this conceptualisation, how do those involved with club culture come to identify with the various club scenes? It seemed that participants gravitate towards those who share components of 'stocks of knowledge' and 'typifications', in doing so they further develop their knowledge and commonalities with one another. They are willing to or already share similar patterns of action, knowledge of expression and interpretation: they seem to share both interactional (social

[1] I understand the term 'ned' to mean the same as Hammersley et al., (2002: 29). The following description is taken from that text: The term 'ned' is widely used in Glasgow. 'Ned' is something you call other people, it is a relative term and depends on how you see yourself. It is a derogatory word for young, working class people, particularly boys who tend to dress in casual, often sports gear such as track-suits. They have a reputation for being rowdy, criminal and violent. A 'Ned' is someone and a type of person you identify by appearance, accent and behaviour.

networking), cultural (knowledge and taste) and material (social location) resources. The quotations from Mick and Ian are typical of many who expressed that they became involved with and attached to a particular genre of clubbing because the people who were already involved were in some ways similar to themselves.

Mick: 'When you went to uni you met more mates and found the ones that were into doing the same things as you. When you went to uni you changed from your mates back home but what I found was that some of those mates from back home get on really well with my uni mates so they are the same kind of crowd and fall into doing the same things.'

Ian: 'People along the same lines as me, basically people that wanted to take drugs, not bother about the way someone danced or looked but just into having a good time.'

These quotes illustrate how participants socialised in and sought out environments where they would find their own kind. This perception sits alongside another commonly held perception, one that on first sight would appear to be contradictory. For instance many of those involved in the dance drug scene perceived club culture in general, to be a social space where one could find a cross section of society. They thought of it as a culture that was welcoming of anyone and everyone whatever their age, sexuality, race or class. However, as discussed in the methodology, access is mediated by one's social make up. Even if club culture is taken to include all kinds of night-time club and leisure venues, such as discos, singles nights, gay clubs and specialist clubs, it would still not be available to anyone and everyone. Each scene tended to have a typical crowd, so although

one could find all kinds of people across the scenes, heterogeneity was less noticeable within the scenes. Participants sought out those who were similar to themselves whilst at the same time exercising heterogeneity in taste. Indeed participants were reluctant to discuss crowds in terms of stereotypes, despitethere being typical crowds. It would seem that although participants might be willing to acknowledge that their choices will conform to the norms of 'people like us', they will also cling on to the personal meanings of particular choices (Chaney, 1996: 136).

Maria: 'People have such a different social mix friends-wise and they know so many folk so you're going to find everything in most people's social groups. I know with my friends there's that many different mixes especially the ones that went to university because you get exposed to a big crowd of your own age and other ages from all different walks of life.'

Alison: 'But the whole thing about clubbing and E being related to young people, well it isn't really that true because the amount of people you meet when you're out there, like people in jobs that you never expect, or wouldn't think would be going out. Well you wouldn't really think that you could go to the Amnesty and meet the Head of Physics who's on E or teachers and social workers and stuff. So I see it as crossing, partly class, age, background, gender it seems to kind of cross.'

What Alison and Maria illustrate is that, although participants were being exposed to new social environments, meeting new people and meeting people that they did not expect to, the people they describe had reasonable social proximity to themselves. So although club culture may attract all sorts of people, this is

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constrained in at least two ways. Firstly, a participants' biography, 'stocks of knowledge' and 'common sense' knowledge will have impacted on their ability and willingness to participate in certain scenes. Second, their identifications with a particular lifestyle and social network has also influenced who goes where. This is not to say that only those with a certain lifestyle go to particular clubs, as there are always people who crossed-over scenes and there are some club scenes that have wide appeal to a broader base of participants. For example, the quote below illustrates how this woman participated in a range of club scenes through having access via a 'social networker'.

Katie: 'It was through her really and just through being single and young. We'd go out sharking. She was always on the guest list because she is very much a networker, a social butterfly. So we'd club-hop from the Amnesty to Subterranean to Fidelity to Erruption. Erruption was cheesy though it had an acid/jazz night that was more grown up clubbing than what I'd been used to. I never got back into that high octane, high voltage, taking a lot of drugs, leaping up and down dancing for 9 hours solid which is what I did at home.'

Others socialised in the various genres of one particular scene in this case the dance scene.

Cath: 'My friend had lots of crusty friends she much preferred that lifestyle. She made that choice, whatever choice you make when you come to university and so I could go with her to the crusty things. Then my other friends were drug dealers who had a lot more money and who were very flash they would be the ones who I went to Subterranean with. Amnesty was more of a mixed bag,

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like you could go to Amnesty with almost anyone. It's almost a generic club, I don't know why. So I would go to Amnesty with both sets of people although less with the crusties 'cos they don't really go there, kind of anybody. But they were really distinct groups of people with different ideals.'

Although the vast majority of participants never gave the impression that a person's race or colour was a barrier to inclusion, one participant did feel it could be problematic in some scenes or clubs.

Kirsten: 'Race is definitely not an issue, that's definitely gone in a lot of respects when you're in a club it really doesn't matter, well unless it's places like Hedonism because I think there Asian people are still given a bit of a hard time but that's because there are a lot of Asians in the club. But I wouldn't say in the clubs I go to it's an issue of any kind.'

During my time in the field there was substantial press coverage on race related exclusions and incidents regarding one Glasgow club's door policy. Although I contacted three Asian clubbers, I was unable to secure interviews with them and so my data is limited. However, my fieldwork experiences left me with the impression that most Scottish club scenes are occupied predominately by white people. Although club culture may be perceived as being open and accessible to all by those who participate in it, scenes tended to be occupied by those who are similar to one another, who tend to have similar styles of life and social circumstances. This suggests to me that the sentiments of club culture in general being open to anyone and everyone has what Schutz calls 'localised applicability' (Cuff et al., 1998: 154).

Modes of identification

The ways in which participants identified with the characteristics of the particular club scene can be seen through various and simultaneous modes of practice. Common ways of demonstrating what kind of clubber you are, and what scene you affiliated with, are through musical preference, substance use, the purpose of the clubbing experience and the way in which you present and clothe yourself.

Music was prioritised; it was cited as the most important reason as to why participants went to a particular club or identified with a particular genre of clubbing.

James: 'I suppose the most important things are a combination of good music, good company and if the drugs are good that's a bonus. And a good club, good music policy, progressive music policy, somewhere that is prepared to take a few risks and try to do something a bit different to what everyone else is doing. I think it is more about a taste in music than anything.'

Zoe: 'It's the music mostly we're all disco girls and we like our cheese and disco and not really in to that dance music or anything so we go there and they play the music that we like to hear and that's it.'

James and Zoe, despite having very different tastes in music, nevertheless both cite music as the most important aspect of clubbing that they identified with. However, the musical taste of participants appears to be very much linked to the substances that they use. For those who preferred dance music, a significant

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number expressed how they felt that drug use, in particular ecstasy, offered them a 'way in' to the music

Sam: 'I think the drugs sort of let you in to the music.'

Susan: 'It is a chemical one buzz though (laughs) and it's great, yeah that's totally linked into my experience of clubbing. Certainly it's how I see techno, I mean I think that the normalisation of drug use is pretty much complete amongst certain sections of society. The whole ecstasy thing was amazing, not so much now but I still use it and think it's a great drug. But the first few times you take it, fuck! I mean it is like, well it's like how the world should be.'

Illicit drug use was associated more with dance music, such as techno, trance, progressive house, whereas those who frequented club scenes that played disco, cheese and chart music[2] tended to use alcohol either exclusively or predominately. This finding is unsurprising given that drug use, particularly ecstasy was a distinctive feature of 'rave' culture (Henderson, 1993b; Merchant & MacDonald, 1994: 18), the culture from which clubbing and dance music has evolved. In contrast chart, disco and cheesy music is associated more with an alcohol fuelled environment.

Zoe: 'Some chart stuff but lots of old stuff. They do a disco night on a Friday night which is the kind of music we really like. They play chart music too and we like some of it and they play some dance music but charty dance so we know what it is. We'd all hate it if we were shoved in to a room and it was that major dance music

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[2] Leisure conglomerates often cater to a large generic customer base, they tend to offer mainstream music, that is 'cheese and chart' - this music is often a mixture of old and new Top 40 hits.

and obviously the drink is really cheap. It's fuelled up in Garbage I'd say it was music first and then everything else like drink, drugs, pulling not pulling falls in to that. Yeah I'd say it mostly goes by the music and then that kind of decides everything else, the kind of people that are going and that.'

Those participants who were involved in a variety of club scenes tended not to prioritise their taste in and knowledge about music. Rather it was substance preference and the purpose of their clubbing experience they highlighted. James was one of the few clubbers who participated regularly in both the 'proper' clubbing and the cheese and chart clubbing. He illustrates how although he uses ecstasy when in 'cool' clubs, his preferred substance is alcohol, however it is not only alcohol that attracts him to what he describes as a 'tacky' club scene.

James: 'Yeah, I mean I still prefer really tacky clubs. To me there is two kinds of clubs. There's the really naff clubs and there's the really cool dancy clubs. And to me because I still like to kind of go out drinking a lot and go on the pull and things like that to me, you still can't beat a really crap club for that.'

The purpose of the night out was another way of demonstrating what kind of club scene participants identified with. It seemed that for those who affiliated themselves with dance music the main purpose of the night out was to dance.

Sam: 'The best bit about clubbing is when, and it doesn't happen very often, is when you and the music are just totally in sync, the music is fantastic and you're just dancing and dancing and just practically just don't even know you're dancing 'cos you just so in sync with the music.'

Whereas for those who tended to be involved in cheese and chart club scenes, where drug use was less prevalent, the purpose of the night out was less focused on dancing and more about trying to find a sexual partner or at least take part in flirtatious engagements with the opposite sex.

Mick: 'Best club ever, well you'd have all your mates there all your really good mates who you go out with, ones you have a laugh with. Also the place would have lots of good looking women in it and good music, smart décor just a really smart place and that covers your criteria. You want a smart place, you want your mates and you want good looking girls.'

The purpose of the night out was interrelated with how participants presented themselves. Appearance was another way of demonstrating how one identified with a particular club scene. For those involved in a drug dance scene their appearance tended to be suited for long spells of dancing, comfort was prioritised, although the image they projected to others was also important. For those involved in other club scenes, their appearance tended to focus more on dressing to attract attention of fellow club goers, and in some cases to attract the attention of the opposite sex. The quote below shows how Ian feels that clothing is important whatever club scene you are involved in, as you are part of a youth culture.

Ian: 'I think for a young culture clothing is always important be it clubbing or not. For me it was important to go to a club and feel like you've dressed the same as the rest of them I think now it's more designer labels, Versace, Armani, you actually have to look

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smooth. Before it was joggers, trainers and a bum bag and you dance about but now you'll see people dressed to the nines. You are in a club to get off your nut and you've got Armani slacks on! That doesn't appeal to me, I like clothes but the clothes I wear are practical, they need to fit in with what you doing, you're dancing for about for 4 or 5 hours so a pair of joggers and trainers and you didn't have to worry.'

However, Ian identifies with the dance scene and using drugs, and as such feels that designer clothes are impractical if the purpose of your night is to dance and take drugs. Sheila highlights how comfort is important when dancing is the focus of the night out; she draws attention to how the main purpose of your clubbing experience will impact on the way in which you present yourself.

Sheila: 'Generally comfort is the main thing, girls will wear trainers and trousers and tops, t-shirts whatever, I mean we'll wear make-up and make an effort with your face, you wouldn't wear your everyday wear but you certainly wouldn't wear a dress or high heels. Me and my friend T are always like how the hell can some girls go out in strappy sandals 'cos we can't understand it. But then when we're out we dance for 3 hours and some girls they like to teeter about depends what the agenda is for the evening, we like to go and dance 'cos we like the music.'

Although dressing up in dresses and high heels was often associated with attracting a member of the opposite sex, Katie illustrates how it is not always the case. As Skeggs has argued, heterosexual women can dress in an 'overtly visually feminine' manner in space where 'dressing-up and hedonism are central' without feeling subject to unwanted attention (1999b: 224).

Katie: 'I love gay clubs that's one of my favourite forms of clubbing, and it's an excuse to dress up. I love that whole theatrical, putting on false eye lashes, feather boas and ridiculous clothes and platform heels, blue in your hair and silver on your body, that whole glamour bit. I used to go with my friend P, he'd put on a choke chain and a lead, and have whip with him, it was good fun. Now when I go clubbing I'm not really dressed up, it's just me clubbing and dancing but if I have the opportunity to go to a dressy night I become someone else, I have my wonderbra and tits out then I'm Miss Vivacious Blonde.'

The safety of public space has long been an issue for women. Heterosexual women can use space primarily populated by gay men as one strategy to minimise threat (Skeggs, 1999b: 222). The safety of space for both men and women will be taken up in more detail in the next chapters.

The components of music, substance use, purpose of clubbing experience and presentation are interrelated identifiers, or means of inclusion: they mark out what kind of club scene participants affiliate to. They are visible symbols that can signal to others, who have the local knowledge to interpret them, what kind of clubber they are and what kind of club scene they identify with. They can also indicate what they are not, what club scene they differentiate themselves from. It is to the processes of differentiation I will now turn.

Differentiation

As participants identify with and affiliate themselves to a particular form of clubbing, being a certain kind of clubber and having a certain style of life, they also

differentiate themselves from others, others who are not like them in a number of ways (Mead, 1934a). This appears to be done through a process of comparing and contrasting their practices, values and the attached meanings of their involvement with club culture with others. Through the interactive symbiosis between the process of identifying and differentiating, 'typical constructs' are built up, such as 'proper' clubber or a 'clubby' scene. The names given to those scenes give clues about what kind of scene it is, in a sense the name symbolised many of the scene's characteristics as well as the kind of people who populate it (Schutz and Luckmann, 1974: 66). Typical constructs took on meaning and came to symbolise both what they are and what they are not: they were classifications of inclusion and exclusion. These differentiations provided meaning to those with localised knowledge; they were embodied in the participants' appearance, actions and practices (Schutz and Luckmann, 1974: 66). However, these names were quite general to those with localised knowledge and there were further differentiations made within each scene. The processes of, and meanings attached to, giving names to typical scenes, crowds, clubs, nights etc. will be taken up more fully in Chapter eight. But for now it will suffice to point out that those who identified with the 'dance' scene were able to specify which kind of dance scene they affiliated themselves to. Saying, 'I love techno and go to the Star club every week to dance', relayed a host of information to the listener. It told them something about the person, what kind of person they were and were not. This argument is in some ways similar to that of Thornton (1995). In her discussion of 'hip' versus the 'mainstream' she argues that 'the logic of subcultural capital reveals itself most clearly by what it dislikes and by what it emphatically isn't' (Thornton, 1995: 105). However, although identifications may be revealed most clearly by what they are not, or what they are different to, in order for subcultural

capital to reveal what it isn't, it also needs to identify what it is. I would argue that one only works in relation to, and in symbiosis with, the other.

I will now look at the main differentiations between the scenes before turning to differentiations that are made within club scenes. As with identification processes, participants appear to utilise the same modes or practices for differentiation purposes. The practices such as substance use, knowledge and taste in music, the purpose of their clubbing experience and their embodied appearance will be discussed in the second half of this section.

Typical club scenes

Although all participants talked of differences between the scenes, many had only participated in other scenes during their initial contact with club culture. They had clear ideas about what was different about other scenes in comparison to their own. These ideas came from their localised stocks of knowledge, the media, their social networks as well as their own experience. Sam, despite having clubbed almost exclusively in 'Subterranean' over the past few years, has very clear views about what kind of people – people who are not like her – frequent other scenes. She had constructed typicalities by calling on perceived musical taste, purpose of the clubbing experience, intellect, maturity and embodied appearance to illustrate differences.

Sam: 'You know people will be very scathing, derogatory of other scenes. For example the type of people that would go to Subterranean and the whole thread of underground parties

attached to that scene are the same kind of people. I mean they would never set foot in The Place, Hedonism or Garbage. Garbage is seen to be for children, it's a students and kids night, they're all just like wee wilderbeasts on heat looking for snog. And The Place is seen like a pack of hairdressers out on a Saturday night all dressed up in their designer clothes with nothing between their ears. And Hedonism is seen to be for people who don't know any better. The people who go to Subterranean tend to think, and this view is sustained in the media, that subterranean has the most kudos musically.'

Rhoda: 'So the kudos is linked to the music?'

Sam: 'Yeah and the crowd goes with the music. Like in The Place you would expect more of your commercial music and you would nearly be disappointed if you heard a tune at Subterranean that you'd heard, or was in the charts. You expect to be hit with stuff that you haven't heard before that is good quality. I don't know if it is hierarchies but there is definitely groups of people and types of music attached to each type of club.'

The first part of the quote refers to how in 'her' scene one would find the same kind of people, people that are involved in 'underground parties', implying limited access or exclusivity in some way. Sam then moves on to cite three clubs which she perceives as typical examples of different scenes. The 'student' scene, is perceived as immature both in terms of musical taste and purpose of going clubbing, implying that the crowd that go to this kind of club night are all the same, unlike those in her scene who are individuals. Second, the 'designer' scene, here she makes reference to the unintelligent 'pack' like behaviour of women in one club whilst the third club is seen to be populated by people 'who don't know any

better', possibly implying a lack of knowledge and taste. Differentiations were also made within scenes; the quotation below illustrates how Cath, who participated in a range of dance drug scenes, saw the differences between the various genres of dance music.

Cath: 'I did the rounds, different types of music in different clubs and different drugs in different clubs for different types of music.'

Rhoda: 'What was different between them?'

Cath: 'The whole atmosphere, Satisfy was hard, it was populated mainly by crusties, big boots and shaved heads, where being hard was the main thing. You weren't cool because you wore the right clothes, you were cool because you could take 13 acid and dance all night. Then Subterranean on Saturday was all about how you looked, you had to take coke and look glamorous. I would go to other clubs just dressed in a track suit but when I went to Subterranean I would dress up and take coke, it was house music. I wouldn't get into the dancing the same way, like at the Amnesty which is techno there's room to dance and there's also neds there. Neds are there to dance and get absolutely out of their faces so there was a kind of devotion to techno going on there that wasn't going on at Subterranean, it was more a devotion to fashion. So you'd go to them for different reasons, but I didn't often go to Subterranean because I didn't like the effort of getting dressed up and putting make-up. I just like going in my track suit, dancing all night and treating it more as a physical work-out than a parade yourself for the men session. I was a bit of a social butterfly I suppose because I didn't come from Glasgow and wasn't a part of any of these groups, I suppose I was part of a student group whether I liked it or not even though I didn't hang out with students.'

It becomes clear that the process of differentiation also includes a hierarchical element to it. This hierarchical element would appear to be 'common knowledge' within clubbing circles, although depending on where a clubbers affiliation lay, the ranking of clubs and club scenes may be different. Kirsten illustrates very well the hierarchical flavour amongst the club scenes.

Kirsten: 'Yeah, well there's snobbery within clubs. People who like hard German techno will look down on the type of techno I like. But then I look down on the people who like house 'cos I don't see the point in it. And people who are into house don't like or see the point in techno. It could be considered a hierarchy but then everyone would consider themselves to be at the top. Well, with Garbage at the very bottom, it is acceptable to a certain extent to go there and get really drunk but it is at the bottom of the clubbing tree. But then Hedonism is terrible too, I hate the place, the bouncers are so uch! (indicates imposing) and you always meet folk from school that you hate. My school was quite snobby and Hedonism is quite an affluent club so they're all there spending Daddy's money so it's not really the type of people I want to hang about with, it's not the music I want. It's just so stressful, even trying to get a drink, you're standing for 15-20 minutes with pushing girls, going 'oooh I want a drink' and guys pushing you to get in. Whereas techno relaxes me, you can zone out at a club like that because you don't care what anybody thinks, what anybody looks like, you just get on and do your own thing.'

It would seem that there are three main 'typical' scenes, constructed around the differences between them. Clubbers and club scenes appeared to have a reflexive relationship, that is they both interacted with one another to differentiate

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themselves from one another. This is similar to the argument made by Willis who suggested that there was a dialectical relationship between the cultural members and their culture (1978). That is, members had a hand in the construction of their own culture, they utilised and interpreted practises such as drug taking to reflect and develop – to further modify their experiences (Willis, 1978: 136): and I would argue their identifications and differentiations. It is to the practices of differentiation, the ways that they set themselves apart from others that I now turn.

Modes of differentiation

As with the process of identification, the same modes of practice were called upon to make differentiations. This section will look at how the purpose of the clubbing experience, substance use, musical taste and embodied appearance served to differentiate one crowd from another. People appeared to be attracted to clubbing for different reasons; it was these differing reasons that were often sited as one of the main differences between participants. Some participants went clubbing to 'see and be seen', some to 'pull' some to continue their drinking whilst participating in flirtatious engagements with the opposite sex. These purposes were almost always contrasted with those who went to dance (and use drugs). It appeared that the more emphasis there was on attracting a member of the opposite sex, the further removed it was seen to be from what was thought of as 'proper' clubbing.

Alison: 'It's broadly stereotyping but you get the sense that the people that are in the cheesier types of clubs aren't especially there for the music or the dancing. You see the guys all standing round the dance floor with their bottles of beer, it's a different kind of atmosphere, you get the vibe that it is more about them pulling or

whatever. Whereas I would probably have less qualms dancing with a guy in a clubby type club or a gay club 'cos I wouldn't necessarily feel that that was the agenda. So I would probably be a bit more inhibited when dancing in the sort of cheesier clubs whereas in other clubs I would probably go for it a lot more and not really worry.'

Rhoda: 'Is that part of the attraction?'

Alison: 'Yeah, definitely yeah 'cos it is a release when you get into dancing whether you are taking drugs or not, 'cos if you are really into the music and you get really into it, it's like, even without drugs, a sense of exhilaration, release. I think it's like total escapism, you can get totally into yourself. I suppose that's what I enjoy about clubby type clubs is you can just say 'right see you later I'm away for a dance' and you can go off on your own. It's not a problem going away and dancing on your own for about an hour or so, I mean someone will find you eventually. But in other types of clubs which are less clubby type clubs I don't know if I would actually get on the dance floor myself 'cos I think it would be just a matter of time before I was getting some hassle.'

As the above quote demonstrates, 'clubby type clubs' were places for 'clubby' people to dance, places where both men and women in both similar and slightly different ways could feel comfortable dancing on their own, without having to think about whether they were attracting unwanted attention. Both men and women seemed to appreciate an atmosphere in which they could feel relaxed and enjoy the music and dancing. Relations between the sexes seemed to take on a more platonic rather than sexual flavour. The issue of whether these kinds of relationships and interactions are more egalitarian than found in other club scenes will be taken up in chapter eight.

Another differentiation that was made was one linked to substance preference. Those who affiliated themselves with dance music often commented on how they found environments that were 'drink fuelled' uncomfortable, distasteful, predatory and irritating. Women who affiliated themselves with 'clubby' club scenes found these environments predatory and at times threatening. Men also found them threatening but the nature of the threat was different, they tended to be worried about getting caught up in potentially violent situations with other men, drunk men.

Alison: 'I suppose the clubs that I tend to go to are the ones where quite a lot of people are taking drugs, probably most. Compare that to Sauce, laser lights and people really drunk and barging past you and being really rude and not being friendly and dancing to YMCA and all sorts.'

David: 'When the vibe is more mixed and you get loads of drunken lads in I don't feel unsafe but it's certainly not an environment where I feel 100% happy. You don't feel you can let go that much, 'cos you're watching out for what they are up [to] and if you're in the kind of club where a lot of people aren't pissed up and leery then they are going to infringe on that a bit.'

Ways of differentiating were often interrelated, it was a constellation of factors that served to differentiate one scene from another. Substance of choice was often linked to musical taste, being under the influence of alcohol did not seem to be conducive with dancing in a focused manner to dance or 'heavy' music.

Zoe: 'I would say it's just the music, I mean it is a lot easy to pull in Garbage but I've obviously been there and pulled quite a few

times, it's quite easy. I think it's a mixture of the drink being so cheap and everybody being quite drunk and if that heavy dance music isn't on, well when that heavy dance music is on I always feel that everybody is really in to it and really concentrating on it. Whereas if the music is more easy going and stuff it's easier to talk to a boy rather than being focused in on this trance music or whatever it is.'

Another way of differentiating between the 'typical' crowds was the way in which people presented themselves and chose to dress. One common complaint from those who participated in the dance scene was about how some clubs had a 'no trainers' policy, this was one of the clearest demarcations in dress codes. It informed club goers that that this was a club night that was unlikely to attract a 'dance' crowd. It was more likely to attract those who liked to 'dress up', listen to lighter, more vocal sounds and where attracting the attention of a member of the opposite sex was potentially going to be part of the evening.

Alison: 'Like you know a rubbish club if it's one that tells you can't come in 'cos you're wearing trainers. It's this differentiation again, like the kind of club where you would find an office party going on, know what I mean? Like they've just left the office and quite smartly dressed or something. But in my view if you're told that you can't get in to a club 'cos you've got trainers on then it's going to be a club that's quite cheesy anyway, where people aren't really into the music or the dancing. They are dressed up and looking pretty rather than actually going for it and really dancing, but in Subterranean it's not so much about dress although I think there is a certain look but I think it's a different kind of trendiness, but it's not the looking so smart style.'

Not all participants' felt that a dress code like that described above symbolised a 'rubbish' club. In fact for some it was thought of as a benefit, it was a 'better' club, one where both the music and the crowd would be better and 'trendy'. Mick marks out a difference between the 'better' dressy clubs and the 'cheesy' clubs.

Mick: 'The better clubs, well the music was better for a start it was less cheesy, it was better music, better folk as well probably because they are picky about who gets in. And it's always the better clubs that are the trendy places to go so folk want to go to them.'

