

Contracting of Control: How do door staff police illicit drugs in the night time economy of the United Kingdom?

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Doctor of Philosophy

University of York

Business and Society

November 2023

Abstract

Door staff are an under-researched area in criminology and are a notoriously difficult network to recruit for research purposes. In the United Kingdom's night-time economy, they are the primary policing agents as opposed to the warranted police officers, and previous research on door staff has focused on violence, and their use of force. Following the creation of a statutory regulatory body, the SIA, in 2003 the private security industry as a whole, of which the door supervisors are a key component, has undergone a process of professionalisation which has shifted the role of the door supervisor into a more insecure position within the NTE previously unrecognised in criminology. This thesis presents empirical data from 20 semi-interviews and four periods of overt observations with active door staff at a busy bar in the centre of a large northern town, focusing on how they police drugs and control intoxication within the NTE and what that means for their role as policing agents in the night-time economy. This research is able to demonstrate a shift in the role of the door supervisor from one of machismo to one of vulnerability as a result of various competing interests within the NTE.

Acknowledgements

I can distinctly remember sitting in the office of the head of 6th form in 2007. She advised me not to apply to university, as I would “lower her acceptance statistics” for the 6th form. I could never have imagined, in that moment, that I would ever be handing in a Doctoral thesis. This would not have been possible without the guidance, insight and encouragement of my supervisors, Professor Sharon Grace, and Professor Charlie Lloyd. I cannot thank them enough for helping me down this path, it’s been an incredible four years over which I have learned so much.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank all of the door staff who agreed to take part in the research. You will never know how your small kindness of giving up an hour of your time for me has helped. I have also so many thanks to give to the friends I have made in the Research Centre for Social Sciences. Specifically, Rodrigo, Anna and, Nathan. Even though the community is small, the supportive atmosphere that we have got me through some difficult times. I must also extend thanks to Gabriel Patriarca, whose stay at York was, in my view, all too brief. Special thanks also go to my incredibly kind friends Krystal, Joe and Ollie.

For these four years I have had to work part time. My assumption is that if I had to work anywhere else, I would have struggled to find anywhere as flexible and accommodating as Brownhill & Co in Leeds. For that reason, I am indebted and eternally thankful to Richard and Bryony Brownhill for their flexibility over the past two years. I am not sure I will find anywhere to work again who understand the importance of refreshing the BBC Football website every two minutes on a Saturday afternoon. I am delighted to have had you as bosses and have you as friends. I owe a debt of gratitude to two particularly wonderful customers of Brownhill and Co, Christine and Carrie who both listened to my rantings and were always incredibly supportive.

A huge debt of thanks goes to my family. My mum, my dad, my sister, and my grandparents. Without their steadfast support, tough love, and encouragement none of this would be possible. I love you all very much.

Finally, the biggest thanks go to Lauren. You have been by my side for every step of this and your support has been invaluable these past four years. Thank you, for everything you've ever done and continue to do, I love you more than words could ever convey.

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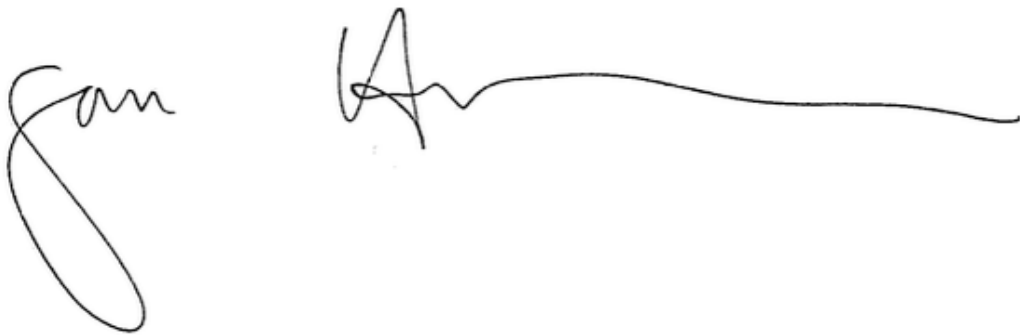
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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All Sources are acknowledged as references.

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is a cursive 'Sam' with a large loop underneath. The signature on the right is a cursive 'A' followed by a long horizontal line.

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List of Abbreviations

CJPOA	The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
EIC	British East India Company
LA 2003	Licensing Act 2003
MDA 1971	Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
NTE	Night Time Economy
PSIA 2001	Private Security Industry Act 2003
SIA	Security Industry Authority

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1 Introduction

1.1 Contextualising the Research

I am personally drawn to the night-time economy (NTE). To me it is a fascinating space to be in both as a customer and a researcher. I see it as a space that is fraught with ambiguities and a space where the dominant state is chaos. Indeed, its chaotic nature has been documented by academics (Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, et al., 2005; Hobbs, Winlow, et al., 2005; Hadfield, 2006). Within this chaotic milieu there is a constant presence with a semblance of order about them: the door supervisor. The door supervisor can be found guarding the doors of the wide variety of city venues, dictating who can and cannot cross the threshold into hedonistic play spaces (Monaghan, 2002a, 2003, 2004; Hobbs et al., 2003; Measham, 2004; Hobbs, Winlow, et al., 2005).

Door supervisors are employed by private security firms and provide security functions to private businesses in the NTE such as pubs, clubs and bars. Door staff are not usually employed directly by the venue. The venues that door staff provide security functions for vary in size, shape, capacity, and ambiance but they share the fact that they all sell alcohol. It is the role of door staff to regulate and control the patrons for these private businesses. Furthermore, door supervisors are the primary security provision within the night-time economy (NTE) and considerably outnumber the police (Hobbs, Lister and Winlow, 2002). The role of the door supervisor, as this thesis shall demonstrate, goes far beyond simply permitting or denying entry to a specific venue. Often, the door staff are the first people that customers seeking entry to a venue will come into contact with and are seen as a fundamental element in the service that the venue provides (Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019). Moreover, the door staff are encouraged to embody the notion “that they have a crucial responsibility in contributing to the construction of a pleasant and seductive atmosphere that will facilitate revellers’ consumption of alcohol” (Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019, p. 31). Somewhat at odds with such a role is the depictions of early research studies, which venerated door staff as well built, powerful men who were able resort to a model of retributive justice to manage drunk, obstinate, violent, and drugged up customers (Calvey, 2000; Winlow et al., 2001; Monaghan,

2002a, 2002b; Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, et al., 2005; Hobbs, Winlow, et al., 2005; Winlow and Hall, 2006). This thesis updates our understanding and contributes to the literature by demonstrating how the role of the contemporary door supervisor has shifted and mutated in ways that previous research would likely view as unrecognisable. In particular, door supervisors police drugs in the NTE not through machismo, but in an increasingly professionalised, knowledgeable, and skilled manner. However, while they are regulated by Security Industry Authority (SIA), door supervisors are nonetheless subject to precarity, together with a multitude of contradicting interests and instructions from security managers, venue managers, and the regulator.

This thesis presents the exploratory findings of 20 semi-structured interviews and four periods of observation with door staff in the NTE in a large northern city in England. Research participants for interviews were primarily recruited using Facebook, demonstrating a novel way of conducting research with door staff who are a clandestine network often hostile to outsiders (Calvey, 2000; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). For the observations, I used an overt method of observing door supervisors with their consent, and the consent of the venue at which they stationed. I used the quiet periods in the night to speak to them about their role and how they policed drugs in that particular bar. This differs from the large majority of previous research on door staff in the UK which has tended to utilize a covert ethnography to gather data (see Calvey, 2000, 2008; Winlow *et al.*, 2001; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). I used the periods of observation as an opportunity to try to understand the role of the door supervisor through their eyes and I made the conscious decision to not reveal to them that I also have had extensive experience of dealing with intoxicated (and at times petulant and recalcitrant) customers in the NTE, albeit from behind the bar (see Chapter Five for further details on methodology).

1.1.1 Terminology

When I embarked upon this research, I initially used the term 'bouncer' to refer to the door supervisors. Indeed, the word 'bouncer' appears in numerous publications on door staff (Lister et al., 2000, 2001; Winlow et al., 2001; Hobbs, Lister and Winlow, 2002; Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, O'Brien and Westmarland, 2007; O'Brien, Hobbs and Westmarland, 2008; Rigakos, 2008; Sjøgaard, 2014; Sjøgaard, Houborg and Tutenges, 2016; Sjøgaard and Krause-

Jensen, 2019; Suonperä Liebster et al., 2020). However, as I was conducting my research it was highlighted to me by three of the interviewees that although bouncer is used to refer to door supervisors, some felt the term bouncer was derogatory and implied violence. Indeed, the preference to be referred to as door supervisors was explicitly noted in the first sentence of an article by Monaghan (2004), although, this preference was subsequently ignored. Reflecting what this thesis argues are the significant changes in the role of people who supervise doors in the NTE, I have avoided using the term bouncer and instead use either door supervisor or door staff interchangeably. I also made this decision because I felt that door staff already come under tremendous scrutiny and are often readily demonised within the media (Calvey, 2019) and I did not want to stigmatise them further by referring to them against their wishes as 'bouncers'. In older texts there is also explicit reference to "door women" (see Monaghan, 2002a) however, it is my opinion that is unnecessary and unhelpful to use gendered terms for the same role.

1.2 Scope and Research Focus

This research aims to explore how door supervisors in the NTE police drugs. When I embarked upon this PhD there was initially one question that I sought to answer:

- 1) How do door staff police possession and supply of illicit drugs and intoxication from illicit drugs in the United Kingdom's night-time economy?

This was a question that has never been satisfactorily addressed by previous research. Whilst there was discussion on the policing of drugs, it was only ever as a brief mention (see Hobbs *et al.*, 2003, p. 189). Moreover, it is a question that merits attention in light of door staff providing the primary policing function in the NTE (Hobbs, Lister and Winlow, 2002) and illicit drug consumption being commonplace within the NTE (Measham, Parker and Aldridge, 2001; Measham and Moore, 2009). However, after the first three interviews were conducted emergent themes from the initial analysis generated additional research questions (Alvesson and Sandberg, 2013) that also warranted enquiry:

- 2) Do door staff have sufficient training and tools in order to police drugs effectively?
- 3) What is the nature and importance of door staff's relationships with each other, the police, bar staff (including managers) and customers?

These questions arose as the themes of tools, training and relationships emerged from the data and were areas that had not previously been researched. Furthermore, these questions warrant attention as licensed venues could have their license submitted for a review – where they could either incur further conditions of additional door staff or have their licence revoked – if either the police or council suspect that venues have too many issues relating to the consumption of illicit drugs. Therefore, door supervisors play a key role in potential outcomes of illicit drug consumption. Linked to these research questions are set of research aims. The realisation of these aims enabled the research questions to be fully addressed. Therefore, the aims of the research are:

- To provide a history of the policing of intoxication;
- To provide a clear picture of the dynamics of how door staff handle both drugs and their customers;
- To map the relationships between the door staff and the police and venue management and explore what these relationships mean for the policing of drugs;
- To understand how the training that door staff receive on drugs (if any) is put into action in the night-time economy.

This research builds upon and develops the previous research on door supervisors, and demonstrates how the role has mutated from one that was focused on the application of violence to achieve order (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003) in a space suffuse with chaos (Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019) to one that is now part of the wider, more commercialised, forms of policing found in modern society (Loader, 2000; Crawford, 2005; Jones and Newburn, 2006; Boels and Verhage, 2016). In addition, it provides an account of how drug-induced intoxication is controlled by door supervisors.

1.3 Chapter Outline

This research contains three chapters which review the relevant literature. In order to demonstrate how door staff are another manifestation of control over intoxication, there is a need for a historical view on intoxication and control. That is the remit of Chapter Two, which looks at three distinct intoxicants and demonstrates how they have been controlled throughout history. One of the central arguments in this thesis is that the night-time economy is not a contemporary phenomenon but rather, it is a new name for something which has been occurring for centuries. This argument is articulated by emphasising that people have long been going into the night to seek pleasure and intoxication, and the resulting intoxication has always been policed or controlled in some way and Chapter Two makes this argument by exploring the history of intoxication through three distinct intoxicants: alcohol in the Georgian era (Clark, 1988; Warner, 2002; Nicholls, 2003; Rogers, 2013); opium in the Victorian era (Booth, 1997; Berridge, 2001, 2013; Inglis, 2018); and cocaine during the Edwardian era (Berridge, 1978c, 1984; Kohn, 1999, 2001; Hallam, 2022). Moreover, this chapter highlights the argument that concern over drug use is not simply about the drug itself, but also about who takes the drugs and in what context they are taking it (Nicholls and Berridge, 2020).

Chapter Three examines the contemporary night-time economy. Specific attention is given to the impact and history of the drug ecstasy. It was important to afford attention to ecstasy as it represents another instance of a substance that created consternation for those in power (Colin, 2009). It charts the rise of ecstasy from its resynthesis by Alexander Shulgin who prepared MDMA to test on himself and his friends and then distributed it to Doctors and Psychologists, who were using the drug to treat patients with histories of PTSD (Benzenhöfer and Passie, 2010). It was not until the drug fell into the hands of clubbers in Texas and later Ibiza that the drug began to cause consternation amongst policy makers (Colin, 2009). MDMA was pressed into pills which became known as ecstasy. The use of ecstasy pills in the UK increased during the late 1980s when a group of DJs decided to try and recreate the atmosphere of Ibiza on British soil. This often took the form of illegal raves in disused spaces such as old warehouses or air hangers (Hill, 2002, 2003; Colin, 2009), the raves and their associated control responses are examined in more detail. The chapter also discusses the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 which removed the previously rigid closing times for venues

within the NTE after research demonstrated that violence stemming from alcohol was clustered around the closing time of bars, pubs and cubs (Hope, 1986; Tuck, 1989; Marsh and Fox-Kibby, 1992). The Licensing Act helped to facilitate a rapid growth of entertainment in the night-time, and firmly entrenched alcohol in the NTE through large pub-chains offering cheap drinks late into the night (Hadfield, 2006). Finally, the chapter examines the research on alcohol and drug consumption in the NTE.

Chapter Four covers the academic interest in door staff and maps how the role of the door supervisor has shifted. Early research focused on how door staff used violence when they were working on the doors of bars and clubs (Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, et al., 2005; Hobbs, Winlow, et al., 2005); or on how door staff were simultaneously dangerous and in danger (Monaghan, 2003, 2004); or on physical threat and relationships between door staff (Calvey, 2000). As referred to above, a key methodological feature of this early research was the use of covert ethnography, where researchers worked on the doors and gathered data on their colleagues (see Calvey, 2000; Winlow *et al.*, 2001; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Monaghan, 2003, 2004). The chapter though, also highlights how professionalisation of the private security industry following the Private Security Industry Act 2001 (PSIA 2001) has reconfigured and commodified the role of the door supervisor. The PSIA 2001 legislated for the creation of a non-governmental organisation (Security Industry Authority (SIA)) to oversee and manage the private security industry as a whole, of which door supervisors are a key part (White, 2010).

Following the chapter on door staff, Chapter Five presents the methods used for this study. It begins with a discussion on research paradigms and their importance within research. The chapter justifies the use of an interpretive paradigm as a suitable methodology for exploratory research and explores the six fundamental characteristics of the paradigm. I then move onto justify my stance as a that of the *dialogic facilitator*, where the researcher aims to allow more voices in the research to be expressed. The chapter then addresses the research design-outlining the process of conducting semi-structured interviews on Zoom. There follows a discussion on the sites of observation, including their selection and the activities undertaken at the sites. The chapter moves on to review the use of convenience sampling, specifically convenience sampling online which follows in the footsteps of previous research using Facebook as a tool to assist the researcher (see also Bhutta, 2012; Norman, Grace and Lloyd,

2014). The research design section closes with a discussion on the sample and its representativeness. No doctoral thesis that focuses on the NTE post 2020 would be complete without some attention afforded to Covid-19, which is addressed in section 5.4. This research was affected by the pandemic in numerous ways, and particularly in regard to the complete closure of the night-time economy for an extended period of time which affected the timing and design of all aspects of fieldwork. I then afford attention to my analysis strategy, where I outline my method of analysis using thematic analysis as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2022), acknowledging that whilst it is a common method of analysis in qualitative research it does have flaws in that it is vulnerable to researcher bias, and I explain how reflexivity should be used to minimise that bias. There is then discussion on the ethics and data management for the project. The chapter closes with an inward look at myself as the researcher at all stages of the research with a section on reflexivity.

Chapter Six presents the first part of the analysis. Broadly, the remit of this chapter is to contextualise the role of the door supervisor and as a result, rather than being a chapter which is entirely analytical it is also descriptive of the role of the door staff. The decision to include this chapter was taken to provide the reader with a deeper understanding of how door staff see their role. This is in-keeping with my role in the research as a *dialogic facilitator* which is outlined in further depth in Chapter Five. Chapter Six covers the fundamental elements of the interviewee's role as a member of door staff. The discussion starts by examining the routes that the interviewees took to get onto the doors and then moves onto a discussion of some of the first shifts that the respondents had and how they see their role. Finally, the chapter discusses the relationship between the door staff and the Security Industry Authority and explores some of the concerns that door staff had with their training, specifically relating to drugs.

The contents of Chapter Seven zooms in on door staff and drugs, beginning with a discussion on the relationships that the interviewees have with venue managers. Discussion moves on to the concerns door staff have about specific drugs, where they disclose that certain drugs are likely to cause the door supervisors more issues than others. The chapter then explores how judgement and experience are a core part of the arsenal that door staff have at their disposal in policing drugs. The chapter then moves inside the venues and explores the

techniques that door staff use when policing intoxication inside bars, pubs and clubs. Toilets are a double-edged sword for people using them as a location to consume drugs as while the cubicles provide hidden spaces for drug consumption, frequent visits can arouse the suspicion of door staff and lead to their intervention. Finally, the chapter examines the relationship between the door staff and the police, albeit entirely from the point of view of the door supervisor. This section exposes a reluctance from the police to get involved with issues that might be seen as only minor infractions of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

Chapter Eight presents an overall discussion about the research and offers some conclusions. The discussion presents a new way of thinking about door staff and their role. Rather than their role being centred on violence and the use of force, it demonstrates how professionalisation has shifted this mode of thinking and demonstrates that the role of the door supervisor is insecure, and that door staff are pushed and pulled in different directions.. They are a contracted form of control whose role is now to ensure the safety of people within an environment replete with chaos. The chapter closes by offering some directions for future research on door staff and highlights a need for research that maps out the wider plural policing network of the NTE.

2 Intoxication and the UK: A Historical View

2.1 Introduction

Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair once described heavy drinking as “a new British disease” (Yeomans, 2015, p. 2). This diagnosis of consuming alcohol in large amounts and their associated dangers being a new phenomenon is however rather myopic. Yeomans states that “the Georgian ‘gin panics’ and the Victorian temperance movement were vivid historical manifestations of mass anxiety about alcohol consumption. The idea that either heavy drinking or concerns about heavy drinking are recent occurrences is, therefore, a fallacy” (p.3). However, the quotation from Tony Blair highlights a widespread short-sightedness when considering intoxication in the United Kingdom. Much of the contemporary academic literature on the night-time economy often lacks reference to the wider history of intoxication and where there are discussions on the historical aspects of intoxication in the recent night-time economy literature, the threads of this evolution are rarely unpicked in any detail, with one author writing “the commercial development of British dance halls and night clubs evolved out of the music halls and gin palaces of the 19th century which increased in popularity in the 20th century to become a key social space for young adults at the end of the Second World War” (Measham, 2004, p. 338), with no further elaboration.

There is a need to explore the historical links between intoxication and control, especially in relation to door staff. This is important because not only does this provide a unique point of view of the contemporary night-time economy, but it also shows how deep the roots between intoxication and control in the UK run. By exploring these historical links between control and intoxication it highlights that there has historically been a desire for people to go out into the night and get intoxicated and that these intoxicated people have always come under some sort of control. The initial control of intoxication in the 18th & 19th Century had the aim of keeping workers fit for labour in order to boost private interests (Nicholls, 2009). The aim in the 20th Century was similar, but focused on ensuring that military personnel were kept sober from cocaine so that they were fit to fight in the First World War (Berridge, 1978c; Kohn, 1999; Shore, 2013; Hallam, 2022).

The research on various periods of intoxication tends to focus on distinct periods, rarely drawing together the epochs, for example Kohn (1999, 2001) lends his focus to consumption of cocaine in the early 20th Century. The result of this is that each period where intoxication is concerned looks distinct. This chapter, whilst it is structured chronologically, aims to bring together these separate literatures to highlight the similarities in the controlling of intoxication over time. Doing so will show how intoxicants have been used by all sections of society and the methods governments have employed in order to control those who explore altered states of consciousness. It also begins to locate intoxication in the night, which is a salient element in this thesis.

The following section is designed to give the reader a broad overview of the history of intoxication in the United Kingdom and examines three intoxicants: alcohol, opium and cocaine. Each intoxicant has its own section although there is some overlap in the timeline between opium consumption and cocaine consumption. I have chosen to focus on the elements of intoxication that stirred up a (moral) panic within the ruling classes and to provide examples of how legislators, police, medical societies and magistrates have all contributed to the attempts to control inebriation. This section draws upon journal articles, textbooks, and contemporaneous literature. By drawing on writings from the relevant time periods I aim to provide a more vivid account of how intoxication, from various intoxicants, has long been a central tenet of British life.