Rhoda: 'You were saying your were going to the naff ones, what was naff about them?'

Mick: 'They were just, well all right but they weren't proper club clubs, just a bit cheesy, charty dance music. Like on Saturday we were going to this club for a leaving do and we hadn't heard of it before. We met these girls and asked them what was it like and they said cheesy and that's how they described it and you know it's going to be charty music.'

Like the scenes themselves, how you presented yourself, the clothes you wore and the tastes you had were hierarchical in nature. So whatever scene participants affiliated themselves to, there were internal standards of presentation and dress. The quote below shows how the 'fashion etiquette' may be different in different scenes but it is nevertheless present across and within all.

Katie: 'I get a buzz from getting the latest Nike terry imaras and I think I'm cool. I could go down to a club like The Place and someone may look at me and think 'look she's only wearing trainers, there a lot of clubs that you aren't allowed to wear trainers. It's absurd,

my trainers cost £120, probably 3 times as much as half of the pairs of shoes that others are wearing but that's my fashion statement, which is quite sad on my part. These clubs have absurd door policies to keep out a certain segment of society. The really hip young things out there and I'm not saying I'm one of them, are wearing trainers whilst others will wear heels but not unless they're Gucci. London has more one-upmanship, it's more relaxed here apart from your Place people who have the latest Versace or Armani and they recognise that. It's the same with anything once you get into it, you start to be able to spot things. The people who are into that would be able to say 'I saw that dress in Cruise last week' whereas I could look around and say she got her trainers 18 months ago, he got his 3 months ago and she just got hers in the sales because they last years model you know?' (laughs).

Conclusion

This chapter has explored how clubbers define what kind of clubber they are. Whether they are 'proper' clubbers or 'just' clubbers. The notion of typifications (Schutz, 1973; Schutz and Luckmann, 1974) sheds light on how clubbers typify their experiences, the club scenes and the people who occupy them, and how these typical crowds and scenes come to take on meaning and symbolise cultural affiliations and lifestyles. I would argue that these cultural affinities are not static; rather they are loose constructions that serve to highlight participants' cultural affiliations and the hierarchies that operate within club culture and clubbing lifestyles. Through modes of identification, participants come to recognise and identify with what kind of clubber they are. Through modes of differentiation, they come to recognise and differentiate themselves from what kind of clubber they are

not. Musical taste and knowledge, choice of substance use, purpose of clubbing experience and presentation of the self, through appearance and manner of using material goods, are all modes of identification and inclusion, differentiation and exclusion.

Typical constructs are built up through the processes of identification and differentiation; these typifications illuminate the distinctions between scenes and the people who occupy them. 'Other' club scenes and the 'others' that occupied them represented those without social proximity to themselves: those who did not have reciprocity of motives or perspectives (Schutz). The distinctions made between 'us and them' appeared based on both persistent social markers such as social class and status as well as what McRobbie calls the 'same old cultural cocktails of dress, music, drugs and dance' (1991: 198). The processes of identification and differentiation are symbiotic in nature: they create groups and a medium through which individuals and the groups to which they belong can acquire status, monopolise resources, legitimise their social advantages, in reference to their superior lifestyles, habits, character and competencies (Weber, 1978a 306/307). Weber effectively demonstrates that material, interactional and cultural resources are stratificational means employed in status differentiation processes; thus bridging the traditional structural-interactional divide in a way that has been taken up by later writers such as Bourdieu. Status differentiation involves the use of class-based resources, knowledge and networks to define 'others'; we use 'otherness' as a powerful means of identification and differentiation, inclusion and exclusion. These statements provide visible symbols that can signal to others, who have the localised knowledge to interpret it, what kind of clubbing and clubber they identify *with* and *as*, as well as what kind of

clubbing and clubber they differentiate themselves *from*. They illustrate what Hollands calls the 'structuration of youth cultures' (2002:163). This process of identification and differentiation is linked to the process of becoming, becoming a cultural participant, it is this process that I take up next.

Chapter Eight   Becoming

Introduction

This chapter explores how participants become cultural participants. It begins by discussing how participants 'suss out' club culture through drawing on material resources as well as social networks and knowledge (Giddens, 1984), resources that have been traditonally associated with class analysis. I discuss how participants begin to try out and experience club culture for themselves. These two sections aim to show how cultural resources such as social knowledge and shared affinities direct participants towards particular club scenes. The last section looks at the notion of becoming to illustrate how participants perceive and experience a sense of belonging (or not). I call on the concept of becoming (Becker, 1991) to chart the process of becoming a cultural participant. The notion of becoming works in sympathy with Schutz's ideas about systems of relevance functioning as schemes of interpretation and orientation (1970a: 120-121). The notion of becoming was more associated with those who identified as 'proper' clubbers rather than those who identified as being just clubbers. Becoming 'proper' clubbers was an experiential learning process that entailed learning about a number of practices. These practices include taking drugs, interacting and dancing in a way that was different to other forms of social dance and refining musical knowledge and taste. For those becoming 'proper' clubbers, aspirations to become a DJ or a promoter seem to extend and deepen the process of becoming. It is during the shift into the production and promotional arena that we begin to see more clearly the gendered character of becoming. Becoming

involves tapping into expert knowledge and interacting socially with those who are deemed to have status. It is in this discussion that the discourse of utopianism and egalitarianism found in some accounts of dance music are found wanting.

'Sussing it out'

There appeared to be a period when those beginning to become involved in club culture spent time 'sussing it out'. In other words, participants-to-be either took active steps to seek out and socialise with others who were already clubbing or already clubbers. These networks provided one form of social access to club culture. This social access allowed would be participants to be party to their friends' knowledge and tastes. They began to suss out where the specialist music shops were, what specialist magazines were available, where specialist or the 'right' clothing shops were, and where people like them tended to socialise. Socialising and mixing with others who had similar lifestyle practices, or lifestyles they aspired to, in turn gave them more access to information about club culture through material (fliers and media) and social information (word of mouth) (Shibutani, 1955). Participants-to-be tapped into various sources of knowledge, the character of which will be discussed later in the chapter. Participants began to move from being a cultural stranger to being someone who was familiar with the culture and clubbing lifestyles (Schutz, 1976). This process was recognisable to me as it was one I went through during my fieldwork. The process of sussing it out enabled would-be-participants, as it did me, to get a sense of the various club scenes that both were and were not accessible to them.

Magazines and guides

Over half of the participants talked about using magazines and guides to find out about the forms of clubbing available to them. These tended to be used for information gathering during their early contact with clubbing, or when they moved to a new geographical area. Many used the specialist clubbing magazines such as Mixmag and Jockey Slut, but more commonly participants used The List, an entertainment guide for Glasgow and Edinburgh. Mixmag and The List regularly profile clubs and specific club nights. They tend to highlight particular aspects of clubs, the crowd, the music or the kind of social interactions and atmosphere one may expect to find. These gave a flavour of the venue and club night. For example, those clubs that were 'student friendly' used words such as 'commercial bash', 'get off your margin with discounted spirits and have a laugh', 'saucy antics', 'cheesy' and 'popular chart'. These descriptions gave the impression that if you were a student, discounted alcohol was a priority, you liked chart and 'cheesy' music and wanted an opportunity to attract a member of the opposite sex then this may be the venue or night for you.

Phrases such as 'the crowd need to make an effort', 'don your best togs' or 'a dressed up crowd' told the reader that the appearance and style of the crowd was prioritised. These clubs tended to have stricter dress codes and often carried a 'no trainers' policy. On occasions, the media implied that the music in these venues would play 'second string to high-concept clubbing' but this was not always the case. The music could also be deemed important with phrases such as 'a steady diet of hard house' or for those on the 'mainstream dance trip', and it tended to be these kinds of venues that attracted big name DJs. These descriptions implied to

the reader that appearance was all important, if you had the 'right' clothes, the 'right' look, could afford the price of the alcohol and ticket, then this may be the place for you.

With other clubs it seemed that the music was prioritised. Phrases such as 'one for the hardcore', 'home to the best banging club nights', 'discerning punters with musical appreciation' informed the reader that this was a dance club aiming to attract a crowd who were primarily interested in the music. Crowds were described as a 'friendly mixed up bunch', 'looking for the right attitude rather than the right shoes' or 'the crowd as varied as the array of nights'. These descriptions gave the reader the impression that an appreciation of a particular kind of music was required, that a person's attitude was prioritised over their appearance and it was potentially a venue for anyone who liked dance music, be it techno, trance or progressive house for example.

Interestingly, after the bulk of my fieldwork was completed, The List changed the format of its 'Clubs' section. Whilst conducting fieldwork it listed the pre-club bars and clubs, however now it divides the section into three parts, pre-clubs, party and chart, and clubs. This division would appear to make a distinction between the types of nights/clubs. The music described in the chart and party section includes, cheese, disco, chart hits, pop and handbag house. The majority of these nights appeared to be aimed at the 'kids' and students, with most featuring cheap or promotional alcohol. When I contacted the editor of The List (The List, 2001) for clarification they said the distinction was about credible and less credible clubs and club nights. The chart and party section remains pretty much the same week in week out, clubs you go to if you want to 'shake your booty in an unashamed

fashion to Abba, The Spice Girls etc. and drink lots of cheap alcohol' (The List, 2001). The clubs section, incontrast, reflects a more varied 'underground' or 'credible' sound, progressive trance and techno. It would appear that the 'clubby' clubs and the clubs aimed more at the 'dressed-up crowd' are, in the main, omitted from the party and chart classification. This suggests that the listings are becoming more reflective of the distinctions made by clubbers themselves. I would argue that this illustrates the dialectical relationship between the two.

Shared sensibilities

Many would-be-clubbers already knew that they 'would not be seen dead' in particular kinds of night-clubs, clubs that had a reputation for being 'cattle markets'. These kinds of venues were seen to attract either 'neds' or older men spending money on younger women. Weber argued that a 'specific style of life is expected from all those who wish to belong to the circle' (1978: 932). More recently Chaney builds on this argument, stating that 'a perceived affiliation for an identifiable group with, for example certain ideas, values, tastes in music, food or dress, is a shared sensibility, these sensibilities are a recurrent focus of concern for all lifestyles' (1996: 126). It would appear that the environments described above were seen by would-be-clubbers to be populated by social groups who 'displayed different affinities in shared taste' (Chaney, 1996: 126). This sense of distinctive affinities in shared taste is what seemed to differentiate one club scene and those who populated it from another. Not that a shared sensibility is mandatory for all members, it can vary within a particular club scene and some participants can cross over and adopt more than one communal identity (Chaney, 1996: 126). Whether or not participants were later able to cross over scenes, they

all had begun to differentiate themselves from others even before they started to balance their knowledge with first-hand experience. This suggests that their subjective understanding is informed by both their position in the world and their experience of it; this knowledge is a key feature in the construction of such boundaries (Schutz, 1970a; 1970b). They were what Schutz would call well-informed citizens, they already knew that 'people like them' tended not to participate in certain club scenes (1970a: 241).

'Trying it out'

As we have seen participants used the media information to 'suss out' the clubs available to them. This information was often used as a rough guide, whereas word of mouth information from fellow club goers often took precedence and was considered more reliable. They began to experience forms of clubbing for themselves. That is not to say that the sussing out and trying it out processes happened independently of one another, rather they tended to happen in conjunction with one another. Trying it out was a period of balancing the knowledge they already had with their first-hand experiences.

First experiences

Around half of the twenty-five participants began clubbing whilst at school, many lived in small towns and tended only to be able access small clubs near their familial home, often due to a lack in viable transport. Wherever they lived their age also precluded them from accessing many clubs. For some, clubbing was 'what

everyone did', it was part of being a young person, it was wrapped up in the transitional process of being at school and moving on to university and or away from home.

Ian: 'I guess it was basically through school, maybe about fourth year of school a few of my friends were DJing, people were talking about it, it was about the time when you're just getting into pubs and the next escalation was clubs, yeah lets go to clubs. And then once you get into clubs that was basically it, it all expanded from there, maybe the last years of school the fifth and sixth year it was at a peak then, that's what everyone was doing so that's what you wanted to do as well, so you went into it.'

Alongside 'it was what everyone did', the other most common way of first experiencing club culture was through other musical scenes. Many participants had already developed an affiliation with what they called alternative scenes. Alternative could mean a range of things from Indie, The Manchester Scene, Rave and Northern Soul, to the festival scene. These identifications illustrated how most participants already had begun to seek out what they saw to be an alternative to mass or popular music culture. Participation in early rave events and alternative scenes exposed them to dance music. It was noticeable that their first experiences were not ones in which they found themselves 'at home' immediately.

Katie: 'I got into clubbing when I was about 16 I used to go to a local alternative club we all used to go every Thursday night and get drunk and that was that. It was an Indie music scene and being into Grunge and Gothic stuff as well I ended up going to festivals which was when I got into the clubbing clubbing thing. Your drug clubbing, dance music and your proper sort of stuff which I would

say started at Glastonbury, no Reading when I was 17. I suppose I took my first E not long after, it was a real turning point in my social life it was like we had discovered something new. It was in a small club in a small town but people like Carl Cox, Fabio, and Groove Rider played there. I took half an E and it didn't really work and I didn't have an amazing night but then 2 weeks later I went back and I had the most incredible night and that was the start.'

Katie's quote is illustrative of how many had already come into contact with illicit substances. Experimental drug use prior to becoming involved in clubbing was not unusual, particularly in those participants who became involved through the alternative music scenes. Those who had been exposed to and felt comfortable with using some illicit substances tended to prefer the effects of those to that of alcohol, which they often associated with aggression. Those who identified as 'proper' clubbers tended to describe men who had drunk too much as 'beered up monsters'. Drinking copious amounts was associated with being immature, out of control and a potential catalyst for violence. Those who felt more comfortable with alcohol rather than drug taking, tended to associate drug use(rs) with being 'dodgy', 'shady' or potentially troublesome. Both groups saw the others behaviour as potentially threatening and unsafe. For the participants of this study, trying it out was about having numerous and successive experiences of club culture in its various forms, over a period of time, before they found an environment and a crowd which they identified with or felt at home in.

Phil: 'My first experience of a proper club, well I didn't know what was going on, I hadn't done any drugs or anything, we wandered about, I didn't dance, didn't have a clue really, but it was fun.'

During these first experiences of clubbing, participants consolidated their knowledge of clubbing environments and learned about other clubbing environments that may be open to them, clubs that were 'bigger and better', ones which they could 'move up to'.

Barry: 'Mostly through mates someone will talk about a place and as you get older it's a lot about going to a smarter place. When we were 16 you didn't get into good clubs, it was dodgy little clubs you go to better ones as you get older. You'd been going to all these naff clubs and then you get in there and you're like wow this is better and the whole thing is different. It's a lot bigger, a lot smarter, a lot trendier, the décor, the whole place is done out, it's as if you've escalated as it were, you've made it to a better thing.'

However, participants already knew that not all clubbing environments would be for them, some club scenes had already been disregarded. Both experiential and handed down knowledge featured significantly in the processes of becoming (Schutz, 1973: 13).

Developing further affiliations

The quote below illustrates how Maria felt she would not fit in, or like to be in venues which she perceived to be primarily for the purpose of picking up a sexual partner, and/or predatory in nature.

Maria: 'Well I'm not up for the places like the Ritzy and Saks I hate them, well I've never been to the Ritzy but places like Fifth Ave. I think

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they are like cattle-markets, I've only ended up there on hen nights and I think it's the most appalling place with squelchy carpets. I don't know if this is cheeky or not but your Ritzy and Saks crowd seem to be non-university educated if you know what I mean. They haven't actually moved into the city centre, that sounds terrible, you wouldn't catch any of my friends remotely near them. One of the girls I know used to work in Saks and she said it was a fantastic place, all the footballers used to come in. It was a great place for some 'cos it was about older men wanting to spend money on younger girls. So you can go out and it's a free night, but I was never interested in getting all my drinks bought for me, 'cos then I'd have to talk to the person that bought me it, I'd rather just pay for my own and just go and enjoy my night. I don't think there's a huge class thing clubbing wise, maybe it's just the clubs I'm in and around 'cos I'm not particularly interested in that kind of thing.'

Maria sees these clubs as being populated primarily by people who are not like her, they do not or have not gone to university, or live in a similar urban locale. The quote also has a gendered character to it, she seems to imply that there is an obligation attached to young women sharing company with some kinds of men. She is able and would prefer to be in leisure settings where such obligations are not the prevailing form of interaction between the sexes. It also has a classed character to it: Maria sees these clubs as being populated primarily by people who are not like her, they do not or have not gone to university, or live in a similar urban locale. Although Maria perceives few 'class' differences within clubs or club scenes, it would seem that the social groups occupying those 'other' scenes are nevertheless 'classed'.

Factors such as a persons social location, social contacts, material assets, previous and expected forms of socialising, age, sexuality, musical knowledge and taste, all seemed to inform that persons sense of identification. I would suggest that although there is heterogeneity across club scenes and clubbing crowds, this has localised applicability and particular scenes, and the crowds found therein, have a homogeneous flavour to them. This would suggest, in line with other studies, that links with social class may have been blurred but they still exist, and that lifestyle formation was occurring within, rather than across social class boundaries (Hendry et. al., 1993; Hollands, 1995). Indeed, finding a clubbing environment in which one felt comfortable seemed very much related to finding a crowd similar to oneself in many respects. This suggests that lines of social affiliation were articulated through musical tastes and lifestyles (Weber, 1975: 22). These 'lines of affiliation' were clearly demonstrated when someone moved from feeling estranged in one social situation to such an extent that they actively avoided a club scene with any similar connotations and found one in which they felt in harmony with: one which reflected their social location. Barry made it clear he did not want to be associated with the student club scene, he found drinking copious amounts of alcohol in single sex groups uncomfortable. He was attracted to a club scene, which he saw as being more mature and heterogeneous.

Barry: 'I just didn't fit in there at all. I felt so out of place going to these
           rocker clubs and country clubs and always wondered why I didn't
           enjoy going out. Then when I got to uni I met all kinds of people
           like me who enjoyed the same kind of things.'

Rhoda: 'Was that a student scene?'

Barry: 'Not at all, I shunned the student scene 'cos that was along the same lines, lots of rugby players, boozing down the pub and stuff and I got into an older crowd and started going out with them and instantly clicked.'

Having looked at how participants tried out various club environments and began to associate with and develop affiliations to a particular scene, I will move on to explore the notions of becoming and belonging. I will then discuss the practices associated with these processes before discussing how cultural knowledge is implicated in perceptions about expert and status.

The notion of becoming

Becker used the notion of becoming to conceptualise how people became marihuana users and dance musicians (1991). He also used the notion of career to conceptualise a 'sequence of movements from one position to another' (Becker, 1991: 24). The notion of career is a concept which views a person's engagement with a cultural group as a process, a process that takes account of the social and cultural context in which becoming a cultural member occurs. Or as Taylor puts it, the way in which becoming, a clubber in this instance, or a female injecting drug-user in her ethnographic study, has a 'starting point at which a novice enters and begins a process of learning the skills necessary to become a competent member' (1993: 31). This seems akin to getting acquainted with a set of cultural codes of practice, through experiential relationships with one's fellows (Schutz, 1970a: 186).

Many participants in this study went through a process of learning and, in some instances, a form of initiation. Those individuals who talked about being initiated

were those who identified as 'proper' clubbers, the ones who participated in the 'proper' club scenes and who had used ecstasy, often simultaneously with their first 'proper' clubbing experience. This process of becoming was in part about developing and investing in a particular lifestyle or, as Taylor argued in the case of women injecting drug users, providing an alternative career, a lifestyle which provided 'meaning, motivation and status' (1993: 6). A clubbing lifestyle did not tend to provide most clubbers with an alternative career; rather it was a simultaneous career, which to various degrees was incorporated into other aspects of their occupational and social life. These issues will be taken up more in chapter nine. For the moment I want to discuss how clubbers learn to become 'proper' clubbers.

The notion of becoming can also be illustrated through those who didn't become 'proper' clubbers. Although all participants went through a process of becoming, the extent to which this happened varied from scene to scene and participant to participant. The process of becoming seemed stronger in those who participated in the 'proper' club scene. This seems related to the subcultural ethos attached to 'proper' club scenes, they were perceived to be different to and further away from the more mainstream or commercial forms of clubbing, such as the student, cheese, chart and party scenes. To become a 'proper' clubber involved learning new skills, such as learning about and experiencing drugs, styles of dancing and interaction as well as refining and developing musical knowledge and taste. This is not to say that other participants, who did not identify as being a 'proper' clubber, did not have to learn some new skills or undergo new experiences, but it did seem that their processes of becoming were less marked. Both groups had to learn how to fit in with the dress codes and expectations of their particular scene.

However, those who just went clubbing attached less sub-cultural ethos to their involvement. By this I mean that, for them, practices such as drug taking and musical knowledge were less integral and imbued with less meanings. For example, although taste in music was an aspect of identification and differentiation, knowledge about music was not regarded as particularly important. Neither was going to house parties, working in the promotion or production business, 'playing the decks' or aspiring to become DJs.

Tricks of the trade: becoming 'proper' clubbers

Learning to do drugs

As James illustrates, he became aware through watching other clubbers that there were 'things' he was and was not supposed to do. This extract gives us a flavour of the new practices, such as the style of dancing, the style of dress and ways of using substances, that James was aware of learning about.

James: 'That was when I started taking pills, and you were aware that there were things that you could do and things that you couldn't do, and I was always kind of looking to people for guides I suppose. Things like dancing, if you are not naturally very good at dancing when you first start going clubbing you look to people and basically try to copy them dancing so you don't end up looking like a complete twat. Things like the drinking, you start to realise that most people are just buying bottles of water and you're not really supposed to take pills and then carry on drinking lots of beer. The clothes as well, you look to see what are the right things to wear.'

The way in which participants learnt to use drugs is similar to how Becker describes becoming a marihuana user (1991: 46). The novice has to 'learn the technique', 'learn to perceive the effects', pick up the necessary concepts and apply them to their own experiences (Becker, 1991: 46-51). He suggests that 'with increasing experience the user develops greater appreciation', 'the taste for such experience is a socially acquired one' (Becker, 1991: 52-53). As Barry shows, using ecstasy is often seen as an integral part of becoming a 'proper' clubber.

Barry: 'Without a doubt you kind of find them and it feels like you're part
           of the club when you start taking them. At the start they take over
           but then the music becomes more important than them.'

This process of fitting in and learning to belong was seen to be progress by the vast majority of participants. They progressed from being a novice to someone who was in the process of learning the skills and ways of being in order to become a competent member (the notion of competence is the topic of chapter nine). The penalties for not doing the things 'you're supposed to' depend in what way and to what extent one contravenes the expected ways of being. Being 'monged out'[3] through taking too many drugs and/or alcohol may result in not being allowed into the club. If they got passed the door staff and their behaviour became unacceptable, either through being too incapacitated to participate or through annoying fellow clubbers, they could be chastised by their friends or told and/or helped to leave the premises. Overdoing drug consumption was seen as

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[3] 'Monged out' means having impaired speech and movement through excessive use of drugs. 'Gouchy' is another term used to describe someone who is in an almost unconscious, relaxed and sedated condition. 'Gouching' is most associated with the effects of using heroin or like substances.

unnecessary and in bad taste, the clubbing experience was meant to be an enjoyable one, drugs were meant to enhance not undermine that experience. However for the majority, the process and experiences of becoming were often talked about as being pleasant, exciting, or even wonderful.

Sam: 'Definitely novice but not in a horrible conspicuous first day at school type of way more in a wide eyed and bushy tailed sense of wonder. You've been initiated. I don't know if it's about the first time going clubbing or if it's about the first time taking drugs but something unlocks the key, which allows you a way into appreciate the music and appreciate the scene.'

Sam articulates well the sense of initiation that participants often attached to going to a 'proper' club and experiencing the effects of Ecstasy for the first time. This process of initiation would appear to be akin to the one undergone by the medical students discussed in Boys in White (Becker et al., 1961). The students were 'initiated into the status of physician' and to be 'accepted' they needed to 'learn what others expected' from them, and how those others would 'react' to them (Becker et al., 1961:4). It was 'not enough to have the skills and science and know the lines' (Becker et al., 1961:4). Similarly, to become a clubber, would-be clubbers needed to experience and interact with the culture, to know about it was not enough to become part of it and feel as if one belonged. In a sense it seemed like 'a turning point, a marker of progression in becoming transformed' (Strauss, 1997: 94-95). For all those who experienced these two things together, it was an abiding memory often described as a 'life changing' event, one which they talked about with a great sense of nostalgia, humour and passion, as Ian explains.

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Ian: 'Probably not such a huge experience if you had the drugs before but combined! 'Cos if you've had the drugs before you know what they do and then the music pumps you up, but I did it all together and it was great.'

Forsyth noted that use of Ecstasy tended to occur within the same time frame as 'initiation in to dance events' (1997: 202) and Hammersley et al. found that Ecstasy was most often first consumed with friends in a club or party setting (2002: 67). Certainly my data indicated that it was common knowledge amongst those who participated in 'proper' club scenes, and who had used ecstasy, that experiencing both together was often an initiating or 'eye opening' experience, after which participants felt like they were part of the club.

Phil: 'This is another cliché, but from the moment that you do your first pill and have a good night with a load of mates, good friends and good loud music, it's like, there isn't some kind of learning curve, you are either experiencing that or you're not. And with pills you think you're great anyway so you don't think oh, don't mind me I'm just a new boy, you think you're great and lets go!'