The starting point for this section is 'the Gin Craze'. There are two key reasons for starting at this point. Firstly, the increase in alcohol harms in the UK in the last 50 years has been likened to that of the Georgian gin craze (Nutt, 2012). Moreover, the heavy public drinking of gin that caused widespread consternation represents the first example of well-documented public intoxication and has even been described as "the first modern drug" (Warner, 2002, p. 2). The fears that surrounded the consumption of Gin during the Georgian era have been likened to waves of concern about intoxication in the modern era (Nutt, 2012), particularly the response to the 'second summer of love', where large groups of people met, raved, and consumed ecstasy (Colin, 2009). Secondly, 'the gin craze' occurred at a period of British history where the economy was at a point of transition. The obsession with gin began towards the end of

the industrial revolution when the economic focus shifted from agriculture to manufacturing, and there were related concerns that the working classes would not be fit for work (Warner *et al.*, 2001a; Warner, 2002). The chapter then moves on to discuss opium use and the policing measures that were employed to control the ensuing intoxication. The third section reviews the literature on cocaine use in nightclubs in the early 1900s and throughout the First World War. Before concluding I bring the discussion up to date by outlining some of the global drug policy developments which paved the way for the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (MDA 1971). Some of the harms associated with the MDA 1971 are then discussed. The chapter closes with some concluding comments and draws the literature together.

2.2 The Gin Craze: “Drunk for a Penny, Dead Drunk for Tuppence”

2.2.1 Contextualising the Gin Panic

In 1751 English artist William Hogarth released two prints. The first print, *Beer Street*, depicts a joyous scene, replete with contented people who are full of smiles and laughter, with mugs of beer in their hands. Some of them are embracing each other, whilst those who are on their own simply look pleased to be there. The second print, *Gin Lane*, shows a very different scene. It depicts a nefarious looking street, with angry looking people, who are gaunt, severe and in some cases skeletal. A mother is sitting on some stairs and her child has fallen away from her grasp and is in the process of falling to the ground. She looks entirely unbothered. There is an air of violence about the image. There is also a strong sense from the comparison of both images, that the distilled spirit, gin, is to blame for the latter hellscape.

Hogarth released these prints in support of an act of parliament, the Sales of Spirits Act 1750, which was designed to curb what those in power saw as a drink that was rendering the lower classes unfit for work. At the time of Hogarth’s prints, gin was a relatively new commodity, as was the consumption of spirits generally, which only took hold in the United Kingdom at the beginning of the 17th Century when brandy was imported from France. By 1643, distilled spirits were “sufficiently common in England to be included among the luxuries subject to the excise duties newly imposed by Parliament” (Warner, 2002, p. 25).

Gin began to gain popularity in the UK when William of Orange took the throne in 1688. He set about popularising the Dutch spirit, Geneva, which was soon shortened to gin. The invention of gin can be credited to Franciscus de la Boe, also known as Dr. Sylvius, of the University of Leyden. It was Dr Sylvius who first redistilled a pure malt spirit with juniper berries which gave the drink a taste that was both smooth and palatable (Warner, 2002). As gin became more popular in the UK, it created a national fervour. It did so for several reasons. Initially the production and consumption of gin marked a departure from the importation and consumption of spirits from France as it had none of the “popish connotations that adhered to brandy” (Nicholls, 2011, p. 64) but it was also a new and popular product that could be made from British materials. Gin became a symbol of Britishness as well as an economic imperative worth pursuing. To make the most of this new commodity, the law makers in Parliament took two drastic steps: within a year of William’s coronation, foreign imports of brandy and aqua vitae were banned and in 1690 the monopoly of the London Guild of Distillers was nullified (Nicholls, 2011). Dismantling of the guild, which had imposed strict trade requirements on spirits, meant that anybody was free to produce the in-demand spirit without the need for a license of any kind. Gin was unleashed, unregulated and most of all, cheap.

A key feature of the new gin market was the lack of any regulations on production, which encouraged the free trade of gin, meaning that “gin was a commodity nurtured in that ideal modern marketplace in which supply is left to find a natural level with demand” (Nicholls, 2009, p. 36). The primary beneficiaries of the gin boom were the landed classes, as they were able to sell their surplus grain to distillers to then be turned into the profitable and in-demand liquor (White, 2003; Rogers, 2013). The demand for gin was high at the beginning of the century and in 1700 the estimated consumption of gin in a year was estimated to be at about half a gallon per person. By the 1720s the domestic based distillers had become a powerful economic juggernaut (Warner, 2002), and by 1730 London was home to approximately 1,500 distilleries (Rogers, 2013). Within 20 years the economic prowess of the distillers became apparent as consumption of gin per person had nearly tripled with estimates suggesting that around 1.3 gallons of gin per year were being consumed (Nicholls, 2009).

As gin was unlike beer or ale, which were both regulated products and could only be sold in licensed premises, it could be found, purchased, and consumed in locations such as “alehouses, taverns, and coffeehouses but also in chandelier’s shops, cellars, backrooms and street stalls” (Rogers, 2013, p. 133). However, the rise in consumption of gin was not without opposition and proponents of the anti-gin movement were not afraid to make their voices heard. The dissenters raised concerns over “public drunkenness, high morbidity and mortality rates and the neglect of children by their drunken mothers” (Herring, Berridge and Thom, 2008, p. 479).

2.2.2 Legislative Measures to Control Intoxication

In the March of 1734 Judith Defour was hanged at the gallows for the murder of her two-year-old daughter, Mary Cullender, in the previous year. Judith had murdered her and sold her clothes on the booming second-hand clothes market to raise money for her addiction to gin. The story was told and printed in a popular 1736 pamphlet against dram drinking¹, which was written by Thomas Wilson, and it was entitled *Distilled Spiritous Liquors, the Bane of the Nation* (Rogers, 2013, p. 132). Thomas Wilson was an avid campaigner for the moral crusade on gin during the 1730s which played a key role in the establishment of the Gin Act of 1736. This campaign was not the first time that people had called out for more stringent controls on the popular new product. At the start of the 1720s magistrates and preachers were calling for more stringent control mechanisms to be placed upon the gin trade because of the dramatic uptake in the consumption of the spirit (Warner, 2002; Nicholls, 2009). These calls for stricter regulations were borne out of “the ever more visible social effects of gin consumption” which sparked trepidation, even from the closest allies of the distillers (Nicholls, 2009, p. 37).

Gin became more popular amongst the lower classes because, compared to beer or ale, it was much cheaper and stronger, so one could get drunker and spend less (Rogers, 2013). Moreover, the beer trade was one that was stringently regulated and highly taxed so there existed a market for a potent and cheap drink (White, 2003). An extract from *Gentlemen’s Weekly* cited in an article by Peter Clark suggests that “dram drinking has been a practise

¹ Gin was served in ‘drams’ and so consumption of gin colloquially became known as ‘dram drinking’

among the poorer sort because they could be made merry with distilled spirits cheaper than they could with any other liquor” (Clark, 1988, p. 65). The upper classes were imbibing citron waters and cherry brandy all the while lamenting how much disposable income the poorer people were spending on drink and expressing concerns that the workers would become idle or lose their discipline (Rogers, 2013). There was a broad support for measures that were designed to at least reduce the consumption of gin within the labouring classes and this support did not go unnoticed by those in power (White, 2003).

The panic and anxiety among the upper echelons of Georgian society about the consumption of alcohol forced the hand of parliament who in 1729 passed the first piece of legislation which aimed to put a dent in the monumental consumption of gin in England. The legislation imposed a license fee of £20 for all retailers of gin and a £10 fine for anyone caught selling gin in the streets (White, 2003). The legislation also provided for an excise duty to be placed upon spirits, but the literature is unclear how much the excise duty was with Nichols (2009) suggesting it was 2 shillings and White (2003) 5 shillings. The legislation was initially a campaign that was headed by “the Middlesex bench, the royal College of Physicians, and the Middlesex grand jurymen” (White, 2003, p. 40). The important point here is that the license fee was designed to be so astronomically high, that it would mean most places would not be able to afford the fee. However, the Act of 1729 was a failure and ultimately repealed in 1733 due to a widespread evasion of the law (Warner, 2002; White, 2003). Repealing the Act angered many who saw it as parliament abandoning their duty to their citizens (Nicholls, 2009). Levels of drunkenness were on the rise, and this did not signal the end for attempting to control the production of spirits, rather it spurred people in power into trying even harder to attempt to bring the situation under control.

Pressure was applied on Parliament to act from numerous people all with different interests including (but not limited to) various London justices, Thomas Wilson, the Bishop of Sodor, Stephen Hales (a physician), and Joseph Jekyll (White, 2003; Nicholls, 2009) and in 1736 an act was passed that placed such stringent regulations on the retail of gin it was akin to prohibition (Nicholls, 2009). The 1736 Gin Act placed a license fee of £50 onto anyone who wanted to sell gin in quantities of less than 2 gallons and also placed a duty of 20 shillings per gallon on all spirits (Nicholls, 2009). These very high fees made the retail of spirits a very

expensive venture, but at the time it was seen as a necessity, as in the words of the Act itself, excessive gin drinking was “very common especially amongst the people of lower and inferior rank, the constant and excessive use whereof tends greatly to the destruction of the healths, rendering them unfit for useful labour and business, debauching their morals, and inciting them to all manner of vices” (quoted in Nicholls, 2009, p. 38). The 1736 Act had more gravitas as there was additional activism from moral reformers of the time (White, 2003).

Nicholls (2009) highlights the tension between the class system of the era and gin consumption. The 1736 Act implies that those in power need to have the lower classes fit and healthy so that they can be useful and make the upper classes money. Indeed, Nichols & Berridge (2020, p. 14) argue that “concerns about substance use are never simply about substances themselves or their specific intoxicating effects. They are always about *who* takes them, in what contexts and with what perceived impacts on social order, cohesion or control”. In this regard the desire to control intoxication from gin suggests that the upper echelons of society during the gin panics were attempting to keep workers who were fit and able to continue to work. Rather unsurprisingly, the upper members of society were never concerned with *their* intoxication, but rather the intoxication of those they saw as beneath them thus protecting their economic interests. Interestingly, again, the 1736 Act refrained from placing sanctions on the production of the spirit, focusing only on the retailing of them, again highlighting the entrenched lobbying power of the distillers (Warner, 2002; Rogers, 2013). Not only that, but the Act struck fear into farmers who were worried that the “vital outlet” for the sale of their surplus grain was under threat (White, 2003, p. 41). The Gin Act 1736 appears as an attack on the vices of the working classes of the time, attempting to limit their consumption and increase their productivity for the sole purposes of making money. The above quotation from the Act appears to suggest that it was only the lower classes in England who had a drink problem, whereas prominent writer Daniel Defoe stated that being drunk was a “national vice” throughout all of the English classes at the time (Nicholls, 2009, p. 79).

2.2.3 Policing of Gin

The Acts of Parliament relating to gin, once introduced, required enforcing. The enforcement of the legislation relied upon the use of informants who operated “in the absence of strong

external mechanisms for apprehending and prosecuting malefactors” (Warner and Ivis, 1999, p. 302). Informers were usually already employed elsewhere in other courses of employment, and they worked either alone or in pairs, looking for a way to supplement their often meagre income (Warner and Ivis, 1999; Warner, 2002). There is little evidence that these informants were acting out of spite or a desire to change people’s moral standing on intoxication (Warner and Ivis, 1999). One of the weaknesses of the Gin Act of 1736 was that it failed to appoint any prohibitive measures on spirits that could be used by people in medical professions when they were making up ointments or remedies for the sick (Warner *et al.*, 2001a; Warner, 2002). This loophole was exposed by informants. The informants would pretend to be medical professionals and would say that they were preparing medical remedies for loved ones who were ill and approach publicans or manufacturers of gin in the hopes of procuring gin. If they were sold gin, they then took the spirit as evidence to a Magistrate’s court to be used against whomever had sold the spirit (Warner, 2002). Cases were tried before magistrates and Warner suggests that around 12,000 defendants had been tried and convicted by 1738. The punishments varied from a £10 fine (with £5 going to the informant) to a prison sentence which was “by contemporary standards, a small fortune, exceeding the annual wages of many female domestics in the capital” (Warner and Ivis, 1999, p. 303).

However, this form of citizen control did little to curb the consumption of gin but did make producers and retailers more cautious of their clientele. Furthermore, informants put themselves at risk of severe injury from beatings, as informing on illegal sellers meant “they threatened the one place where working men and women were able to meet, share a drink, and perhaps find a job in hard times” (Warner, 2002, p. 137). This meant that informers were choosing to put their own bodies on the line as a means of upholding the law and making a considerable sum of money quickly. Even though informants were assisting in the policing of intoxication, the government of the time were still fighting a losing battle as intoxication was rife.

There is also evidence of informers being used by excisemen² during the gin panics (Warner, 2002). In this modality of controlling intoxication, the tax officers assumed a central role in

² Also referred to as taxmen. The language is used interchangeably in the literature.

targeting gin producers. To do this, the tax officers would recruit informants to their network to reveal the locations of the illicit distilleries. Once the locations were discovered, bailiffs and constables would be sent by order of the excisemen to collect the fines from distilleries or serve warrants for arrests (Warner and Ivis, 1999; Warner, 2002). At this point in history, constables were not warranted policemen but were ordinary citizens who were compelled to volunteer their time in holding public office for a year to assist in upholding the law (Warner, 2002). These constables were upholding the law in their neighbourhoods often having to choose between the duty to their role or loyalty to their fellow neighbours, with the latter frequently taking precedent (Warner and Ivis, 1999; Warner, 2002).

There is evidence that, when it came to controlling illicit gin production and sales, the burden was mainly upon the voluntary constables and the tax officers. Whilst government set out the legislation, it was left to the taxmen to harness informants so that they could gather information on illegal gin sellers to take to the Magistrates' courts for executable warrants. Evidence gathered from the warrants was used against the producers and sellers of gin in their prosecutions. It is also worth pointing out that the excisemen would often target the larger producers and retailers of gin because they were more likely to be able to afford the fines that would be handed out (Warner and Ivis, 1999; Warner, 2002). By utilizing informants, the tax officers would place the informants in danger from reprisals from angry members of the communities that were being targeted which intimates that there is a vulnerability when people are put up to this task in that some of the wider population can use violence as a response when their access to alcohol is either restricted or denied (Warner and Ivis, 1999; Warner, 2002).

2.3.4 Concluding the Gin Craze

The final key Act of Parliament in response to the gin craze was the Sales of Spirits Act 1750, more commonly known as the Gin Act 1751. In the words of Nicholls, the act "was designed not to reinforce gin's outlaw status, but instead drag it into the orbit of respectability" (Nicholls, 2009, p. 47). In order to give gin a more respectable veneer the Act added a further 20 shillings onto the price of a license and ensured that licenses would only be granted to publicans who had working out of rented establishments costing at least £10 per year and

who had also been donating to the church and the poor (Nicholls, 2009). Whilst the 1751 Act is said to signal the end of the gin craze (Yeomans, 2015) one must question the efficacy of the various acts of parliament designed to reduce the consumption of spirits. In an interesting piece of research, Warner et al (2001a), demonstrate that any reduction in consumption after the passing of a gin related acts was only ever short lived, with consumption eventually increasing after a short-lived decline.

Overall, the legislative measures did have some impact on consumption of gin, but its effect was only ever short lived. Rather than targeting the smaller sellers, legislation, and the will of the excisemen focused on the larger producers, in part knowing that they would be more likely to be able to afford the fines for illegal gin production (Warner and Ivis, 1999; Warner *et al.*, 2001a; Warner, 2002). Importantly, the policing of intoxication during the gin panic has been the role of Magistrates and the tax man. It has relied on volunteers and informants to elucidate the authorities about transgressions committed by producers. As time moved on so did patterns of intoxication, and predicably so did the concerns about the new forms of intoxication. The attention now turns to ‘the opium epidemic’.

2.3 Opium: Consumption and Control in Victorian Britain

2.3.1 From an Indian Field to a British Apothecary: The Trading of Opium

The poppy is a beautiful and rather innocuous looking flower, connected with the image of going over the top of the trenches in fields of France or Belgium during World War I. The petals of the flower are delicate and short lived, falling off to reveal a pod whose contents often contain benign offerings – seeds that are used in cooking and health remedies. Poppies make up “a large botanical family of 28 genera and over 250 individual species” (Booth, 1997, p. 1) but this section is concerned with only one of those species, the *Papaver somniferum*. It is this species that produces opium, a powerful narcotic that has seeped into many aspects of human life. There have been references to opium from as early as the 3rd Century BC (Norn, Kruse and Kruse, 2005). Until the 13th Century, opium appears to have been used unproblematically but at this point in history psychoactive substances were castigated by religious leaders as a short-

cut to reaching God and so “intoxication and drug use was therefore linked at a very early stage to the idea of deviance, rebellion and heresy” (Buxton, 2006, p. 6). Much like gin, opium came to grip Britain in its intoxicating hold and became the subject of fierce political debate and control.

Before any detailed discussion of opium intoxication and control, it is important to explain how opium use developed in the UK. Although opium has a long and rich history as an analgesic, this section aims to examine its use in the United Kingdom during the Victorian era so only a brief history shall be presented here (for a fuller discussion on the history of opium see Booth, 1997; Berridge, 1999; Ul Haq, 2000). The history of opium and its recreational use in relation to this section starts in 1501 with the Portuguese, who discovered the cultivation of poppies and the production of opium when they landed in India (Buxton, 2006). During this time the social preference of the Portuguese moved away from smoking tobacco and towards smoking opium and the merchants “concentrated the sale of Indian opium to the Chinese market. The Portuguese were therefore responsible for transforming the context of opium use from pain relief to leisure activity” (Buxton, 2006, p. 7).

The flow of opium would however eventually come west. It did so as the British East-India Company (EIC) emerged as a fierce contestant within the burgeoning capitalist order of the 17th century, transporting luxury goods such as silk and silver and drugs such as tobacco and opium back to British shores (Breen, 2022). The EIC’s initial strategy was to keep levels of production and cultivation low, so that prices for it could be kept high (Buxton, 2006). However, the EIC soon reneged on that policy as fierce competition from the Dutch and high demand from China provided a good reason to do so, and thus they increased the volumes of opium they exported in the latter half of the 18th century. Demand for opium was so insatiable that it is claimed food crops were destroyed to make space available for poppy plants which reduced the availability of food, contributing to the death of a third of people in the Bengal region due to famine in 1770 (Ul Haq, 2000; Chaudhury, 2003; Buxton, 2006).

The EIC assumed a large role in the production of opium, dividing it into two classes (Buxton, 2006). Akbar opium was sold to consumers in India and Provision opium was prepared for export, sold through the EIC’s own auction houses in Calcutta (Buxton, 2006, p. 9). Exports of

opium from India to China were estimated to be 127 metric tons by 1800 but this was soon dwarfed in 1857 as 6,372 metric tons of opium were shipped out of India (Ul Haq, 2000, p. 27). This commodity was a core source of revenue for Britain as sales of opium “contributed 11 per cent of total revenues accruing to the British administration in India. By the 1850s, this had increased to 17 per cent” (Buxton, 2006, p. 10). Supply of opium into Britain tended to come into London from Turkey as the Turkish opium was deemed to be a higher quality than Indian opium (Booth, 1997) and the wholesale markets would sell opium along with other drugs and spices. The use of opium was completely unregulated until the Pharmacy Act of 1868 was introduced (discussed further below), and even after this Act restrictions were still minimal (Berridge, 2013). Opium products were widely available, with wholesalers preparing their own products such as:

opiate lozenges, compound powder of opium, opiate and its derivative, morphine, were advised by doctors to treat all sorts of illnesses too. Fascination with the drug grew ever larger and mentions of the drug were appearing in popular culture, references to opium surfaced at a time that “opium became associated with mystery and evil (Berridge, 2013, p. 77).

It is these products that were consumed on a daily basis in the United Kingdom. These products could be used either medicinally or recreationally, and the distinction between the two is often blurred. What follows is a discussion on opium use in the Victorian era.

2.3.2 Opium Use in the United Kingdom

Throughout the late 18th and 19th century the use of opium was widespread and pervaded all parts of society (Booth, 1997). For example, opium was given in the form of laudanum to babies when they were ill, children were sent out to apothecaries to collect opium for their parents and women in the crowds during the ballet would inject themselves with morphine (Walton, 2001). Unlike gin during the Georgian era, the use of opium transcended class boundaries (Berridge, 1999). It was a popular drug of choice for mothers of all social classes to give to their babies but for different reasons. Working class women would give their children opium preparations as a sedative so that they were able to go out and work because

there was the fear that should they not be able to do so their families would fall below the subsistence level (Lomax, 1973). Mothers in the upper classes would often have a nurse who looked after the baby for them and would feed the child opiate-based medicines as “some parents really thought that these preparations were beneficial to the infant, and it was widely held that Godfrey’s Cordial³ strengthened the heart” (Lomax, 1973, p. 169). Sadly, this practice resulted in many infant deaths over the years. Lomax suggests that this was because “100 years ago children were not deemed very important. They had no rights, either in the family or out of it, until they reached working age” (Lomax, 1973, p. 176). Opium could be purchased from apothecaries, pharmacies or even grocers and each of these retail outlets tended to prepare their own mixtures and because of the high rate of pollutants in the opium the strength of each preparation would differ (Lomax, 1973; Berridge, 1999, 2013).

Opiates were not just used as a sedative in during the Victorian era, they were also used recreationally. Opiates could be obtained in street markets too, where on Saturday nights “purchases of pills and drops were a regular custom as much as the buying of meat and vegetables” (Berridge, 1999, p. 28). Opium was also used recreationally amongst the working classes in the Fenlands in England (Seddon, 2007). The use of opium in the Fenlands was culturally accepted, and it was even a part of everyday life that the eldest child would be sent to the local shop to buy the opium for the day (Berridge, 2013). It was also used by men in the Fenlands to ward off the symptoms of fever as a result of working in the severe cold as well as using it to allay the boredom of long hours working in the fields (Inglis, 2018). Furthermore, middle class use of opium was widespread, and tinctures of laudanum and other preparations were often enjoyed by the Romantic artists of the era such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Thomas De Quincey both of whom admitted to enjoying opium (Berridge, 1999).

It is worth affording some attention to Thomas De Quincey, who wrote the famous autobiography *Confessions of an Opium Eater* published in 1821 (Booth, 1997; Inglis, 2018). In his work, De Quincey highlighted how his recreational use of opium was often an adjunct to the enjoyment of certain activities (Booth, 1997). De Quincey would often get high on opium and go for long walks because he knew the drug could heighten his sensitivity to outside

³ Godfrey’s Cordial was a brand of opium preparation.

stimuli (Booth, 1997; Berridge, 2013; Inglis, 2018). Interestingly, De Quincey would also use opium and frequent the opera and by doing so he was “able to stretch the pleasure of being in the ordinary world” (Booth, 1997, p. 37). De Quincey venerated opium and suggested that it was the drug – as opposed to himself – that was really the hero of his autobiography referring to the “marvellous agency of opium” (Inglis, 2018, p. 158).

Opium was also finding its way into popular culture and was commonly read about in newspapers and literature. In Victorian England, opium dens in particular had captured the public imagination. One famous commentator described a fictional opium den in following way:

Between a slop-shop and a gin shop, approached by a steep flight of steps leading down to a black gap like the mouth of a cave, I found the den of which I was in search. Ordering my cab to wait, I passed down the steps, worn hollow in the centre by the ceaseless tread of drunken feet and by the light of a flickering oil-lamp above the door I found the latch and made my way into a long, low room, thick and heavy with the brown opium smoke. [...] He had turned his back so that none could see him but I. His form had filled out, his wrinkles were gone, the dull eyes had regained their fire, and there, sitting by the fire and grinning at my surprise, was none other than Sherlock Holmes (Conan-Doyle, 1981, p. 230).

However, despite Conan-Doyle’s description of an opium den as an iniquitous location, they were by all accounts rather less exciting than that. The Victorian construction of an “opium den” was somewhere that opium could be smoked in a social situation, commonly used by Chinese sailors (Berridge, 1999, 2013). Indeed, it was not so much a den as it was a social club, used by the sailors when they were on leave in places such as London, Liverpool or Cardiff (Berridge, 2013). The ‘dens’ were often found in seamen’s lodging houses, and in London these houses were licensed by the London County Council and whilst a license could be repealed if there was evidence of opium smoking, this rule was often ignored (Berridge, 2013). Rather than being dens of iniquity, the social clubs were used by sailors on shore leave and work alike, with evidence suggesting that opium was consumed by the sailors before they would go to work (Berridge, 2013).

Opium was not exclusive to the Victorian era, its use in everyday life carried on well past the turn of the century. Opium parties were common and were brought to the forefront of people's attention after the death of the actress, Billie Carelton in 1918 (Kohn, 2001; Berridge, 2013). These opium parties were frequented by those in demi-monde bohemian circles and would often entail smoking opium in rooms scattered with cushions and duvets for extra comfort, sometimes ending in an orgy (Berridge, 1999, 2013). The recreational use of opium had clearly seeped into many different aspects of life.

Overall, opium use in the Victorian era and the turn of the century was varied. Some used it medicinally, whilst others would use the drug recreationally. The tide against opium was slow to turn, but it started to do so after a series of murders by opium poisoning and subsequent demand for public protection from the press who were also clamouring for government intervention for opium to be distributed by vendors more assiduously (Lomax, 1973). The anti-opium movement is discussed briefly below, before discussing how those seeking intoxication were controlled.

2.3.3 The Anti-Opium Movement

It is difficult to discuss the anti-opium movement without including at least some discussion on the opium wars. Whilst the opium wars are not a key focus for this thesis it is necessary to reflect on them briefly as they are one of the principal reasons that the anti-opium movement gained traction in the Great Britain, which led to legislation designed to control the sale and distribution of opium (Buxton, 2006). The opium wars were in fact two wars fought between the Great Britain and China (in 1839-1842 & 1856-1858) (Berridge, 1999, 2013). Effectively, the wars ignited when China wanted to enforce their prohibition against opium traffic by British merchants of the East India Company (Berridge, 1999). The wars came to an end after the signing of two treaties, the Treaty of Nanking in 1842 and the Treaty of Tientsin in 1858 (Inglis, 2018). The impact of the two wars initiated "the connection between hostile reactions to opium use in the East and changed perceptions of opium in England" (Berridge, 1999, p. 173).

2.3.4 Controlling Opium Use

In reviewing the literature there appear to be two key modalities of controlling the recreational intoxication of opium. The first method gave significant responsibility to pharmacists through (wholly insufficient) legislative measures, and the second method utilised the police force in policing 'opium dens'. There is here again, arguably, a detachment from the Government in the policing of recreational intoxication. The following section will outline both of these modalities.

2.3.4.1 The Pharmaceutical System of Regulation

There is an important back drop to the 1868 Pharmacy Act, which needs to be discussed briefly before the regulation and control can be discussed (for a more in-depth discussion see Berridge, 1999, pp. 113–122). In the mid-1800s there was a considerable effort from medical and pharmaceutical professionals alike to establish themselves as separate and self-regulating bodies (Berridge, 1999). This effort culminated in the establishment of the professional body known as the Pharmaceutical Society in 1841 and the society “sought government backing for its unique educational qualifications and for restriction on trade in the interests of its pharmacist members” (Berridge, 2013, p. 57). This marked the beginning of the professionalisation of the role of the pharmacist (Berridge, 1999, 2013). As a part of their mandate, the Pharmaceutical Society wanted to restrict the availability of the open sale of dangerous poisons, of which opium was one (Berridge, 1999). Until the late 1860s, opium and its myriad preparations were widely available, almost completely unregulated, and available to buy in most shops (Seddon, 2007). Indeed, this availability was entirely in keeping with the laissez-faire approach that dominated the Victorian economy (Seddon, 2007). There was about to be a change in the way that Victorians could procure their drugs and after a long process of deliberation the Pharmacy Act 1868 was enacted (Berridge, 1999, 2005, 2013; Seddon, 2007). The measures that were given to control the intoxication from opium were to only allow sales of opium from registered pharmacists and opium was placed on the second schedule meaning it had to be labelled as a poison, although in reality this measure was wholly insufficient (Berridge, 2013). Opium had to be kept behind the counter and could only be sold to people that the pharmacist knew, and a log of all their sales had to be kept so that it could

be audited (Berridge, 2013). Opium could still be purchased with a prescription so anyone who was able to afford a prescription could still purchase opium and its derivatives unhindered (Berridge, 1978b, 1999, 2013). The responsibility for policing the sales of opium was given to the Pharmaceutical Society, but they were not given sufficient powers to enter into pharmacies and check all the logs (Berridge, 1999).

The 1868 Act did not place any restrictions on consumption or possession, rather it applied restrictions at the point of sale (Seddon, 2007). A result of the Act was that it invested considerable power to pharmacists in the control of the drug (Berridge, 1999). After the initial implementation of the Act, there was a noticeable decline in the number of infant deaths from opium poisoning (Berridge, 1999). In terms of opium, the Act placed it in a scheduled list meaning that it could only be purchased from a pharmacy with a valid prescription (Inglis, 2018), and products containing opiates also had to be labelled as poisons (Buxton, 2006). In this regard, pharmacists “became ‘an unpaid but interested, drug enforcement cadre scattered throughout Great Britain’” (Buxton, 2006, p. 17).

Virginia Berridge argues that prior to any legislative controls, narcotics and their sales were controlled by a lay system of regulation (Berridge, 2005; Seddon, 2007). This placed the control element of regulation onto ordinary people, where selling drugs was almost entirely at the discretion of the vendor. The Pharmacy Act of 1868 altered this mode of drugs regulation and Berridge has termed this the pharmaceutical system of regulation (Berridge, 2005). The responsibility for ensuring that the legislation was adhered to was not one for the Government but for the Pharmaceutical Society (Berridge, 1999; Buxton, 2006). Unfortunately, the voluntary policing from the Society could not be fulfilled as the inspectors were not given the additional powers of entry nor the rights of access to inspect business records or registers of pharmacist (Berridge, 1999). However, the use of the Pharmacy Act to punish illegal sales was rare, as most pharmacists would have likely treated someone asking for smoking opium with great suspicion (Berridge, 2013). Furthermore, those who could afford to buy a prescription were largely unhindered by the Act (Berridge, 1999).

2.3.4.2 The Police

The police were utilized in the control over intoxication, although in relation to opium their use was sparing. As discussed above, Chinese sailors often used their licensed seamen's lodgings as social spaces where recreational opium smoking was engaged in (Berridge, 1999, 2013). The apparent need to police opium dens was often called for by The Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade who framed the Chinese sailors as alien and culturally dissident foreigners, which emphasised the deviant nature of opium consumption and sped-up the need for increasingly formal controls of the drug (Berridge, 1978b). Early discussions of the 1909 Shanghai Opium Commission revealed that the police had information on some of the Chinese boarding houses and that "it seems to have been tacitly accepted that opium smoking would probably take place in a fair number of them" (Berridge, 1978a, p. 6).

The literature on the policing of recreational opium intoxication does appear sparse, but Berridge (2013) does provide one account of this. In 1912, early one morning twenty-nine sailor lodgings in the small Chinese enclave in Limehouse were inspected on suspicion of opium smoking without warning, eleven of which were licensed with the council and the remaining eighteen unlicensed (Berridge, 2013, p. 84). Police raids were not always as successful, often when they raided the houses it would be empty or there would be new sailors moving in who knew nothing of the activities of the previous tenants (Berridge, 1978a, 2013). The police were more focused on the smuggling of opium by Chinese dealers, primarily in London and Liverpool (Hallam, 2022). Judges who were prosecuting infractions for recreational use also appear to be relaxed in their tolerance towards opium smoking (Hallam, 2022). It was not until half-way through the First World War that the policing of intoxication came under increasing political scrutiny, with concerns primarily surrounding cocaine use which is discussed in the following section.

2.4 Cocaine Use in Great Britain

2.4.1 Contextualising Cocaine

This section discusses the use of cocaine in nightclubs from around 1900 to 1919. It demonstrates how fear of the effects of cocaine played out in London's West End in the years

preceding and during the First World War. The First World War has been described by some commentators as a key period in the establishment of state regulation in the United Kingdom with regard to drugs (Hallam, 2022). At the turn of the 20th Century a series of small illicit drug scenes began to emerge (Kohn, 1999, 2001; Hallam, 2022). These scenes were not an anomaly of the times as other scenes continued to emerge during and immediately after the First World War (Kohn, 1999, 2001; Hallam, 2022). There are initially three questions that will need to be answered in relation to these illicit drug scenes: what was being consumed? Where is it being consumed? And who is consuming? Once these questions have been answered, then the discussion can explore more widely how the intoxication was controlled through legislative measures and subsequently policed.

One of the drug subcultures was the opium scene, which was most strongly rooted in Liverpool and London, both cities were focal points of Britain's international opium trade (Booth, 1997; Berridge, 1999; Hallam, 2022). As opium is discussed in greater detail above, little attention will be paid to it in this section, but it would be remiss to not mention that the consumption of opium continued well into the 20th Century. Other emerging illicit drug scenes of interest are the cocaine scene based in the West End of London and the 'white' drug cultures of the late 1920s (Hallam, 2022). The key drug within these scenes is (unsurprisingly) cocaine but other drugs were consumed in these subcultures including morphine and heroin (Hallam, 2018) (described in detail above). The sale of cocaine, along with opium, during war time was restricted under the far-reaching Defence of the Realm Act 1914 Section 40B (DORA) and could only be prescribed – prescriptions were only for single use – by medical practitioners, dentists and veterinary surgeons (Hallam, 2022). If someone was caught in possession of cocaine, the law stated that they must have a prescription for it (Kohn, 1999, 2001; Hallam, 2022). The government were prompted to use DORA to control the distribution of cocaine partly due to anxieties that British and allied troops who were on leave were consuming the drug in entertainment venues in the West End of London (Berridge, 1978c; Hallam, 2022). However, it could be obtained from pharmacists if they were prepared to disregard the legislation that governed its sale and often, cocaine was procured from pharmacists in the West End (Hallam, 2018, 2022).

These drugs, and in particular cocaine, and their effects were deemed to be an excellent pairing with the rapidly evolving entertainment sector of the early 1920s which was transforming from a service that was primarily focused on catering to the élite into a more modern consumer industry (Kohn, 1999). The venues that were subject to this change were primarily night-clubs and dance halls. These venues were located in the West End of London and became associated with drugs, music of African-American origin and, the pursuit of pleasure for pleasure's sake (Kohn, 1999, 2001). Kohn has described the West End as "a zone of casual employment with no clear boundaries between the legitimate and the criminal sectors" (1999, p. 109). The penchant for nightclubs began in 1911 (Kohn, 1999) and night clubs and dance halls were seen as key social spaces for young people during the First World War and the ensuing years (Measham, 2004). These nightclubs had to be registered under the Licensing Act of 1910 (Shore, 2013). Clubs had to be registered at the petty sessional court of the district, and once registered the police had no right of entry to the club without a valid warrant (Shore, 2013). Kohn has suggested that because of the nature of nightclubs at this time and the interweaving of drug consumption, sex, dancing and other forms of hedonism that these clubs were pushed underground and so unlicensed, therefore underground nightclubs began to appear in London (Kohn, 1999, 2001).

These clubs were spaces where class boundaries were transcended (Kohn, 1999). And the West End at the time was a space with blurred boundaries between the legitimate and illegitimate:

people of all ranks and stripes would rub shoulders – indeed this was one of the main objections to such establishments. West End nightlife, based on theatres and clubs was an island of social promiscuity in an era of rigid class boundaries. It was a vertical section through a horizontal society. (Kohn, 1999, p. 109).

These objections were certainly more heightened during the First World War, where soldiers on leave were frequenting these venues and imbibing themselves with alcohol and getting high on cocaine (Berridge, 1978c; Kohn, 1999; Shore, 2013). Soldiers were not the only ones who were consuming cocaine in nightclubs either. The nightclubs provided entertainment and dancing late into the night there were strings of chorus girls, dancers and prostitutes all

engaged in casual employment. Sniffing cocaine gave them all the energy to perform and work well into the small hours of night (Kohn, 1999). These supposed dens of iniquity posed issues for the government of the time who were keen to ensure that soldiers were fit to fight during the War. In the interwar years, there were further concerns that cocaine was creating issues of disorder (Shore, 2013) and these concerns were magnified by a press who realised that the salacious stories of nightclubs, intoxication and criminality gripped readers (Kohn, 1999). To bring the intoxicated under control, successive governments introduced various sets of legislation and employed various policing tactics.

2.4.2 Laws, Licensing and Loopholes

The purpose here is to outline the various legislative measures that were enacted during this period to control intoxication from cocaine. Although cocaine was earmarked as the primary social menace, measures were also taken to curtail intoxication from alcohol. Prior to introduction of DORA regulation 40B “the legislative control of narcotics was exercised by means of the poisons and pharmacy laws” (Berridge, 1978c, p. 286). These laws concerned themselves only with the sale of opium and its derivatives and cocaine but provided no restrictions on either the possession or the use of the drugs (Berridge, 1978c). The late 19th Century had seen various attempts to control the sale of alcohol with the passing of various Licensing Acts which attempted to reduce the number of licensed premises and placed restrictions on the opening hours of pubs (Shore, 2013). There were also Acts that aimed to control drugs more robustly. The passing of control measures for intoxicants continued into the early 20th Century.

In 1902 the Licensing Act created a distinction between proprietary clubs and members’ clubs (Shore, 2013). The distinction between them was that in the proprietary clubs the premises and stock were the possession of a proprietor and as such they needed to have a licence, whereas a members club meant that the property which included the stocks of alcohol were the property of the members and so these clubs did not require a license (Shore, 2013). Eight years later the Licensing Act of 1910, as mentioned briefly above, stipulated that clubs had to be registered with the petty sessional court of the district and that if police wanted to search it they were obliged to obtain a warrant. Moreover, to obtain a warrant “the police had to

gather enough information to satisfy a court that a club was conducted in such a way as to constitute grounds for striking it off the register. It was the inherent tension in this situation that would fuel much of the debate about police powers” (Shore, 2013, p. 187). In terms of drugs legislation, the Pharmacy Act of 1908 “placed cocaine, morphine, opium and derivatives containing more than 1 per cent of morphine under greater control” (Berridge, 1978c, p. 286). The responsibility for policing this change in regulations was not left to the police, but rather to the Pharmaceutical Society who were under the general control of the Privy Council Officer, who by all accounts, exercised their control very laxly (Berridge, 1978c).

The start of the War ushered in a strident moralism to policy making (Kohn, 1999). David Lloyd George declared in 1915 that “we are fighting Germans, Austrians and drink, and so far as I can see the greatest of those deadly foes is drink” (taken from Kohn, 1999, p. 110). To demonstrate important sobriety would be to the war effort the King announced in April 1915 that he and his family were abstaining from consuming alcohol for the duration of the War (Kohn, 1999, 2001). Other policies included shorter opening hours for London pubs, serving only two hours at lunch and three hours in the evening, beer had its alcohol content lowered and the price of it trebled (Kohn, 1999). There was a positive effect to these policies, consumption of alcohol halved, and drunkenness convictions were cut by three quarters, but there was a downside. In the light of these measures “any other form of intoxication would stand out all the more starkly” (Kohn, 1999, p. 110). There was one glaring issue with the policy limiting serving times, it failed to include nightclubs and so, taking advantage of the loophole, they continued to serve well into the small hours of the night (Kohn, 1999, 2001) and because of high price of alcohol and the lax policing of cocaine, the drug was consumed in the nightclubs (Berridge, 1978c).

The War and its impact changed the focus of British narcotics policy and brought the government into a more central position in managing the issue. However, it was not cocaine that brought about change, but rather pressure from anti-opium interests who placed demands on their parliamentary representatives, supported by shipping companies who had become unwilling smugglers of narcotics. A meeting to discuss “legislation for the strict control of the traffic in opium” was convened and the Home Office was represented by Sir Malcolm Delevigne (Berridge, 1984, p. 20). Delevigne seized the initiative and at the meeting

declared that this was a matter for the police and as such the central authority on this matter should be the Home Office (Berridge, 1978c, 1984). That was not the only policing matter on his mind that concerned narcotics, he was aware that cocaine use in the West End was reaching potentially threatening levels and so in 1916 cocaine was included under Section 40 of DORA (Berridge, 1978c). This criminalised the supply of intoxicating drugs to members of the armed forces with the intent of incapacitating them (Hallam, 2022). Notwithstanding these war time regulations, the consumption of cocaine was still commonplace in the West End (Berridge, 1978c, 1984; Kohn, 1999, 2001; Hallam, 2022).

Nightclubs managed to evade the shorter serving times up until November 1915, when the Home Secretary issued the Clubs (Temporary Provisions) Act, although this Act still allowed nightclubs to remain open until midnight on the weekends (Kohn, 1999, 2001). Shortly after however a stricter closing time of nine-thirty was stipulated for restaurants, pubs and nightclubs and as a response the nightclubs went underground. By December 1915 there were supposedly 150 illegal nightclubs in Soho (Kohn, 1999). To try and put a stop to the intoxication, the police were deployed (Hallam, 2022).

2.4.3 Police and Control

The West End had a vibrant recreational drug taking scene even after the passing of DORA 40B (Berridge, 1978c; Hallam, 2022). Furthermore, the restrictions on the drugs “encouraged an illegal network” of cocaine dealers who would sell drugs to soldiers in the West End (Berridge, 1978c, p. 297). It has been suggested that the dealers were getting their cocaine from a number of dubious pharmacies and then selling it on to those in search of intoxication (Berridge, 1978c). However, the police were wise to this occurrence and had set up a surveillance network before the passage of DORA 40B. According to official reports they:

kept observation on the West End thoroughfares, cafes and public houses frequented by soldiers and prostitutes, with a view to locate the person in this illicit trading in cocaine which has to our knowledge here, a very dangerous effect upon the brain of any person who indulges in its use. (quoted in Hallam, 2022, pp. 342–343).

In this history of intoxication, the period during the war represents a period of time that the drugs legislation was enforced by the police. Undercover tactics were used to control intoxication too, two people were sentenced to six months hard labour for selling cocaine to Canadian soldiers following a successful ruse where the use of an undercover sergeant trapped two cocaine dealers (Berridge, 1978c; Hallam, 2022). However, this method had a limited shelf life as the soldiers looking to procure cocaine became wise to the strategy (Berridge, 1978c). The efficacy of policing intoxication under DORA is questionable as after nine months of the laws being in place, there had only been a small number of prosecutions, six of which were for cocaine (Berridge, 1978c, p. 300).