The quotation from Sam below illustrates how using Ecstasy can be seen as a symbolisation of enjoyment, one way of demonstrating both to oneself and others how much one is 'into it'. Indeed a number of prevalence studies done on Ecstasy use suggest that over 80% of clubbers have had life time experience of Ecstasy. In that sense Ecstasy could be seen as an integral part of a 'proper' club scene for the majority of clubbers. [4] My data suggests that one reason why so many

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[4] Mixmag found that 85% of their readers had taken ecstasy in the last month and nearly 98% had at some point (Howe et al., 2001). Release (1997) and Riley et al. (2001) both found 80% of life-time experience of ecstasy consumption in their British and Edinburgh

clubbers may use Ecstasy is related to the experience it engenders, that is, it seems to generate a sense of belonging, of being part of something.[5] In other words, it is illustrative of the process of becoming or, as Sam suggests below, taking ecstasy can 'offer a way in'.

Sam: 'I know a lot of people that don't take drugs now or who take drugs very irregularly and have a lot of reasons for that, like they've done enough, been there done that, they're tired of it, or it takes too much of a toll on their life. But I don't actually know anybody that is a clubber that is into it and really enjoys it, that has never, ever had anything. So I think drugs might be to do with it. Also it's just learned behaviour, you just look around at what other people do and if you are in that environment for long enough and interested in picking it up you just do you know. But I think drugs definitely offer a way in.'

This data may be an example of what Schutz would call motivational understanding (1970a: 11). In contrast to this, those who did not participate in 'proper' club scenes demonstrated how they would not know how to go about finding or using drugs such as ecstasy. As Zoe illustrates ecstasy use was unusual within her group of clubbing friends and within the club scene she participated in.

Zoe: 'I wouldn't say there are no drugs in Garbage but we've never done drugs and I don't think we'd know..., I mean lots of people

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samples respectfully. Akram reported 96% life-time experience in her Nottingham sample (1997). In Glasgow, Forsyth (1997: 101) and Hammersley et al. (2002) found that 91% of clubbers had at some point used ecstasy.

[5] Although, as can been seen at the end of the first quotation, alcohol can also engender feelings of belonging in particular social settings.

smoke hash but that's probably about it, I don't think it's the kind
of place you'd take drugs in. I don't really know but I don't think
so, it's mostly drink.'

Drugs were not the only way in which a sense of belonging and becoming was
generated. Learning new forms of interaction and dancing and increasing one's
musical knowledge were also associated with becoming a 'proper' clubber.

Learning to interact and dance

The quotation from Stewart below illustrates the various things he had to learn in
order to fit in, to feel as if he belonged and become one of thegroup. It illustrates
how he already had knowledge of the music but after hearing it in a club setting it
took on further meanings for him. He clearly demonstrates that the expected ways
of interacting were different from what he had been used to, both generally, and
specifically regarding the interactions and relations with the opposite sex. He had
to learn to recognise, reciprocate and initiate friendly interaction with people he did
not know. Going for a 'wander' was to take a break from dancing and chat, not to
chat up women. These experiences meant he felt under no obligation to take on
the more usual masculine role associated with many other socialdance arenas, of
initiating sexual advances. These new forms of interaction appear to have given
him confidence, the sentiment of gaining confidence is one which will be taken up
further in chapter nine.

Stewart: 'I knew what the music was like before because my mate had
            been buying it and we would listen to it, but going to the club the

first time was a bit of an eye opener. It was packed and the atmosphere was different and one of the first things I remember about being out of my nut was saying to everyone how come everyone is asking me if I'm all right? And being initially paranoid about that, but getting over that quite quickly. Initially it's dance, dance, but then eventually you get to know that you can walk away and just go for a wander. Not like in the way that you would wander round a club with a beer and look at all the women like you did when you were sixteen. But go for a wander, dance for half an hour and maybe say hello to a couple of folk, so you learn about that. I've never been one for chatting up, it's different, no pressure and I'd to learn to do that. I had to learn to approach people and just say hello, how you doing? But with the knowledge for the first time that people weren't going to turn round look you up and down and turn away, big difference. Confidence builder. You did learn, it became less important how you looked, there's a certain element about how you fit in. I quickly learned that the easiest way to get in was essentially not to bother your arse, say hello to people on the door and they'd let you in. Then not get too drunk, never fall about, didn't need to be pissed to talk to people, didn't need to be pissed to feel as if you belonged to a group of people.'

These new forms of interaction and social relations were another illustration of becoming a 'proper' clubber. As David explains, trying to attract a member of the opposite sex is not the norm at 'clubby clubs', instead an 'all in it together' atmosphere is sought out and constructed by the majority of the crowd.

David: 'It's a lot less aggressive than it would be in a pub type of environment. It's mostly down to the guys, well from my point of view we're a lot less, it's not our objective or my objective to go out and pull, you're there to dance and to meet people. Meeting

people of the female variety too but not because you want to pull them, you're quite happy to sit and chat. The female people I was with and the ones I met were really happy because it wasn't that kind of thing. They felt happy to go out but now it seems that they can only do that in gay clubs and that's a bit of a disappointment because I don't necessarily want to go to gay clubs all the time.'

David talks of the men in terms of 'we' and 'our' indicating a group perspective, a common view held by the majority of the men (Schutz, 1976: 251). He also illustrates awareness and understanding of how many women feel safer in 'proper' or gay club environments because they are perceived as less aggressive. The women also talked about the lack of emphasis on attracting the opposite sex and how it made for a more comfortable environment, one that engendered a sense of equality.

Cath: 'No one ever hit on you, no one ever tried to chat you up or get off with you, you would meet people and you would have soulmates, you would get on, hug and chat all night long or would dance near them but no one ever got off with anyone. There was never an issue of sex and it really did just feel like you were a person more than a woman. You're not allowed to feel like that normally. People remind you by whistling or shouting or something every day, or even by just looking at you a certain way. So a sense of power from that as well you know? A sense of equality.'

Previous research has also reported female clubbers feeling liberated, equal and free (Pini, 1997a; 1997b; Merchant and Macdonald, 1994; Henderson, 1993a). Henderson argued that clubbing environments had loosened their association with being an arena for the sexual pick up (Henderson, 1993b). The role played by

young men had, however, to be 'pieced together from the young women's accounts' (Henderson, 1993a: 52). My data suggests that men in 'proper' clubbing environments were often not interested in trying to pick up women. The extract from Ian demonstrates how the nature of the interactions between the sexes takes on a non-predatory, sensual flavour in a 'proper' club setting. Seeing women as fellow clubbers seemed related to the feeling that everyone is there for the same reasons and few are there explicitly attempting to attract a member of the opposite sex.

Ian: 'You could see lassies walking down the street and guys giving them a wolf whistle and you see two lassies in a club and for some reason the identities all becomes one, you're a clubber having a good time it's not about whether you've got breasts. Whether it's because everyone has taken the same drugs and you're feeling the same. Not being sexist, but you don't get silly wee lassies standing at the bar with their shorts skirts giving it, (imitates posing), oh he's looking at me. I don't think it's a case of hitting on people it's more a case of mutual bonding. It doesn't seem as cheesy as going up and saying 'I'm Sam what do you do?'. It's more, 'have you been taking something tonight?, 'how are you feeling'? Etc. It's not as streamlined as I'm getting you into the sack at the end of the night, it's not like you're a woman and you're pissed. You'd be naive to think that because it would be so embarrassing to walk up to a girl at a club and try it on 'cos they just look round at you and be like what the fuck are you doing? Piss off I'm here to have a good time not to get into some sleezy chat with you. They're all there for the same reason, to enjoy the music and the company, they're not there to look for a fella. I don't think it's their main agenda to get laid by the end of the night. I've been to clubs loads of times when I've been single

and that's not in my head, if it pops up at the end of the night it's a bouncy bonus.

As can be seen from Ian's extract, contravening these expected ways of being by trying to overtly attract a member of the opposite sex, was frowned upon. Clubbers dealt with it by telling the impostor to 'piss off' or giving them the cold shoulder, more aggressive or threatening behaviour and the security staff would be called to intervene. However, as Ian indicates, the change in relations between the sexes is one of degree and taste. To be seen to be overtly initiating some 'sleezy' chat would be tacky and the reserve of 'naff' or 'tacky' clubs. 'Proper' clubbers are more concerned about displaying their taste, not only in music but in the way in which they behave. Predatory or overt 'pulling' tactics were associated with 'beer monsters', being drunk, being immature, being cheesy and displaying a lack of decorum. 'Proper' clubbers, unlike 'silly wee lassies', would tolerate far less explicit sexual advances. For 'proper' clubbers it seems that if anything sexual was to happen it would be more mutual, subtle and gradual, or as Andy puts it 'holistic'.

Andy: 'And the thing that's nice about it is that it's not, well it's sexy but it's not about trying to pick people up and stuff. I mean sure that might happen but it's not expected that guys are going to try and chat girls up. It makes for a much easier atmosphere if people don't feel that kind of, any kind of pressure going on in that way. So there is something very kind of, well holistic about it or something.'

As Sam conveys, 'pulling' takes on a mellow ambience and predatory behaviour is unacceptable, so although 'the same stuff is going on', it is done in a more discreet, respectful style.

Sam: 'I think obviously people are trying to pull, they're going out on a Friday or Saturday night, they're dressing up, looking good and probably a lot of them are hoping to go home with someone. But it's definitely not a predatory environment. It's very very unusual to get hassled in clubbing clubbing, it's unacceptable within the whole environment. I mean the bouncers think it's unacceptable and they'll intervene and get rid of them. I think in non-clubbing nights you'd practically expect to get hit on. I think if people are trying to pull they are more likely to sit down for a very mellow chat and what you doing after and all the rest of it, but I think there is probably the same stuff going on though, but just in a different way. And in a much less threatening way if the truth be told.'

Could this be interpreted as being indicative of gender relations becoming more egalitarian as suggested by Merchant & Macdonald (1994)? It certainly seems that the 'pursuit of a sexual partner is not given pride of place, rather sensations of mind, body and soul is a greater motivation for participating' (Henderson, 1993a: 48). And certainly the men and the women living 'proper' clubbing lifestyles perceive that to be the case, to an extent, a point to which I will return later. For the moment I will continue to explore the other ways in which participants became 'proper' clubbers, an example of which was learning to dance.

Cath: 'I still couldn't do the dancing, but loved it because you could dance like an idiot and nobody could really see. I remember standing behind this girl and I thought she was so cool because

she was doing this dancing that I just couldn't do. Stood behind her the whole night trying to copy her and by the end of the night I had mastered the dance and I remember from then on getting so excited about my dancing improvements' (laughs).

Despite the effort, conscious or otherwise, made by clubbers to fit in, the perception held by many was that you were able to 'do your own thing'.

Lorna: 'At The Base you're just getting into the beat, you can just do your own thing and everybody's facing the same way. But in the discos you sort of dance like everybody else (laughs). But you just try and fit in with everybody else.'

Doing your own thing would appear to be related to being able to dance or to stop dancing whenever you liked, you did not need to dance with a partner or around your friends. It also seemed that, because the majority of the crowd faced the DJ and focused on the music, there was less attention paid to who or what was going on around you. This appears to have contributed to participants feeling less inhibited, as it was the DJ, the music and the atmosphere that was the focus rather than those on the dance floor, as Cath illustrates.

Cath: 'A thousand people all facing one direction and dancing entirely on their own. I found that very attractive, the feeling of standing amongst thousands of people, you're so focused on the stage, the light shows and lasers. So it was that feeling of independence really a real social independence. Because the thing that was valuable was the time you spent on the dance floor listening to the music and feeling connected to the music rather than the time you spent chatting and doing silly dancing and getting drunk. It was a physical kind of dancing, much more focused and much less

social, although there is an element of sociability because you catch someone's eye and they're doing good dancing and they look at you and you're doing good dancing and you run over and hug each other. But people do come up to you and congratulate you if you're a good dancer, which is bizarre, so the better you dance, the more people come up to you and the better you feel at the end of night.'

As Cath articulates so well, the feelings of 'social independence' were valuable to her, she was becoming a 'proper' clubber and could demonstrate her sense of belonging through her energy and enthusiasm for dancing. Her enjoyment and enthusiasm, her becoming, was recognised and congratulated by others, which in turn enhanced her feelings of being part of something, belonging to a particular group of people. Feeling less inhibited and demonstrating enthusiasm appeared to be both simultaneous and symbiotic. This period would appear to be the time when clubbing was most pivotal in participants' lives. It was often talked about with a great fondness, it was in a sense the best time, a time when they were in love with their new discovery, it was a 'honeymoon' period, as Kirsten puts it.

Kirsten: 'When I first started clubbing properly, when I first started with techno and I've spoken to people about this, there definitely is a honeymoon period. When I first started going to Techno clubs you basically get introduced to this whole new social group and meeting new folk everyday. You'd walk up Sauchiehall Street and you'd meet people you'd met at a club and it was great. You think this is so fantastic, totally at the centre of things.'

The notion of honeymoon is expanded in chapter nine, but for the moment I want to show how musical knowledge was another aspect of becoming a cultural participant.

Musical knowledge and taste

For 'proper' clubbers it was not only what they liked (musical taste) that was important, but also what they knew about (musical knowledge). Again there was a sense of progression, refinement and maturity attached to accruing knowledge and developing ones musical taste.

Robbie: 'Definitely, it can get quite snobby. When I was working in Sounds it was good to see people getting into different things. I was just into Techno for years, and everyone told me in the record shop you'll get into deep house, 'cos you'll need something more musical it happens with everyone, it's really funny watching that, it's really good watching people's tastes progress as they get older.'

Becoming musically knowledgeable also seemed to engender feelings of becoming part of and belonging to a group that was perceived as more progressive and ahead of its time than other club scenes. Being advanced appeared to be linked to having status.

Stewart: 'Right from the point of when my mate was playing the records you know you are part of something because there are 3 or 4 of you listening to that. And then you hear it in the charts 3 months or 3 years down the line and you go aye, sub-cultural capitalwise

you're thinking ho ho. I've heard some music that otherwise I would have never had heard, records that I love, so definitely part of something. And even now there's people getting involved in it all the time, part of something now means retrospectively listening to classic tracks that I know. You always knew that you were moving on to somewhere else, there would be somewhere else to go.'

As Stewart explains, listening to and knowing about music that only a few select people have heard of, or have access to, made him feel part of something, it afforded him some cultural status both then and now, it also epitomised good taste. Whereas listening to 'common or garden' music implied not only a lack of taste but also a lack of knowledge that there was something better. As Katie illustrates, music that was perceived to be lacking in interest and imagination was seen as 'common and boring', as were the people, or at least their tastes, who listened to it.

Katie: 'Common or garden house music bores me and also the 18/19 year old girls in lycra dresses with high heels. I just don't like that whole scene I think it's boring and unimaginative, the music is too repetitive, it's not got enough bump and grind, not enough bass and not enough interest.'

Both the men and women developed their knowledge about and tastes in the music of the 'proper' club scenes. As Sheila explains she makes 'informed decisions' about what records she buys, who she goes to hear play and what club night she chooses in order to hear her kind of music.

Sheila: 'I don't DJ but I know what I like and I'll buy it. I don't just go along
             on a whim and not listen to the music at home I do, I know what I
             like and I'll go and see people that I like, make informed decisions
             as to what club I'm going to go to and why.'

Both men and women had aspirations, not only to consume what club culture had

to offer, but also to be active in the construction and, in some cases, the

production of it.   The quotation below, again from Sheila, shows us how some

'proper' clubbers develop even more specific kinds of knowledge about the music.

However, very specific and detailed musical knowledge tended to be accrued by

men, the 'trainspotters' of club culture. My data suggested that the active interest

of Sheila and her friend were probably less common. Nevertheless, Sheila along

with the majority of women, found that attempting to access records through using

decks in record shops was uncomfortable, even intimidating.

Sheila: 'I think guys, like the boyfriend I went out with, when we first met
             we sat down and spoke about music when we were first getting to
             know one another. And he couldn't believe that I knew so much
             about it because most women don't, most women and are like
             what is it? They don't know the names of things and don't find out
             about it. Whereas men are like what is that? I must get that and
             they go out record shopping. You just need to stand in Sounds
             and it's all men that stand and listen to the records. And I'm
             saying to my flatmate Jim I really want to go in and listen to music
             and decide what I want to buy but I'm too scared to actually stand
             there on the deck and listen in case everyone goes what's that girl
             doing standing there you know? It's quite a male dominated thing
             music business. But I mean I've got loads of female friends that
             listen to music but don't really take an active interest in it you

know? Like my friend Tina she knows quite a lot about music and I find her quite unusual, it's weird.'

Some women felt that their ability to acquire further musical knowledge and skills was constrained, they would need to enter into a realm that was more commonly populated by and associated with men. Becoming, in part, meant tapping into knowledge and skills that were seen to have legitimacy in a 'proper' club scene. The next section thus takes up the notion of experts and status.

Experts and status

Becoming a 'proper' clubber was associated with a sense of progression and advancement, looking to those perceived to be more practised, knowledgeable and competent. However, it is not just competent clubbers who are afforded some respect and status, it is also those who are deemed to have access to, or are involved with, the production and promotional aspects of clubbing. My data suggests that many 'proper' clubbers aspire to become involved with the construction, production and promotional elements of clubbing. It seems they do this in a variety of ways. Becoming part of a social network who know club night staff, promoters and or DJs, which could result in being put on the guest list, being informed of special, one-off events or getting free entry to the club. They could become a member of staff, either through working the door or distributing tickets or promotional fliers. They could invest in their own decks, learn DJing skills or organise and promote their own parties or club nights. This kind of involvement was only apparent among those who thought of themselves as 'proper' clubbers. Being a clubber became part of their day-to-day lives through living with fellow

clubbers, DJs, promoters, through supplementing their income by working in some capacity for club nights, through having their own house parties (free) or organising DIY parties (tickets); it became a lifestyle.

Barry uses the notion of VIP to illustrate how a certain 'select' crowd, through knowing the DJs and promoters, can get in for free and be privy to inside information. His extract gives us a sense of status attached to participants.

Barry: 'I've also noticed that there is this whole VIP room, select group who all know the DJs and club promoters and who get in for free or work on the door and they're probably at the pinnacle. They get in for nothing and are always there and they know what's going on so they're at the top. Then there's the people maybe know a few of them and know everyone and are just happy to be there and want to be at the club.'

Barry clearly illustrates who is often afforded cultural status. Although that is not to say that an individual's status is static, nor is it to say that because you are a DJ, you are automatically given cultural status, as Stewart explains.

Stewart: 'The difference for me is, well lets take The Place, Joe Faith who is a phenomenally successful DJ says it's one of his favourite clubs, but be aware that this person has little or no credibility beyond Radio 1 or the mass market dance culture. Whereas people who have always been at the ground, people who have put a lot of time and love in coming to Subterranean in my opinion are the best DJs. They get the crowd going, you hear records there that you would never hear, its an appreciation of quality music not that cheesy stuff.'

Although DJs may be regarded as being cultural & musical icons (Brewster & Broughton, 1999), the cultural status afforded to them varies from club scene to club scene. For some 'proper' clubbers, big name DJs, with a large commercial market, may have less 'credibility' than those who remain dedicated to playing progressive music. Not all wanted to become DJs or promoters, but becoming part of a social network, taking on promotional work and increasing one's cultural knowledge in the process was nevertheless status enhancing.

Sheila: 'Well there's a sort of subculture in Glasgow, everyone that's into the same kind of things knows what's on and yeah you can see it on posters. I've got friends who run nights and I work for a club night at Subterranean, I promote it. So I suppose I'm part of that, you get to hear what's on and who's playing and of course people introduce you to things that you don't know about and to DJs you've never heard of.'

Becoming also seems to have notions of exclusivity attached to it. As Andy explains he has exclusive access to two clubs through being on the 'guest list', not just for that occasion but on a 'permanent' basis. The status of which he plays down as it conflicts with the 'proper' clubbing ethos of egalitarianism and clubbing being open and available to all. Bragging about it would be in bad taste, becoming a 'proper' clubber involves discretion and subtlety.

Andy   'Yeah, but generally I don't pay entry to the clubs, well the two I go most regularly I'm on a permanent guest list for them which is really nice. Well I've kind of done favours for them in the past, so it's kind of I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine'

Rhoda   'Is there a kind of status thing about being on the guest list?'

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Andy   'Yeah definitely, it's a nice feeling just being able to walk straight in. But everyone is supposed to be on the same kind of level so you never want to brag about it too much so I won't go around telling people 'oh I got in for nothing.'

Status was not always club based, indeed becoming a 'proper' clubber was as much about what you did, and who you did it with, during your leisure time away from the actual night out clubbing. It became a focal aspect of a wider lifestyle. As Cath illustrates, having decks in your house secured a steady supply of clubbers wanting to learn and practice their DJing skills.

Cath: 'Music in the house all the time. Kudos, oh! Having decks in your house, that's cool, being able to DJ was cool even if you weren't a DJ, being able to do it was cool and everyone was trying to learn and I used to try and learn but I was useless at it. Even when my boyfriend put 2 identical records on I still couldn't match them together, even when he set at the right speeds and stuff I still couldn't do it.'

Hosting house parties, living with fellow clubbers and having decks in the house were associated very much with those who saw themselves as 'proper' clubbers.

Cath   'It was a real coup if you had a special DJ at your house party it would be like so and so is DJing at my flat and there would be like 200 hundred people like wroom! to your flat and that was a real social coup, it was like having a TV personality round to your house for tea.'

Rhoda   'Was it a kudos thing?'

Cath   'Oh so much!'

Cath was a typical female 'proper' clubber, one who found the dance floor and her overall involvement with clubbing a positive, opening, confidence-building experience. However, becoming for most women did not extend to playing the decks. Most of the women I spoke with had tried but felt uncomfortable in what they saw as a competitive, male-dominated arena. It tended to be men who extended their process of becoming through developing DJing skills.

Ian: 'I thought about it very much so, I thought I'm in the club scene, now imagine if I can actually DJ as well, it was very appealing to me. Then you know all that's going into it, you know how to play a tune, how to mix and get more into it. 'Cos the DJs most of them started off being clubbers themselves, it must be the best feeling ever to have two thousand people dancing to the records you're playing.'

Rhoda   'Is there a competitive edge to it?'

Ian   'With DJs, highly competitive.'

Rhoda   'Even when mucking about in the house?'

Ian   'I think so (laughs) yes, one of my good friends used to be a DJ and he played at Wroom, you'd get other DJs who thought they were just as good as D but they weren't playing in clubs. Though the jibes were tongue in cheek and never totally serious.'

I have begun to suggest that the men in this study were more likely to acquire in-depth and specific musical knowledge and skills than the women. Although many of the women who were 'proper' clubbers became involved with the street level

promotional work or staffed club nights in some capacity, it was unusual to find women becoming DJs or running their own club nights (Bradby, 1993; Thornton, 1995; Collin with Godfrey, 1998). Sue who was an exception, articulates very well what most of the women talked about, that is, where they thought the 'equality' ended.

Sue: 'I think on the dance floor, as a guest I would say yeah to a sense of equality, it's ecstasy opening peoples' minds up making them feel like I am a person, a human being. It does this thing where it makes you feel brilliant with everybody and you don't see colour, age, sex. But as a promoter totally different. For years I thought I was accepted as a woman, as a person, I did feel quite equal dealing with a lot of men. But I did come across a thing when me and my boyfriend were putting on these parties but it was really me, it was my money, my ideas and he was just helping and one of his friends was a DJ. Anyway the guy was totally macho man and there were quite a few of them like that, they couldn't handle doing business with a woman. But what you do notice is that there is far more men running clubs and owning clubs and with the DJs it's male domination totally.

Sue, a promoter, explains how female DJs are often regarded as novelty acts. She suggests that once women become involved in the production and promotional aspect of clubbing, they have to be 'strong' to overcome what she sees as 'chauvinist' behaviour.

Sue: 'There will be an element of novelty because it's unusual to have a female DJ it is harder for women, especially on the DJ scene. Promotion wise I did recently encounter quite a lot of male chauvinist stuff, I really was shocked, 'is this because I'm a

woman?! I can't believe it'. You have to be really strong. When you are stronger, harder more forceful what are you? 'You're a bitch!' If it's a guy he is strong, macho and everybody loves him. It is a very misty area these gender things but I definitely did notice it on the DJ side of things. It's very competitive and male dominated. I've DJed as well, I remember I went in to my brothers room to have a mess around with the decks I was interested but didn't know how they got it so smooth and perfect, the mixing. So I got him to show me how to operate the decks, scratch a wee bit, fade in and out and use the headphones. Anyway, he's showing me all this, so I know how to operate all the stuff. But as he was showing me how to mix, pull one back and then let two go together the more he's doing it himself and the next thing you know I'm sitting down and he's just playing records for me. And I'm like 'I'm supposed to be learning this'. Because men are like that, they just totally, don't give you the time to take it in. So the way Ruth (female DJ) got over that was by getting her own decks and equipment. Wasn't any stupid guy there to push her over and take it away.'

Becoming egalitarian?