The police remained the primary form of policing of intoxication in nightclubs, even after the First World War had ended (Berridge, 1978c; Shore, 2013). Moreover, after the war focus on the policing of intoxication in the illegal nightclubs intensified dramatically (Shore, 2013). Shore (2013) focusses on the police campaign against nightclubs with a particular focus on one nightclub owner, Kate Meyrick, which is worth affording attention to here. Kate Meyrick was of Irish extraction and owned several nightclubs in Soho during the early 1900s, she was given the nickname 'Queen of the Nightclubs' in the Press and has been further described by Judith Walkowitz "as the fixed point in the shifting terrain of London's hedonistic action environment" (2012, p. 213). Shore (2013) builds on this demonstrating how, even after 10 prosecutions for breaches of licensing conditions, Kate Meyrick was able to open new nightclubs in Soho. How Meyrick was able to achieve this is unclear, however in her research Shore does also highlight that it could have been "a product of her sheer tenacity, and relentless determination to succeed in the nightclub business" (Shore, 2013, p. 190) The policing tactics used were by all accounts underhand as they "were intent on controlling and supervising nightclubs" (Shore, 2013, p. 190). The police often targeted the Meyrick venues as use of them was deemed to be the "habitual resort of women of ill repute" (Shore, 2013, p. 191). Moreover, the Home Office during Meyrick's time as the Queen of Nightclubs was headed up by the puritanical and stridently moralistic Sir William Joynson-Hicks who was determined to 'clean-up' London (Shore, 2013). What has surfaced here is more evidence that the targeting of venues is not concerned with the substance itself or its intoxicating effect but rather it is about who is consuming it and in what context they are taking it (Nicholls and Berridge, 2020).

For the police, getting into a nightclub was difficult. Nightclubs often required its customers to be and entry into the nightclubs required a password, and so the police had to don their plain attire and infiltrate the clubs (Shore, 2013). The aims of the police are somewhat unknown, but it appears likely that the police were attempting to contain the nightclubs rather than close them down (Shore, 2013). Meyrick would often be reprimanded and punished for her breaches of the law, but would often start new ventures (Shore, 2013). This tells us that there is a fluidity to the nightclub industry, it was dynamic and adaptable much like the night-time economy (NTE) is in the present day (Shaw, 2010).

2.5 Drug Policy: From Prescription to Prohibition

The main focus so far for this chapter has been to elucidate the reader on the historical aspects of drug consumption and their controls by exploring three distinct intoxicants. Because of its centrality to this thesis, it is also salient to provide the reader with an account of the developments of British drug policy following the 1920s up to the present era. This section does not look at the story of individual drugs but instead examines how legislation, policies and international conventions generally focusing on drugs have evolved up to the present day. There is not the space within this thesis to provide a comprehensive overview of the evolution of drug policy within the UK (see Seddon, 2010 for a more in depth analysis) but rather, this section shall provide a brief overview. The discussion highlights similarities in the rationale for adopting and implementing new legislation to control drugs; in that subcultures, youth and fears over hedonistic drug consumption continue to help inform the debate (see Yates, 2002; Davis, 2005).

2.5.1 The Dangerous Drugs Act 1920 and the Rolleston Committee 1926

In the years preceding the First world War there were a number of international conferences (see Figure 1 below) and conventions that discussed a unified approach to global drug policy, including the Shanghai Conference 1909 and the Hague Conference 1912 (Buxton, 2006). The Shanghai Conference was significant as it “laid the foundations for international dialogue on

opium and other drugs” (Buxton, 2006, p. 35). This is arguably the start of the evolution of the international system of control and was “characterized by tension and protracted conflict between the USA and other states” (Buxton, 2006, p. 44) as the USA were keen to enforce a more punitive stance towards drug consumption. Seddon makes the argument that “the period at the turn of the twentieth century, and especially the first two decades of that century, was a transformative one in this field, culminating in some landmark legislative ‘events’” (2010, p. 56). The legislative events to which he alludes are the Harrison Narcotic Act 1914 in the United States of America and the Dangerous Drugs Act 1920 in Great Britain (Seddon, 2010), it is the latter of these two Acts with which this section is primarily concerned.

Date and Place of Convention	Title of Convention	Entry into force
January 1912, The Hague	International Opium Convention	February 1915 & June 1919
February 1915, Geneva	Agreement Concerning the Manufacture of, Internal Trade in, and Use of Prepared Opium	July 1926
February 1925, Geneva	International Opium Convention	September 1928
July 1931, Geneva	Convention for Limiting the Manufacture and Regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs	July 1933
November 1931, Bangkok	Agreement for the Control of Opium Smoking in the Far East	April 1937
June 1936, Geneva	Convention for the Suppression of the Illicit Traffic in Dangerous Drugs	October 1939

Figure 1: Pre-Second World War Drug conventions 1

As discussed above section 40B of DORA was effectively a mechanism for the government to enforce prohibition during the war era, and the Dangerous Drugs Act 1920 made the provisions of Section 40B permanent (Kohn, 2001). The 1920 Act effectively marked the birth of the modern era of drug prohibition in Britain (Seddon, 2010) and was a response to the discussions of the Hague Conference of 1912. The Act enshrined the restrictions on the sale of cocaine and heroin that Section 40B had enforced during the war era and stipulated that they could then only be dispensed upon prescription by a licensed medical professional (Seddon, 2010; Shiner, 2013). Moreover, under the 1920 Act, as it was under DORA, it became an offence to be in possession of substances such as morphine, heroin and cocaine without a valid prescription, but there were no limits placed on the prescribing of these drugs by medical professionals (Shiner, 2013). The Act was the responsibility of the Home Office, with Delevigne as Home Secretary, although there was a weak attempt from the newly created Ministry of Health to take ownership of the 1920 Act (Berridge, 2005). Furthermore, “it became obvious that Delevigne in the Home Office had an essentially short-term and penal conception of the issue. This was a question of ‘stamping out addiction’ through the use of police powers” (Berridge, 2005, p. 12). This is a key moment for drugs legislation and policy as this indicates the turn towards a penal attitude to drug consumption and possession (Berridge, 2005; Buxton, 2006).

The prescription arrangement from the 1920 Act was then confirmed following the conclusion of the 1924-1926 Departmental Committee on Morphine and Heroin Addiction, also known as the Rolleston Committee (Shiner, 2013). The Committee determined that “the administration of morphine and heroin may be regarded as legitimate medical treatment” for those who were being treated for addiction using the method of gradual withdrawal and also for those “for whom, after every effort has been made for the cure of addiction, the drug cannot be completely withdrawn” (Spear, 2002, p. 31).

2.5.2 Post-World War Two Drugs Policy: The Turn to Prohibition

Throughout the 1950s there were concerns, which were exacerbated by the media, that drug use amongst young people was increasing, particularly the use of cocaine, heroin and

cannabis which were predominantly consumed by young people, particularly in jazz clubs (Yates, 2002). Many people were gravitating toward the West End of London, as there were a small number of doctors who were willing to prescribe drugs to people based there (Yates, 2002; Davis, 2005). In response to these concerns, the Interdepartmental Committee on Drug Addiction published a report, often referred to as the first Brain Report after its chairman Lord Brain, in 1961 which “found that there was little need to make any radical change” (Yates, 2002, p. 115). In the following years there were reports in the media that drug use was increasing in London clubs (Yates, 2002) and following sustained pressure from media outlets, the Government reconvened the Committee who acted again under Lord Brain’s guidance. The Second Brain Report was published in 1965 and two and half years later “the recommendations of the report were implemented within the provisions of the Dangerous Drugs Act 1967” (DDA 1967) (Yates, 2002, p. 115).

Essentially, these recommendations were that the core principles of the Rolleston model were to be kept although the prescribing of heroin and cocaine necessitated a special license that was issued from the Home Office. The powers of the police were also extended (Yates, 2002; Davis, 2005). After the implementation of the DDA 1967 illicit drug use in jazz and night clubs continued and shifted from single drug use towards an increasing tendency to use more than one drug, also known as poly-drug use (Davis, 2005). Drug scenes were now dominated by cannabis, cocaine and LSD (Seddon, 2021). The acceleration of poly-drug use meant that “concern grew that opiate abuse would arise from social contact between cannabis users” (Davis, 2005, p. 46). The concern culminated in the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (MDA 1971) which “ratified the 1961 United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs... which continues to provide the basis for one of the harshest drug regimes in Europe (Shiner, 2013, p. 630). The MDA 1971 classifies drugs into three classes, A, B and C, which reflect their (apparent) harm (see Nutt, 2012) and each class has varying penalties attached to them, with the penalties increasing for each class (Shiner, 2013; Seddon, 2021).

Section 1 of the MDA 1971 legislated for the creation of an Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD). The ACMD has a statutory duty to advise the Government on which classification drugs should be placed in based on their harm (Shiner, 2013), although the Government are free to disregard the advice of the council should they wish (Shiner, 2009;

Seddon, 2010). Within MDA 1971 the idea of harm prevention is inherent, and it (supposedly) achieves the prevention through making substances illegal (Potter and Wells, 2021). When the MDA 1971 was first introduced the allocation of drugs to particular classes was said to be provisional and open to review, however, the original classifications have largely remained intact (Shiner, 2009). Ecstasy was added in 1977 and classified as a Class A substance (Shiner, 2009) and the first recommendation to move cannabis from Class B to Class C was first given in 1979 but subsequently rejected (Shiner, 2009). The process of adding a new drug into the MDA 1971 is a time consuming and laborious task (Potter and Wells, 2021), as the banning of a substance is based on its molecular structure and the evidence of harms that the chemical posed and in the time it takes for a substance to be banned chemists can create small changes to the molecular structure of the drugs and create chemicals that produced a similar effect but circumvent the controls of the MDA 1971 (Deen *et al.*, 2021).

In the mid-2000s more of these substances, which could circumvent the MDA 1971, began appearing in recreational drug scenes and came to be known as 'legal highs' as they could be freely purchased either online or through retail outlets known as 'head shops' without prosecution (Deen *et al.*, 2021). New drugs that were evading the scope of the MDA 1971 were appearing increasingly often (Norman, Grace and Lloyd, 2014) and so the Government enacted a new piece of legislation which banned the sale and supply of 'legal highs' (Hill, 2020) and focused the enforcement of the Act on the head shops (Banbury, Lusher and Gudelha, 2018). The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 (PSA 2016) placed a blanket ban on chemicals that could have an effect on the body, although there is a specific exemption within the Act for any substance which can be used as a medicine (Hill, 2020). The Act makes it illegal to sell, supply, import and export the chemicals but it does not criminalise their possession (Banbury, Lusher and Gudelha, 2018).

The legislation of drugs in the United Kingdom has undergone significant changes within the past 100 years. There has been a move away from medical regulation in the early 1900s (Berridge, 2005) to a system which now prohibits drug use outright and criminalises the end user (Babor *et al.*, 2010; Banbury, Lusher and Gudelha, 2018; Robinson, 2020; Daniels *et al.*, 2021; Eastwood, 2021; Potter and Wells, 2021). The two key pieces of legislation which are in force in the United Kingdom are the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and the Psychoactive

Substances Act 2016. The following section outlines some of the harms that stem from the prohibition of drugs.

2.5.2.1 Harms of Prohibition

By 2021, the MDA 1971 had been in force for 50 years (Eastwood, 2021). The MDA 1971 aimed to reduce the harms of drugs but at the same time arguably causes harm itself by curtailing individual autonomy to consume drugs and by imposing punishment on those who do break the law (Potter and Wells, 2021). The justification for this position is neatly articulated by Du Pont and Voth:

a restrictive drug policy is a deterrent to drug use and helps to reduce drug-related costs and societal problems. Although legalization or decriminalization of drugs might reduce some of the legal consequences of drug use, increased drug use would result in harmful consequences (Du Pont and Voth, 1995, p. 461).

This position is arguably based on a flawed utilitarian reasoning which implies that the amount of harm from drugs is wholly dependent on the number of users and that fewer users equates to less total harm (Potter and Wells, 2021). Potter and Wells (2021) have argued that by prohibiting cannabis the MDA 1971 causes more harm than it prevents in that the production and supply of cannabis is unregulated and in the hands of criminals which leads to a more harmful product appearing on the market. Moreover, they also argue that the “imposition of criminal penalties can lead to life-long harms stemming from the stigma of a criminal record beyond the immediate harms of punishment itself” (Potter and Wells, 2021, p. 284). Across the MDA’s lifetime over three million criminal records have been generated for drug offences and there have been 1.3 million recorded police cautions for drug offences, which are flagged in certain criminal record background checks (Transform, 2021).

Harms of prohibition have also been recognised by other academics and Robinson (2020) highlights that the preliminary findings of the Lammy Review demonstrated how prohibition disproportionately harms Black communities. Robinson demonstrates this by showing that

“for every 100 white women handed custodial sentences at Crown Courts for Drug offences, 227 black women were sentenced to custody” (Robinson, 2020, p. 262). The figures for Black women are not too dissimilar as they were 2.3 times more likely to receive a custodial sentence than White women (Robinson, 2020). The cost of policing and enforcing the drug offences and drug-related crime through the criminal justice system amounts to approximately £6.9 billion per year (Transform, 2021).

2.6 Concluding Remarks

In examining three distinct eras of intoxication, this Chapter has shown how initially the control of intoxication from gin was through legislation, policed by excisemen who used informants. These informants were placed in vulnerable situations, as they often faced reprisals from angry members of the public (Warner and Ivis, 1999; Warner, 2002). Indeed, initial concerns over gin were not about the effects of the drink on the human body, but more about how gin would affect the person’s capacity in terms of productivity (Warner, 2002; Rogers, 2013). There are signs here that the issue with intoxication is not concerned with the substance itself nor its intoxicating effect but rather it is about who is consuming it and in what context they are taking it (Nicholls and Berridge, 2020). Again, this concern over who and in what context, surfaces during the opium era. Initially, opium was used widely and culturally accepted all throughout Great Britain (Booth, 1997; Berridge, 1999, 2013; Buxton, 2006; Seddon, 2007) but the anti-opium movement raised concerns over who was taking opium, with their attention primarily focused on Chinese seamen (Berridge, 1978a, 2013). The control of intoxication in this instance was primarily invested in a public body, namely the Pharmaceutical Society. The police did have more powers in relation to policing intoxication from opium, but they rarely got involved with issues pertaining to pharmacies (Berridge, 2013). The police were used, however to police Chinese seamen’s licensed lodgings, where, if evidence of opium smoking was discovered, the license could be removed (Berridge, 1978a). The police were largely ineffective in controlling recreational opium smoking and were more focused on illegal smuggling of opium out of British port cities (Booth, 1997; Berridge, 1999; Inglis, 2018).

The section then looked at cocaine use in nightclubs and has explored the dynamics between the nightclubs and the police (Shore, 2013). In examining cocaine, there was a strong focus on who was taking it and in what context that stirred up consternation for the Government of the time. The fear was that cocaine was rendering soldiers unable to fight during the First World War (Kohn, 1999). The Government passed section 40B of DORA in a bid to make it illegal to sell cocaine to soldiers, but cocaine was being used widely in the underground and illegal nightclubs of the time (Kohn, 1999, 2001). Nightclubs had become subject to strict opening hours during the First World War, but they were defiant and continued to open late into the night in spite of strict regulations (Kohn, 1999, 2001; Hallam, 2022). The police infiltrated nightclubs by using plain clothes police officers who were sent undercover to gather evidence (Kohn, 2001; Hallam, 2022). What the story of cocaine represents is the first time that the policing of intoxication became a key focus of Government. Rather than giving powers to excisemen or pharmacists to control intoxication, the Home Office assumed a central role and directed the police to try to control the intoxication from cocaine.

Finally, this section then provided an account of the developments in drugs legislation, bringing it up to date and discussed the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 thus highlighting the move away from a medical system of regulation (Berridge, 2005) to a more punitive system which criminalises drug use (Monaghan, 2014). Given that this chapter has examined the history of intoxication of three substances, there are some issues that have been raised which warrant some discussion.

2.6.1 Key Issues from the History of Intoxication

This chapter has raised some key issues in relation to gin, opium and cocaine that directly link to this study's focus. The gin panics highlight the impact of deregulation, in that after the London Guild of Distillers was dismantled in 1690 (Nicholls, 2011) there were no regulations on the production of gin and so the production and consumption of the spirit increased, the impact of this was that there were increased and unintended consequences of extreme intoxication as the spirit was stronger and cheaper than what was already available (Warner, 2002; Nicholls, 2009). This is where parallels between the history of intoxication and the more contemporary NTE begin to surface. As will be discussed in Chapter Three, there were some

unintended consequences of deregulation of alcohol licensing especially in regard to the creation of large pubs selling high quantities of alcohol for relatively low prices (Hadfield, 2006). The control of intoxication from gin also demonstrates that when it comes to enforcement of the laws, there is a vulnerability as to who is doing the enforcement. The informants who were telling the excisemen about illegal gin hawkers and distillers endured fierce reprisals from the wider community (Warner and Ivis, 1999). Indeed, the use of informants and excisemen to enforce these laws effectively created a distance between the state in the control of recreational intoxication. This distance between the state and the control is again evidenced when it came to the policing of recreational opium consumption, where it was incumbent on pharmacists to control the supply of opium to their customers, in what Berridge calls the pharmaceutical system of regulation (Berridge, 2005). This system of regulation also made it the role of the Pharmaceutical Society to check that the pharmacists were keeping the appropriate logs of their sales, however this system was flawed in that it did not give the Pharmaceutical Society the requisite powers of entry to pharmacies to ensure all the sales were documented correctly (Berridge, 1999) and even though the police did have the authority and power to get involved with the pharmacies, it was rare that the police would get involved (Berridge, 2013). Moreover, it was not until 1916 that control over intoxication became a central focus of the Home Office when there were concerns about soldiers being fit and able to fight during the First World War (Kohn, 1999, 2001; Shore, 2013; Hallam, 2022). What we see from this chapter is that there is often a strong desire for people to become intoxicated, which is often met with resistance from those in power who want to attempt to control the intoxication. The reasons for wanting to control the intoxication differ, but there is often concerns about the workforce and the health of the population at large that are the main drivers for wanting more increased control.

By providing a history of intoxication, this chapter has also raised another issue which is to do with control. There are questions surrounding who is controlling who and why. The most pertinent points from this chapter are that when it came to controlling intoxication on the ground, much of the responsibility was given to ordinary citizens rather than bodies who have the power of the state behind them, which Berridge termed the lay system of regulation (Berridge, 2005). An example of which would be the excisemen during the gin panics (Warner and Ivis, 1999; Warner, 2002). Berridge (2005) also suggests that there was a pharmaceutical

system of regulation where the pharmacists and the Pharmaceutical Society during the opium and cocaine eras would control the intoxication (Berridge, 1999, 2005). Doing so places the control of intoxication onto ordinary people. However, there are times when the state deems it necessary to step in, which is what occurred in the policing of cocaine during World War One. Where the boundaries for the state stepping in to try and control the intoxication more rigorously are somewhat murky and unclearly delineated, but from this chapter it could be argued that the state steps in when there is a larger societal issue or some part of the state is deemed to be under threat. Finally, there are some key harms that occur as a result of prohibition. Prohibitive regimes criminalise drug use and those who are prosecuted for drug related infractions of the law suffer the stigma of having a criminal record for drug offences, which can in turn make it more difficult to lead a normal life (Eastwood, 2021; Potter and Wells, 2021; Transform, 2021). Drug laws also impact Black communities more harshly as they are more sternly punished than their White counterparts (Robinson, 2020; Eastwood, 2021; Potter and Wells, 2021). These themes shall be returned to in Chapter Eight.

3 After Dark: The Contemporary Night-time Economy in the United Kingdom

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter demonstrated that in Great Britain there has always been and remains a desire for people to imbibe themselves with intoxicants for pleasure. There is a rich historical literature base on intoxication (see: Warner, 2002; Nicholls, 2011; Berridge, 2013) and a diverse and interdisciplinary literature base on the night-time economy (NTE) and associated issues. This chapter aims to link these literature bases together and to demonstrate how the night-time economy (NTE) is a continuation of the desire to seek out places to get intoxicated but is also a site of control - either legislative or coercive.

There are competing definitions from both academics and professional sources on what the night-time economy is, one definition comes from the Night Time Industries Association (NTIA). The NTIA are a trade association that promotes the economic contribution of the NTE in the UK and internationally. Their definition asserts that

the NTE involves the provision of goods, services and experiences associated with the conduct of nightlife. Leisure experiences such as entertainment, music, clubbing, and the consumption of food and alcohol are the principal activities associated with the NTE. An efficient infrastructure, especially for transport and logistics, is essential for the NTE to flourish (Furedi, 2015, p. 4).

The NTIA's definition highlights how expansive the NTE is, covering a broad spectrum of industries and venues with the notion of consumption a fundamental element of the night-time experience. It also highlights that there is the need for an efficient infrastructure in the NTE, but interestingly fails to mention security and safety, a role which has been eagerly shouldered by the private security industry (Kostara and White, 2023). The NTIA definition of the NTE is ultimately very wide. It locates the NTE more broadly, a village pub in the middle of

nowhere open till midnight would be a contributor to the NTE in this definition just as much as a super-club playing house music until 6am would be – perhaps not in financial terms, but certainly in terms of activity. This is important for this thesis as some of the door staff who have been interviewed have not just been policing intoxication in cities, but in towns and rural areas too.