Returning to the argument that within clubbing environments the relations between the sexes are more egalitarian than in other arenas of social dance. Certainly those who became 'proper' clubbers did demonstrate that they were not participating in order to pursue sexual liaisons. The relations between men and women were marked by respect for each other's feelings, the fact that they shared something in common – they were 'proper' clubbers – seemed to take precedence in their interactions with one another. Both the men and the women sought out and constructed environments in which they felt safe, safe from predatory and/or

aggressive behaviour, safe from people who were not like them. In addition to this, 'proper' clubbers were becoming part of a cultural group, a network of people who would often share similar socialising and leisure environments, be it through bars and cafes they used or at house parties. However, both the men and women articulated that, although there was a sense of equality on the dance floor, the more they moved into the production and promotional side of clubbing, the more it became a 'mans world'. The women were less likely to aspire to be a DJ and were less inclined to establish extensive record collections. Those who did want to learn to play the decks or collect records, which often had to be played on the decks in a shop in order to know what they were buying, felt uncomfortable. Some of the women became involved in the street-level promotional side with no apparent difficulties, but for the one who progressed further and began to run her own nights, parties and DJs, it did appear that she had come across 'misty' gender issues. And although female DJs are becoming more common, many it seems, are still considered as 'novelty' acts. Thornton argues that academics have conflated women's 'feelings of freedom', fostered by social dance, 'with substantive political rights and freedoms' (1995: 21). In a sense this may be the case but the women in this study did articulate very strongly the confidence building, 'social independence', 'feeling like a person more than a woman' and 'sexually safe' experiences that becoming a 'proper' clubber afforded them. A small number went on to take up positions of status within the club scene, although these positions were less likely to be at the 'pinnacle'. All the women maintained that these experiences were valuable, even life changing, for them in terms of their self-esteem and self-development. These notions are taken up more in chapter nine. Both the men and women felt that it was harder for women to

become DJs and promoters than for it was for men. They also felt that this was changing and asserted strongly that they wanted these changes to continue.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored how clubbers access and acquire knowledge through material and social sources to 'suss out' what forms clubbing takes in their locale. Clubbers seem drawn to those with shared tastes and social proximity to themselves: their cultural affiliations were encased in and mediated by both old and new social hierarchies. This perceived affiliation for an identifiable group is demonstrated through having and constructing shared sensibilities, in other words a similar lifestyle (Chaney, 1996: 126). Knowledge is both experiential and handed down (Schutz and Luckmann, 1974). The notions of stocks of knowledge and typification shed light on how clubbers typify their experiences, the club scenes and the people who occupy them, and how these typical crowds and scenes come to take on meaning and symbolise cultural affiliations and lifestyles. These affiliations are not static, rather they are loose constructions that serve to highlight the cultural affiliations and the hierarchies that operate within club culture and clubbing lifestyles.

The notion of becoming was used to illustrate how clubbers move from being a novice to becoming practised (Becker, 1991). Learning to belong highlights how the process of becoming was more in evidence amongst those who identified themselves as 'proper' clubbers. Access to 'proper' club scenes was mediated by participants social location, their position in the world and experiences of it; these informed them where 'people like them' could and could not go. They learnt new

practices and skills, such as drug taking, new ways of interacting and dancing and refining their musical knowledge and taste. Acquiring knowledge appeared to be implicated in a transformational process (Strauss, 1997: 94). Becoming a 'proper' clubber was not only associated with going out to clubs, it also often involved house parties, living with other clubbers, working in the scene, playing decks and aspiring to become a DJ and/or a promoter. Both men and women became 'proper' clubbers, both men and women valued the 'social independence' they gained through their clubbing experiences. Both men and women became involved with the construction, production and promotional aspects of club culture at some level or to some degree. Status was afforded to a variety of people and practices, but most often it was the DJs and promoters who seemed to be held in highest regard. It tended to be the men who pursued more of a career (in a conventional sense) in clubbing, and thus they could take the processes of becoming further and as such 'become' more.

Chapter Nine   The Competent Clubber

Introduction

This chapter explores the notion of competency. I call on the work of Schutz (1967; 1970a; 1970b; 1973; 1976) and Strauss (1997) to show how, through particular practices, participants demonstrate and maintain their cultural identity as a competent clubber. I begin by exploring the notion of honeymoon. This is a period when engagement with clubbing is pivotal and at its peak. Involvement fluctuates and it appears that many clubbers tended to club in cycles. The idea of a clubbing calendar will be discussed. The section, 'everyone knows' takes up the concept of common knowledge and how it can range from the pragmatically limited to the well-informed (Schutz, 1970b: 39). The differing perspectives held amongst the different club scenes can be conceptualised as in-groups and out-groups (Schutz, 1970b: 98). Reciprocity of perspectives was a recurring and strong theme, but although these tended to be assumed, they were not always reliable. Section four takes up the notion of 'at home' (Strauss, 1997). Many of the clubbers were now participating in well-defined situations, they were in a 'common situation with fellow beings' (Schutz, 1970b). Perceptions of similarity and reciprocal acceptance amongst 'proper' clubbers were in evidence. I discuss how these relations are affirmed before pulling together the ways in which clubbers could be deemed incompetent.

Progressively competent

Competence appeared to involve both progressive recognition and becoming recognised. Running through the feelings of familiarity, acceptance and competence was a discourse of safety. I argue that feelings of being 'at home' are illustrative of clubbers being embodied personifications of competent clubbers. The notion of 'at home' also illustrates the ways in which we tend to keep our social place through interaction and through the formation of lifestyles. Being competent was about expressing the spirit, being the embodied personification of someone who is familiar with the ways of being in that cultural community (Schutz, 1970b: 18-19). Competency was more often about not what you did but the way that you did it, it was about subtlety. Clubbers, through 'we-relationships' (Schutz, 1970b: 33) and gestures of affirmation (Strauss, 1997: 85), reaffirm one another's identification as 'proper' clubbers. Affirmation, I argue, is augmented through reflecting and sharing past common clubbing experiences, as well as through reciprocal recognition and acceptance. Notions of competency are highlighted through the ways in which clubbers could be deemed incompetent. It seemed that their fellows reminded them that their flaunting or flouting of the expected ways of being was both unbecoming and inappropriate.

Honeymoon

As mentioned in chapter eight, feelings of social independence were associated with becoming a 'proper' clubber. Having learnt the tricks of the trade many clubbers began to engage with their new-found love in an intense way. For many it was a time when clubbing was central in their lives. It seemed that this phase of engagement was about the 'need to validate new found conceptions of themselves' (Strauss, 1997: 132). Becoming competent seemed most keenly felt

during this time. Their clubbing experiences facilitated feelings of wonder, excitement, enthusiasm, newness, a sense of being part of something special, even exclusive – akin to being on honeymoon. Kirsten was very much in her honeymoon phase, her extract captures the sense of energetic rapture of the here and now. She had progressed through the various scenes and found her place, amongst friends, in the techno scene. She talks in terms of 'we', 'us' and 'our', illustrating the strength of the 'we-relationships' in her social group (Schutz, 1970b: 34). She illustrates how music features prominently in her daily life, how her group all have similar musical tastes and desires and how these common interests serve to engender feelings of belonging and closeness.

Kirsten: 'I wouldn't have got as close to them had I not been involved in the techno and drug scene because it has bound us. It has held us together and brought us together. Music is such a big part of my life that everyday I'll see at least 4 of my friends and I'll have conversations with them separately about different DJs, different nights, things we're going to do, things we're going to see. Last summer there was just so many amazing DJs which got my heart going more than anything else. DJs that we've never seen like Jeff Mills a big Detroit DJ who never comes to Britain but came to T in the Park and he's just a hero in our group and everyone was going crazy in our group, but that's one of the essential ingredients.'

Much recreational and leisure time is taken up with talking about, planning and organising the actual night out. Being social involves participating in musical discussions, the friendship groups seem to build up their own sociology of taste and attach value to the music they identify with. Musical taste and knowledge is a

major point of connection, identification and differentiation in her social relationships during this time.

Kirsten: 'Your whole week is spent thinking about what is coming up at the weekend if you're going to have enough money, if you've got the night off work, that sort of thing. You obviously talk about music a lot, like I'll meet people at college and I've got my music and they've got their type of music and you'll sit and argue about it or sit and slate each other or have a discussion about so you're talking about it like that. You're constantly organising with your friends what you're going to do, where you're going meet, everything basically, most of my life is taken up with clubbing even though I don't go out that much.'

Kirsten encapsulates how her relationships with other clubbers, and the clubbing experiences they construct and reflect on, are part of her daily life, despite only going clubbing once a month. The intensity of the honeymoon could not be maintained indefinitely. Cath clubbed intensely for three years, until the ecstatic feelings began to fade and the lifestyle and drug taking began to take its toll on her emotional and physical well being (these issues will be taken up further in chapter ten).

Cath: 'Intense yeah and when I was doing it, it was like a lifestyle, it was your way of life and everything else revolved around that. It wasn't a case of I'm working tomorrow at 6.30 so I shan't go out, it was like of course I'm going out tonight and if I've got to work tomorrow then I'll just take more speed so that I can stay awake through my work. The whole of life was revolved around going out, clubbing and taking loads of substances and that was my lifestyle at the time. And of course you have to change that if you

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want to have a healthy life, you can't keep that going. Need to get a job and therefore need to not be exhausted all the time, need to be healthy.'

Maintaining such an intense and constant engagement with clubbing without other aspects of your life being detrimentally affected would appear to be difficult to avoid. In order to manage and maintain a clubbing lifestyle many clubbers took time out. They had spells when they would reduce or cease their drug intake, go out less often, and choose to engage with some other social activity. David shows how going out clubbing two to four nights a week, going to parties and using drugs regularly began to impinge on his ability to function coherently. Nevertheless, his identification with being a clubber does not wane, and he does not disengage with clubbing *per se* rather, he like many others tended to club in cycles.

David: 'Absolutely, for a large part of time it was my social life, that's all I was interested in doing, if I didn't go out I'd be and still do get depressed, you know. I want to go clubbing, I want to feel all of that and on a regular basis but for a variety of reasons like work, no money you can't. It seems to kind of come and go, I'll do it for so long and then think there are other things I want to be doing. If you're clubbing all the time it impinges on you doing other stuff because your brain is not functioning properly. You're tired, even with work, you can't go out on a Sunday night 'cos you can't go in to work out of it. But it depends what's on and who you are with but certainly at least twice a week if not Thursday, Friday, Saturday Sunday. Do that for months, and then you either can't do it anymore or don't want to but I certainly wouldn't say that it is over. You see friends tiring out and think, right time to take it easy or time to go off and do whatever else with them even if it's not

right time to get away from this group of people it's like time to do other things.'

Clubbing in this fashion meant that a clubbing lifestyle could be maintained over a number of years. The newness and specialness of the honeymoon phase seemed hard to recapture in subsequent clubbing experiences. Each bout of engagement was 'a little bit different'.

David: 'It's very liberating, I've been trying to work out what it is since then and trying to find the exact same experience but of course I can't. Very similar type things I suppose on many nights and loads that weren't but it's kind of like when you have a trip or whatever, it opens up some little door somewhere that stays open and you remember what it was like but each time it's that little bit different.'

It seemed that many of the 'proper' clubbers tended to have periods, sometimes weeks but more often months, of more intense clubbing coupled with periods of not going out as much and/or using less drugs. There was a cyclic and seasonal element to it, a kind of clubbing calendar. This was, in part, related to how many, and how often, club nights were running, as well as to the number of larger and more one-off events that were taking place. Even during her honeymoon phase, there was a sense of ebb and flow in Kirsten's clubbing activities.

Rhoda   'Have you had a kind of cycle when you've clubbed less or more?'

Kirsten   'It doesn't noticeably but December and January I was clubbing a lot and fell behind in a lot of my college work just from going out far too much. February I had to cut back completely and not go

out. March is building up again, April will be mad 'cos there are so many 21st's and big nights, and the summer will probably be quite good. So yeah it does go in spates of far too much, not enough and enough.'

After a 'far too much spate', many clubbers actively choose to lessen how often they go out. However, that does not necessarily mean they lessen their identification with, and practice of, a clubbing lifestyle.

'Everyone knows'

Being a competent clubber involved having a sense of the 'common knowledge' circulating within and around club scenes. There was also a belief in and evidence of reciprocity of perspectives amongst clubbers. In chapter seven we saw how participants tapped into both social and material sources of knowledge. Social knowledge, from other club goers and being with people similar to themselves, was important. As Schutz suggests, 'a unity of outlook depends on the belief that members of the community share views about the world' (Schutz, 1970b: 17). Common knowledge became a feature of what it meant to be a clubber, and terms such as 'we' and 'our' illustrated the strength of common perspective amongst the group. They assumed that everyone knew what they did and other clubbers reciprocated their perspective, they had what Schutz would call an 'assumption of unified knowledges' and reciprocity of perspectives (1970b).

Drawing on her knowledge about and experience of clubbing, Sam who identified as a 'proper' clubber, takes for granted or assumes that anyone into clubbing 'can't possibly be judgmental' about using illicit drugs. She implies that this is a

commonly held view, that there is a 'unity of outlook', and indeed this featured strongly in the data. There was a common assumption amongst 'proper' clubbers that anyone into clubbing had at some point used drugs.

Sam: 'If someone is into clubbing but not necessarily into the scene that you are into, but if they're into clubbing the chances are, well they can't possibly be into clubbing and be pedantic or judgmental about drug taking. So then you might extend that to a bit more of an open mind and a love of music and a desire for a social life, a certain set of priorities, so yes there would be common values but different types of people.'

Kirsten knows the differences between the club scenes and she assumes that other people in Glasgow also know. Schutz & Luckmann make the distinction between 'knowledge about' and 'knowledge of acquaintance' (1974: 137). In the case of Kirsten, her knowledge would seem to be one of acquaintance, rather than vague knowledge about; she had progressed through the various scenes until she found her 'home'. Her presumed sense of common knowledge and her use of cultural terminology appeared to be illustrative of her familiarity.

Kirsten: 'Like if you speak to people in Glasgow they'll know that split, like Garbage and Sauce are complete cheese, that Hedonism and The Place are for pulling and drink and Amnesty and Yipyap are for music and drugs essentially. Fidelity would fall into that last category too.'

Zoe had been going out clubbing for about a year but did not identify as a 'proper' clubber. She too had access to both the material and social information, yet it seemed she was less familiar with the expected mores and dress codes of other

clubs. It may be that this information was less relevant to her, she was less motivated to increase her understanding, she had tried out three or four different clubs but her experience of these had not been enjoyable.

Zoe: 'The first time we went to Garbage we got in, I'm in a tiny boob tube dress and my friend had a Hedonism outfit on. Although the music was good I was 'oh my god we stick out like sore thumbs'. We got into the toilet and we were talking about how awful it was but we thought we'll get a few drinks and get on the dance floor and Jenny is saying 'everybody's looking!' Nobody was dressed up except us, we kind of got away with it because we're a lively group, there are 6 of us so we can burst in on the place in these tiny dresses. When I went to Fidelity I was wearing a sequinned boob tube and black trousers 'cos I'd dressed down. We got into the toilet and I said to Jenny I'm having a terrible time, everybody is looking at me going 'who's the girl in the boob tube?' And she says well it's okay you're supposed to be individual in this kind of place and I'm like I'm the only person here that's showing a bit of flesh everyone else is in t-shirts or denims. It was awful. Now when we go somewhere new I'm like right what kind of things do they wear? I always ask and someone will say whatever you want to wear and I'm like no, what do all the girls wear?

In contrast to Zoe, Kirsten who identifies as being a 'proper' clubber shows how she has grasped the shared knowledges in operation, she knows that by conforming to the dress codes she will feel comfortable and not out of place in whatever club scene she chooses to go to. It would appear that Kirsten is what Schutz would call a 'well informed citizen' (1970b: 39).

Kirsten: 'If I'm going out to dance trainers without a doubt but if I'm going
            out to get drunk with my girlfriends, like if we're going to Hedonism
            it would be heels definitely. You do sort of stick to the dress
            codes 'cos you know you won't get in if you don't or you know you
            won't feel in place. If you go to Hedonism with trainers on you
            know you're not going to feel in place, feel a wee bit silly so you
            dress so that you feel comfortable.'

Common knowledge is not static, it alters through interaction and through the
reconstruction of events, relations and experiences, it has to be 'built up by the
members and is therefore always involved in a process of dynamic evolution'
(Schutz, 1970b: 83). The evolutionary flavour of common knowledge came to light
when participants talked about their own club scene. Their knowledge was more
detailed, nuanced and current. Maria shows she has both a general
understanding of clubland as well as the current common local knowledge
particular to the club scene she identifies with and participates in. She has
'inherited' this knowledge through socialising in that environment; she knows the
ways of being in a detailed manner. She has learnt through experience, and is
familiar with the spirit of that club scene in a way that only those who have
participated in it would know.

Maria: 'Well if you're falling about the place you'll get chucked out. When
            I was going to The Place it was very much 'The Place does not
            associate with drugs', yet you knew full well that upstairs where
            tables were there were lines of coke. I suppose there is an
            unwritten code, it's never said but you just know, there's no words
            as such like we're not having this or that, it's just one of those
            things. Like the clubs I go to I know I'm not going to get hassled, I
            know there's not going to be some 15-year-old flirting. It is

unwritten there are no words for it, it's just kind of known, you inherit, know things through socialising. The Place gets rid of the letches, the hassle, and they don't like people loitering in dark corners. Cloak rooms have definite rules, no skipping queues.'

Maria is aware of the common knowledge circulating around Glasgow clubland regarding her favourite club. However, she believes these commonly held perceptions are limited. Maria, who has personal experience of the club, holds a differing perspective. She acknowledges the common knowledge to an extent but through her being one of the 'in-group', having relationships and identifications with the regulars, she qualifies and disputes the common knowledge of the 'out-group' (Schutz, 1976: 244-245).

Maria: 'All of people I've spoken to think The Place is really pretentious, I don't. I got to know a few people in The Place through my ex-boyfriend, and one of the girls I know runs the bar. There are a lot of faces I know and every now and again you'll see people from the past. I know a lot of people have money and are flash but they're quite nice people it's not like they're I've got money, I've got money it's like so what. Whereas I find Hedonism really pretentious, it's look at me and I've got this and that, whereas in The Place they all know they're stunning but they don't really care. But there's always someone you know in there, I find it familiar.'

As Schutz points out, knowledge is socially distributed, 'nobody can know it all, it becomes a matter of agreement and combination of the highly partial, segmented and often vague knowledge of individuals' (1970b: 38). The next extract shows how that, even within the 'in-group', differing perspectives can occur, how reciprocity of perspectives tend to be assumed, even if they are not always

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reliable. Katie assumed that since her best friend was a 'proper' discerning clubber like herself, she would not find Goa to her liking. However, her friend's experience gave her reason to doubt her 'natural attitude' and the 'we' perspective circulating within her group.

Katie: 'Goa is a funny one 'cos I've been to India and spent a few months there over the last 4 years. I steadfastly said no I'm not going to go to Goa and then my best friend went last year and loved it. And I was surprised because I thought as you always do that you are quite a discerning clubber you know? Like I'm not just going to sell out and do that because it will be crap, full of tourists and full of kids not knowing what they are doing. But she had a magic time, she couldn't rave enough about it, she said it was fantastic. It would have been easy for me to go but I specifically avoided it, I was like no it's a sell out. (laughs) 'Cos I'm a snob, I'm a terrible club snob.'

However, most often the data reflected reciprocal perspectives and unity of outlook within the club scenes. Clubbers now tended to be in situations in which they felt 'at home'. The next section builds on the notion of being 'at home', how, through sharing a common situation, clubbers felt safe, it was a public space that engendered feelings of comfort, safety and knowing.

'At home'

Being 'at home', be it in a place, space, situation or interaction, implies that the person is at ease, at one with themselves, relaxed and familiar with their surroundings and company. Although 'at home' can also imply domestic space

(which does not always imply safety and being at ease), in this instance it means a social space in a more metaphorical sense (Bourdieu, 1984). 'At home' was not only a space but a well defined situation, it was identifiable, recognisable, one in which the clubber knew what had gone before and what was likely to take place (Strauss, 1997: 48). Strauss continues, 'implicit in well defined situations is the assumption of each that the identities of both self and other are known' (Strauss, 1997: 48), in a 'common situation with fellow beings' (Schutz, 1970b: 82). A common situation, for instance, could be the club scene that participants identified with and participated in, the one in which 'individual members' biographies participate; and the system of typification and relevances determining the situation forms a natural conception of the world' (Schutz, 1970b: 82). It is here in the 'common situation' that members 'find their bearings without difficulty in common surroundings, guided by a set of recipes and mores that help them come to terms with fellow beings belonging to the same situation' (Schutz, 1970b: 82). It was a social arena where competent clubbers were visible, recognised and accepted. Strauss suggests that recognition is about reciprocal acceptance (1997). Skeggs suggests that it is a continual process in which we all participate in order to place the other, and hence understand how to place ourselves and how to make relationships with others' (1999a). She adds that being positively recognised affords legitimacy (Skeggs, 1999a).

Andy demonstrates how at ease and comfortable he is in this 'common situation', he knows the 'spirit' of the crowd rather than practical details about them. He intimates reciprocal acceptance between himself and the other clubbers in the crowd.

Andy: 'I think taking E is about escapism anyway, because there is so
          many people I know when I go clubbing and I don't even know
          what they do for a living, don't know what their second names are.
          Yet they are people that I feel I know, at least I feel as if I know
          their spirit quite well, but actually practically I know very little about
          them. But I quite like that as well, that's quite nice, certain kind of
          anonymity there apart from who you are when you are there it
          doesn't really matter, you're just there, part of a crowd who likes
          getting into the same things and having a good time.'

Ian too demonstrates how wanted and accepted he feels. He is 'at home' in his
'wee group' or common situation. He illustrates very clearly how comfortable he is
with the relationships and interactions he has with his fellow beings.

Ian: 'It's being part of a society, a wee club, you're going there, you're
          part of a wee group, you feel wanted, you're meeting new people,
          you're being outgoing, you're talking and chatting and that's what
          it's all about. I may be in a club taking a pill or a drink but so what,
          I'm making friends, I'm enjoying myself, I'm communicating with
          people I wouldn't be if I wasn't at the club.'

The next extract from Sheila shows how there are a variety of issues that can
facilitate feelings of being 'at home'. Through being a core member of a social
networks who regularly go to this club, Sheila recognises and is recognised by
'loads of people', this familiarity and intimacy seems related to, and was equated
with, feeling safe and having a legitimate presence. Sheila identifies and has
affinity with the crowd; they are for the most part people like her. It would seem
that mixing with people she has an affinity with engenders Sheila to feel
comfortable, safe, familiar or 'at home'.

Sheila: 'My regular club is Subterranean that's the one I like best, there's loads of people there that I know, I feel totally at home there, there's never any trouble, you never get any aggro, everyone knows your face and you feel safe there. Aside from that I know what nights to go to and what not to go to. Like there are some nights I wouldn't go to because I know I wouldn't like the music but generally their Friday and Sunday nights are the best musically in Glasgow, for the type of thing that I like and I want to go and listen to music that I like. And it has an amazing atmosphere, because it's kind of small, no neds that go and that stuff totally affects your night you know? If you go to Amnesty some nights, 'cos some nights they put on really good music but the clientele is really disjointed, there's loads of young neds and I don't know, you don't feel quite as comfortable as you would in Subterranean. So it's all these wee factors you know what the staff are like, what the music is like and who goes there.'

In Barry's extract one can see that going to a club(s) on a regular basis is linked to feeling part of a 'family'. He recognises and is recognised by the other regulars, his visibility is about empirical recognition of being in or out of place, it is about placement (Skeggs, 1999a). His placement would appear to be consolidated by socialising in the same few clubs where he would be part of the 'whole family thing of meeting friends'.

Barry: 'When I first got into it, it would be once a week, then when I really got into it I would go out on Saturday and Sunday night and then I would go to a student thing on a Wednesday night. That only lasted for about 6 months, but for about 2 and half years it was nearly every weekend. Always the same few clubs where you'd become a regular and that linked in to the whole family thing of

meeting friends and stuff who I still know, but we'd go to the same places often. We'd have the odd jaunt to London or Manchester just to see what was going on.'

Like the other participants in this section, Kirsten illustrates the 'interlinked' aspect of being involved with a particular club scene. I found, like Malbon that the 'more experienced clubbers have a regular thing that their contemporaries go to as well and they are happy with that' (1999: 176). These are public spaces yet are occupied to an extent by 'same faces' who appear on the 'same circuit'. Competent clubbers seem to have a legitimate presence and dominate the 'circuit'. It would appear that in this metaphorical 'home', the identification of being a 'proper' practised clubber comes to the fore, they are visible and competent.

Kirsten: 'The techno scene is quite close, that's what I go out in mostly, you always see people, like you'll see them at Yipyap, Amnesty or Fidelity or wherever. You do see the same faces about a lot because they all follow the same circuit. It's quite good because even though you don't necessarily know them to talk to, you just feel more comfortable through the fact that you know their faces and maybe one of your friends knows them or whatever. It does sort of bring an interlinked thing to it, like everyone knows everyone really, like if you sat down and went do you know who that it is? Somebody will know who they are or they've met before so it is quite nice that way because you feel a bit safer than dancing with a bunch of randoms.'

Running through the feelings of being 'at home' is a discourse of safety. Many of the men and women constructed an environment in which they felt safe and comfortable with people they had affinity with, an environment that excluded the

'randoms' and sometimes the 'neds'. The 'neds' and 'randoms' would appear to represent overtly masculine, aggressive, swaggering men and overly and overtly feminised drunk young women. This is similar to an argument made by Skeggs regarding heterosexual women in gay space. She argues that for 'heterosexual women who are excluded from or do not want to be part of what they experience or perceive as the unremitting heterosexual masculine culture that comprises cities at night, gay space offers a safe alternative (Skeggs, 1999b: 223). So it would seem that feeling 'at home' is related to being familiar with, belonging to the common situation, being 'in place'. Being in a well-defined situation where there is an assumption of reciprocal identities (Strauss, 1997: 48). In this metaphorical social space, people who are not like them, who do not share and reflect their views, either exclude themselves or are excluded from participation. This illustrates how clubbers tend to keep their social place through interaction. It is here that 'proper' competent clubbers 'find their bearings without difficulty', they did not have to make too much effort, they were 'at home' (Schutz, 1970b: 82).

'Its not what you do its the way that you do it'

In discussing the various features that go to make up a competent clubber, I do not intend to present some kind of stereotypical unchanging clubber, or a linear process; rather I want to highlight how being competent was more about being and doing 'not very much in a particular way'. Clubbers were no longer strangers in their cultural community (Schutz, 1976). They were now 'steeped in the cultural codes of conduct, they had learnt the tricks of the trade, they could express the spirit, the embodied personification of someone who is familiar with the ways of being in that cultural community' (Schutz, 1970b: 18-19). Being a competent

'proper' clubber involved subtlety, a manner, a way of saying, a way of doing, a way of being, rather than what one said, did, or was. It was similar to the common phrase 'its not *what* they said but the *way* that they said it'.

As Sam's extract highlights, being competent was about having an intimate understanding, recognition and presentation of the social mores. Competent clubbers do not have to put very much effort into being and demonstrating their competency, they are the 'embodied personification' of a 'proper' competent clubber (Schutz, 1970b: 18-19).

Sam: 'You know when the music or the beat is slower you can just stand
           and do not very much but you have to do not very much in a
           particular way to not look, well you can do your own thing its, well
           in a way you are quite free to do your own thing but I guess its
           about how relaxed you are about it. How un-self-conscious you
           are about yourself on the dancefloor, and that can be quite a
           giveaway.'

As Sam shows, being competent was in part about being at ease with your clubbing experiences, it was about having intimate knowledge and shared past experiences with other clubbers. Strauss argues, 'persons must do their own experiencing in order to do their own evaluating. This does not mean a person cannot be taught something about something prior to direct experience of it, as they may have experienced similar situations so can readily understand. However, you yourself must do and undergo in order to accurately evaluate' (Strauss, 1997: 26-27). Sam, through her experiential understanding, can recognise those who are either 'not into it' or 'don't get it'.

Barry is also able to demonstrate his competency, through being aware of, and abiding by, the expected ways of being. He knows that, in order to maintain the spirit and atmosphere of the night, he needs to be relaxed and open to interaction, and to look after and respect people and their personal space. He is familiar with the detailed, specific and localised knowledge of that club scene, he finds his 'bearings without difficulty, guided by a set of recipes and mores' (Schutz, 1970b: 82). He can recognise those who do not have mutual understanding, those who do not, or cannot, enter into the desired and expected interaction, those who are not practised and not in-tune.

Barry: 'It's such a safe environment, it feels so safe there that if anyone, if you do get the odd beered-up leery type nobody is happy about it at all, so there is a code of conduct about staying chilled, being happy and being open, being open-minded is another big one. I suppose you do look after people, if you're in the toilets and you see someone being ill there's a lot of camaraderie and I think there's a bit of a thing about space on the dance floor as well because you become really precious about it. So not being shoved or pushed and just respecting people's personal space and respecting them for who they are, not bringing down the vibe. Community spirit sort of.'

Susan was a long-standing clubber, one who had clubbed in various club scenes for a number of years. Despite being in a new town with clubbers she had never met before, she was able to 'fit in' with the spirit and ethos of 'proper' clubbing. She was comfortable whether she was clubbing in her favourite local club or in another part of the country.

Susan: 'I think it's hard to reflect on it and say yeah there was a point when I was a novice and now I'm an expert 'cos you don't think about yourself doing that, with anything really. But I can go to clubs in other towns and not know where the loo is but I fit in. For example I met this women through a friend of a friend and we ended up going out, going back to hers, watching videos and smoking hash, we crashed out then went to a café for a big English breakfast and it was just great. And I've never met this woman before, her friends came down to visit from other places and we all knew the score and it was great so yeah you do, there are certain, within the clubbing framework that I exist in yeah there are certain patterns of behaviour and norms that you get.'

Experiential understanding can also be gendered in character. The relations that men had with other men also had to change. Being competent was in part about demonstrating one's understanding, mutuality in perspective and a sense of sharedness. It appeared that some men who had used ecstasy became more open and/or affectionate with one another. Like the women, the men seemed to feel more of a person, more of a clubber than a man and to varying degrees their relations with one another reflected that notion. They, like women, were primarily there as clubbers, not as men vying for the attention of women. There seemed to be little need or desire to display territorial, macho behaviour. There was an understanding that 'on scene' it was okay to engage in same sex tactile behaviour such as touching, hugging and even massaging in certain contexts, often when feelings of mutuality were greatly felt. Phil understands that for a man to engage in tactile affectionate behaviour is not only acceptable but that is what many competent male clubbers do. There is subjective and mutual understanding between and amongst 'most' of the crowd. Phil illustrates how this kind of

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interaction would be out of place, if there were not mutual understanding, acceptance and recognition between the parties.

Phil: 'Inappropriate? Like random hugs from a stranger? (aye). No it's never inappropriate because, well it would only feel inappropriate if you didn't understand how that person felt and if most of the people in the room do understand how that person feels they just sort of appreciate it. If the person is smiling and giving folk hugs, it's never felt inappropriate.'

James also knows that touching in an intimate manner between men is acceptable, it does not look 'out of place'. In this context there are no aspersions cast about this kind of behaviour or about his sexuality. He also knows that this would not be the case in other social arenas, such as a 'tacky disco' or most pubs. These displays of openness and affection tended to be confined to the social interactions that took place in and around the 'proper' club scene. In other words, it would appear to be a situational identity, one that is confined to a well defined situation where the actors concerned recognise one another through familiar acts (Strauss, 1997: 48). That is not to say that these kinds of interactions did not have some effect on same/opposite sex relations in their wider lives (these issues will be taken up more fully in chapter ten).

James: 'Like when you are with your mates, and there's a lot of, well it's acceptable to be hugging your mates and be quite close. You could give your best mate a massage for example in a club and it wouldn't look extremely out of place. Whereas if you did that in a beered-up tacky disco kind of place everyone would basically think you were gay.'

As Strauss argues, 'identity is connected to fateful appraisals made of oneself – by oneself and by others'. 'Everyone presents themselves to others and to their self, and sees their self in the mirrors of their judgements'. 'The masks they then thereafter presents to the world and its citizens are fashioned upon their anticipation's of their judgements' (Strauss, 1997: 11). Being competent and deriving satisfaction from clubbing experiences seemed to involve a bit of give and take; practised clubbers knew that if other clubbers were not enjoying themselves they were also less likely to enjoy their night. Strauss argues that 'we can be relied upon to keep our social places at our own direction and comfort because we learn to be more or less sensitive to interactional cues, and because we apply and obey certain ground rules of interaction' (1997: 78). David explains that if he did not treat people in the expected manner (with respect and consideration) he would feel 'less happy' because he and the others around him would know he was breaking 'the ground rules'.

David: 'It's like, all right I can be happy if I treat people this way but as soon as you stop doing that you start to feel less happy with yourself. So knowing that what the ground rules are and knowing other people know that too, when or if you do deviate from that then you're just like no that's not right.'

Contravening the expected ways of being seemed related to a sense of taste. To flaunt your use of substances, your sense of style, your status within the scene or your musical knowledge was considered unbecoming. As Robbie illustrates, using too many drugs would be considered to be indecorous by his friends.

Robbie: 'I mean you can let yourself completely go and you've also got
            that excuse in the back of your mind, well I was out of my face last
            night.   But if you do end up making a fool out of yourself,
            somebody may say look at the state you were in last night.'

During fieldwork, I heard clubbers being reminded if their substance use had been
overindulgent or their behaviour rude or immature.   In this next extract Katie
describes how she had been annoyed with some of her friends recently for taking
too many drugs and coming into a public space the following day in an 'ugly' state.
It seems that what is deemed unacceptable is appearing in public or at least in a
'non-proper' club setting in such a condition, it would appear that it is akin to letting
the side down.   Taking too many drugs *per se* is not necessarily deemed
problematic, but to let others see you under the after effects of taking too many
drugs and behaving in a rude manner would seem to be contravening the ethos of
being a 'proper' competent clubber.   As Katie says, 'thank god for house parties
where you can do what you want' and, I would argue, keep any untoward or
excessive behaviour between fellow clubbers.

Katie: 'I was appalled actually on Sunday because of the nick they were
            in coming into the bar, their local where they come at least once a
            week and some times more. Purely drug induced, swearing really
            loudly and just generally being obnoxious. I think they realised as
            well and I spoke to Dee and she hadn't come to the pub and said
            that there was no way she was going out and let people see her in
            that state 'cos she knew what she looked like. It looked ugly,
            they'd been out all night, dancing taking drugs willy nilly. And
            came in wide eyed you know that white spit in the corner of your
            mouth, just not really being able to string a conversation together
            and swearing really loudly on a Sunday afternoon in a public bar.

And I thought no, thank god for house parties where you can do what you want.'

Impinging on others enjoyment, crossing the boundaries of taste and decorum was considered inappropriate and out of place. The notions surrounding what was considered unbecoming highlight how having good taste, a sense of understated or discreet style and being mature in terms of your behaviour and knowledge, were all seen as part of becoming a competent 'proper' clubber. This status was not static, it was a process, one that needed to be reiterated and reaffirmed by other clubbers.

Affirmation

There was a dynamic pattern of mutual understanding, that is 'reciprocity of motives' (Schutz, 1970b: 33), a desired and expected reaction and interaction. Schutz argues that reciprocity of motives (communicative common environment) and reciprocity of perspectives (the reasoning that, were they in the other's place, they would experience the common situation from the other's perspective, and vice versa) can constitute an, at least temporary, 'we-relationship' (1970b: 33). A we-relationship is expressed in mutual awareness, a sympathetic participation in each other's lives, even if only for a limited period (Schutz, 1970b: 34). In this next section I will explore how, through recognition of 'we-relationships' (Schutz, 1970b: 33) and gestures of affirmation (Strauss, 1997: 85), clubbers come to reaffirm to one another their identification as 'proper' competent clubbers.

Many clubbers 'knew' one another through socialising within and across the club scenes. Their becoming and belonging was part of a lifestyle in which there was a general sense of knowing one another in 'spirit'. Common perspectives and mutual understandings were constantly reiterated and reaffirmed through the social relations they had with other clubbers. Malbon argues, reflecting on after-club experiences are about 'consolidating and partly rationalising the clubbing experience' (1999: 169). They are also about 'reliving the night out, looking forward to what is to come and an attempt to make sense of the night out in the context of clubbers' broader everyday lives' (Malbon, 1999: 169). Gary illustrates how, whilst at a club, his being a 'proper' competent clubber is reaffirmed by another who 'knows', recognises and perhaps mirrors his identification and embodied personification of what it feels like to be a practised clubber.

Gary: 'We are all together in the same thing anyway. I mean sometimes I just burst out laughing on the dance floor thinking about it, a wry smile and someone else will instantly know what I mean, it's like knowing, it's just knowing.'

Affirmation also seemed related to being part of something exclusive; something only open to those with the social contacts to be in the know. Phil illustrates how his position as a 'proper' competent clubber is reaffirmed through being invited to dance events that are only open to a select crowd, other practised and in the know clubbers, promoters and DJs.

Phil: 'I went to a little club in Glasgow on Saturday night that was definitely one of the best clubs I've been to for ages. It was quite good in a few important ways. They've just started up and tried to

get a license but got knocked back both times so eventually they got so hacked off with all the wrangling that they're basically doing it illegally. You wouldn't know it was there because they can't advertise, it's just this little doorway and 3 foot from the door you still can't hear the music. You swing open the door and there are a couple of lads inside and you go up and get signed in, 'cos it's kind of meant to be members only 'cos they are just trying to keep it quiet at the moment. So Miz had been before and she sorted us out for getting in and it was for that very reason, because it is just by word of mouth and there is no advertising it isn't full of drunken neds and stuff. It is only for the people that are there because they've almost been invited along somewhere along the line, so everyone respects what they're trying to do and they don't want to ruin it and for that reason it's a really good crowd. The music was good too and that is a good club.'

Below, Cath reflects on a time when clubbing was pivotal in her life, how her clubbing activities provided her with 'an identity'. Strauss suggests that 'gestures of affirmation may be elicited directly or indirectly by trying out appropriate behaviour and thereby receiving approval' (1997: 85). Her status as a practised clubber known on the scene was reaffirmed and reinforced through recognition.

Cath: '...being recognised, being known, I nearly had a heart attack of joy when someone would say to me oh I know you, you're (nickname). Yes I am, hurray! I have an identity, I can take the drugs and dance for 8 hours solidly.'

Affirmation could take place not only during, but also after clubbing events. Malbon notes how 'swapping stories of musical and chemical highs and lows, how the DJ played, who they met, comparison with other nights out and what is next

night out' is all part of the experience (1999: 172). It is after the event that the interpretation of the night takes place. As Sheila explains it is often once you get to the party that 'bonds' are made.

Sheila: 'Some people go to different clubs and then meet up at parties afterwards. But in a club you tend not to sit and have in-depth discussions with people about anything particularly interesting but at a party you do. You sit about with friends and people you don't know and get into good conversations and that's where bonds are made so to speak, I wouldn't say these really happen in the club.'

In the next extract from Ian, one can see the theme of exclusivity arising again. Ian illustrates how, through talking about the night, what you have done and the way you are feeling, clubbers reaffirm a 'sympathetic participation in each others lives' (Schutz, 1970b: 34). Malbon states that, although clubbers have 'unique experiences, it is fun to establish common threads of a night out to prolong the night and defy the advancing morning and with it everyday life' (1999: 170). Ian certainly seems to want to prolong his night out and establish common threads; he also intimates that this process continues after the clubbing experience, he re-lives the good times once he gets home and meanings are attached retrospectively.

Ian: 'You do get to some cracking parties by word of mouth. It's amazing you go to this club you've had a great time, but you can go on to a party after that's even better than the club you're in heaven! Then when you get home you'll sit and go fucking hell I went to that club, went to the party and took all that and I'm monged but what a time I've had! You always think wow! A good party afterwards can be the making of a good club, it was an extra for me not a necessity. House parties can be more pleasing 'cos

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there's no one there that you've not invited but then again going to a party you meet the most insane diverse people.'

Rhoda   'Diverse in what sense?'

Ian: 'Where they come from, what they do, what they look like. It's partly the drugs but you get so involved with these people you can speak to everyone. In the club you're so into dancing you're not really seeing all these people around you. At the after-club party that's where you sit down and talk about the events of the night, what you've done and how you're feeling now. There's always someone there to keep things going until you've got the will power to phone a taxi at 6 on a Sunday.'

Like Malbon I would argue that after parties can represent a transitional stage between the night out and their wider lives (1999: 170). After-club parties featured highly in 'proper' clubbers lives, they were part of a clubbing lifestyle. Access to and participation in private parties were also a marker of not only acceptance but competency. As discussed in chapter seven, status was associated with having a set of decks and hosting house parties. The following quotation from Kirsten illustrates how after parties are a significant form of social interaction that reaffirm not only their clubbing experiences and relationships, but also the gendered dimension of that reaffirmation.

Rhoda: 'Are after parties a big thing?'

Kirsten: 'Very big in my group, they usually go on for a while. We normally go up to someone's flat and then they (boys) go on the decks and play the decks for hours. The girls don't really play the decks at

all I don't know why, it's never been picked up. But generally you just sit about, chat, smoke a lot of hash, come down from the night, talk about it all. Sometimes you feel oh my God I feel as I've been going for days, it's good.'

Some of the 'proper' clubbers preferred and tended to go to parties, be they after-club parties or unlicensed parties/events, rather than going to licensed clubs. As Malbon points out 'it's a scene thing, to be amongst cool people' (1999: 74). This was made possible through being part of the social networks on the scene. As Robbie shows he knew 'DJ mates and DJs'. Private parties appealed because there would be 'mutually sound people' there.

Rhoda: 'Are you into the private party scene?'

Robbie: 'Yeah, much more than clubbing, 'cos then you know who's going to be there, it's not just going to be, it's going to be a select amount of people and it's select and it will be mutually sound people.'

Rhoda: 'How do you get to hear about them?'

Robbie: 'Through the different DJs and through your friends or people will ask your mates to DJ at a certain party 'cos they've been to parties when they've DJed and it's like right well there'll be cool people there etc.'

I would concur with Malbon that 'reflections' are, in part, about a process and a space, within which clubbers not only contrast 'a world of clubbing to a normal, straight world; but also how clubbing contrasts with other facets of the lives' (Malbon, 1999: 170). However, I would argue that it is more than that. By being invited to and participating in after-club parties, clubbers could reaffirm their

competency to one another. Affirmation was also about recognition, as Taylor argues 'our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, and non or misrecognition of others can inflict distortion or damage if society mirrors back to them a 'confining, demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves' (1994: 75). Following this conceptualisation, being recognised, through others mirroring back an open, discerning, competent, legitimate picture of themselves, being a competent clubber could be an affirming positive force in their lives. The positive feelings and associations associated with such seemed to remain for some clubbers, even when they moved on or out of clubland. However, before discussing this more fully I want to draw together the issues of incompetence that have been touched upon throughout this chapter.

'Not quite right'

All the club scenes had their own barriers to inclusion, such as not having the 'right' attitude or embodied appearance, being too intoxicated or aggressive. Clubbers already 'knew' what places they would 'not be seen dead in', where they would not fit in. Those 'other' scenes and the people found in them were disparaged and 'classed' (in both senses of the term): they were places and people without social reciprocity and proximity. Becoming involved learning to belong, to do drugs, to interact and dance, as well as learning about who and what had status in their given club scene.

I have argued that when clubbers got it right, their actions were rewarded through acceptance and affirmation from other clubbers. This process is highlighted through the instances when clubbers could not, or did not, embody the spirit of a

practised competent clubber in a given club scene. We saw how Zoe had made an unsuccessful attempt at fitting in to a club scene that was new to her. She was not familiar with the expected mores and dress codes. It seemed that her being out of place was acknowledged, she was not reassured, welcomed or accepted. It would seem that other clubbers acknowledged Zoe's own sense of being someone who didn't get it or wasn't into it. Her incompetence was recognised by a lack of gesture and a lack of reciprocal acceptance.

However, even the competent practised clubbers had episodic lapses, times when they contravened the expected ways of being. There was evidence of sanctions being imposed on people who were not embodying the spirit of the particular club scene. Overdoing drug consumption was seen as unnecessary and in bad taste, the clubbing experience was meant to be an enjoyable one, drugs were meant to enhance not undermine that experience. We saw that, when practised clubbers took too many substances and then came into a public space, one that was not occupied predominately by 'proper' clubbers, they were reminded of their unbecoming and inappropriate behaviour. There was little evidence of clubbers deliberately resisting these boundaries, quite the reverse, it seemed they actively abided by the expected ways of being. By doing so they were included, recognised and accepted, it was in their interests not to break the rules. It would seem that exclusivity and exclusion work in combination with one another, one cannot be exclusive without being exclusionary. Indeed, being excluded appeared to be the most common sanction imposed on those who broke the rules.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how clubbers became competent and practised they became steeped in a lifestyle of clubbing that involved a great deal of social mingling and extensive communicative contacts. Through being in well-defined situations, clubbers interacted with one another on the basis of reciprocal manners and mores. To flaunt or flout these was considered unbecoming. Being a competent clubber appeared to be very much related to not doing very much in a particular way, a subtle way. There appeared to be a range of knowledges, both between and within scenes, but competent 'proper' clubbers tended to be those who had progressed through the various scenes. Their knowledge had become revised and qualified and, as Strauss argues, this was not just about having more knowledge but also about having their perception transformed (1997: 94).

A clubbing lifestyle was a common situation: it was about recognition. Competent clubbers could recognise one another through reciprocal manners and mores, through their relaxed, understated, subtle yet confident style. Being in this well-defined and common situation, clubbers felt safe, they tended not to be in the company of people who were unlike them, those situations or people tended to be avoided and or (self) excluded. Those 'others' such as the 'randoms' and the 'neds' were disparaged: they were 'classed' as not having social reciprocity and proximity. The notion of 'at home' illustrates the relationship between structural and interactional boundaries: the ways in which we tend to keep our social places through interaction and through the formation of lifestyles. Their lifestyle, belonging and competency was reaffirmed through recognition, reciprocity, positive reinforcement and approval by other competent clubbers: they had a visible, recognisable and legitimate presence. Unbecoming behaviour was clearly illustrated through notions of incompetence. If clubbers contravened the cultural

codes of conduct there was a lack of acceptance and inclusion. Being a competent clubber involved recognition and affirmation – the positive feelings associated with these relations and positions remained with many clubbers even when they moved on and out of clubland.

Chapter Ten   Moving on, moving out

Introduction

In the last three chapters I have discussed the processes of identification and differentiation and becoming a 'proper' competent clubber. This chapter explores how, through narratives of progression, clubbers make changes in their clubbing lifestyles. This involved reduced drug taking, increased investment in work careers, perceptions of ageing, changing expectations and priorities regarding socialising activities, all of which served to facilitate a less intense engagement with a clubbing lifestyle. These socially located practices and attiudinal changes were encased in a narrative of progression. In the second half of the chapter I call on the work of Bourdieu (1984; 1986) and the notion of sociability (Allatt, 1993) to illuminate how participants felt their involvement with clubbing had not only enhanced their social skills but had also provided them with sustainable social and communication skills. There appeared to be a gendered dimension to sociability. Both men and women perceived these skills as positive and enduring, serving to enhance their confidence and aspirations regarding their current and future sociability. Becoming a 'proper' and competent clubber was felt by many participants to have enhanced their confidence and sociability as well as embellished their sense of social identity.

Narratives of progression

Talk about changes in clubbing practices and lifestyles was often encased within narratives of progression; clubbing was something you 'grow out of'. Changes in drug taking practices, an increased commitment to work careers, perceptions of ageing and culturally appropriate socialising, all served to facilitate participants to move on and or out of clubbing. It seemed that some participants were in a process of transition. As Roberts argues, youth transitions can occur at any age, the life stage of youth is inherently transitional (2000). Socialising and clubbing were still considered to be important but clubbing was now more framed in terms of responsibility, maturity and constraint.

The first section discusses how those who had been using drugs began to do so in a more controlled manner: this was seen as part of the maturing process. Second, I explore how an increased responsibility and commitment to work and/or future career impacted on clubbers' perceived ability to maintain a clubbing lifestyle with the same intensity. Perceptions of age and appropriate behaviour also emerged. It seemed that it was not work, age and changing social priorities *per se* that served to change participants clubbing practices. The perceived appropriateness of continued cultural involvement also seemed to impact on the intensity and extent of clubbing lifestyles. In the last section I discuss how becoming a 'proper' clubber seemed to enhance participants' social skills, skills of sociability that were thought to be transferable and sustainable beyond an identification with and engagement in a clubbing lifestyle.

'What goes up must come down': increasing control over drug use

In line with Henderson I found that, for many participants, the attraction of clubbing outlasted the attraction of drug use (1993a: 36). Refining and reducing one's drug taking behaviour seemed to be an extension of being a competent clubber.

The following quotation from Stewart shows how, over time, the meanings he attached to his drug use have changed. Although drugs had been an integral part of becoming a 'proper' clubber, particularly initially, in later years most clubbers seemed to have reduced their drug taking considerably. Stewart could demonstrate his cultural affiliation in a host of other ways. Using drugs had become less meaningful and important, it had become subject to more control and restraint. Thomson et al., have argued that the notion of maturity often entails notions of control (2001:146). And indeed we can see this in the extract from Stewart. Now, rather than using ecstasy, he prefers to draw on the atmosphere and energy created by those around him, as well as his knowledge and appreciation of the music. He demonstrates how his stocks of knowledge – his past clubbing experiences – impact on current experiences and practices. He would seem to be more in control of his euphoric state.

Stewart: 'Over the years it's become not about drugs, whereas drugs may first open your eyes to the possibilities that are there, I think the drugs may be part of the learning process. But you don't have to be out of your nut to enjoy the music, in fact you remember the music better if you're reasonably straight. I'm no saying I'm a train spotter, in fact that's wankerish, but you do remember it better, feeling of enjoying it and you've got more control. You can get that light feeling, not all the time, but if it's a brilliant record you do get that. People getting excited all around you, jumping about on tables and smiling. You don't go to the pub and get that it's

almost like winning the football league every week. You get that euphoria. You can get that every 2 weeks if you go to the right club and atmosphere and that's the kind of euphoria you get and you don't get it anywhere else. I wouldn't swap it for anything at all.'

Many of the participants who used ecstasy and identified as 'proper' clubbers increasingly began to acknowledge that much of the friendliness and ecstatic feelings they had felt, were more related to the effects of ecstasy than they had thought earlier in the process of becoming a 'proper' clubber. Having 'been there, done that' many participants acknowledged that they too had gone through a stage when drugs had 'taken over', but they were now beyond it, they had matured and moved on in this respect. There was an increasing sense of it being unacceptable to be out of control. Participants seemed less willing to indulge in the effects of ecstasy, such as the spontaneous friendliness and empathy that it often tended to stimulate in them. As seen in chapter nine, overdoing the drugs was seen to be in bad taste and unnecessary. It seems that they were beginning to disassociate with the practices of the 'young' (Roberts, 1997: 11), or those not progressing in an apt and competent manner.

Two participants had got into significant emotional and physical difficulties, which appeared very much linked to excessive and prolonged drug taking. After a break from both drugs and clubbing for three years, one had began to go clubbing occasionally once more, this time without taking drugs. The other stopped clubbing but occasionally used ecstasy. All participants and their social networks seemed to monitor the frequency, amount and the context within which they and their friends used drugs. Drug use was subject to informal policing mechanisms

(Henderson, 1993a: 38). The social expectations operating with 'proper' clubbing networks indicated that the more experienced and more mature you became, the more controlled you became in your drug use.

The following extract from Stewart illustrates the increasing disassociation from those younger than himself. It seems that he perceives the behaviour of the young to be gauche. He tries not to be dismissive and derogatory, as he too has behaved in this manner. But he is now not only a competent clubber, one who has learnt to manage these experiences, but he is also someone who is growing up, maturing and moving on, and as such is someone who can demonstrate restraint.