Hobbs et al (2003; 2005) offer a different definition of the NTE. Rather than discuss it as a stand-alone phenomenon they suggest that the NTE was the result of a process of neoliberalism and capitalism pouncing on a gap in the city. Their definition suggests that there was:

first, a shift in economic development from the industrial to the post-industrial; and second, a significant reorientation of urban governance, involving a move away from the managerial functions of local service provision, toward an entrepreneurial stance primarily focused upon the facilitation of economic growth. In many British towns and cities these processes are associated with the development of night-time leisure economies. (Hobbs, Hadfield, *et al.*, 2005, p. 89)

Before the shift that Hobbs et al (2005) have described, cities were left economically stagnant as the post-war economic boom petered out in the 1970s (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). The economic reorientation moved from cities being focused on industrial production towards the provision of services (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, *et al.*, 2005). As a result of the shift, academics have argued that cities were becoming increasingly aesthetic, a process which Featherstone (1991, p. 91) referred to as the “aestheticization of everyday life” where style and fashion were being brought onto the high street for everyone to see. In turn this made cities increasingly competitive. Cities were ‘forced’ to compete and were then obliged “to be more active in marketing themselves” (Begg, 1999, p. 805). This competitiveness contributed to the construction of purpose-built night-time leisure spaces such as Quayside in Newcastle, and the Gay Village in Manchester (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003, p. 19) This definition suggests the NTE evolved out of capitalist ideals of stimulating economic growth wherever possible.

These two definitions are useful in helping to define the contemporary night-time economy. However, both ignore the historical aspects of consumption in the United Kingdom. Chapter Two articulated that recreational consumption has occurred in Britain for at least two centuries. Both of the definitions are limited in their ability to demonstrate the historical elements nightlife and intoxication. Moreover, there are also issues with both definitions in that the term itself “night-time economy” assumes the NTE as a singular entity which is devoid of the varied consumption habits, youth cultures and drug cultures within it (Silverstone, 2006).

Notwithstanding the limitations of the definitions, I have chosen to follow the Hobbs et al (2005) definition. This definition has been chosen because of its strengths in emphasising the commodification of night life by adding ‘economy’ to the title. This ties in with the central theme of this thesis, which will demonstrate that door staff walk a difficult line upholding the law and protecting the commercial interests in the way they police drugs. Moreover, Hobbs et al’s (2005) definition, whilst not explicit, allows for the inclusion of private security as the authors state there are certain processes that aid in the development of nightlife. Furthermore, for Hobbs et al, the NTE is “a post-modern playground... but more akin to a pre-modern battleground” (Hobbs et al., 2003, p. 246). This encapsulates that environment that door staff work in very well, in that there is a dualism in the use of the spaces where hedonists are pursuing pleasure, but door supervisors are (or making an attempt at) controlling intoxication.

3.2 The Rise of Academic Interest in the Contemporary Night-Time Economy

3.2.1 Constructing the Night

One common thread throughout the research literature is that authors have purported that the concept of the NTE can be traced back to the urban geographer, Jane Jacobs (Jacobs, 1961), in her work “The Death and Life of Great American Cities” (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Roberts and Turner, 2005; Shaw, 2010). In her work, Jacobs (1961), is critical of American urban planning regimens and argues that city planners did little to understand the complexities of

human lives. Shaw (2010) also credits Murray Melbin (1987) and his analyses in presenting the notion of the NTE. Murray's central thesis was that there was a shift occurring in how people worked, with an emphasis on an increasing number of roles that were being conducted during the night (Phillips, 1990). It is not uncommon in this way for academics to recognise the work of both Jacobs and Melbin as important contributions to the concept of the NTE, however arguably their accreditation lacks regard for the richer history of the links between the city at night and intoxication. It is not uncommon for contemporary discourse on the NTE to fail to consider how cities were used at night prior to the aforementioned economic shift of the 1970s and 1980s and the expansion of the NTE.

The commercial development of nightclubs as we currently understand them have "evolved out of the music halls and gin palaces of the late nineteenth century which increased in popularity in the twentieth century to become a key social space for young adults by the end of the Second World War" (Measham, 2004, p. 339), yet not enough research into night clubs prior to the economic shift has been conducted, nor is it widely discussed within academia. Writing about the nightlife of Manchester in the early 1840s, Friedrich Engels said:

On Saturday evenings, especially when wages are paid and work stops somewhat earlier than usual, when the whole working class pours from its own poor quarters into the main thoroughfares, intemperance may be seen in all its brutality" (Haslam, 2015, p. x).

Therefore, it is important when discussing the contemporary NTE to also appreciate the history of the night and understand that the pursuit of pleasure in the night is not limited to the past 30 years, but instead that hedonists have been conquering the evenings and small hours of the mornings for generations.

Intense academic focus on the NTE in the United Kingdom emerged after the think tank, Comedia⁴, published a report which was the result of research in fifteen town centres in the

⁴ Comedia was founded in 1978 by Charles Landry and comprised people who developed projects concerned with city life, culture and creativity. Many of the people who were involved in Comedia were also academics (Shaw, 2010).

United Kingdom (Shaw, 2010). The research comprised of a 15-month long study examining “the problems of revitalising public and social life in 12 town centres in the United Kingdom” (Comedia, 1991, p. 4). During this study, Comedia (1991) interviewed key actors within the town, including, but not limited to, the police, retailers, and representative figures within the local councils. The motivation for the report was that Comedia felt that British people were not participating in nightlife in the same way other European countries, and it was thought increased engagement would be economically prosperous for the UK (Comedia, 1991; Bianchini, 1995). The Comedia report was aimed at policy makers and called for a ‘time-shift’ in socio-cultural policy (Comedia, 1991, p. 22; Shaw, 2010). Comedia initially called for an 18-hour city, rather than a 24-hour city, citing that they thought the activities of the daytime should be spread out into the evening (Shaw, 2010). Issues that were raised by Comedia’s study included the poor provision of transport links in the night, constraints on the evening economy imposed by strict alcohol licensing laws, and people leaving the city centres at night straight after their chosen cultural activity finishing rather than staying out in the city centre (Comedia, 1991; Bianchini, 1995).

Following the report, Comedia arranged a conference, and a trial called *More Hours in the Day*, both held in Manchester in 1993. The *More Hours in the Day* trial experimented with late night shopping and temporarily extended the opening hours for pubs, bars and clubs (Shaw, 2010). During this trial the pubs and bars were permitted to remain open until midnight and the clubs were allowed to open until 4am (Bianchini, 1995). At the conference, evidence and arguments were laid out for the revitalisation of town and city centres in the evening and the night-time (Roberts and Turner, 2005). The Comedia conference was heavily influenced by continental Europe, citing successful expansion of the economy into the night from countries such as Germany, France and Sweden during the 1970s and the 1980s (Bianchini, 1995). The conference successfully popularised the idea of creating a night-based economy in city centres by “promoting festivals, and evening entertainment, making city centres safer at night through closed circuit television (CCTV) schemes, encouraging evening and night-time entertainment uses and relaxing restrictions on alcohol licenses” (Roberts and Turner, 2005, p. 172; Shaw, 2010). This created interest from scholars who venerated the successful European night economies citing that it should become the “explicit aim of many British cities to become a ‘European city’” which Heath argues are by their very nature 24-hour cities (Heath, 1997, p.

194). Bianchini (1995) was one of the first academics to discuss the idea of a night-time economy. He discussed a 1979 initiative conducted in Rome that divided the city “based on four different foci of activities” (1995, p. 121) subsequently proposing that cities could benefit from creating economies that were open for 24 hours.

Many scholars who were writing in the early 1990s saw the benefit of extending the economy into the night, suggesting that there would be positive knock-on effects for the daytime economy too. Bianchini (1995) wrote that “planners may be able to stimulate in the night-time public demand for a different, more humane, sustainable and civilised city in the daytime as well” (p124). This demonstrates the potential for town centre managers to take “a more holistic and expansive consideration of the totality of the city centre” (Heath, 1997, p. 197). The early literature also demonstrates that the proponents for a 24-hour city at the time were working on the assumption that the stimulation of a vivid economy at night would “contribute substantially to the economic viability, quality of life and city marketability” (Rowe and Bavinton, 2011, p. 814). Advocates of these changes also articulated that in order to extend the economy into the night-time there would need to be a change in the licensing laws for the sale of alcohol (Bianchini, 1995).

3.2.2 Commodifying the Night: The Licensing Act 2003 & the Rise of Consumerism

This following section outlines the implementation of the Licensing Act 2003. It charts the development of the Act and then questions to what extent, if any, the Act has achieved its stated aims.

3.2.2.1 *The Rationale for the Licensing Act 2003*

To build a successful NTE in any city, there had to be a fundamental change in the legislation surrounding both the sale of alcohol and the opening times for licensed venues. This change came through the newly ensconced Labour government, headed up by Tony Blair. Blair wanted to modernise the alcohol laws in the UK and to do that the government introduced the

Licensing Act 2003 (LA 2003)⁵ which had four key objectives; the prevention of crime and disorder, the prevention of public nuisance, the promotion of public safety, and the protection of children from harm (Hadfield and Measham, 2015). The implementation of the LA 2003 represents the largest liberalisation of alcohol licensing laws in England and Wales since the 19th Century (Humphreys and Eisner, 2010). The Act partially came into effect in October 2003 but because of the complexity of the legislation it was not fully functional until 2005. The Act modernised the previously complex legislation (Hadfield and Measham, 2015) and was a key feature of the Labour manifesto in their 2001 campaign. The night before the voters went to the polls in 2001 around ¼ of a million young people received a text message saying “Cldnt give a XXXX 4 last orders? Thn vte Lbr on thrsday 4 xtra time” (Hadfield, 2006, p. 3). There is arguably a distinct hypocrisy between the Labour party using this line to attract young voters and Tony Blair later declaring excessive consumption of alcohol as a ‘disease’, as mentioned in the previous chapter (Yeomans, 2015). This also serves as a pertinent indicator of how culturally significant alcohol was and remains, allowing it to be weaponised not just by drinks lobbyists, but by politicians and policy makers too.

The LA 2003 was designed so that the restrictions on trading times were removed and “encouraged licensed premises (should they wish) to apply for extended hours of trade” (Humphreys and Eisner, 2010, p. 43). Under the Licensing Act 1964, which was the legislation that preceded the LA 2003, licensed premises in England and Wales were permitted to sell alcohol between the hours of 11:00 and 23:00 or 22:30 on a Sunday, allowing 20 minutes for consumers to finish their drinks. Certain venues had ‘Special Hours’ certificates that would allow them to sell alcohol until 2:00am (Humphreys and Eisner, 2010). The LA 2003 repealed the trading hours and began to modernise alcohol policy. In doing so the LA 2003 created a market that allowed venues to operate into the early hours of the morning and to generate more revenue, facilitating the expansion of the NTE in towns and city centres at night by providing spaces where people could consume alcohol for much longer periods of time. It is worth noting that it was not just alcohol-based establishments that benefited from the later licensing hours, late night take-aways and transport services also received an economic boost (Furedi, 2015). Cites at night (especially on a Friday and Saturday) have long been a playground

⁵ The Licensing Act 2003 applied to England and Wales.

for people, however, the liberalisation of alcohol licencing laws and pressure from think tanks brought what we now understand to be the contemporary NTE into a much more visible position.

The LA 2003 was an ambitious piece of legislation in that one of its key underlying intentions at the time was the instigation in attempting to change the “longstanding British drinking culture characterized as “binge and brawl” (Hadfield and Measham, 2010, p. 69). The culture to which Hadfield and Measham allude was the focus of three studies (Hope, 1986; Tuck, 1989; Marsh and Fox-Kibby, 1992). These three studies were central in identifying the role that new licensing laws – the LA 2003 – could play in reducing violent crime and disorder (Humphreys and Eisner, 2010). The results of a study conducted by Hope (1986) highlighted that 25% of all disorder that transpired between 6pm and 6am was concentrated in the 30 minutes after the first closing time. This finding was then buttressed by Tuck’s (1989) study of several urban, suburban, and rural sites who suggested that intoxicated patrons were leaving licensed premises after the closing time and congregating at food outlets and public transport hubs, and it was where these crowds were congregating that issues of violence erupted. Furthermore, in the study conducted by Marsh and Fox-Kibby (1992) their findings also highlighted a concentration of violence and disorder that peaked at 11pm (when pubs and bars closed) and again at 2am (when nightclubs closed). Their findings were that 47% of disorder incidents related to alcohol occurred within only 2 hours of the week – between 11pm and 12am on a Friday and Saturday night.

Whilst one of the remits of the LA 2003 was to reduce violence, it arguably did so in a counter-intuitive way. Rather than restrict the availability of alcohol, it is a rare example of legislation that attempts to achieve a purpose by the removal of restraints as opposed to adding to them (Humphreys and Eisner, 2010). Removing the previously rigid fixed closing times and replacing them with more flexibility in their licensing (Humphreys and Eisner, 2010) could be seen as a move which more attractive to alcohol retailers and customers in pursuit of hedonistic experiences as they could continue to serve and consume alcohol until the small hours of the morning (Hadfield, 2006; Humphreys and Eisner, 2010). However, the rationale for removing the stringent closing times was that by giving venues the capacity to decide when to close, this would stagger closing times for venues and that this staggering would result in less people

congregating and overburdening food outlets and transport hub in the hopes of reducing violence (Hadfield and Measham, 2010; Humphreys and Eisner, 2010). The LA 2003 represents another form of legislation that is designed to control intoxication; however, it is important to note that it gives the responsibility for issuing and administering alcohol licenses to local councils who stand outside of the criminal justice apparatus with little to no training in “security or community safety matters. These tribunals nonetheless deploy civil and administrative mechanisms of central importance to the strategic governance of crime and disorder in British towns and cities” (Hadfield and Measham, 2010, p. 71). Moreover, the LA 2003 has pushed the control of alcohol to the forefront of urban governance whereby town councils can impose or remove stipulations for alcohol licenses for venues, including stipulating the number of door staff a venue is required to have in order to operate (Hadfield, Lister and Traynor, 2009). There is though, the question of whether the LA 2003 has achieved its aims in regard to four objectives.

3.2.2.2 Licensing Act 2003: Mission Accomplished?

At this juncture, it is necessary to consider the extent to which the Licensing Act 2003 has achieved its desired objectives. Those objectives were: the prevention of crime and disorder; public safety; the prevention of public nuisance; and the protection of children from harm (Light, 2005; Hadfield and Measham, 2015). There was, however, a deep scepticism about whether the LA 2003 would be an effective piece of legislation, with Goodacre (2005) suggesting that:

Alcohol is a huge cause of illness and injury in the United Kingdom and is a major threat to our ability to sustain high-quality emergency care. To increase the availability of alcohol at a time when the problem is escalating, as the Licensing Act does, appears to lack common sense (Goodacre, 2005, p. 682).

Goodacre was writing from the perspective of someone who works in emergency care and was deeply concerned with the effects of liberalised alcohol sales on the emergency workers. During the implementation of the LA 2003 the Daily Mail launched a campaign entitled ‘Binge

Britain' which suggested that the LA 2003 only served to create more alcohol related problems (Foster *et al.*, 2009). However, one early study on the Act suggests that:

the overall conclusion to be drawn from the evaluation is that in their first year the changes introduced by the 2003 Licensing Act had only small effects on the levels of alcohol consumption and on alcohol-related problems of crime and disorder. Some crime has been displaced into the small hours, but overall levels of crime associated with the night-time economy remain largely unchanged (Hough *et al.*, 2008, p. iii).

The Act was designed to make applying for a license a more streamlined experience, but some have argued that it did the opposite, with Light arguing that "the Act, in its 201 sections and eight schedules, the Guidance in its 178 pages and the 200 pages of secondary legislation so far issued, rather than offering a simplified deregulated system combine to increase complexity, constraint and bureaucratic burden" (Light, 2005, p. 282). One key issue with the Act, identified by Humphreys and Eisner (2010) is that unless there was a concerted effort to ensure that the objectives of the LA 2003 are being met, the uptake and impact of policies will vary from local authority to local authority, which would have amounted to a failure in its implementation. According to the rationale of the LA 2003, the removal of fixed closing times "should activate a natural staggering of closing times that interrupts situational triggers for violence and disorder" (Humphreys and Eisner, 2010, p. 58). Humphreys & Eisner (2010) found that when the closing times were staggered the magnitude of the staggering was only modest and that "such peaks were for most periods of the week, temporally displaced later into the night, which *could* serve to intensify the burden on the police and emergency services" (p58). They go on to suggest that there is little available information about what the optimum amount of staggering would be in order to achieve a meaningful reduction in crime, violence, and anti-social behaviour and so it is difficult to make a decision on whether or not the LA 2003 has achieved one of its aims.

Foster et al (2009) set out to evaluate the Act, four years after its full implementation, through a nationwide survey of local authority chairs of licensing committees and senior members of licensing teams. They found that contrary to the media panic, there was no discernible change in the following alcohol related variables: public noise levels, violence and fights, under-age

drinking, crime and drink driving (Foster *et al.*, 2009). Moreover, Forster et al (2009) found that, in regard to protecting children from harm, the sales of alcohol to children under-age remained unchanged. From this one could choose to argue that the LA 2003 is not delivering its stated aims as there is no change in the patterns of consumption. However, the implementation of the Act has not made any of these factors worse and so it would be difficult to argue that it has failed. Other research has reaffirmed the work of Forster et al and found that the implementation of the LA 2003 has not had a substantial impact on alcohol related harms (Stevely et al., 2021).

Overall, it could be argued the LA 2003 updated previously archaic legislation and has simplified and codified “alcohol entertainment licensing law and, substantively, to allow the ‘responsible majority of people more freedom and choice about how they spend their leisure time’” (Light, 2005, p. 268). In this regard, it has made alcohol law more streamlined, but it did set out with four key objectives. Given that research has found there has been little change in the issues stemming from alcohol in the NTE it is difficult to conclude that those aims are consistently being achieved. Early studies indicated that the impact of the LA 2003 has a small effect on alcohol-related issues (Hough *et al.*, 2008; Foster *et al.*, 2009) and more recent studies reassert that claim (Stevely *et al.*, 2021; David *et al.*, 2022).

3.2.3 Consuming the Night: The Impact of Consumerism and Deviant Leisure

Humanity has always, to some degree, “attached social significance to specific objects of consumption, and consumerism has been the essential complement to the development of capitalism’s productive forces” (Hall, Winlow and Ancrum, 2008, p. 89). Consumerism plays an essential role in the NTE, making the commodification of the NTE markedly different from the past cultures of intoxication that were explored within the preceding chapter. Generally speaking, when it comes to consumption:

A substantial segment of consumers choose hedonistic luxury rewards over cash of equal or greater value; consumers typically explain such choices based on the need to precommit to indulgence, to make sure that the award does not end up in the pool of money used for necessities (Kivetz and Simonson, 2002, p. 199).

The NTE is a space predicated on consumption of alcohol spurred on by retail outlets offering cheap drinks (Hadfield, 2006) to fuel hedonism (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003). The principles of consumerism were given the freedom to flourish under the Thatcher regime and their embracing of capitalism and neo-liberal policies in the late 1980s (Hall, Winlow and Ancrum, 2008). The consumption of rave culture (discussed below) is bound up in capitalism too, with Smith (2014) asserting that:

The emergence of rave culture in the 1980s did not challenge the dominant power structures in the way that media reports and some academics believed. While the drug use and illegal parties associated with rave culture can be understood as a challenge to the authority of the police and legal system, Reynolds (1998) points out that rave culture is in fact compatible with a conformist lifestyle and describes it as ‘controlled hedonism’, while the club scenes in resorts such as Ibiza that flourished in the wake of rave culture are little more than sites of ‘unadulterated consumerism’ (Smith, 2014, p. 86).

Town and city centres at night are now dominated by “alco-leisure” industries which is a considerable divergence from the models of the NTE that were offered by Comedia and early NTE academics (Rowe and Bavinton, 2011) who previously imagined streets abounding with late night cafes and cultural activities. The commercial viability of the NTE is driven primarily by the sale of alcohol for consumption, which also situates towns and city centres at night as sites of intoxication (Measham and Brain, 2005; Rowe and Bavinton, 2011). The importance of alcohol in the NTE has not gone unnoticed, with some commentators describing it as “a substantive component of the night-time economy” (Sheard, 2011, p. 620). Moreover, the NTE is a site “in which disorder is an essential by-product of a brand of alcohol-infused consumption” (Crawford and Flint, 2009, p. 407), contributing to the chaotic nature of the NTE. Indeed, the intoxication and disorder of people in the NTE led to panic surrounding ‘binge drinking’ (Measham and Brain, 2005). But as is clear from previous chapters, the panic surrounding intoxication is not a novel phenomenon, as there was nationwide hysteria in the 1800s surrounding the consumption of gin (Warner, 2002; Nicholls, 2003, 2009; White, 2003; Nutt, 2012; see Chapter Two).

Alcohol, whilst an important component of the NTE, is not the only focus of research in the NTE. There has also been a focus on other components such as the consumption of drugs in clubs and bars (Measham and Moore, 2009), the use of closed-circuit television (CCTV) by private operators who can track and monitor perpetrators of incidents across a city (Brands, van Aalst and Schwanen, 2015) and an interest in how door staff handle and manage customers to bars and clubs (Hobbs, Hadfield, *et al.*, 2005). A more in-depth discussion of alcohol in the NTE takes place below but it is important to note here the salient shift, when a key component of the experience became the consumption of illicit drugs, occurring in the late 1980s and early 1990s, that helped to facilitate the rapid accession of the NTE to extreme prominence within the overall economy of the United Kingdom. This movement is also important for this thesis because it represents another form of intoxication that requires control. It also arguably demonstrates that the issue of consumption is not only about the drug itself but also it is about who is taking the drug and in what context it is consumed (Nicholls and Berridge, 2020; see Chapter Two).