Stewart: 'What did get a bit much was about 3 years later little idiots coming up like that (arms open going to embrace) alright mate! And you're going aw fuck off! Just like go away. And they're like this is my first E and this is fucking amazing and you're going oh yeah very pleasant for you, you just feel a bit then (moves hands from side to side, dodgy impression) then you catch yourself going, aw I'm a bit of a tit'.

Having learnt to do drugs, having learnt to manage the effects of them, there is now less desire or need to continue using them in the same 'young' fashion. Reduction in drug use was a perceived marker of progression, a sign of maturity with it's accompanying degree of control and responsibility.

'Once you get a job': investment in work careers

Henderson noted that 'changing occupations, a shift in valuing other dimensions of life and making new friends' modified the drug use amongst the women of her study, these changes were described as a 'natural progression' (1993a: 37). Reduction in drug taking and increased value attached to work careers both served to reduce engagement with a clubbing lifestyle.

Most of the participants in this study had at some point gone to college or university. Many drew attention to the changes that moving from education to full time employment had had on the manner and frequency of their clubbing. This, it seems, was a period of transition from the world of student life to the world of adult employment. We see in Mick's extract how he now felt a need to be more sensible and responsible. It appeared that the economic and social value he attached to work facilitated a change in his clubbing practices, rather than just having a job. He associates university with less responsibility than work. Further, work requires regular and punctual attendance. University, it seems, made fewer demands on his time and energy.

Mick: 'At uni you had less responsibility, you could just say oh sod it. And you'd just go to parties afterwards and it didn't matter 'cos you knew even if it was a Sunday you could sleep the next day. But once you get a job you have to be slightly more sensible. You got to make it in for work.'

In the next extract from Matthew we can see how social expectations and cultural knowledge facilitate him to move on and adapt his social life. He 'knows' that for someone like him, it is acceptable at seventeen to do 'whatever' but by twenty four he also 'knew' that he had to get a job and work hard in order to afford to go out.

Being a student was often synonymous with being young and having little responsibility. It was 'common knowledge' that once you have been through that process, it is expected and appropriate that you move on, you cultivate a work career and make efforts to become responsible and financially independent (Schutz and Luckmann, 1974: 66). Matthew highlights these social expectations, he 'knows' what is expected of him, as he says its part of the maturing and growing up process.

Matthew: 'It's to do with age like 'cos when you're 17 you think you can do whatever but when you get to 24 you know you have to get a job and work hard so you can go out at the weekends. I've seen so many people lose their jobs and stuff over just going for it every week and I've been there and done that and I'm not saying that. But I've never ever been unemployed and I think you can get caught up a wee bit, especially the first few time you take E you think right I can take it Friday night, Saturday night, can take it on a Tuesday. And I think you've got to be aware of that but that's part of maturing and growing up.'

For many, clubbing had been part of their daily lives whilst at university. Taking on a job that was valued and/or demanding of one's energy and/or time, impacted significantly on participants' drug taking and clubbing. Once working, clubbing became associated with being an escape from the mundaneity of daily working life. It tended to be thought of as a weekend thing, something that should not and could not be done on a more frequent basis. There was recognition that it would no longer be appropriate or sensible to maintain such an intense and energy consuming social life.

An increasing sense of responsibility and maturation is very apparent in the next extract. Katie articulates her increasing emotional investment in, and commitment to, her work. It seems that her increasing commitment to her job caused her to reduce her nights out clubbing and, in particular, after-club parties. She wanted to be seen by her new boss as a conscientious worker. She did not want to miss any opportunity to enhance her career prospects, particularly now she had a manager whom she respected. Nevertheless Katie had been clubbing 3 times in the last fortnight.

Katie: 'I'm much quieter, I mean I'll still go out clubbing but I won't go to the parties afterwards, I'll go home to my bed. And I won't take as many drugs as they (friends) take on a Friday and Saturday night because I have to work the next day. Generally I don't get the weekends off. It's only been in the last 6 months I've been a bit more conscientious with my job. I've got a new manager who I don't want to see me like that (after effects of all night drug taking), 'cos I respect her and want to do a good job. I've got to an age where I shower everyday, wash my clothes regularly, change my knickers and brush my teeth twice a day. I hold down quite a responsible job and I don't want to ruin it all.'

Many participants talked about how it was easy to club wherever and whenever when you had no mortgage, no children and only yourself to worry about. For those who had had these responsibilities through much of their involvement with clubbing, they had always had to fit clubbing in and around the other dependants and demands in their life. There were two women that I interviewed in this situation. As Jackie explains her work had to take priority because of material need. She did not live in an area with many 'clubby' clubs; she and her mates had

to rely on public transport to get to many of their preferred clubs. It was both financial necessity and her increasing commitment to work that impacted most on her ability to go out clubbing as often as she would have liked.

Jackie: 'A lot of the problem for me was I used to work over the weekend and the kind of job I had it would have been impossible to go clubbing and then go in the next day so I ended up going less and less. I missed a shift a couple of times and I'd worked so hard for the job I thought well I can't do it all and I need the money. If I'm going to do anything I need the money, I need the job so something had to give so I sort of went less and less so now it's mainly local. But hopefully next month I pass my driving test, pick up a banger and that will be me back on the road again.'

Thornton argues that 'young people, irrespective of class, often refuse the responsibilities and identities of the work world, choosing to invest their attention, time and money in leisure' (1997a: 206). However, several of the participants had many of the trappings commonly associated with adulthood. They were for the most part single professionals, geographically mobile, university educated and relatively affluent people. Most pursued a work career, which was seen as part of a natural progression. I would argue that it was not that they 'refused' the responsibilities and identities of the work world, rather that they had little need or desire to prioritise the world of work until they felt a social expectation and or material necessity to do so.

As participants moved into the world of work, notions of ageing became more apparent. In the next section I explore how the structural, physical and perceptual

aspects of ageing influenced what leisure and social activities were deemed socially suitable and acceptable.

'It's harder to fit in the older you get': ageing and participation

As the quote in the above title suggests, notions of ageing were apparent in participants' narratives of progression. The quotation illustrates how the social construction of age influences the perceived appropriateness of remaining engaged with a 'youth' culture once you are no longer perceived by yourself and or others to be in that category. As we have already seen, there was data to support the idea that participants had begun to disassociate themselves from those younger in years, or manner, than themselves. It seems that participants began to feel pressurised to 'act their age' (Roberts, 1997: 11).

As discussed in chapter seven, participants constructed 'typical' club scenes. The cheese, chart and party scenes were perceived to be 'young' scenes, whilst the 'proper' club scenes were considered to be more mature and more for the informed, discerning crowd. It was not only the scenes that were deemed young or mature, the music was also thought of and typified in this way. Many participants equated being young with being trendy and preferring cheesy music. As you became more experienced and competent, there was evidence of participants moving to club scenes which provided a more relaxed, 'cool' environment. Frenetic and excessive drinking and taking too many drugs, as well as loud or brash behaviour, became less acceptable as you progressed through the club scenes and became more competent and mature. Progression implied

maturity, and was synonymous with being discerning and having more control over the self.

It seemed that the 'young' scenes were predominately occupied by those under 25 years. Participants appeared to make, and felt obliged to change their clubbing lifestyle to accommodate the increasing commitment of independent living. Roberts points out that as youth transitions have lengthened, what were teenage youth cultures may now be absorbed into larger young singles scenes (2000: 7). When 25 years of age, Susan began to feel older than others She began to feel out of place, she was troubled by the thought of having to stop participating in something she loved doing. Susan articulates well the social embarrassment she felt about participating in activities that were deemed to be primarily for the young, going out 'on the pull' it seems was the preserve of the 'young'. Susan sees little point in going out on the cheese, chart and party scene, once you've met a potential husband. Through meeting a woman older than herself and getting introduced into a different club scene, one not focused on finding a sexual partner, Susan no longer felt out of place. It seems 'proper' clubbing, with its focus on music and dancing, is a social arena where the presence of young adults is more acceptable and legitimate for longer. That is, it seems to be a social arena where those in their twenties and thirties can continue clubbing safe in the knowledge that they are with people like themselves. Susan has a shared sensibility with, access and affiliation to and reciprocal recognition of belonging to a social network, one that encompasses and accepts a wider age range. She may have increasing adult commitments, but equally, she creates space in her life for a 'taste of liberty' (Bourdieu, 1985: 55-56).

Susan: 'I was starting to be one of the older people at clubs and I was 25. I was like what's happening? I've loved clubbing all my life, is there a date when I'm going to feel too embarrassed to go? The woman that I met at Greenpark was 35 and it was just like, wow you have given me another 10 years! I met people, I guess you can distinguish them because they're not like 'I have to go to discos or clubs till I meet my husband then I have a white picket fence and babies' and stuff because I can't see why else you stop going. For me one of the most liberating things was coming to Glasgow and meeting older women who were still at it and have it as part of their lifestyle. I mean they might not go clubbing so much because of work commitments, or you don't have the energy and need to give your body a bit of a rest.'

This quote illustrates how the structured, physical and attitudinal aspects of ageing impact on participants' ability to maintain an intense involvement with a clubbing lifestyle. Pini explores ageing femininity and argues that 'female corporeality is experienced in terms of culturally specific discourse about 'ageing' femininity' (1997a: 116). Both the men and the women talked about feeling too old for certain clubbing scenes and practices. However, some women talked specifically about ageing in a physical sense. Susan recognises the importance of physical image, particularly now she does not perceive herself to be 'young and slim' anymore. She implies that there are limitations of ageing femininity. I agree with Pini when she argues that there is a conflict between ageing and clubbing (1997a: 151).

Susan: 'Most women I know who go clubbing are quite slim, I'm probably the porkiest amongst us (laughs). But that would be the only thing to stop me eating was if I had to give up my clubbing (laughs). I love it. I hope it goes on forever. Someone was telling me I'm on the tail end of generation X, they wanted it all, wanted to be

liberated but only if you were young and beautiful. I don't know if the next generation underneath are going to be like, if they are going to be more open to letting be at it. Even if they don't define it as youth anymore but just as normal behaviour.'

Many participants were keen to stress that club culture was welcoming of people of all ages. But, as with 'anyone and everyone' in chapter seven, this had localised applicability (Cuff, et. al., 1998: 54). Although it was common to see people in their thirties, those in their forties tended to attract attention, they were unusual. There seemed to be a sense of bemusement attached to seeing 'old' clubbers. As Barry relates, he finds it surprising that 'old' people would still want to engage with clubbing, a site of youth.

Barry: 'Age, I don't know I started quite young for the kinds of place I was going but you're always quite surprised when you see an old wrinkly there, you're like oh! Wow! But then it's like that's cool, I always go up and talk to them and say I don't mean to be rude but why? What attracted you here 'cos I can't imagine you being here.'

There was evidence that some participants found 'old' people clubbing quite comical. Comical because they were seen as trying to hang on to their past or lost youth and they looked physically out of place. Others were more accommodating and seemed to afford some 'respect' for the older clubbers, those who were still be able to demonstrate their enjoyment. Clubbing and ageing seemed to be far less in conflict if the person was making a living and/or career out of their DJing or promotion skills. But as Pini argues, for all but a few clubbers, even within a

mature club scene there will come a point when the generosity of 'good on you' eventually runs out (1997a: 150).

'You always want a good social life': sustaining sociability

Clubbing remained a very important site of cultural activity and affiliation, although for many it seemed that the intensity of that identification and engagement began to lessen. As Sam explains, she now saw clubbing more for what it was, a night out. It was one site of sociability amongst others.

Sam: 'You realise that you know everybody being so nice, so friendly, so positive and warm, you realise it's just a drug and it's not real, it fades, it wears out and it's not there in the morning. And it's not going to feed into real life and it's not going to change the world, you know. So I think after a while you see it more for what it is. You see it for just the night in itself and just more like you would see any night, going out drinking, chatting or whatever, an opportunity to relax, have a dance and a chat to your pals. But you, well I don't think it's the be all and end all anymore.'

For three women in the study, being parents impacted on their ability to maintain a clubbing lifestyle. In the early years of their children's life their nights out clubbing had been constrained considerably. All had maintained an interest in clubbing and all had 'got back into it'. One year after the interview, Sam reported being back into clubbing more than ever, in different places but with the same crowd.

Participants voiced a desire to maintain an active, enjoyable and busy social life, other social activities began to take higher priority and clubbing moved from being

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a core feature of every weekend to being more of an event. Often this meant that participants restricted their clubbing to niche 'word of mouth' events organised by people they knew, or they went out to a particular club night, in a particular club they already knew, and were known in, every month or two. Developing other social interests and hobbies, eating in and out or meeting up with friends for a drink and a trip to the cinema, began to feature more often in participants' social calendar. As Katie's extract shows, there comes a 'stage' when there is an expectation, a desire, to socialise in a manner associated more with adulthood than youth.

Katie   'I think I'm reaching the stage where I would like to go out with someone to dinner (laughs). I'm getting terribly old.'

Social networks and relationships also ebbed and flowed. 'Close' friends appear to be indicative of stability within clubbers' social lives and networks, whilst 'clubbing only' mates appear to be indicative of the transitory aspect of clubbing social networks and many of the club scenes. Most participants differentiated between clubbing-only mates and close friends. Despite having developed bonds, a sense of reciprocal identification and acceptance of one another, many were considered to be ephemeral friends. Those bonds were considered to be solely centred on their mutual passion for clubbing, and to that time and place. Barry draws attention to the ebb and flow in his clubbing social networks and how these types of relationships were differentiated from school friends, flatmates, and friends with whom they participated in other social activities with as well as went clubbing with. These latter friendship groups were considered to be close friends and tended to remain part of the participants' social networks.

Barry: 'It seemed to vary every year I was at uni it was a different sort of crowd. There was a core, maybe 3 of us and people would drop out and more people would join us. It would build to about 10 people going out and then they'd drop out and go their own way. My best friends I didn't meet when I was clubbing but they would come clubbing with me. I would only say 2 close friendships that are still lasting that I formed in clubs. But you become really close to people for about a year and then they depart so they're not like childhood friends or the kind of friends you live with and spend everyday with and see the bad times with. You're only spending the good times with them and I think that's what it is. They see you when you're at your best or your most sociable.'

It seemed that clubbing-only mates had an at least temporary 'we-relationship', that is a sympathetic participation in each other's lives (Schutz, 1970b: 33-34). Whereas those friends they went clubbing with and interacted with in other social settings and capacities provided more stable 'we-relationships'. In brief summation, Roberts points out that 'leisure activities are transient and unstable'; moving on involved 'growing up and establishing adult identities'; it was about progression (1997: 11). Progression seemed related to gaining more control over the self, most clearly seen in relation to drug use, to investing in and taking responsibility for one's work career, and to perceptions of age, appropriate behaviour and the ensuing change in socialising activities. Simultaneously, some participants continued to identify as clubbers, they knew the 'spirit': many of them still socialised with other clubbers, and maintained an interest in clubbing and knowledge about the music. Some occasionally or cyclically 'got back into it'. It seemed that establishing adult identities was being simultaneously recognised and affirmed, alongside the social approval to continue participating in certain forms of

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clubbing. They expected and 'knew' that clubbing would become a less important and or appropriate leisure pastime to engage in.

Enhanced sociability

An identification in, and engagement with, a 'proper' clubbing lifestyle seems to have furnished some participants with increased self-confidence and skills of sociability that were perceived to have enhanced their sense of social identity.

In a sense, enhanced sociability was a residual effect of becoming a 'proper' and competent clubber. This section explores how most clubbers felt more positive and confident about themselves through their identification with, and engagement in, clubbing. They felt that their social and communication skills had been enhanced considerably. As we saw in chapter eight, being sociable, socially and communicatively competent, was a valued feature of being a clubber. In this section I draw on Bourdieu's concepts of social capital and embodied cultural capital to illuminate how clubbers recognised, developed and utilised their adept social skills to develop and maintain social networks (1984; 1986). Capitals are material, interactional and cultural resources employed in status differentiation processes; they are resources that have traditionally been associated with class analysis. Social capital consists of networks and connections, contacts and group memberships, which, through the accumulations of exchanges, obligations and shared identities, provide actual or potential support and access to valued resources (Bourdieu, 1993: 143). These networks initially help develop, but are then eventually sustained by, the skill and effort of sociability. This is done through a continuous series of exchanges in which recognition is endlessly affirmed

(Bourdieu, 1984: 250). Bourdieu also talks of another form of capital, embodied cultural capital, which can be a particular style of dress, mode of presentation, form of social etiquette and competence, as well as a degree of confidence and self-assurance (1984). It would appear that many of the clubbers in this study were developing and maintaining their social and embodied cultural capital through their proficient sociability.

As Ian explains, some clubbing arenas could provide a forum to become part of a 'wee group network'. He implies that feeling part of something can facilitate some people to feel less self conscious and more confident about themselves. Being part of, and accepted in, a social network was seen as a constructive way of developing social competence.

Ian: 'I think people that went into it that weren't very open, not confident in themselves, clubbing would give you the ability to be more free about yourself and probably not bother as much. I can imagine people going and gaining a bit of confidence and gaining a wee group network of these are my friends and being part of something that's happening and although it only happens on the weekends so what? You work through the week and you're part of something at the weekend and I think it's probably quite constructive for some people.'

David elaborates on how feeling similar to others makes him feel not alone and more comfortable with himself. He feels more confident about engaging with and participating in social interaction of various kinds. This confidence extends to social interaction and relations outside of clubbing arenas.

David: 'Certainly towards people. One of the main things about the whole clubbing thing is that, well there are people out there who do feel the same way which in itself makes you feel more comfortable, like you're not alone I suppose. But the way you interact with people as well. Like if someone had phoned me up before I started and said do you want to come and do this thing? (interview) I'd have been eh, I don't know, eh what's it all about?'

For Barry, involvement with and identification in a 'proper' club scene appeared to influence his sense of self-identity. He reflects on how he feels that being in an environment which encourages social interaction has improved his social skills. He feels more able to talk with 'anyone', he appears to be more confident within himself, has developed his sociability and, as such, feels he has developed his sense of self.

Barry: 'I don't think it really improved my social circle, it definitely improved my social skills in that I can go up to people and talk to them with no problem and that definitely stems from (clubbing). It's an environment where it's encouraged that you go and speak to anyone, so my social skills have definitely developed a lot. My sense of my self as a person so it's more of a personal development for me. Just far more sociable, you can talk to anyone and I think it's probably helped me develop the personality that I have now. Definitely a lot louder and a lot more outgoing. A lot more confidence in myself.'

As already discussed, notions of ageing were apparent in participants' narratives of progression. A sense of accomplishment seemed to be derived from growing up in an accelerated fashion, and developing his sense of identity. Stewart reflects

on how this intense period of socialising and social networking has made him feel more complete and mature.

Stewart: 'People go along and enjoy themselves but part of the reason for growing out of it is possibly because that you feel quite accomplished in the fact that you've done more growing up in the years that you've been going than you did in the ten years before. Feel a much more complete person and I don't think there's any doubt about that.'

Heath and Kenyon argue that young single adults, rather than being socially isolated, tend to foster a wide range of complex social networks, in which they embrace intimate, platonic and non-platonic relationships (2001: 84). Participants of this study, like Heath and Kenyon's, seemed to attach great value to being sociable and maintaining social networks. This seemed related to developing their own sense of self, a public and private identity of being a sociable person. Their sociability also appeared to be about maintaining friendships and networks. It may have been that they realised the importance of learning the skills of exchange (sociability) which sustain these relationships, and also the skills which enable them to create social and cultural capital of their own (Allatt, 1993:154). Certainly Katie rates sociability very highly, she implies that it is important to 'be seen', to be visible in particular social settings. It would seem that this is not only important to her for personal reasons, such as her own self-esteem, but also for more public reasons, such as being known and recognised as a competent, visible social actor.

Katie: 'Well for me anyway as my work takes over more and more of my time I need to prove to myself that I have a life. I'm out clubbing and dancing and meeting people and I'm seen to do that which is

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important for my self-esteem. It's important to maintain my friendships and participate in the social activity of going out. Probably my clubbing succeeds where a lot of other things I would like to do fail. Like sometimes I think oh I should go to an Art Gallery or should do that but I don't get up in time because I've been out the night before (laughs).'

Sues' sociability manifested itself in a slightly different way. She needed to be a very adept social networker in order to promote and organise parties. She had, over time, developed the acquired skills and disposition to put on a 'good night'. Her efforts were rewarded by the positive feedback she received from the crowd. It was important to her to get everyone in 'sequence', to accumulate reciprocal exchanges of sociability, this way everyone was happy and her efforts were affirmed.

Sue: 'When the nights go really well and people are cheering and clapping going more! More! One more tune! That thing where people are really happy and they go away on a pure buzz and a high and you get the feedback. The dance floor packed, really hot and everyone with big smiles and the music sounded great and everybody's dancing in rhythm. People don't realise they're doing it but they are all dancing together. I just find it dead exciting and it's like it's all kind of sequenced in a way, it's a sequence of events that goes all in together and gathers in to a big fucking bomb and people love it and I love it. Just putting on a good night making people feel happy, that's always been my motivation, making people feel as if they've left their worries behind for that night.'

It seemed that Barry, who was 22 years of age, found that socialising with people who were still active socialisers and clubbers, inspired him to think that he too could sustain a sociable and fun style of life, into his thirties and beyond. It seems these social networks have influenced his aspirations in life, in the sense that he now feels that he will have more potential lifestyle options available to him.

Barry: 'I think definitely I'm the person I am now because of that experience. I'm more rounded, more hedonistic, more intent on actually enjoying my life and not worrying about small things. I think that definitely stems from hedonism, fun and just meeting all sorts of people, meeting people older than me and knowing that I could still have loads of fun at whatever age. Your role models were teachers at school and stuff and you just looked at them and thought oh no! When I'm 35 do I have to do that? Do I have to wear a suit and drive a brown car? It made me realise that there is so much more out there.'

Participation in and identification with a clubbing lifestyle seemed to have embellished many participants' social identities. They identified with and were identified as 'proper' competent clubbers and adept socialisers. It did seem that high levels of participation in leisure, particularly leisure that brought individuals into contact with their peers, positively enhanced their self-confidence and self-image (Bynner and Ashford, 1992). This enhanced confidence and self image was also gendered in character. These processes were more apparent in those men and women who were now moving on and out of clubbing, those who had had an opportunity to reflect on how and in what ways clubbing had influenced their sense of gendered identity.

Gendered sociability

This section explores the gendered manner in which embodied cultural capital manifested itself in the data. Some of the male clubbers talked about how they felt more comfortable in a 'proper' clubbing arena. These few men felt that the interactions, relationships and feelings that clubbing engendered in them, had influenced they way they interacted with other people in the course of their daily lives. Broadly, this was about a general sense of well being and increased confidence, but more specifically it seemed to enhance their sense of gendered identity. Stewart, who originally came from a socially and economically diverse 'new' town, talked at length about how he had found the 'proper' club scene to be a social arena in which he felt relaxed and 'not out of place'. It seemed that being willing and able to engage in a range of conversational topics and not just those most often associated with men, such as football, gave him increased confidence about his conversational repertoire and enabled him to feel more valued as a person. In addition, he felt this 'opening up' process, as he and many others called it, had facilitated him to be more aspiring in regards to his future way of life and career.

Stewart: 'I suppose I find a lot more confidence with my own intelligence. I found an area where something like that was valued, your social skills or your ability to hold a conversation beyond football was valued all of a sudden where it hadn't been before. That was a big thing, a big eye-opener for me. I know you're just talking shite but it's not shite about football. And it's not shite about 'new town' or about what you're wearing, it's about other things, your mind is opened up, you've been dancing for 4 hours, you're relaxed, you're calm, you begin to talk about all sorts of things that you

never thought you would have. It helped me tremendously, I don't think if I hadn't been going to those clubs, well it's a ridiculous thing to say and maybe you shouldn't think you're a product of everything you've ever done, but I know that I feel that if I hadn't been going to clubs and taking drugs I would have never have explored the possibility of,... I know I'm working in IT at the moment but it's a means to an end, but I've got dreams and goals that I would never have had if I'd never encountered that. I would have never had those possibilities opened up to me, I think my behaviour is considered eccentric by the people that I know who are still living in 'new town.'

It seems that Stewart's identification with the processes and practices of the 'proper' club scene set him apart from his 'new town' pals. His lack of affinity with socialising in an environment where drinking and fighting were common social activities for men to participate in is consolidated through his involvement with a 'proper' clubbing lifestyle. He draws attention to his complete lack of affiliation with physical aggression and violence.

Stewart: 'You don't feel like a numpty. You don't feel out of place for not wanting to fight or turning your back or say look that's a new shirt I don't want blood on it or I'd rather finish my pint. I don't want to get thrown out, I'm not interested in hitting another human being. There's a bizarre one, I don't care if I can punch him or knock him out, it's not an issue, different way of life, different way of enjoying yourself but counter-cultural compared to the culture you're brought up in.'

Stewart elaborates on the impact he feels clubbing has had on his presentation of self, in particular the perceived effects it has had on his sense of masculinity. In

his home environment, men did not embody certain postures or engage in tactile affection. This is in contrast to the 'proper' clubbing scene Stewart became involved in. Being able to experiment with and adopt new ways of presenting the embodied self, it seems, has allowed Stewart to feel more complete. It seems to have added 'fine detail' to his masculine identity (Roberts, 1997: 1).

Stewart: 'The whole thing has made me a much more tactile person. I think if it hadn't been for that I wouldn't have hugged anyone in my life. It was never big in my family, can only kiss in my family if it's Christmas. I would have never have done it before. Shaking hands was woah! Never crossed my legs till I was 21 things like that you'd have never have done, you just dinnae do all that carry on, but it makes no difference. The tactile side of it is something I'm totally delighted about. I don't know where I'd have got it from if I hadn't got it from there (clubbing).'