3.3 It's All the Rave: Ecstasy in the United Kingdom

It could be argued that it is impossible to understand the expansion of the contemporary NTE without a discussion of the drug MDMA⁶ and its association with house music and illegal raves in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The effects of this drug combined with the work of pioneering musicians who were producing a new type of music constructed with a strong kick drum and classic Motown and soul samples called 'house' music created a unique bond between music and drugs and must be explored.

3.3.1 From California to Ibiza: Re-synthesis, Kick Drums & Synthesizers

Intoxication and who is getting intoxicated has always been a cause for concern for those in government (Nicholls and Berridge, 2020). As discussed in Chapter Two, the gin craze caused consternation to spread through the bourgeoisie about how fit for work the proletariat were

⁶ MDMA is more commonly known by its street name, ecstasy. Ecstasy often comes as a pill which is swallowed by the user.

after the consumption of gin (Warner, 2002; Nicholls, 2011). Later there were similar concerns about opium smoking in London resulting in the restriction of the drug through legal measures and the policing of opium 'dens' (Booth, 1997; Anderson and Berridge, 2000). Concern over drugs is not a novel phenomenon, one only has to scour the tabloid presses for hysteria over drug consumption. The account of the drug MDMA is one that follows the historical pattern of controlling intoxication, starting on west coast of the United States of America. There is sometimes a tendency to oversimplify or take for granted the connection between raves and the consumption of ecstasy in the UK. Shiner (2009) suggests that ecstasy and house music were 'fused' together but does not elaborate on exactly how. Whilst there is considerable debate on how raves⁷ became a popular phenomenon in the UK (Ward, 2010), it can be argued that it cannot be discussed nor understood without giving at least some credit to the American chemist, Alexander Shulgin.

MDMA was initially synthesised by Merck in 1921 (Silcott and Push, 2000; Critcher, 2003; Benzenhöfer and Passie, 2010) and brought to the attention of Shulgin by a student of his whilst he was working at a university. How exactly Merck came to initially synthesize MDMA remains a mystery and a popular rumour suggests that it was developed as a means of suppressing appetite. However, there is nothing in Merck's historical archive that verifies that story (Silcott and Push, 2000). Shulgin then resynthesized MDMA in 1965 and tested it in 1967 (Colin, 2009).

Alexander Shulgin dedicated his career to synthesising and understanding the effects of psychedelic drugs. For most of his career he did this legally, as he was issued with a license from the US Drug Enforcement Agency to synthesize drugs, from an outhouse down a path at the rear of his California home (Colin, 2009). Rather than test the drugs that he synthesised on animals, he tested them on himself, his wife, and their friends at dinner parties they would throw. The sessions

were highly civilised affairs, a very bourgeois nirvana: a handful of friends would gather at one of their homes, each bringing food, drink and sleeping bags for an overnight

⁷ The word 'rave' is used in reference to "grassroots organized, anti-establishment unlicensed all-night dance parties, featuring electronically produced dance music (EDM), such as techno, house, trance and drum and bass" (Anderson and Kavanaugh, 2007, p. 500)

stay. [...] Afterwards they would submit reports detailing the drug's effect. (Colin, 2009, p. 24).

In describing the effects of MDMA in their semi-biographical novel, *PiHKAI* (Phenethylamines I Have Known and Loved), the Shulgins say "I found it unlike anything I had taken before. It was not a psychedelic in the visual or interpretive sense, but the lightness and warmth of a psychedelic was present and quite remarkable" (Shulgin and Shulgin, 1991 quoted in Colin 2009, p25). In 1977, Shulgin had introduced MDMA to one of his close associates, Leo Zoff, a psychologist who became so enamoured by the drug that he travelled the length and breadth of the USA introducing it to approximately 4,000 other psychologists and psychiatrists all the while extolling the virtues of the therapeutic potential of the drug (Colin, 2009; Ward, 2010). There was a consensus amongst the scientific community at the time that MDMA should be kept from the prying eyes of law enforcement and there was agreement that no papers should be published on the subject (Colin, 2009). MDMA was used by many medical professionals in the USA in treating patients with psychiatric disorders (Cricher, 2003) and as the effects of the drug passed through word of mouth, it eventually wound up in the hands of drug dealers who changed the street moniker of the drug from 'Adam', a name with soft-religious undertones to the more prurient name of 'ecstasy' (Silcott and Push, 2000; Cricher, 2003; Colin, 2009). The name ecstasy was chosen because of the effects of the drug in releasing dopamine and feeling closer to each other (Colin, 2009). The recreational use of MDMA spread across the USA in 1983 & 1984 whilst it was still legal, primarily pushed by the Texas Group⁸ who produced the drug (Colin, 2009). Ecstasy was to be found in American clubs, but rather than being visible in places such as New York or Chicago where a new style of music, typified by strong kick drum rhythmic melodies created with synthesizers known as 'house', was being churned out onto dancefloors, ecstasy was most visibly present in the staunchly republican state of Texas (Silcott and Push, 2000). It was in these Texan clubs where ecstasy became associated with the rich and famous, the American elite, and new age hippies (Silcott

⁸ The Texas Group was a spin-off of the Boston Group, who were the first mass manufacturers of ecstasy pill in the USA whilst it was still legal (Colin, 2009). One of the members of the Boston group recognised the potential of ecstasy and decided to aggressively pursue the venture in Texas – and so he named the people who worked for him the Texas Group.

and Push, 2000; Colin, 2009). The popularity of the drug spread across the globe and into new age hippie haunts such as the Balearic Island of Ibiza (Bellis *et al.*, 2000; Colin, 2009).

Following the fall of Spain's fascist dictator General Franco in 1975, an international airport was built on the island of Ibiza who at the time had a population of around 37,000, this created an influx of tourism and by 1986 Ibiza became a frequent haunt of new age travellers, celebrities, and the British working classes (Colin, 2009). Ecstasy had followed the new age travellers into Ibiza (Bellis *et al.*, 2000; Colin, 2009). That, combined with cutting edge DJs who were playing music of all genres, including the new house music coming out of Chicago, started to create a hedonists' paradise with clubs with outside dance floors at which to party underneath the moon and stars. Taking ecstasy was a part of this Ibiza experience (Colin, 2009). The working-class British who were in Ibiza in 1986 were mostly from the south of London and went back to the UK after their holiday and, like the physicians in California, endorsed ecstasy and brought swathes of people with them to Ibiza the following year (Colin, 2009). In the following years the popularity of ecstasy and spirit of Ibiza grew so significant that opportunists would attempt to bring the Balearic ambience onto the shores of Great Britain, and so the acid house movement was in its embryonic stages and about to conflagrate through the British land.

3.3.2 Hangars & Fields, Thatcher, and Pills: How Ecstasy Helped to Facilitate the Expansion of the Night-Time Economy

3.3.2.1 Ecstasy in the United Kingdom

Up to around 1986 ecstasy was primarily associated with the upper echelons of society, was labelled a 'designer drug' by the press (Silcott and Push, 2000; Colin, 2009) and consumed in high end night-clubs in Texas, New York and Chicago. It was prohibited in Great Britain under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1970. There are then some parallels here with the opium epidemic (see Chapter Two) where the consumption of opium for pleasure was linked with more sophisticated events such as tea parties or the ballet during the Victorian era (Anderson and Berridge, 2000; Berridge, 2013). As was the case with opium, once ecstasy got into the hands

of the working classes a change in attitude towards its consumption began to turn into notions of panic and control (Hill, 2002). This attitude, as always, must be understood in the context of the time. The prime minister of the Great Britain at this time was Margaret Thatcher, who had significant support from large sections of the general public, the majority of the Conservative party and importantly, a sizeable section of the press (Hill, 2002). Thatcher's rule as prime minister (1979-1990) "has been identified as constituting a hegemonic project – Thatcherism" (Hill, 2003, p. 220). Thatcherism presented a vision of what Britain should look like by combining 'new-right' thinking, a traditionally conservative vision of Britain, an endorsement of the free market, and an authoritarian stance towards crime and control (Hill, 2002, 2003). Moreover, Thatcherism robustly attempted to shape and define British society on its terms to define "what the nation is and who the people are" (Hall, 1988, p. 71). Illegal raves stood counter to the Thatcherite vision of the nation and the people.

In late 1987 several new club nights spawned in the centre of London where ecstasy was consumed and club goers would dance into the night to the repetitive sounds of house music (Hill, 2003; Colin, 2009). By the time spring had come around in 1988 the acid house parties had gained such popularity that they started to move outside where parties of up to 20,000 participants would come together and rave in a field or a disused hangar to evade the watch of law enforcement (Hill, 2002, 2003; Critcher, 2003; Colin, 2009). These large-scale events were both a secretive and profitable affair (the profit was alleged to be upwards of £50,000 per event) and an entrepreneur at the forefront of the acid house movement was Tony Colston-Hayter, who developed the Telephone Venue Address Releasing System (Critcher, 2000, 2003; Colin, 2009). The system was used because the rave venue was a kept secret until the last possible moment, and tickets were issued with a telephone number, which ravers would have to ring to receive a computer message specifying the meeting place (Critcher, 2000, 2003; Colin, 2009). There was some form of security at these events, but because of their illicit nature, and perhaps their extreme profitability, the security was often organised by professional criminal organisations (Critcher, 2003). Control over patrons getting intoxicated was not just a desire from the government but also from those who had private interests in holding raves. Ecstasy was present and arguably a core tenet of the raves with the yellow

smiley face⁹ became synonymous with the movement (Critcher, 2000; Colin, 2009) In August 1988, the tabloid newspaper *The Sun* began reporting on drug taking at Spectrum, a club based in London, and so “an intense moral panic developed around acid house” (Hill, 2003, p. 219).

Rather than start their news coverage of rave culture as a negative phenomenon, *The Sun* initially provided an endorsement of raving as the latest dance craze, they even marketed their own smiley faced t-shirt (Critcher, 2000). The tabloids changed their tone to a more vehement condemnation of rave culture following two deaths connected to ecstasy in June and October 1988 and once a connection between drugs and raves had been made following a police raid on boat party in the November of the same year (Critcher, 2000, 2003). In June 1989 the Daily Mail in a vociferous editorial condemned the acid house movement as “a façade for dealing in drugs of the worst sort on a massive scale” and a “cynical attempt to trap young people into drug dependency under the guise of friendly pop music events” (Colin, 1998, p. 97). This new youth subculture of raving caused consternation amongst those in power who deemed the movement to be ‘an enemy within’ as it constituted a disruptive presence because even at “a basic level, the mobility of participants made them harder for the police to control and regulate” (Hill, 2003 p226) and so, as a means to control intoxication from ecstasy, plans were developed to bring intoxication to a head (Hill, 2002, 2003). The key measure that the Government took to control the raves was the establishment of the police Pay Party Unit (PPU) in the September of 1989. The remit of the unit was to co-ordinate police action against raves on a national scale (Hill, 2003, p. 221). As with the gin craze and opium wars, control of intoxication was manifested through legislative measures and increased policing.

Even though there are parallels between the gin panic, the opium epidemic, cocaine consumption and the acid house movement, the way in which the acid house movement differs is due to the contestation of space present in this movement. Each of the examined time periods present as issues of deviant leisure in some form. The consumption of opium occurred within certain spaces (such as people’s homes or in the amorphous social clubs

⁹ The origins of the yellow smiley face are contested, but the symbol was adopted by the acid house movement after a DJ, Danny Rampling, was celebrating his birthday. The yellow smiley face started appearing on posters that were promoting raves in the early 1990s and so the symbol became synonymous with rave (Matos, 2016).

(Booth, 1997; Berridge, 1999)) and as such was somewhat easier to control as authorities had at least some awareness of where transgressions were taking place. However, the acid house movement appropriated spaces and adapted them for parties, most likely never to be used again (Hill, 2002, 2003). Thus, making it much more difficult to control and police. This anomalous use of space “presented a basic challenge to the idea that the national space was under the sure territorial jurisdiction of the Thatcher government” (Hill, 2003, p.222) and so acid house was accordingly labelled as a threat to the hegemonic ideals of Thatcherism.

3.3.2.2 Controlling Intoxication

The response to the acid house movement was to introduce a new piece of legislation, the Entertainment (Increased Penalties) Act 1990, sponsored by Conservative backbench MP, Graham Bright and commonly known as ‘the acid house bill’, coupled with the expansion of already existing police resources. In terms of policing, a new police Pay Party Unit (PPU) was established in 1989 whose role was to act specifically against unlicensed parties (Hill, 2002, 2003; Colin 2009). The PPU initially struggled to get to grips with the parties, as they were so cunningly organised characterising the creative practices of youth culture (Willis, 1990). This energy made the task of policing these spaces much more difficult which goes some way to explaining why a large number of parties were able to take place (Hill, 2003). Police would use tactics such as intercepting rave attendees on motorways after the location of the rave was announced, and shutting off key transport routes (Hill, 2003, 2003; Colin, 2009). The key element of the 1990 Act was that it increased the penalties for people found guilty of organising unlicensed public entertainment events to either a £20,000 fine, 6 months in jail, or possibly both (Critcher, 2003; Colin, 2009). Furthermore, the Act “heralded in quite Draconian measures to quash the rave culture ranging from fines and confiscation of record decks and PA (public address) systems to the long-term imprisonment of rave organisers” (Merchant & McDonald, 1994; quoted in Critcher, 2003, p.51). In response to this Act, the aforementioned entrepreneur Tony Colston-Hayter responded by creating and leading the association of Dance Party Promoters to campaign against the imposed 3am curfew on night-clubs. He organised protest parties in London and Manchester, however, the turnout was paltry, and the effect of the protests were miniscule (Critcher, 2003, p.51).

In a continuing war between political ideology and the acid house movement the Conservative government introduced another Act in 1994, The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (from here in referred to as CJPOA), further entrenching the values of Thatcherism (Hill, 2002). The CJPOA covered many aspects of crime, including “action against terrorism, pornography, reform of the juvenile justice system, and clarification of police stop and search powers, as well as targeting raves and new age travellers” (Critcher, 2000, p. 150). There were new trespassing offences that carried heavy fines and prison sentences. The CJPOA defines a rave as “a gathering of 100 people or more persons, whether or not trespassers, at which music is played during the night” and the music is described as “that which is wholly or predominately characterised by the emission of a succession of repetitive beats” (The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, s63). It is clear that acid house movement caused consternation amongst the Conservatives as “never before, over years of moral panics ... had a government considered young people’s music so subversive as to prohibit it” (Colin, 1998, p. 223). In relation to raves, the CJPOA gave the police powers to arrest trespassers (without a warrant) who failed to leave the site of a rave after being asked to do so by police officers. It was also made an offence “to make preparations to hold, wait for or attend a rave” (Henderson, 1997, p. 10). Osgerby has described the CJPOA as “a set of social and cultural controls that were the most comprehensive and authoritarian since 1945” (1998, p. 234). Although Colin and Osgerby are both critical of the CJPOA, the police were initially hostile to using their new powers against the ravers, with evidence suggesting that the majority of the 1,000 people arrested under the Act were in fact road protestors and not rave attendees (Critcher, 2000). The Act was arguably implemented as a method of reducing raves and ecstasy consumption fuelling what the press referred to as “the evil acid house cult” following their reporting of a rave which was attended by 11,000 “drug-crazed kids” organised by “evil drug dealers” (Osgerby, 1998, p. 181).

For the smaller rave promoters, the fines for holding a rave prescribed by the CJPOA were too much to risk and so they were either forced out of business or they moved their enterprises abroad (Osgerby, 1998). However, for the larger promoters the CJPOA arguably assisted in helping them to make even more money. For these larger promoters who had “ample experience and resources at their disposal, major rave organizations like Joy, Live the Dream and Sunrise were able to meet strict licensing regulations and stage legitimate, fully licensed

and very profitable events” (Osgerby, 1998, p. 192). The issues that the CJPOA was designed to tackle were however already in decline and shifting into legal venues (Critcher, 2000) and clubs such as Ministry of Sound in London and Sanctuary in Milton Keynes were beginning to prosper financially from the location change (Osgerby, 1998). In 1997 the outgoing Conservative government took one last stab at curbing the intoxication stemming from the acid house movement passing the Public Entertainment (Drug Misuse) Act 1997 which gave local authorities permission to “revoke night-club licenses on the word of police that drug taking or dealing was thought to be occurring on the premises. The law had been mobilized to eliminate the unlicensed rave and regulate clubbing” (Critcher, 2000, p. 150). However, Clubs simply expanded into the burgeoning NTE and as their commercial viability did not go unnoticed, they quickly became part of the fabric of a night out and sites for intoxication and drug consumption. Some of these issues will be discussed in the following section.

3.4 Under the Cover of Darkness: Drink and Drugs in the Night-Time Economy of the United Kingdom

The purpose of this section is to map out some of the wider issues that stem from the NTE. The section begins with a more thorough explication of the chaotic conditions that are faced by the workforce in the NTE and in doing so aims to provide a better understanding of the conditions in which door supervisors ply their trade. Some focus is afforded to alcohol and the resulting issues from alcohol intoxication. Even though this thesis revolves around illicit drugs, alcohol comprises a substantial component of the NTE (Sheard, 2011) and cannot therefore be ignored. The focus then moves on to discuss illicit drugs in the NTE.

It is necessary to consider venues before moving on to discuss intoxication, as consumption of alcohol and drugs occurs within a very particular bounded space (McLauchlan and Noble, 2020). Bounded play spaces are defined by Measham as a setting characterised by “the possibilities of pleasure, excess and gratification” (2004, p. 343). The NTE fits the description of a bounded play space perfectly, a site of hedonism that can be revealed through copious amounts of inebriants spurred on by cheap deals on alcohol¹⁰ (Hadfield, 2006). One could take

¹⁰ A bar I once visited in Newcastle offered “quadvodts”, which is four shots of vodka and a mixer for under £5

this further and argue that a venue constitutes a bounded play space as well, as once the threshold has been crossed there are then increased opportunities for pleasure, excess and gratification. It is within these play spaces that issues can occur. As raves moved into licensed venues and the NTE expanded, a variety of licensed premises opened that catered to different demographics (Hadfield, 2006). Many high street chain bars and pubs moved away from the traditional aesthetic of a pub (which had predominately been a bastion of male drinking culture) towards a design that was so-called 'female friendly' including features such as large windows to assist in creating light and a spacious environment (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003, pp. 149–157; Hadfield, 2006).

3.4.1 Chaos in the Night-Time Economy

Throughout this thesis one key assertion is that door supervisors work in a chaotic environment, with this in mind it is necessary to explicate what those chaotic conditions within the NTE are. Some of the chaotic conditions stem from the harms of the NTE whilst others come from the shift patterns and working hours that door supervisors face. Generally speaking, working in the NTE is typically done for low pay, with long shifts the hours worked are unsociable (Hadfield, 2006; Tutenges *et al.*, 2013; Murray, 2022) Such conditions could even be categorised as "extreme" work (Granter, McCann and Boyle, 2015; Murray, 2022). Initially, roles which had risky cultures and actions (emergency rescue services or stock-market trading) were categorised as extreme work, however now this concept of extreme work is being applied in more mundane settings (Granter, McCann and Boyle, 2015). Granter *et al.*'s (2015) argument is that following increasing work intensity, growth of workloads and the elongating of the working week that the "basic contours of a wider range of occupations have become magnified and extended so that fairly ordinary work might be considered extreme" (Granter, McCann and Boyle, 2015). Moreover, the ideas of extreme and normal coexist in a duality, as roles which can be categorised as extreme have tasks that are considered normal and routine to those in that particular role (such as searching for drugs and confiscating them), but would be abnormal to those on the outside, with extreme work the atypical is typical (Granter, McCann and Boyle, 2015).

The NTE also generate some more nefarious harms which contribute to a chaotic milieu. As will be detailed further below, intoxication plays a large role in the creation of chaos. Ayres (2019) suggests that when it comes to the NTE that:

The control and regulation of substances is contradictory and confusing. Excessive intoxication is promoted in the NTE via happy hours and two-for-one promotions, endorsing and encouraging the use of certain (commodified and legal) substances over other, often less harmful (illicit and uncommodified) substances (e.g. alcohol versus ecstasy), which are prohibited and criminalised (Ayres, 2019, p. 149).

Research on the NTE has suggested that the intoxication from both alcohol and illicit drugs may fuel violence and conflict, which can create a volatile and tense atmosphere (Tomsen, 2005; Barton and Husk, 2012). Typically, research into intoxication related disorder within the NTE primarily tends to characterise men as the aggressors and women as the victims, although there has been some research which investigates female aggression within the NTE (Swann, 2021). The scholarship on women and their safety in the NTE has explored the fears that women have whilst they are in it and has highlighted how drinks spiking and fears of unprovoked (male) violence are key concerns that women have whilst trying to enjoy a night out (Sheard, 2011). Another focus of research in the United Kingdom has investigated “intoxication and women’s safety in the NTE which documents the gendered risk of navigating the NTE” (Anitha *et al.*, 2021, p. 2045). Research conducted in Newcastle-upon-Tyne by Nicholls (2017) considers the following:

“the ways in which gender and sexuality intersect in young women’s negotiations of femininity in the NTE, with the perceived threat of the heterosexualised male gaze often taking precedence over the perceived threat of experiencing homophobic abuse as women grapple with the pleasures and risks of visibility and the pressures to display markers of normative, heterosexual femininity” (Nicholls, 2017, p. 262).

The participants in Nicholls’ (2017) study were all young females, aged between 18 and 25, and they discussed their experiences of expectations and pressures “to present themselves as certain kinds of (hetero)sexualised subjects in the spaces of the NTE, but without appearing

to be 'enticing' or 'encouraging' men and inviting the risk of abuse and harassment" (Nicholls, 2017, p. 270). There is clear evidence here that some women feel that they are at risk from some form of harassment from men, and as such take drastic steps in order to reduce the possibility of an incident occurring. Moreover, research conducted in Australia has found that women are not able to enjoy the NTE as fully as their male counterparts as their experience is curtailed by having to consider how they are going to keep themselves safe from potential unwanted attention and assaults (Du Preez and Wadds, 2016).

There is also the issue of anti-social behaviour (ASB) which contributes to the chaotic nature of the NTE. Town and city centres at night are both the host to, and the generator of, varying forms of anti-social behaviour (Crawford and Flint, 2009). Research has shown that locations of licensed venues is "associated with negative perceptions of alcohol-specific ASB" (Taylor, Twigg and Mohan, 2015, p. 2197). ASB in the NTE ranges from violence and disorder (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003) to urination in the streets (Wickham, 2012).

To close this section, it is worth briefly discussing how the NTE contributes to harms in society more generally. One broad harm of the NTE is that the "control and regulation of the NTE disproportionately discriminates along the lines of race, gender and social class" (Ayres, 2019, p. 149) as regulatory and control mechanisms are routinely not being applied consistently and are often influenced by economic factors and commercial business models (Hadfield, 2008; Ayres, 2019, p. 149). Doing so provides "opportunities for socially corrosive and harmful practices to proliferate, particularly within the context of the control and regulation of drugs" (Ayres, 2019, p. 149). A briefing from the Institute of Alcohol Studies suggests that "participants in the night time economy drink more than the national average and more significantly, drink at levels which are above average for their age group" and that on Friday and Saturday nights 61% of violent incidents occurring between the hours of 10pm and 6am were alcohol related (Institute of Alcohol Studies, 2020, p. 1). Moreover, those patrons who attend the more commercial venues – venues which play mainstream music and cater to a diverse range of customers instead of those which play and cater to a specific audience – and through the consumption of alcohol are more likely to be aggressive, violent and commit acts such as criminal damage than their counterparts who are attending the more underground, specific dance clubs and taking drugs (Hadfield, 2006; Ayres, 2019). Indeed, the links between

violence, alcohol and the NTE have been present for many years. Between 1997 and 2001 Manchester city centre for example saw a 240% increase in the capacity of its nightlife venues coupled with a 225% rise in the number of assaults (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). The costs of violence are deeply significant in terms of economic, social and health related implications (Bellis *et al.*, 2008). Research analysing UK survey statistics shows that “one-in-five violent incidents occur in, or directly around, drinking premises” (Philpot *et al.*, 2019, p. 57) suggesting that the NTE whilst being a zone that offers recreational benefits is one that is a “hot spot for anti-social behaviour and violence” (Philpot *et al.*, 2019, p. 61) which adds to the chaos within the NTE. Whilst there are clearly harms that stem from the NTE, there are ways in which local authorities could mitigate some of these harms. In 2011 the UK government introduced the 2011 Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act in which there was a discretionary power that local authorities could apply, known as the Late Night Levy (LNL) (McGill *et al.*, 2022). The LNL is a mechanism that local authorities can use to charge local businesses that supply alcohol for any extra enforcement costs that the NTE puts upon the police and licensing authorities, the revenue generated from this scheme is “split with a minimum of 70% going to the police and the remainder to the local authority” (McGill *et al.*, 2022, p. 2).

3.4.2 Intoxication in the Night-Time Economy Part I – Alcohol Consumption

As discussed earlier, in the early 1990s academics and think tanks proposed that cities and towns at night should follow the European example and cater to a late-night café culture (Comedia, 1991; Bianchini, 1993, 1995). However, in recent decades the United Kingdom has instead seen a significant expansion in the provision of an alcohol-focused night life (Bellis and Hughes, 2011). Consumption of alcohol is now identified as one of the substantive components of the NTE (Sheard, 2011) which involves the ideologies of “production, consumption, regulation, representation and identity” (Jayne, Holloway and Valentine, 2006, p. 459). Moreover, also writing in 2011, Bellis and Hughes highlight that since 1961 the quantity of alcohol that is released for sale in the United Kingdom had more than doubled (Bellis and Hughes, 2011). Alcohol provides a focal point which caters for adventure and hedonism (Winlow and Hall, 2006; Sheard, 2011). This has created a ‘bounded play space’

(Measham, 2004) where there is the maintenance of “a contradictory dualism of both deregulation and regulation versus fun and disorder” (Sheard, 2011, p. 620).

As a result of (alcohol-fuelled) disorder, violence can often occur (Ayres and Treadwell, 2012). The relationship between alcohol consumption and violence is widely acknowledged within the criminological (Lister et al., 2000b; Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, O’Brien and Westmarland, 2007; O’Brien, Hobbs and Westmarland, 2008; Ayres and Treadwell, 2012), sociological, geographical (Jayne, Holloway and Valentine, 2006) and medical (Groves, 2010) literature bases. Some of the literature explores the measures that are taken to reduce alcohol violence (see Bellis and Hughes, 2011). These control measures can stem from the LA 2003, where the licensing authorities can stipulate to a venue the number of door supervisors that should be working at the venue to help deescalate and control potentially violent situations and remove recalcitrant and inebriated customers. However, it is important to acknowledge that the NTE is premised on excessive alcohol consumption (Hadfield, 2006) and that “drunkenness is tolerated and in fact is now necessary to generate the amounts of alcohol consumption need to finance night-life venues” (Bellis and Hughes, 2011, p. 542).

3.4.3 Intoxication in the Night-Time Economy Part II – Drug Use

Even though raves started to move into licensed venues in the mid-1990s, there were some already established clubs who were established arguably even before the concept of the NTE was developed (such as Manchester’s infamous Hacienda) and, in these venues, drugs were already a part of the milieu (Osgerby, 1998). Raves were more than just a means of people meeting up to dance, the notion of a rave was a highly commodifiable, marketable, and emotional entity. When Tony Blair came to power in 1997 he adopted D:Ream’s 1993 club single “things can only get better” as his campaign song. If rave could permeate politics, then it was certainly capable of influencing the shape and constitution of the NTE.

Issues in the NTE are not just confined to the effects of alcohol. Drug use is common within the NTE, with research suggesting complex patterns of polydrug use associated with a night out (Measham and Moore, 2009a). The NTE is a diverse setting, and drug consumption is not homogenous, different venues attract different crowds whose patterns of consumption are

markedly different (Measham and Moore, 2009a; Ward, 2010). Discussions around drug consumption in the NTE often focus on specific drugs, most commonly cocaine, MDMA, ecstasy, ketamine or GHB (Ward, 2010). Whilst this list is not exhaustive, it is uncommon to find patrons of bars and clubs consuming drugs such as heroin or crack cocaine. The drugs that are found in the NTE are often referred to as 'party drugs' and are often a core element of youth culture in the pursuit of pleasure (Miller *et al.*, 2015; Pennay, 2015).

The NTE constitutes a space that is conducive to the consumption of illicit drugs by offering venues that are dimly lit (Hadfield, 2006) and play loud music (Haslam, 2015). The NTE also offers itself as a space where illicit drug use is both ordinary and tolerated (Miller *et al.*, 2015). As with the consumption of opium and cocaine in the late 19th century and early 20th century discussed in Chapter Two, there has been concern for intoxication over specific drugs. Mephedrone (4-methylmethcathinone), is a novel psychoactive substance that has been used recreationally in the NTE (Wood, Measham and Dargan, 2012). It was used as an alternative to ecstasy due to its similar effects (Measham, Moore and Østergaard, 2011). There was evidence that mephedrone was increasingly consumed in light of a shortage of other drugs such as ecstasy (Measham *et al.*, 2010), and as the concern from the "Conservative 'law and order lobby' and the tabloid press" (Measham, Moore and Østergaard, 2011, p. 143) grew surrounding the effects of mephedrone, it led the drug to be banned under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (Measham, Moore and Østergaard, 2011; Wood, Measham and Dargan, 2012). Research on the use of mephedrone was conducted before it was scheduled on the MDA (Measham, Moore and Østergaard, 2011) and then one year after it was made illegal (Wood, Measham and Dargan, 2012). This demonstrated that the drug remained popular even after it was banned, which suggests that, despite it being classified as illegal, club goers remained undeterred in consuming it (Wood, Measham and Dargan, 2012). Thus, the study by Wood *et al.* contributed to the body of literature that suggests legislative controls are ineffective at reducing substance use, an argument also articulated by Morin and Collins (2000).

Research on the NTE has not only mapped out emerging trends but has also looked at patterns of drug consumption between customers of different venues. In a defining piece of research on drug consumption in the NTE, Measham and Moore (2009) draw four conclusions from their study designed to assess the prevalence of illicit drugs with dance club customers using

self-report surveys in the NTE. Their study was conducted in-situ in the NTE in the early stages of the evening to engage with respondents when they were at their least intoxicated (Measham and Moore, 2009a, p. 444). Their first conclusion was that there is evidence for a distinct weekend 'recreational' drug consumption by young people in a range of venues in the NTE. Second, they found that there is a relationship between "diverse yet distinct patterns of drug use and consumption of different entertainment types" (Measham and Moore, 2009, p. 456). Their third finding was that the practice of pre-loading occurs with illicit drugs as well as alcohol before people come into the NTE. Their conclusion was that consumption of illicit drugs in the NTE is dynamic, and that trends can change as certain drugs emerge. For example, the authors cite that in two surveys of the same drum and bass club there was "an apparent increase in availability and use of (higher priced) MDMA powder, coupled with a slight reduction in use of (lower priced) ecstasy pills" (Measham and Moore, 2009, p. 547).

These findings highlight how diverse and dynamic drug consumption is in the NTE. Furthermore, research from Belgium suggested that NTE research was often fixated on the association between electronic dance music and MDMA, and their study examined the broader spectrum of nightlife conducting research that included venues playing rock music (Van Havere *et al.*, 2011). In this study the authors found that within the recreational environment frequent recreational drug use is common and illicit drugs are consumed throughout the broad spectrum of venues within the NTE (Van Havere *et al.*, 2011).

3.4.4 Controlling the Chaos?

The NTE is a deeply contested space (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, *et al.*, 2005; Hobbs, Winlow, *et al.*, 2005; Measham and Brain, 2005; Crawford and Flint, 2009; Measham and Moore, 2009a). It is a space in which:

different economic, social, professional and lay interests coalesce and collide, and where commercial and business imperatives converge with moral claims over appropriate behaviour and citizenship (Crawford and Flint, 2009, p. 404).

Drugs are taken by some in the night-time economy as a means of enhancing their pleasure (Measham, Parker and Aldridge, 2001; Measham and Moore, 2009a; Measham, Moore and Østergaard, 2011; Wood, Measham and Dargan, 2012) and their resulting intoxication can present a problem to venue manager and owners. Tensions between businesses and consumers arise when the intoxication involves the consumption of drugs, as drugs and their consumption at a venue pose a threat to the license of a venue (Manchester, 2008). Under S8 of the MDA 1971 the occupiers of premises can be punished for permitting certain drug related activities to take place there, and so their interests must be protected, and consumption must be controlled. Indeed, the LA 2003 stipulates that a licensing authority has the power to add a condition to the license of a venue that they must contract door supervisors to work at the premises which places the emphasis of policing the NTE in the hands of private security rather than the public police (Kostara and White, 2023).

3.5 Key Issues from the Night-time Economy

Similar to Chapter Two, this chapter draws to a close with a discussion on some of the key issues raised in regard to the NTE, which will be discussed in Chapter Eight. One of the issues that has arisen in this chapter is that, that also appears in Chapter Two, is that frequently legislation is deployed as a response to intoxication; for example the CJPOA was used to try and put a stop to the illegal raves and the consumption of MDMA (Critchler, 2000, 2003; Hill, 2002, 2003) and whilst it did effectively prevent the illegal raves they simply moved into legitimate, but more tightly regulated spaces. Moreover, the policing of the NTE has seen a withdrawal from the police which leaves the NTE to rely more heavily on policing by commercial forms of security (which is discussed in greater depth in Chapter Four).

Another issue is that the NTE represents a continuing balance between commodification and the control of intoxication. The LA 2003 had economic benefits by allowing venues to remain open for longer and extending the trade into the small hours of the morning (Hadfield and Measham, 2010), but there were again unintended consequences of this in that intoxication from alcohol and drugs required policing and the public police were unable to police the NTE on their own (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). Attention now moves on to discuss the door supervisors

who provide the security for the licensed venues in the NTE (Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, et al., 2005; Hobbs, Winlow, et al., 2005; Rigakos, 2008; Søgaaard, 2014; Søgaaard, Houborg and Tutenges, 2016; Søgaaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019).

4 Door Staff: From Violent Thugs to Professional Security?

“People think we're typical arseholes who just want to fight everybody when we get the chance. It isn't like that. We're taking action for the sake of people's health and safety.

People end up in hospital and we're trying to stop that.”

(VICE 2015)

4.1 An Introduction to Door Staff

In many advanced democratic countries around the world the traditional state orientated systems of providing security are starting to give way to an increasing number of decentralised pluralistic systems where the public police force works alongside a range of state and private agencies (Brodeur, 2010; Hansen Löffstrand, Loftus and Loader, 2016). Private security companies operate in numerous areas and at times can be the most dominant and most visible form of policing (Crawford, 2005). Loader (2000) identifies that what we typically understand to be known as policing has, in recent years, shifted away from being the sole domain of government into a system that favours a more networked approach. He elucidates a modality he calls “policing beyond government” (p. 238). This modality refers to security provisions that are supplied by a commercial market. Whilst modern private security is now regulated by a statutory body, it is still important to acknowledge that policing is no longer a service solely provided by the state. Security now has a transactional element to it (Zedner, 2006). It can be bought and sold (See Section 4.2). One area where private security dominates the policing landscape is within the night-time economy (NTE) (Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, Winlow, et al., 2005; Liempt and Aalst, 2015; Suonperä Liebster et al., 2019). Predominantly, in the NTE private security takes the form of door staff (Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, Winlow, et al., 2005). It is common for bars and clubs in the NTE to hire security companies to provide door supervisors to maintain control over intoxicated patrons (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003).

Working as a member of door staff is multi-faceted, and a range of skills are deployed in the course of their duty in order to ‘police’ the patrons of the bars, pubs and clubs they provide

security provisions for, both inside and outside their assigned venue. Technically, the dominion of the door supervisor is limited to the boundaries of the venue they are contracted to supervise¹¹, they are the guardians of the entrance to hedonistic playscapes and enforce the rules of the house (Hobbs et al., 2003). But on occasion their actions spill beyond the bar, leaving the private sphere, and move out onto the pavement, entering the public domain, for example, if a brawl has broken out¹².

The administration of security functions in the NTE is not limited to door staff, there are other groups such as Street Pastors (Middleton and Yarwood, 2015; van Steden, 2018), a volunteer Christian organisation who “respond to public disorder and the feelings of insecurity resulting from a night out by engaging with vulnerable – regularly drunk and intoxicated – people (van Steden, 2018, p. 404). These contributions by organisations which are neither the police nor private security, are what Loader calls “policing below government” (2000, p. 328), referring to systems of organised surveillance conducted by ordinary citizens. Whilst street pastors and other organisations make up some of the security provisions within the NTE, this Chapter will detail the role of the door staff. This thesis examines the policing carried out by door staff, as opposed to other organisations, because they are foremost the primary policing agents within the UK’s NTE (Winlow *et al.*, 2001b; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003) and they provide a form of policing intoxication that other organisations – such as the street pastors – do not. However, there are questions that must be explored and clarified before reviewing the literature on door staff in the NTE. Those questions pertain to security, policing and pluralised policing. Namely, what is security in the modern age? What is policing and pluralised policing? These questions will be answered in the first section of this chapter. The chapter then moves on to discuss some of the theoretical frameworks for understanding the work of door staff, and then progresses to chart the legal framework for private security in the UK and to provide discussion on the training that door staff receive. The penultimate section discusses the substantial literature

¹¹ Security companies are typically contracted to bars and clubs to provide security to a venue, and then supply the venue with door staff. If a security company has a contract for multiple venues door staff are responsible for the venue they are assigned to, they cannot typically swap locations or go and assist any other venues who have a contract with their security company.

¹² Recently, there have been many videos of door supervisors appearing on social network sites where brawls have erupted outside a venue and been filmed by passers-by. Videos uploaded to these sites draw comments from people who either venerate the door supervisor for their work or leave derisive comments about door staff, further entrenching stereotypes.

on door staff and their policing of the night-time economy, before moving on to a final section which asks the pertinent question, where are the drugs? Doing so provides a justification for this study, showing that whilst the literature on door staff has focused primarily on policing and violence, there has been no previous research with a specific focus on door staffs' role in the policing of drugs and intoxication in the NTE.

4.2 Security, Policing and Pluralised Policing

At the heart of this thesis are a number of contested terms and ideas. There has been much written on the concepts of security, policing, and pluralised policing. Security and police are not necessarily clear-cut concepts and merit further scrutiny.

4.2.1 What is Security?

Security has traditionally been conceived as the practice of defending a sovereign state from external threats (Zedner, 2009). Zedner suggests that security is changing the nature of criminological pursuit, arguing that previous clearly delineated boundaries between policing and security services have now become obscured. At the heart of security is the liberal ideal "of a publicly guaranteed social order that serves as the bedrock for core human goods such as peace, democracy and human rights" (Smith and White, 2014, p. 421). There is a fluidity to the concept of security, as Zedner states "security varies in its importance; in its location between state, private, and civil society, and, not least, in its very meaning even within that supposedly homogenous entity that is Europe" (2009, p. 11). One issue with security is that not only is it a desired state – so that people can feel safe and secure during the course of their activities – it is also a product that can be sold and "produced by private security firms, sold and traded commercially, and enjoyed as a club good available only by those who buy access or rights to it" (Zedner, 2009, p. 12). The fluidity of security is also manifested at a more local level and across time and space. A zone in a town or city with a cluster of bars and clubs will need much less involvement of security agents during the day than it will at night when the hedonists descend onto the streets and intoxicate themselves with various substances (Measham, Parker and Aldridge, 2001; Measham and Moore, 2009; Ward, 2010). The need

for security in an area can expand or contract depending on the day or the hour in order to better guarantee the social order that Smith and White (2014) speak of. Furthermore, the need for security increases in the NTE as the levels of sobriety in the customers declines, so that their intoxication can be controlled and managed (Crawford and Flint, 2009), largely by private actors such as door staff (Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019).

Security, then, has a dual nature whereby it is both a desired state and a product that can be consumed and traded (Zedner, 2009; White, 2010; Smith and White, 2014) and like most products it can vary in its quality. Competition between security contractors “has created a market for cheap, poor quality private security services that may, on balance, threaten the health and safety of citizen-consumers more than they enhance it” (Smith and White, 2014, p. 424). This could have acute consequences for the safety of patrons within the NTE where excessive alcohol (Barton and Husk, 2012) and drug consumption are common (Measham and Moore, 2009). Even though security can be a private and tradeable commodity, it is still contingent on the state to ameliorate the standards of security through regulation of the market to ensure that contractors do not fall below a baseline standard (Jones and Newburn, 2006; Smith and White, 2014). As a result of the expansion of the security market, ‘policing’ services can be delivered in private, semi-private, and public domains by a multiplicity of semi-private and private actors (Boels and Verhage, 2016). At the heart of security lies control, which is manifested through policing, it is a service that seeks to placate the ideal of a guaranteed social order by providing spaces with trained – to some degree – agents who are symbolic of security (Zedner, 2009) that can provide services that we would normally consider to be ‘policing’.

4.2.2 Policing and Pluralised Policing

There has been a reorientation in recent decades of what policing is and what we understand it to be. There is the Weberian ideal that the defining feature of a modern state is its monopoly of the legitimate use of force within predetermined and specified spatial boundaries (Weber, 1978; Loader, 2000). The monopoly is principally vested in the body we know as the police (Loader, 2000). The modern construction of security as a liberal ideal of social order that can be maintained through state and non-state actors begins to erode what we might consider to

be traditional policing. Policing is a set of tasks that are no longer solely delivered by the state institution, there are now actors within the private sphere who perform policing actions. For the sake of clarity, I have chosen to use Jones and Newburn's definition of policing:

organized forms of order maintenance, peacekeeping, rule or law enforcement, crime investigation and prevention and other forms of investigation and associated information brokering undertaken by individuals or organizations, where such activities are viewed by them and/or others as central or key defining part of their purpose. (Jones and Newburn, 2006, p. 3)

I have chosen to follow this definition of policing as these elements of policing are applicable to door staff. Door supervisors are organised by the Security Industry Authority (discussed in further detail below) and they assist in maintaining order within the NTE, have been contracted to undertake activities that ensure that clubs, bars and pubs are complying with the laws, and to uphold the licensing conditions of venues. For example, a door supervisor will check IDs to ensure that the person who is seeking access to the venue is at least 18 years of age (which is enforcement of the Licencing Act 2003, and a licencing condition). This suggests that policing tasks can be undertaken by private actors which feeds into the concept of pluralised policing.