Barry, on the other hand, is less sure whether tactility and affection such as this can be expressed outside the club. He also considers how socialising in an environment which is predominately or partially occupied by gay men can influence the way in which some heterosexual men regard (homo) sexuality.

Barry: 'My brother and his mates go out clubbing they're all hugging and smiling. Definitely breaks down barriers but still confined to the club they don't take it out of the club really although they are more tactile. But some people do take that acceptance out of the club well I know I have. I'm more tolerant because you're exposed to it and once you've been exposed to it you kind of realise that there is nothing abnormal, strange or scary about it in anyway, not phased by it.'

The association between man to man tactility and homosexuality is made clear in the extract from Kirsten. She points out that cuddling by her male clubbing friends attracts attention from some of their other male friends. There is a difference between 'accepting' homosexual men and being thought of as gay. Acceptance of gay men seems very conditional. It's acceptable as long as, first, there is both social and physical distance, and second, being in the same environment as gay men does not imply that they too are homosexual. There also seems to be an issue of territorial space, these clubs it seems are not predominately occupied by gay men, it would seem therefore that it is primarily heterosexual space (Skeggs, 1999b). Kirsten acknowledges that despite socialising in mixed sexuality environments, her male friends still hold derogatory and homophobic views about gay men.

Kirsten: 'A lot of the guys in our group are touchy feely but not in a homosexual way, you know what I mean? They give each other big cuddles, it doesn't bother them at all. But then other boys sit and wonder what are they all about and think it's a little bit too close. But we don't notice it now, it's just nice 'cos you do get loads of cuddles and everyone is really affectionate all the time. Gay people are accepted in that as long as it doesn't come anywhere near me sort of thing. If somebody was approached by a gay person in a club, it would be an issue. They probably won't be happy about it. I think a lot of boys are frightened that it will take their masculinity away if somebody hits on them and they're a boy as well. I think it will still be a bit scary or intimidating to be hit on by somebody like that. But it is accepted, it's not like it's they shouldn't be here because they are like that. My flatmate can be quite funny about gays but then a lot of boys can. They will go a bit over the top sometimes, sing songs but it's not meant at anybody in particular or meant in a malicious way it's just gays in

general, poofs whatever. They don't want anything to do with them, I think they're more scared of them than anything else. I can imagine if they were approached by a gay person it would be more threatening than anything else. I'd pay money to see that.'

As found by Henderson, some men seemed afraid of being labelled gay despite being more 'open', non-predatory and openly physical with one another (1993a: 51). My data seems to support, at least in part, Pini's suggestion that 'men can simultaneously engage themselves with practices traditionally associated with femininity and maintain their masculinity intact' (1997a: 98). However, my data also suggests that engagement and identification with 'proper' clubbing practices seemed to dislodge certain associations of masculinity for some male clubbers. My data further suggests that, to 'an extent, rave can be seen to have provided a space within which masculinity can momentarily absorb or lose itself within the realm of the feminine' (Pini, 1997a: 97). In other words, for some heterosexual men, the impact of 'proper' clubbing, and all its associated processes and practices, did seem to facilitate a few men to acquire and express other ways of embodying their masculinity. It seemed also to have influenced some heterosexual men's views and attitudes towards homosexuality, making them more understanding about, accommodating with, and less threatened by, gay men. Whilst for other men it seemed that although they were more comfortable with same sex tactility, the meanings they attached to masculinity and heterosexuality remained intact.

As well as some women associating 'proper' clubbing with a sense of social independence, a few talked specifically about having an increased sense of their own physicality. As discussed in chapter seven, many of the female clubbers who

clubbed in 'proper' clubbing environments talked of feeling less inhibited about the way they danced and the way in which they presented themselves. This was attributed to the focus of the evening being on the music and dancing rather than being on finding a sexual partner. As can be seen in Alison's extract, this lack of inhibition allowed her to 'get really into it' and not really 'worry'. Being able to 'get really into it' facilitated a sense of exhilaration and release it seemed to allow her to have a greater sense of her own embodiment and physicality on the dance floor.

Alison: 'I would probably have less qualms dancing with a guy in a clubby type club or a gay club 'cos I wouldn't necessarily feel that that was the agenda. Maybe that's me being naive but you just don't get the same agenda. I would probably be a bit more inhibited when dancing in the sort of cheesier clubs whereas in other clubs I would probably go for it a lot more and not really worry. It is a release when you get into dancing you like, well not that I'm particularly good at it but whether you are taking drugs or not 'cos if you are really into the music and you get really into it it's like you can almost get, without drugs even a sense of exhilaration, it's like a release. I think I suppose like I said before it's total escapism, you can get just totally into yourself.'

This sense of physical release was echoed by a few women who participated in the 'proper' club scene. These women felt that in 'proper' clubbing environments they were under less scrutiny from others but particularly, the male gaze. Here was a social space where they could get on with the business of pleasure, get a buzz from the combination of the music and the dancing and the sense of release it engendered in them. A small number of women talked about how dancing energetically for hours was a welcome physical exertion. It was equated with the buzz that a physical workout can have on the body and mind. Henderson too

mentioned the issue of physicality, with one of her respondents stating that it was her 'favourite form of exercise' (1993a: 35). In the next extract, Cath reflects on the physical buzz that dancing 'hard' for hours gave her. She perceives it as giving her a sense of physical power – how she could be as 'powerful and as physical as men' on the dance floor. She attributes this to an ability and 'freedom' to express herself separately from men.

Cath: 'But that feeling, that sense of physicality is still with me. The sense of the power you can get through your own physicality and that buzz that you get from being physical is still there. That kind of really bad appreciation of hardness, I can dance for 8 hours because I'm harder. Then I went through a phase of I can drink 10 pints because I'm hard and all of that. But I also think that's to do with feminism and after the 70's and women's movement and all that and some women began to think well we can just be as powerful as men, just as hard and just as physical as men. Have just as strong sense of physical power as men have and that's what that clubbing feeling gave me, was that sense of physical power that I hadn't had before. I think there are huge gender issues in clubbing to do with sort of a freedom for women to express themselves physically, separately from men.'

Certainly many of the women found 'enjoyment of their own sexual presentation' (Pini, 1997a: 42). They also seemed to find confidence through an increased awareness and appreciation of their own sense of physicality. This it seems allowed them to feel 'free', get a 'buzz' and enjoy getting into, and out of themselves. Unlike Pini I found no evidence of what she argues to be one aspect of clubbing femininity, that is 'an appreciation of other women's bodies and their movements' (1997a: 42). The women who could gain access and participate

competently in 'proper' club scenes delighted in finding a social arena whereby they could feel under little or no sexual pressure. These interactions and ways of being seems to have generated a sense of escaping the trials and tribulations of daily life, a sense of exhilaration in being able to 'dance their socks off without worry' and enjoyment from the 'sensations of mind, body and soul' (Henderson, 1993a: 48). It seemed that in 'proper' club scenes women enjoyed the sensations of being confident, competent and self assured.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the processes and practices that serve to facilitate a move away from clubbing lifestyles. Participants framed this moving on process within a narrative of progression. This was marked by increasing control over drug use, an increasing investment in work careers, perceptions of ageing and what were deemed more appropriate socialising activities for someone in their social position. The data illustrated the relationship between the structural, physical and interactional aspects of transitions: in particular from university to employment, that impacted on participants social expectations to work more and club less. Clubbing shifted from being a core aspect of their lifestyle to just being part of it. Many continued to maintain a strong interest in music, strong ties between close clubbing friends and still identified as having been or being a clubber. My data suggests that high levels of peer orientated leisure participation can enhance self-confidence and self image (Bynner and Ashford 1992). Sociability also took on a gendered dimension. Some men found that their identification with and involvement in 'proper' clubbing allowed them space to embrace other dimensions of a gendered identity. As Stewart put it

Stewart: 'Guys are perennially under more and more pressure to be less of

a dick, and more so in a club environment where you are

expected to behave reasonably, which I'm all for. That means not

harassing anyone irrespective of gender, no fighting, no stealing

drinks, not being an arse, not being leery. I think there's more

pressure for that.'

Some women found that, as well as an increased general sense of social

independence, they relished their experiences of feeling confident, competent and

self-assured. Many participants had been engaged with club culture in various

forms for many years, nevertheless clubbing was a transient and changing social

activity, one that could not be maintained indefinitely. Ageing and clubbing

seemed to conflict, and eventually the element of 'good on you' appeared to run

out (Pini, 1997a: 150). More generally, sociability was clearly valued by

participants. They developed networks of camaraderie that they sustained through

sociability. This social capital may have given them access to potential or actual

valued resources (Bourdieu, 1993: 143). Participants were confident, articulate,

personable and sociable, and had an aesthetically pleasing sense of style.

Although many had had unpleasant, boring or negative clubbing experiences, their

overall involvement with clubbing was felt to be positive, they felt better about

themselves. It had provided an arena in which they felt able to express aspects of

their gendered identities that they would be less able to do in other social spaces.

Many had seemed to develop sustainable social and communication skills, these

were perceived to be likely to serve them well in other domains of life.

Chapter Eleven   Conclusions

Introduction

In this chapter I first discuss the three main findings of the thesis. First, I note how young people have fluctuating investments in cultural scenes and lifestyles, their affiliations to which are mediated through their stocks of knowledge, social position and biographies, what Schutz would refer to as their life-world (1970b). Affiliations are bounded, by both new and old social hierarchies: the process of maintaining boundaries illustrates the unequal status between groups. The second central concern of the thesis was to explore whether the process of becoming a clubber was gendered. Here I discuss the ways in which this was found to be so, as well as addressing a gap in the literature by discussing how both men and women experienced gender relations in particular club scenes. Within this I discuss whether or not these are indicative of gender relations becoming more egalitarian. The third central issue relates to processes of becoming, in the sense that 'becoming' was a process associated with progression, maturity and refining one's taste and knowledge: the confidence and skills of sociability that this process furnished participants with will be discussed.

I then move on to how I used the literature to make sense of the data: how the literature informed the direction of the study and how the data informed the literature drawn upon, to illuminate processes of becoming. I will discuss the contributions and constraints of the study, drawing attention to how the process of analysis rendered explicit a thematic link between the existent literature on young people's transitions, identities and lifestyles, as well as a conceptual thread for

interpreting the data itself. I will also discuss the methodological contributions and how the study informs ideas for future research. I then return to discuss the significance of my findings in relation to the specific literature on clubbing, the wider body of literature on young people's transitions, identities and lifestyles, and how they challenge certain theoretical positions in current sociological debate.

Main findings

Cultural boundary processes

Social knowledge and shared affinities directed participants towards particular club scenes. Most participants already knew where they would not belong and went about the process of discovering where they would belong. Social networks provided further social access. Their stocks of knowledge could be balanced with first hand experiences. The modes of identification and differentiation – music, substance use and purpose of clubbing experiences – were interrelated identifiers. Cultural practices were subject to cultural codes of conduct. Flaunting or flouting these was considered both unbecoming and inappropriate. These practices were visible symbols that signaled to others, who had the local knowledge to interpret it, what kind of clubber they were and were not – what kind of scene they identified with or did not. Identification was related to having 'family likeness' (Chaney, 1996: 92). Processes of identification had a symbiotic relationship with processes of differentiation. Participants gravitated to those who shared components of 'stocks of knowledge' and 'typifications'. These typifications were not static; rather they were loose constructions that served to highlight different cultural affiliations

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and lifestyles. Participants sought out those who were similar to themselves whilst at the same time exercising their heterogeneity in taste.

Processes of identification and differentiation were not just about similarity and difference, they were also about the ways in which practices, tastes and knowledge contributed to constructing shared sensibilities amongst one group whilst generating distinction from others. The practices of distinction (inclusion and exclusion), were based on both persistent social markers such as social class and status as well as what McRobbie calls the 'same old cultural cocktails of dress, music, drugs and dance (1991: 198). There was a reflexive relationship between the sensibilities of the group and the sensibilities of the individual. 'Becoming' involved skills and knowledge. Knowledge was differently embodied and endowed within wider hierarchies of power (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Bourdieu, 1986; 1989), and was a key feature in the construction of boundaries (Schutz, 1970a; 1970b). The sense of belonging and affinity, cultural knowledge and taste and practices associated with the processes of boundary construction, all contributed to participants' sense of social identity. Clubbers placed each other, to an extent, on their consumption and cultural related activities. This did not mean that these identifications and additional ways of placing each other had replaced other more persistent markers of their place in the social world. As Chaney argues, socio-structural elements in our lives do not disappear just because new ways of identifying and placing each other come along (1996). Access to, and ability to participate in, particular social and cultural arenas is mediated through stocks of knowledge, social biographies and lifeworlds.

Thornton asserts that the 'mainstream other' were trapped in their class, they did not enjoy the classless autonomy of 'hip' youth' (1995: 101). She also asserts that distinctions, such as age, gender, sexuality and race, were called upon more readily than class, income and occupation to make and maintain distinctions between clubbers and club scenes (Thornton, 1995). The participants of this study also talked of 'others', the 'beer monsters' and 'silly wee lassies' who epitomised a lack of taste, a lack of knowledge and a lack of maturity. The 'others' in this study represented those who would be out of place, people with whom 'proper' clubbers had little cultural affinity or reciprocity of perspectives. My findings suggest that the cultural distinctions and boundaries operating within club culture do not just conceal the social and status positions of young people as argued by Thornton (1995), they also reveal them. Boundaries created groups and clubbing is a cultural medium through which individuals and the groups to which they belong can acquire status, monopolise resources, legitimise social advantages in reference to their superior lifestyles and competencies (Weber, 1978a: 306-307). My findings suggest that there are clear social demarcations evident in who can get into and fit into particular forms of clubbing; they illustrate the stratified and hierarchical nature of clubbing. My findings support the argument that night-life provision exploits existing social divisions and cleavages; it segregates young adults into particular spaces and places (Hollands, 2002: 153). They confirm what Hollands calls the 'structuration of youth cultures' (2002:163).

The processes of boundary maintenance were further illustrated by the data from participants who identified as being 'proper' clubbers. 'Proper' club scenes, like the subcultural punk scenes of the 1980's, were based on exclusivity and notions of shared superior tastes (McRobbie, 1984). When in 'proper' club scenes with

people who they perceived to be like them, participants reported feelings of being 'at home', being familiar with and belonging to a common situation. The notion of 'at home' illustrates the relationship between structural and interactional boundaries: the ways in which we tend to keep our social places through interaction and through the formation of lifestyles. The crucial role of social networks was illustrated through the question of who could access and participate in after-club parties. These findings are suggestive of placement, being in place through shared affinities, reciprocal acceptance and competence. Distinctions were further highlighted when clubbers did not embody the spirit of a practised competent clubber in a given club scene. When out of place, other clubbers appeared to recognise this through a lack of gesture and reciprocal acceptance. There was little evidence of clubbers resisting these boundaries. I argue that exclusivity and exclusion work in combination with one another; one cannot be exclusive without being exclusionary. As Bauman and May suggest, the power to refuse entry, to demarcate boundaries according to acceptable characteristics, is deployed to secure a relative homogeneity (2001: 40). Cultural practices, tastes and knowledges were currencies that signaled exclusivity and inequality. These were employed to maintain boundaries, the notion of 'other' highlighted the disparate status between social groups: 'others' were disparaged and 'classed'. Inequality was also found within groups: in the next section I discuss whether and in what ways gender relations have become more egalitarian in some club scenes.

Gender - small change

My data suggests a small change in gender relations in some 'proper' clubbing environments. Relations were more based around sociability than sexual intent.

'Proper' clubbers perceived 'proper' club scenes to be 'safe' social spaces. Notions of safety were both classed and gendered. Gendered notions of safety were illustrated through the ways in which many women related safety with a sense of liberation, their participation was a positive and empowering experience. This sense of social independence appears to have been facilitated by gender relations being more based in sociability, social competence and shared sensibilities rather than around sexual relations. Feeling equal on the dance floor sat alongside the knowledge that the production and promotional side of clubbing was pretty much a 'man's world'. Becoming a 'proper' clubber was a gendered process. My findings suggest that men were more likely to acquire in-depth and specific musical knowledge and DJing skills. In this sense men could take the processes of becoming further and as such 'become' more. As found in other studies it was unusual to find women becoming DJs or running their own club nights.

Classed notions were apparent through 'proper' clubbers distancing themselves from predatory or overt sexual behaviour: being drunk, immature and displaying a lack of decorum and taste. These behaviours were associated with disparaged 'others', the 'randoms' and the 'neds' who belonged to other club scenes. They were 'classed', in both senses of the terms, as not having social reciprocity and proximity.

Notions of safety were also present in the data from men. For a few heterosexual men, notions of safety seemed related to extending and enhancing the ways in which they could express and embody their masculinity. Nearly all the men in this study were aware of women's negative feelings and lack of tolerance surrounding

predatory behaviour and explicit sexual advances. This awareness, in combination with an identification with the ethos of a 'proper' club scene and the cultural codes of conduct surrounding social interactions, meant that most 'proper' clubbers interacted 'without overt sexual intent' (Henderson, 1993a: 52). This did not mean that sexual relations were out of the question, rather that sexual communication tended to come in what was perceived to be a more discreet and respectful style. Involvement in and identification with 'proper' club scenes seemed to have influenced some men's views and attitudes towards homosexuality, making them more understanding about, accommodating of and less threatened by gay men. Whilst for other men, although they may have become more comfortable with same sex tactility, the meanings they attached to homosexuality and their own gendered identity remained intact. Like the women, men seemed to find this lack of emphasis on attracting the opposite sex engendered a sense of equality between men and women. The process of becoming was not only gendered in character; it was classed, associated with social competence, maturity, refinement of taste and knowledge. It is to these findings I turn next.

Progression and sociability

Becoming a 'proper' clubber was about progression, refinement, exclusivity, maturity and being seen as having good taste. It was often about being and doing not very much in a particular way. It involved a manner, a way of being, saying and doing. Identifying as a 'proper' clubber was part of a wider lifestyle. It often involved tapping into and developing expert knowledge and skills. For some, this extended to the promotional and production aspects of clubbing.

Once working, clubbing became associated with being an escape from the mundaneity of daily and working life. I suggest that clubbing provides both a 'text of excitement', an intense desire for pleasure through the sociability of the event (Pini, 1997b: 156), and a 'text of avoidance', a desire to avoid the responsibilities in their wider lives (McRobbie, 1994: 172). The latter appeared more prevalent once clubbers began to move on and out of a clubbing lifestyle. Contrary to Thornton (1997a), I argue that the participants of this study did not 'refuse' the responsibilities and identities of the world of work, rather most of them had little desire or need to prioritise it until they felt a social expectation and/or material necessity to do so. It was very clear that both financial need to work and having dependents impacted significantly on how often and to what extent people could become involved with a clubbing lifestyle and whether and to what extent they could become a 'proper' clubber.

Becoming a clubber and changes in clubbing practices were encased in narratives of progression: clubbing was something you 'grow out of'. Changes in drug taking practices, an increased commitment to work careers, perceptions of ageing and culturally appropriate socialising, all served to facilitate participants to move on and out of a clubbing lifestyle. Refining and reducing drug use was an extension of being a competent clubber, confirming previous findings that for many the attraction of clubbing outlasts the attraction of drug use. Reduction in drug use was perceived as a sign of maturity with its accompanying degree of control and responsibility.

The socially located practices and attitudinal changes in the processes of moving on and out illustrated how social identities and lifestyles are inherently transitional: that moving on is about progression (Roberts, 1997: 11). Participants continued to identify as clubbers, they knew the 'spirit', many of them still socialised with other clubbers and maintained an interest in and knowledge about the music. Some occasionally or cyclically 'got back into it'. It seemed that establishing adult identities was being simultaneously recognised and affirmed alongside the social approval to continue participating in certain forms of clubbing. For all but a few clubbers, even within a 'proper' club scene, there comes a point when the generosity of 'good on you' eventually runs out (Pini, 1997a: 150). Club culture, although perceived as being welcoming of 'anyone and everyone', has localised applicability. This was illustrated through the practices of distinction that clubbers employed to sustain cultural boundaries.

The process of becoming a 'proper' clubber seemed to have furnished some participants with increased self-confidence and skills of sociability, and was perceived to have embellished their social identities. The synthesis of Schutz (1967; 1970a; 1970b; 1973; 1976) and Bourdieu (1986; 1984) illuminated how clubbers recognised, developed and utilised their adept social skills to develop and maintain social networks. I argue that many of the clubbers in this study were developing and maintaining their social and embodied cultural capital through their proficient sociability. As found by Allatt my participants realised the importance of learning not only the skills of exchange (sociability) which sustained social relationships, but also the skills which enabled them to create social and cultural capital of their own (1993: 154). The development and cultivation of sustainable social and communication skills, I suggest, will facilitate access to potential or

actual valued resources in their wider lives. The skills of sociability are likely to be not only sustainable, but also transferable to other transitions and processes of becoming that these young people will engage in during their life-course.

The next section discusses the process I undertook to search the existing literature for concepts and findings that would help me explain and support the emergent themes from my data. Using theory to make sense of the data was an eclectic process. It was clear from my data that I would need to engage with a wide body of literature, literature that drew on a number of conceptual frameworks. It was also clear that none of these frameworks could solely, independently support and explain my findings.

Using theory to make sense of the data

I argued that the re-conceptualisations of young people's transitions lacked a sense of process. It shed little light on how young people were continually in a process of becoming someone or something else and how this process is subject to fluctuation. It gave little sense of what kinds of resources young people required to become a 'proper' clubber, Goth or Punk (Cieslik, 2001). It offered little insight into the transitions we make in order to make manifest our social identities, or the ways in which socially distributed knowledge was implicated in the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people. The literature suggested that transitions and activities not associated with work might also be significant in the lives of young people. This prompted me to consider the ways in which young people could amass resources from wider social participation and lifestyles. These

lifestyles were mediated by and embedded in the structural positions and material resources of the young people involved.

Symbolic interactionism proved to be useful for shedding light on processes of becoming. This work is expressly concerned with process, how people through interaction evolve, negotiate and become. More recent conceptualisations, that I argue are rooted in the intellectual heritage of symbolic interactionism, stress the need to understand identities as multiple, developing in relation to other identities. Identities that are derived from one's class, gender and ethnicity as well as from the interactions, relations and practices of being in the world (Rattansi and Phoenix, 1997). These notions of identity sat well with the idea of young people's transitions being akin to a continuous process of becoming: a process that is likely to be gendered. Skegg's argument was useful for thinking about gender and class in processes of becoming (1997). Becoming is a process that can be different things for different women of different classes, races, ages and nations, a process that requires specialised knowledge (Skeggs 1997: 98).

However, these conceptualisations did not account for how group processes impact on young people's social identities. Neither did they provide a way of exploring the processes of group life: the ways in which shared meanings are built up amongst the group and how the boundary work we do in part constitutes the self. I fused together two different theoretical perspectives, those of symbolic interactionism and social anthropology. This fusion was useful for thinking about the ways in which clubbing has been conceptualised previously. Willis (1978) and Hollands (1995) have explored the cultural dimensions of young people's transitions previously. These studies, like this one, illustrate how dominant

definitions are reaffirmed and authenticated through boundary construction. The work of McRobbie (1984) and Willis (1978) was useful for thinking about the significance of cultural knowledge in the processes and practices of boundary construction. It illustrated how gender relations and the experiences of women may be different in subcultural (punk) and mainstream (disco) scenes (McRobbie, 1984). It highlighted how subcultural youth scenes can offer a deviant lifestyle, one based on exclusivity and notions of superior shared taste than that found in the mainstream. The mainstream, Hollands suggests is largely populated by the working class young people who are denigrated (2002). He adds that these spaces and places are becoming increasingly gentrified, further excluding already socially excluded young people (2002). I found the critiques of subcultural theory, post-modern readings and those influenced by the cultural turn convincing (Cieslik, 2001; Hollands, 2002). They appeared insufficient for conceptualising the process of becoming a clubber.

The specific literature on clubbing did however help me make sense of the character of gender relations; much of it argued that a distinction needed to be made between relations on the dance floor and relations in the politics and production of rave. It also suggested that although femininities and masculinities in the 'hip' club scenes appeared qualitatively different to those found in the mainstream, club scenes seemed to produce the same division of labour found in both the wider music industry and other types of employment. This body of work drew my attention to the contradictory nature of gender relations and how none of these studies had examined what men had to say about their experiences of clubbing and gender relations.

Unlike subcultural theory, the concept of lifestyles offered a way of exploring distinctive cultural practices and identifications without imposing a determinate and deviant relationship with the dominant culture. This concept could also illuminate hierarchical distinctions both within and between social and cultural groups. Lifestyle research, however, has tended to overemphasise the choice and agency of social actors, often at the expense of neglecting some of the more persistent ways of life. In terms of this thesis, the concept of lifestyle could not account for the ways in which involvement and identification with a lifestyle may ebb and flow, how it may mean different things to a person at different times. It neglected not only process but also what other forms of capital young people may have and develop. Wynne synthesised the concepts of capital and lifestyles to illustrate how styles of life, processes of becoming and the learning of cultural practices are implicated in social and cultural stratification (1990). This work led me to think more about synthesising sympathetic conceptual frameworks to help make sense of the data, and to explore Bourdieu's work more fully, particularly the ways in which it has been adopted and adapted to the study of young people (1984; 1986).

Thornton adapted the notion of cultural capital to conceptualise club culture (1995). Her study illustrated how subcultural capital, like cultural capital, puts a premium on the second nature of knowledge; it is the embodied form of being 'in the know'. Subcultural capital is a currency that correlates with and legitimises unequal statuses (Thornton, 1995). However, the notion of subcultural capital was insufficient for thinking about and accounting for the influence of social networks and connections and how these were central to the process of becoming a clubber. Social capital is, however, about networks and connections (Bourdieu, 1984: 1986). This notion has also been adapted and applied to young people's

transitions. Morrow has suggested seeing social capital as a set of processes, rather than a measurable thing (1999). This way of thinking gives space for young people to develop their social capital. Their investment and opportunity to do so may fluctuate, but seeing it as a process allows room for learning the skills of exchange. The notion of sociability helped me make sense of how young people can learn the skills in order to develop social and cultural capital of their own (Allatt, 1993). Clearly sociability had a role in the formation of social networks, young people were aware of the value of networking as much as their adult counterparts. When the notion of social capital was co-opted with the sociology of everyday life (Schutz and Luckmann, 1974), it illustrated clearly how social capital was transmitted and how the development of knowledge and competence was implicated in that process. The ability to learn news skills and develop social networks was not context free: the sociology of everyday life highlighted how these networks were embedded in young people's social biographies, mediated by their gender, class and ethnicity.

Despite the conceptual potential of social capital to illuminate the processes and practices through which privilege and disadvantage were transmitted, social capital in and of itself was insufficient for providing the conceptual backdrop for this thesis. The importance of knowledge has been recognised by other youth researchers; they have turned to educational concepts to help explain how learning is implicated in the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people (Cohen and Ainley, 2000; Miles, 2000b). A theory of learning as cultural practice offered some conceptual mileage to help me understand how the capitals young people have in informal contexts can be transformed to more formal learning processes. However, it neglected the ways in which cultural and social capital are differently

embodied and endowed. It also tended to assume that learning new skills would propel the social actor in an upward trajectory. I would suggest that knowledge can be both empowering and disempowering. Knowledge, as day to day experience of the social world, is nevertheless a key aspect of processes of becoming.

This literature shed light on young people's transitions, identities and lifestyles; it helped me contextualise my thesis and understand my data. Yet none of these concepts on their own seemed able to fully explain and illustrate the processes of becoming a clubber and whether these were gendered. The literature reaffirmed the importance of process in young people's transitions, identities and lifestyles, a process in which social and cultural knowledge was implicated. I used the literature to explore concepts that would help me make sense of the data but it wasn't until I began the process of analysis that the above themes really came to the fore. The work of Schutz came as a surprise guest for helping me understand the data. In the next section I will discuss the contributions this has made to the study, both conceptually and methodologically.

Contributions, constraints and ideas for the future

Conceptually, this thesis has offered another way of linking the disparate literature on the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people. Phenomenological concepts are seldom used as a heuristic device for linking disparate areas of literature. Yet the notions of Schutz complemented many of the other frameworks discussed in the literature. This was particularly noticeable when discussing the symbolic interactionist work on identities, processes of becoming and the

construction of boundaries. It was also apparent in Willis's (1978) study, which highlighted not only the processes and practices of boundary construction but also how knowledge was a key feature in such practices. Complementary perspectives arose again in the discussion of lifestyles and the concepts associated with Bourdieu (1984; 1986). The correspondence between them is unsurprising given that the work of Weber provides the bedrock and inspiration for both strands of sociological thought. When the notions of habitus and capitals were synthesised with the sociology of everyday life, the determinism between the class habitus and the conditions of existence was fractured and highlighted how social learning is implicated in the transmission of privilege and disadvantage.

Yet it was the process of analysis that drew my attention to the ways in which knowledge was implicated in processes of becoming and how the work of Schutz could provide a heuristic framework to conceptualise my data. I do not suggest that the work of Schutz can do this on its own. However, when this body of work is synthesised with other sympathetic conceptual frameworks it can allow for a better understanding of the role of knowledge in the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people. As well as informing the conceptual framework and linking disparate areas of literature, the work of Schutz also informed the way in which I reflected on the methodological processes of data collection.

I was like Schutz's cultural stranger. To participate in clubbing activities, like the participants, I had to build up my knowledge of the culture, develop social networks, learn about the cultural boundaries that marked the various scenes and learn about the music and styles of interaction. In a similar yet different fashion, I too to went through a process of becoming, although as discussed in the

methodology, this process also had some crucial points of departure. It demonstrated how incompetent I was as a cultural participant, it highlighted the skills, dispositions and resources that were required to become competent cultural participants.

The process of recruiting participants rendered explicit what would become another important analytical theme. I wanted to talk to people who identified themselves as clubbers. In doing so I facilitated participants to identify themselves through their own definitions, and in the process assess their own eligibility for inclusion. This is what Lofland calls member-identified categories, 'folk' typifications that members employ (1976). Using folk typifications is inextricably linked with the development of analytical ideas and the collection of data (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 51). Participants were keen to qualify and clarify whether and in what way they identified as being a clubber. It emerged that participants distinguished between what they perceived to be 'proper' clubbing opposed to 'just' going out clubbing. This methodology facilitated the development of analytical insights that subsequently became the themes that underpin much of the data chapters. This does not mean that I literally transposed the data into the findings. I had to step back, locate and interpret what participants said in light of the empirical and conceptual work done previously.

On hindsight I would have followed up participants more often and for a longer time period. This would have given a greater sense of process over time. Nevertheless, member-identified categories may prove especially useful in studies where an aim is to explore the ways in which young people build up identifications and differentiations; how these are implicated in cultural boundary processes:

processes that may illuminate the cultural barriers that young people have to negotiate in their transitions. Categories such as these could also be used to make comparisons between groups in parallel studies. The notion of becoming could be developed further to examine other processes of becoming, other transitions, identities and lifestyles that people negotiate such as 'becoming' a retired person for example. It would also be interesting to investigate further the fluctuating nature of involvement in and identification with a style of life and cultural affiliations, as well as the practices associated with such, through more longitudinal work.

Significance of findings

In this section I want to discuss how my findings relate and contribute to the specific literature on clubbing, the literature that discusses the transitions, identities and lifestyles of young people and some of the debates taking place in contemporary sociology.

This study contributes to the debates taking place in the sociology of youth concerning how best to conceptualise young peoples' transitions in late modernity. My findings support previous suggestions that cultural transitions are largely influenced by structural factors, it is not credible that these are less crucial in the lives of young people today. The stratified nature of cultural transitions was evidenced through the ways in which the participants of this study were able to monopolise resources, legitimise their social advantages, in reference to their superior lifestyles, habits and competencies (Weber, 1978a 306/307). My findings confirm previous suggestions that protracted transitions are more likely to be

experienced by middle class young people who have a post-complusory education and invest in individual choice (Wallace, 1987a; Abbott and Wallace, 1990). My data illustrated the relationship between the structural, physical and interactional aspects of transitions: in particular from university to employment that impacted on participants social expectations to work more and club less. Young people's ability to protract their transitions, to invest in a clubbing lifestyle was determinedby both material, cultural and interactional resources: their social location, their command of cultural knowledge and taste, and their access to and competence in social networking.

My findings support the suggestion that there is increasing internal differentiation within social groupings, that social and cultural scenes tend to be occupied by those who are similar to one another, who tend to have similar styles of life and social circumstances. The processes and practices of getting into and fitting into a clubbing lifestyle was permeated by social class differences. This study illuminates further the stratified and hierarchical nature of cultural activity and identifications. Social class, like masculinity, has not been transformed rather what has changed is its presentation and packing (Brittan, 1989:2).

I argue that the work on contemporary social dance scenes, which calls on a range of concepts to highlight the similarities and differences between cultural groups, can be better conceived of as cultural boundary processes. The fusion of symbolic interactionism and social anthropology shed further light on the ways in which cultural knowledge and taste, interrelated identifiers and social affinities, all contributed to mark out and sustain cultural boundaries: boundaries that reflect both fragments of older social divisions and new forms of social hierarchy and

distinction (Hollands, 2002: 157). Access to 'proper' club scenes was mediated by participants' social location, their position in the world and experiences of it; these informed them where 'people like them' could and could not go: lines of affiliation were bounded. This study confirmed the arguments of Willis, who demonstrated that the knowledge, taste, practices and values held by the 'bike boys and hippies', and in this case the 'mainstream' and 'proper' clubbers, are illustrative of class boundaries (1978). My study adds weight to the more recent arguments of Hollands who suggests that the 'mainstream' is occupied mainly by working class young people and more associated with corporate clubbing; whilst the 'hip' or 'proper' club scenes are more likely to be occupied by middle class young people and associated with exclusivity and superior shared taste (2002). Typical constructs highlighted not only the different cultural affiliations and lifestyles but also the 'classed' based nature of distinctions. The notion of 'other' was classed, it illuminated how status differentiation involved the use of material resources, cultural knowledge and social networks to define 'others'; we use 'otherness' as a powerful means of identification and differentiation, inclusion and exclusion. It was a concept that illustrated what Hollands calls the structuration of youth cultures (2002: 163). This confirms the utility of Roberts et al.,'s concept of 'structured individualism', as discussed by Rudd and Evans (1998) and Raffo and Reeves (2000). It is useful for conceptualising the relationship between structure and agency (1994). The agency of young people is recognised, but conditioned by their material resources and social networks (Raffo and Reeves, 2000: 147).

My findings suggest that social relations and networks are still formed on the basis of similarity: identifications were often made on the basis of 'family likeness', similarity in status, social location or social class. The participants of this study,

who in the main were educated, geographically mobile, would consider themselves to be organisers of their own social networks and relationships. They are arguably a group who would be more likely and able to create new social formations and identities beyond their social class or status. Yet this was not substantiated. I argue that processes of becoming are rooted in the individual's life-world. Who, what and how people become is informed by their past and present social locations and biographies. Factors such as a person's social location, social contacts, material assets, previous and expected forms of socialising, age, sexuality, musical knowledge and taste, all seemed to inform that person's sense of identification. Although there may be increased scope for some to seek out and create additional social identifications and differentiations, available through increased internal differentiation, my data suggests that these are built on top of, rather than beyond status and social location, as suggested by Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002: 36). My thesis has shown that clubbing was and is a valued and important cultural activity in the lives of participants. The importance of becoming a 'proper' clubber was demonstrated through the meanings they attached to such participation and the influence this identification had on their social identities. Becoming a 'proper' clubber was significant to participants both now and in the future: it furnished them with increased self-confidence, an increased sense of social independence and enhanced skills of sociability. The relationship between the structural, cultural and interactional can be seen through participants' ability to participate in protracted cultural transitions that impacted on their social identities. Participants of this study did not attain adult status at a particular point in their lives: becoming was a perpetual, provisional and fluctuating process. These were young people who could afford materially and socially to extend both their structural and cultural transitions. The social confidence and adept skills of

exchange could be called upon in parallel and future social negotiations and transitions of becoming. They were resources that would help them to develop and create social and cultural capital of their own (Allatt, 1993).

The participants of this study have similarity with some of the young people described by Ball et al., (2002), who have secure, but not fixed or complete identities, identities that are part of a stable transition and related to an imagined future of 'becoming somebody'. The identities 'claimed or sought were underpinned by the marking of differences' (Ball et al., 2002: 150). They invested in their identities as 'proper' competent clubbers, 'an identity that sat comfortably alongside other ways of being – it was part of the 'natural' lifestyle of high-fliers, upwardly mobile young people' (Ball et al., 2002: 150). Social identities were also gendered; the findings on gender relations illustrate the relationship between identities and cultural participation.

My data confirms previous studies and suggests that the cultural production of clubbing is an arena that remains, for the most part, the preserve of men. In a sense, Thornton's argument, that academics have conflated women's 'feelings of freedom' fostered by some contemporary social scenes 'with substantive political rights and freedoms', carries some weight (1995). However, the women in this study articulated strongly the 'social independence', feeling 'more like a person than a woman', experiences that becoming a 'proper' clubber afforded them. Men articulated their awareness of women's experiences and position; they too valued relationships based on shared meanings and sociability. These findings are not necessarily indicative of egalitarian gender relations *per se*, although they are suggestive of some shift in how some women and men experience and express

their gendered identities, at least in an environment that values sociability and shared sensibilities over sexual intent. My findings suggest that some men have become more tactile, tactility that seems as much related to ecstasy use as it does to the process of becoming a 'proper' clubber. I suggest that some clubbing arenas may create space for 'small pockets of social change' that are easily accommodated in a society where gender remains a fundamental distinction and division (Deegan, 1987: 14).

As Jenkins (1992) found Bourdieu (1984; 1986), I found Schutz good to think with (1967; 1970a; 1970b; 1973; 1976). Both can illuminate 'the manner in which the routine practices of individual actors are determined, at least in large part, by the history and objective structure of their existing social world, and how those practices contribute – without this being their intention – to the maintenance of its existing hierarchical structure' (Jenkins, 1992: 141). Together they highlighted how social learning was implicated in the transmission of privilege and disadvantage. Schutz sees knowledge as being implicated in our micro and macro understanding of the social world – it is derived, experiential, reflexive and socially distributed: knowledge is implicated in our subjective understandings, experiences, actions and identities. Unlike much of the existent literature, this work brings process into the way we view young people's transitions, identities and lifestyles but without neglecting the more persistent enduring structures in our life-worlds. The work of Schutz offers another perspective that contributes to the conceptual debates taking place in the sociology of youth regarding the ways in which young people construct and negotiate their transitions, identities and lifestyles in late modernity. The notion of typifications renders explicit classifying schemes of inclusion and exclusion, it illuminates the practices of distinction. The notion of 'at

home' illustrates the relationship between structural, cultural and interactional boundaries: the ways in which we not only tend to keep our social places through interaction but also through the formation of lifestyles. It effectively demonstrates the material, interactional and cultural resources employed in status differentiation processes, thus bridging the traditional structural-interactional divide.

To conclude, the process of becoming a clubber was a gendered, dialectical and transformational process that was informed by the social heritage and locally situated experiences of clubbing participants. It was a process that manifested itself through embodied practices involving cultural knowledge and taste. The participants did place one another, at least in part, on the basis of their participation in and identification with a clubbing lifestyle. These placements appear to be embedded in the social order: they called not only on old social markers but also on the increasing hierarchies of difference within and across social groups. Social competence, cultural knowledge and consumer activities were all implicated in the placement of others, in the boundary work that clubbing collectives engaged in. I suggest that boundary processes tell us something about not only the individuals and collectives involved, but also the cultural and social order in which they live their lives. This thesis echoes Wynne's argument that practices of distinction in which cultural knowledge is a key element, are essentially attempts at becoming: these practices and processes of becoming are reflective of and implicated in social and cultural stratification (1990). Becoming a clubber involved interactional, cultural and material resources. These stratificational resources were employed in practices of distinction: inclusion and exclusion. Becoming required competency, skills and dispositions. It was a process that transmitted privilege and disadvantage.

Appendix two   Demographic profile of clubbing populations

Measham et al. confirm many of the local and qualitative indications regarding the social make-up of British clubbers (2001). They suggest that clubbers came from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds, although they also found demographics varied by club. They found that although ethnicity varied by club, 93.9% of clubbers were white (Measham et al., 2001: 92). Age distribution also varied by club but was similar to that found in other surveys, the mean age being 22.8 years (Measham et al., 2001: 93). These findings contradict some earlier suggestions that rave cultures were undifferentiated and inclusive in form (Merchant & MacDonald, 1994), that it is mainly white, working class and heterosexual people who populate rave culture (Thornton, 1995). Although Collin, with Godfrey, have suggested that the social make up of crowds is also different according to its locality: more up-market in the West End of London, distinctly working class in the East End and a mixture of students and working class youth in Manchester (1998: 246).

Although there appears to be demographic diversity, local variation and differences between clubs themselves, clubbers tend not to be dislocated from employment and training. Most are economically active with 58.4 % in full time employment and 24.4% in higher education (Measham et al., 2001: 94). The findings of Measham et al. compare with the studies done in Scotland (2001). The studies done in Scotland were all designed to explore patterns of recreational drug use through contacting people at dance events.

In Edinburgh, Riley et al. found 90% of the one hundred and twenty two dance-event participants were in education and or employment (2001). Hammersley et al. (2002) draw on data from two studies undertaken in Glasgow during the 1990's, a large sample of which overlaps with the data discussed by Forsyth (1996; 1997). Forsyth found that 25% were currently at University but 82.4% had been to University at some point (1997). Hammersley et al. found that 5% had a postgraduate degree, 20% had a university degree, 18% a college qualification, 31% had A levels, 20% had O levels and 5% had no educational qualifications (2002: 5). A third were working, a third were on unemployment benefit, 23% were students and the remainder were sick or on employment training (Hammersley, 2002: 5). Forsyth found that although 40.7% of his sample were unemployed, the vast majority of them had been in previous employ, with many supplementing their income through the 'grey economy', with most being in and around the dance drug scene and service industries (1997: 87-92). Hammersley et al. found social class difficult to establish but suggested that most were experienced poly-drug users in their mid twenties, and that as a group they had rather a middle class skew (2002: 3). Forsyth used the Office of Populations Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) (1991) scale to assess the social class of participants. Because of the diversity of respondents occupations, he also gathered data on parental occupation to demonstrate that 61.8% could be described as middle class and 38.2% as working class (1997: 92).

All names are pseudonyms

Sheila

Sheila is 24 years old, she is a university student who works part time in a bar. Sheila lives in a shared flat in the West End of Glasgow. She has been clubbing for 4 years, and although occasionally goes to two other club nights tends to stick to her long-standing favourite where she feels 'at home'. She currently does some promotional work for her favourite club and is intensely engaged with clubbing. Musical taste and knowledge is important to her.

Barry

Barry is 22 years old, has been to university and now works full time in a media related occupation. He lives in shared accommodation in the centre of Edinburgh. Barry has been clubbing for 6 years, he tried a variety of club scenes until he found venues and nights where he felt as if he 'fitted in'. He now attends his current favourite club night almost exclusively.

David

David is 23 years old, has been to college and is employed in the service economy (culture and leisure). He lives in shared accommodation in the centre of Edinburgh. David has been clubbing for 3 years, and although he has tried a variety of club scenes, he now tends to stick to his current favourite club night where he feels comfortable.

Robbie

Robbie is 24 years old and has worked in various service industries since leaving school. He lives in shared accommodation in the south side of Glasgow. He is a part time DJ who had been clubbing for 7 years. He goes to one club night occasionally but prefers private parties. Musical taste and knowledge is important to him.

Cath

Cath is 25 years old, has been to university and lives with her partner in the West End of Glasgow. Cath has been clubbing for 9 years, and is recently 'getting back into it' after a break of 3 years. She works in a health and social care related occupation. Prior to her break Cath clubbed extensively in both licensed and unlicensed nights, currently she occasionally goes to one club where she feels comfortable and not too old.

Stewart

Stewart is 25 years old and lives with his partner in the West End of Glasgow. He worked in a service industry (communications), and is now attending university. He has clubbed for 7 years, primarily in his favourite club, where he now goes to occasionally.

Sam

Sam is 30 years old and has been clubbing for 9 years. She lives in the West End of Glasgow with her boyfriend and child. She has been to university and works in an education related occupation. Sam often attended one particular club night,

unlicensed nights and private parties. Her clubbing has become a less frequent activity over the last 2 years.

Susan

Susan is 28 years old and is currently not resident in Glasgow. She has been to university and is in an education-related occupation. She has clubbed extensively for 10 years and prefers unlicensed events and parties. Musical taste and knowledge is important to her.

Katie

Katie is 26 years and works in the service industry. She has been clubbing for 9 years. Katie has clubbed extensively in various scenes, although now not into 'high octane' clubbing, she still goes clubbing two or three times a week to various club nights. Musical taste and knowledge is important to her.

Jerry

Jerry is 29 years old and has been clubbing for 8 years. He has been to university and has worked in various service industries; he is also a part time DJ. He lives in shared accommodation in the West End of Glasgow. He is involved in the care of his non-resident child. He tends not to go clubbing, preferring to concentrate on developing his Djing career.

James

James is 25 years old; he is at university and has been clubbing for 5 years. He lives in Glasgow city centre. He clubs in various scenes depending on which friends he is out with, and the purpose of the night.

Craig

Craig is 25 years old and has clubbed for 8 years. He has been to university and works in an education-related occupation. Clubbing has become less central to him recently, and partly due to living in a semi-rural location, he currently clubs infrequently.

Maria

Maria is 23 years old, has been to university and works in a service industry. She has been clubbing for 8 years, though not intensely. She currently goes out with the 'girls' occasionally to a couple of clubs where she feels comfortable.

Zoe

Zoe is 20 years old and is currently at university. She has been going out with the 'girls' once a week for 3 years. She clubs exclusively in one particular club. She lives with her parents in the suburbs of Glasgow.

Kirsten

Kirsten is 19 years old, is currently at university and has been clubbing for 3 years. She lives in shared accommodation in the centre of Glasgow. Although Kirsten only goes out once a month to one particular club, she is intensely involved with clubbing. Musical taste and knowledge is important to her.

Alison

Alison is 23 years old, has been to university and now works in a health and social care related occupation. She lives in shared accommodation in the West End of Glasgow. She has clubbed in a variety of scenes over 7 years; clubbing remains

an important aspect of her social life. Currently she goes to two club nights where she feels comfortable.

Gary

Gary is 28 years old and has been clubbing for 8 years. He has worked in various service industry jobs through is currently attending university. He lives in shared accommodation in Glasgow. He is intensely involved with clubbing and goes out primarily to two clubs nights.

Phil

Phil is 28 years old, has been to university and currently employed in an agricultural related occupation. He lives in shared accommodation in a small town. He has been involved in clubbing for 12 years although his involvement has diminished in the last year or so.

Jackie

Jackie is 34 years old and has been clubbing for 15 years. She works in a health and social care related occupation and has not been to university. She has clubbed extensively over the years and after a period of being less involved is currently 'getting back into it'. She lives in her own flat with her child in a large town.

Mick

Mick is 23 years old, has been to university and works in an agricultural related occupation. He has been going clubbing for 7 years. He lives in a small town with his parents and currently clubs infrequently.

Lorna

Lorna is 28 years old, works in administration and has not been to university. She lives with her child in a large town. She has begun going to a local 'proper club' over the past year.

Sue

Sue is 38 years old and works in a leisure and recreational occupation. She lives in shared accommodation in the West End of Glasgow and has not been to university. She tends not to go to clubs; she prefers private parties and unlicensed events. She is involved in the production and promotional aspects of clubbing, musical taste and knowledge are important to her.

Andy

Andy is 33 years old, has not been to university and works in the music industry. He has clubbed for 14 years, although only in the last two or three years would call himself a 'proper' clubber. For the past couple of years he goes almost exclusively to his favourite club night. Musical taste and knowledge are important to him.

Heather

Heather is 22 years old, is currently attending university and working part time in a service industry. She lives in shared accommodation in the West End of Glasgow. Heather has been clubbing for 5 years, she is intensely involved and musical taste and knowledge are important to her.

Ian

Ian is 25 years old; he is a white-collar worker and has not been to university although has done a year at college. He lives with his girlfriend in Edinburgh. He has clubbed for 7 years although his involvement has diminished over the past couple of years; he rarely goes to clubs now.

Prompt 1 (interviews 1 - 4)

How get in to clubbing?

Demos –age, work, background?

Typical night

Appearance – what's in your head?

Ultimate or unusual experience?

What the difference between a club you like and a club you don't?

Any do's or don'ts?

Common values or tastes?

Anything that's in or out?

Influence of gay culture?

Image of men/women

Stereotypical men/women – contrast with self

Social interactions differ from bar, club, party?

Clubbing persona contrast with everyday self?

Egalitarian relationships?

Most/least pleasurable aspects?

When new, need to learn anything?

Music shops/mags/clothing?

Prompt 2 (interview 4 – 14)

How get in to clubbing?

Demos –age, work, background?

Typical night

What the difference between a club you like and a club you don't?

Common values or tastes?

Anything that's in or out?

Influence of gay culture?

Image of men/women, femininity/masculinity

Social interactions differ from bar, club, party?

When you go in to a club what do you do, what do you see?

Clubbing persona contrast with everyday self?

Egalitarian relationships?

Relationships, how do they fit in?

Most/least pleasurable aspects?

When new, need to learn anything?

Music shops/mags/clothing?

Prompt 3 (interviews 15 – 22)

How get into clubbing?

Typical night?

Demos

Remember being novice? New?

How know where to go?

Frequency/routine/cycles

Dancing?

Be anything you want to be?

Appearance? Looking good, cool/feeling good

Pleasure

Sense of shared purpose?

Tolerance?

Gay culture influence?

Common values?

Status/kudos?

Etiquette/Rules? Codes of conduct?

Club you like, club you don't? What kinds of people go there?

Compare different scenes

Who wouldn't fit in?

What would exclude them?

Private parties

Safety – in what way?

Importance of social life, accomplishment?

Gender relations egalitarian?

Hugging uncomfortable?

Best bits?

Ever imagine not doing it?

Prompt 4 (interviews 23 –25)

How get into clubbing?

Typical night?

Remember being novice? New?

Demos

How know where to go?

Frequency/routine/cycles

Dancing?

Be anything you want to be?

Appearance? Looking good, cool/feeling good

Sense of shared purpose?

Tolerance?

Gay culture influence?

Common values?

Status/kudos?

Etiquette/Rules? Codes of conduct?

Club you like, club you don't? What kinds of people go there?

Compare different scenes

Who wouldn't fit in?

What would exclude them?

Private parties

Safety – in what way?

Importance of social life, accomplishment?

Gender relations egalitarian?

Hugging uncomfortable?

Best bits?

Ever imagine not doing it?

Uni educated people, why?

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Appendix One   *Flier*

Club Culture

What is it all about?

Tell me
a research student
what clubbing
means to you.

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