When discussing the pluralisation of policing, scholars have pointed to an "increasing disconnection between the public police and policing" (Loader, 2000; Boels and Verhage, 2016, p. 3). A consequence of the pluralisation of policing also implies that there has been a shift from the state-centric policing framework (Boels and Verhage, 2016). To highlight this more clearly, I have used Loader's (2000, p. 323) definition of plural policing:

What we might call a shift from police to policing has seen the sovereign state – hitherto considered focal to both provision and accountability in this field – reconfigured as but one node of a broader, more diverse network of power. Sure enough, this network continues to encompass the direct provision and supervision of policing by institutions of national and local government. But it now also extends to private policing forms secured through government; to transnational policing

arrangements taking place above governments; to markets in policing and security services unfolding beyond government; and to policing activities engaged in by citizens below government. We inhabit a world of plural, networked policing.

One must enquire as to how this definition relates to door supervisors. When applying for a license to sell alcohol, a venue must submit their application to a local council. The local council could, in theory, stipulate that as a part of the licensing condition the venue must have a certain number of door supervisors providing security to the premises on a given day. This is what Loader refers to as “policing through government” (2000, p. 237) where policing functions are stipulated by the state but are able to be purchased privately. The combinations of public, private, and semi-public actors has created a web of policing actors, creating a “complex amalgam of policing activity in the streets and beyond” (Boels and Verhage, 2016, p. 4).

The following section examines the academic literature on door staff, with a particular focus on the pronounced transition from maintaining order through violence or the threat of violence, towards professionalisation and a focus on the other security functions that door staff provide within city centres at night. It then examines theoretical frameworks that have been used to understand door staff and sets out the frameworks that I shall utilise for the thesis. The third and final section discusses the processes people have to go through to become a member of door staff and the information that they are supplied with in regard to drug consumption and the actions they should take to prevent its use.

4.3 Theoretical Frameworks

Most researchers examining door staff have utilised a single theoretical framework. Frameworks such as masculinity (Monaghan, 2002a; Søggaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019), violence (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Hobbs, O’Brien and Westmarland, 2007) and dirty work (Hansen Löffstrand, Loftus and Loader, 2016). This thesis argues that door staff cannot be fully understood through the lens of one theory. Due to the complex nature of working the doors, and the related contradictory and competing interests, there is arguably no one overarching

framework that helps us to fully understand the role of the door supervisor. Instead, one can consider a number of theoretical perspectives as a Venn diagram (provided below), where the frameworks intersect and complement each other. What follows from here is a discussion on theories that relate to door staff.

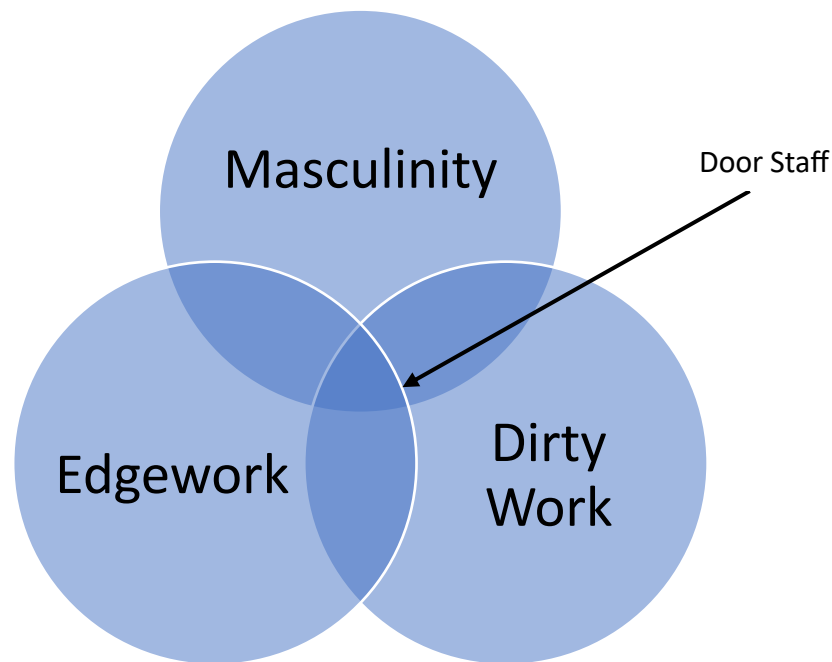


Figure 2 - Theoretical Frameworks 1

4.3.1 Masculinity

Working on the doors of bars and clubs is, arguably, an occupation which places a high value on the establishment and projection of a “forceful masculine identity” and those working the doors attain higher levels of respect if they possess a superior physicality (Monaghan, 2002a, p. 339). However, it is important to be clear that the concept of “masculinity is not the possession or non-possession of certain traits. It is to do with the maintenance of certain kinds of relationships between men and women, and between men” (Morgan, 1992, p. 67). Moreover, masculinity is not exclusive to men, as Cliff Cheng states “writing about masculinities need not be about the male sex. Masculinity can be and is performed by women. Women who are successful managers perform *hegemonic masculinity*” (Cheng, 1996, p. xii). Cheng alludes to the fluid nature of masculinity; this is also reflected in the work of Monaghan

(2002a) where he discusses how some female door staff that he had interviewed projected masculine traits. For example, he describes a discussion between two female bouncers who are estimating the competency of one of their fellow female colleagues and disparage her by describing her as “a twig” (p341). This demonstrates that dominant masculinities are potentially independent of biological sex and that furthermore, “masculinity is not a fixed entity embedded in the body or personality traits of individuals. Masculinities are configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action and, therefore, can differ according to the gender relations in a particular setting” (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 836).

There is a strong emphasis placed on a need for physicality and powerful body build by all door staff, regardless of their sex, in order to be effective in the role (Monaghan, 2002a). Physicality is seen as a necessity because door staff can get into situations where physical intervention is unavoidable and their strength is an asset. For example, they may have to restrain an inebriated and aggressive patron until the police arrive (Liempt and Aalst, 2015). Hobbs *et al* (2003) reported that door staff are often keen to play down the ability to fight as an important characteristic but the respondents in their study also made it clear that it was necessary to respond to situations quickly, and sometimes with violence (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Liempt and Aalst, 2015). The necessity for physicality and the use of the physical body to restrain, detain or indeed at times for self-preservation, raises fundamental questions on how and when that force should be used. The location in which door staff work has the propensity to be violent (Monaghan, 2002a) and bouncers “derive an economic rent from their potential to utilise pragmatic violence as a mode of social control” (Lister *et al.*, 2000, p. 384). However, there is a fine line between what is deemed appropriate by the door staff and what could render them ineffective due to their physicality. As Monaghan highlights when he discusses physicality, “sizeable bodies must also be fit for action” and they must also be technically competent (Monaghan, 2002a, p. 342). There is the concern that if people are too muscular then they will have sacrificed the ability to move and respond quickly to outbreaks of violence. For the door staff, a visibly muscular body may be symbolic in that it serves as a deterrent effect that discourages violence from customers.

Much of the literature regarding door staff and their relationship with masculinity is now rather dated. Winlow's work on masculinity in Sunderland was written in 2001, whilst Monaghan wrote much of his work in the early 2000s. At this time considerations around how to professionalise working on the doors were only just beginning to take hold, so this work does not accurately reflect any current relevance of masculinity in working on the doors and how masculinity now plays out between door staff in the current climate of the NTE. This earlier work also cannot account for the changes in the private security industry since 2003, namely that the role of the door supervisor has come under pressure to transform from a role that places emphasis on the ability to fight, to one where the emphasis is on conflict de-escalation and the use of force only as a last resort (Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019). This therefore merits, some reflection on the ongoing relevance of masculinity for research on door supervisors.

4.3.2 Edgework

The initial concept of edgework was first theorised by Stephen Lyng (1990). Lyng's argument articulated an approach to understanding voluntary risk-taking, focusing on the risks taken by sky divers. Whilst on the face of it, one could argue that sky diving is completely different to working on the doors, Lyng posits:

that activities that can be subsumed under the edgework concept have one central feature in common: they all clearly involve observable threat to one's physical or mental wellbeing or one's sense of an ordered existence. (Lyng, 1990, p. 857)

Moreover, Lyng also suggests that for activities which lie within the concept of edgework, people who do not know what they are doing put themselves at an increased risk of harm. Edgework, to Lyng, is also about specific emotions. Lyng highlights this by noting that "in those forms of edgework involving a threat of death or injury, the individual typically feels a significant degree of fear during the initial, anticipatory phases of the experience" (Lyng, 1990, p. 860).

The theory of edgework was directly applied to the role of (Danish) door staff by Søggaard and Krause-Jensen (2019). Door staff routinely expose their bodies to situations that have a clear threat to their physical and emotional wellbeing (Monaghan, 2003, 2006a; Søggaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019). In this regard, edgework has the potential as a theory to better understand the working practices and mentality of door staff. For example, edgework implies control over emotions, because emotions such as fear can prevent the most effective and appropriate actions (Lyng, 1990; Søggaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019) and control over emotions is salient for understanding how door staff execute their role effectively. Throughout the course of their work door staff must learn to be in control of their own emotions (such as anger and fear) (Monaghan, 2002a; Søggaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019) as well as the emotions and the unpredictable reactions of recalcitrant, sometimes unruly, and often inebriated patrons of the NTE (Monaghan, 2002a, 2003). Door staff, according to Søggaard and Krause-Jensen, are typically “understood as a man¹³, whose job is to confront unruly customers, prevent uncontrollable prospects from gaining customer status and strip unruly patrons of such status” (2019, p. 32). Edgework theory therefore emphasises control over circumstances as well as emotions. It also implies that door staff must remain in control of their emotions in order to effectively control and police the intoxicated customers of the NTE.

Søggaard and Krause-Jensen make the assertion in their paper that “much research on bouncers has found analytical inspiration in the psychosocial approach developed by Lyng (1990)” (Søggaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019, p. 33). However, there are very few studies that apply edgework theory to door staff as directly as the two Danes have. Most articles that discuss edgework only mention it fleetingly (see: Monaghan, 2002). The evidence base on door staff could benefit from further discussion on door staff and edgework.

4.3.3 Dirty Work

“Dirty work” is a theory initially developed by Hughes (1951, 1958) and is a concept applied to occupations which could be deemed degrading or running “counter to the more heroic of

¹³ As outlined above, door staff are not exclusively male, but I believe that what the authors are alluding to here is that the stereotype of bouncers is that they are men. There are women who work on the doors. For further discussion on this see Hobbs, O’Brien and Westmarland, 2007.

our moral conceptions” (Hughes, 1951, p. 319). Hughes built upon his earlier work by developing ‘dirty work’ further into a three-pronged typology, where responsibilities of work could be constituted as physically, socially, and morally tainted (Hughes, 1958). Hughes did not elaborate on these terms, however, but Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) have usefully done so.

Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) built upon the work of Hughes (1951) by adding criteria for each of these taints. These authors posit that a *physical taint* occurs where a job is “performed under particularly noxious or dangerous conditions” (1999, p. 415). Second, that the *social taint* occurs when the role involves coming into contact with people or groups who are themselves stigmatised or where the occupation appears to have a servile relationship towards other people. The third and final taint is the *moral taint*, which “occurs where an occupation is generally somewhat sinful or of dubious virtue” (1999, p. 415). The two authors make it clear in their work that “the boundaries between the physical, social, and moral dimensions are inherently fuzzy, and many occupations appear to be tainted on multiple dimensions” (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999, p. 415). Therefore, for a role to be considered ‘dirty’ using the dirty work framework, it does not necessarily have to meet all three of the taints.

Hansen Löffstrand, Loftus and Loader (2016) have applied the dirty work framework to private security personnel in both the UK and Sweden examining private security staff as ‘dirty workers’ and exploring how the staff construct their self-esteem in the face of stigmatisation. This comparative study takes the idea of *moral taint* and builds upon it by suggesting that it “occurs when [private security] officers are judged by external audiences as untrustworthy or ... where they internalize doubt about the legitimacy of their own work” (Hansen Löffstrand, Loftus and Loader, 2016, p. 299). Their findings demonstrate how private security personnel invoke a range of tactics and strategies to “deflect scorn and construct a positive reframing of their work as important and necessary” (Hansen Löffstrand, Loftus and Loader, 2016, p. 312).

The dirty work framework is arguably very broad in its scope, so it is not exclusive to those in private security, let alone to door staff. However, it is a useful framework for understanding door staff because it approaches the industry from multiple points of view and attempts to garner an understanding both of how door staff see themselves and how the public perceive

them. Whilst Hansen Löffstrand et al (2016) have applied the dirty work theory to the private security industry generally, their work focused upon a wide variety of private security officers – working on TV sets and in shopping centres as well as private security who provided public functions – rather than exclusively door staff. It is important to explore the dirty work framework in relation to door staff, as doing so focuses in on a specific area of private security, as opposed to applying it to private security more generally.

Discussion on the theories relating to door staff will continue further in Chapter Eight. The focus now turns to a practical exploration of the world of the door staff and how they are now regulated in 2023.

4.4 Getting on the Door: The Security Industry Authority, Regulation, Licensing and Training

Private security is a prodigious industry that seeps into many corners of society, for example there are private security companies who are responsible for security provisions in large shopping complexes (White, 2010), who escort convicted criminals to prisons (English, 2018) and who provide security for international sporting events such as the Olympics (Fussey *et al.*, 2012; Armstrong, Giulianotti and Hobbs, 2017). The people providing these security functions are required to undergo training and successfully pass exams relating to a specific area of private security in order to legally work within it. Once the training scheme has been passed, the candidate is then eligible for their security badge. Becoming a door supervisor requires people to follow this route too, as door supervisors fall under the general umbrella of private security.

The Security Industry Authority (SIA) is the regulatory body responsible for the private security industry, and provides the training required to work as a licensed door supervisor. When the NTE was burgeoning over the late 1980s and early 1990s and the need for door staff was becoming greater, there was no legislative requirement for door staff to be licensed (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). However, towards the end of 1990s as the NTE developed, a requirement was introduced that door staff had to be registered with the local council who had jurisdiction for

licencing the area where they were employed, meaning that a door supervisor could be registered with multiple local authorities if they worked for several bars covered by different councils (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). Door staff in the late 1990s were also required to have successfully completed a course called 'Door Safe' (Calvey, 2000, p. 45). There were flaws with this approach, namely that the system of multiple licences was difficult to manage and that the previously unregulated security sector was creating a hole that was willingly filled by criminal gangs to 'control' doors of clubs and bars (Morris, 1998). This was discussed in a government white paper in 1999 which also recognised the importance of the private security industry and set out plans for statutory regulation of that industry in England and Wales. They stated that "despite the importance of the activities which the private security industry carries out there is no regulation to control those who work in the industry and no standards to which companies have to adhere" (Home Office, 1999, p. 3). As a commitment to Labour's partnership delivery of public services, the PSIA 2001 was viewed as an opportunity to embrace the capabilities of the private security industry alongside the work of the public police, to tackle the poor standards of policing within the private security industry, and to address criminal behaviour in the private security industry (White, 2010).

4.4.1 The Security Industry Authority

The creation of the SIA was the "centrepiece" of the Private Security Industry Act 2001 (PSIA 2001) (White, 2010, p. 141). The SIA is a non-departmental public body that is "directly accountable to the Home Office and is tasked with the day-to-day responsibility of regulating those sections of the industry covered by the legislation" (White, 2010, p. 141). The PSIA's own stated purpose is to provide protection to the general public from malpractice in the private security industry. This is also stressed in the door supervisors training manual, which reiterates that the vision of the SIA is to "reduce criminality and raise standards in the private security industry to ensure the public is, and feels, safer" (Get Licensed, 2023, p. 3). This vision of the SIA blurs the distinction between public and private policing, as they see themselves as part of the fabric that keeps the public safe, an example of Loader's "policing below government" (2000, p. 328).

Broadly, the remit of the SIA is two-fold. The first part of their role is to assist in reducing criminality (discussed in more detail below) and the second role is to raise the standards within the private security industry. The statutory functions of the SIA include licensing individuals who apply for their license (following the successful completion of a qualifying training course, which is discussed further below), approving security companies, monitoring the activities of people who are employed within the industry¹⁴, the undertaking of inspections, and to approve the standards of training within the industry. The remit for the SIA is contained in section 1.2 of the PSIA 2001. The significance of the SIA in terms of the focus of this thesis is that the PSIA 2001 provides authorization for the SIA to provide and maintain the administrative framework for the enforcement of compulsory licensing of individuals who undertake security functions. This includes the provision of criminal record and identity checks to ensure that those who have applied for a license have demonstrated they meet the standards of being 'fit and proper'. However, it is important to note that being issued with a license does not grant the holder any additional statutory powers. Section 1.5 of the PSIA 2001 highlights that:

- (5) The Authority shall not be regarded –
- a) As the servant or agent of the Crown; or
 - b) As enjoying any status, immunity or privilege of the Crown

Whilst the aim of the SIA is to reduce criminality, it must not therefore be seen as an extension of the state. There is then, a deep-seated irony present in the role of the SIA. Smith and White suggest that there is a 'paradox of private security regulation' which identifies that whilst the regulation of private security serves to protect the general public by mandating a minimum standard on security contractors it also infuses the private security industry contractors with a degree of 'state-ness' in that it demonstrates the state has "a highly visible presence in the security sector" (2014, p. 426).

¹⁴ It is quite common for the SIA to say that they are reviewing the license of a door supervisor if the door supervisor in question has been the subject of a video posted on social media showing the potential use of excessive force. This was the case with Julius Francis, a former world champion heavyweight boxer who appeared to knock a man unconscious whilst working as a licensed door supervisor. It was decided that Julius had acted in self-defence, and he still works on the doors of bars.

The PSIA 2001 gives the SIA authority to specify the requisite competencies and training standards to be met in order to be issued with a license. The SIA issues specific licences for close protection training, CCTV training, security guards and door supervisors, each with their own competencies and standards that need to be met. In order to work on the doors of licensed venues, candidates must be issued with the door supervisor's license. It has been argued that the licencing of door supervisors was a politically motivated activity designed to "promote public reassurance through the symbolism of action" (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003, p. 168). Moreover, there are assertions that endeavours to secure a safe environment for the denizens of the city centres at night-time was a way of securing risk-free conditions for capital investment (Hobbs *et al.*, 2000). Given the economic conditions that gave rise to the emergence of night-time leisure (deregulation and extended licenses) it is difficult to argue any other case.

It is necessary at this point to reflect upon the SIA critically, and to discuss to what extent it has met its aims, which were to reduce criminality and improve standards within the industry. The traditional image of the private security sector being riddled with criminality is arguably overexaggerated (White, 2015). Whilst there are examples of criminality (such as protection rackets, excessive use of force, and drug dealing) within the security industry (see Morris, 1998; Berry, 2020) these instances are somewhat over-exaggerated by the media (White, 2010, 2015). To assist in preventing criminal behaviour "the SIA is authorised by the PSIA 2001 to administer and enforce a licensing system in which each private security officer working in a licensable role must undergo an identity and criminal records check" (White, 2015, p. 429).

White (2015) evaluates to what degree the SIA has achieved their two aims. He argues that according to the SIA's own commentary on their statistics in 2010¹⁵ they suggested they were "making a strong contribution towards achieving this objective". Although their "figures certainly signify progress, they also demand closer scrutiny" (White, 2015, p. 429). Notwithstanding the SIA's confidence in their work, White is somewhat more sceptical and

¹⁵ In White's (2015) article, he does reference statistics that the SIA published online in 2010. However, upon trying to access them the website was no longer available or accessible and instead redirects the user to the SIA home page.

purports that the SIA “has succeeded in meeting its objectives, but only to a degree” (White, 2015, p. 426).

In attempting to improve the standards of the security industry, the SIA administer a voluntary scheme called the Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS). The aim of this scheme is to improve the standard of companies within the industry as opposed to the standard of the individual. Incentives for being a part of the ACS include being on the list of the SIA’s own register of approved contractors and preferential conditions for operation. White (2015) has leveraged three key criticisms of the SIA and their use of the ACS to raise standards within the industry. The first criticism is that “although the content of the competency requirement varies between sectors so as to account for the range of responsibilities assumed by different parts of the industry, the content is too homogenous within the sectors” (White, 2015, p. 435). White has identified that the requirement is not nuanced enough to account for the variety of roles that occur within the private security industry, as such one of the recommendations was that the requirement should be tailored so that it is able to clearly delineate the variety of security roles within the industry.

The second criticism White identifies is that the effect of the competency requirement has raised the standards of the lower end of the industry but has had the opposite effect at the higher end, and their standards are now as a result overall lower. By creating a higher, and “universally recognised standard of training there is less incentive for those who have historically recruited above this standard to continue to do so” (White, 2015, p. 436). The final criticism from White is that the training organisations, who are SIA accredited, are not consistently delivering the qualifications “in a rigorous manner” (White, 2015, p. 436). In his research, White identifies that in order to make the course more appealing to potential recruits some training organisations are shortening or simplifying their courses and making the final exams easier to pass which ultimately ends with a poorer standard of operative. This third criticism was echoed in a Home Office review of the SIA in 2017 (Home Office, 2017). The Home Office (2017) review does highlight that even though the SIA does have the remit to raise the requirement of the training standards, monitoring the provision of training would prove difficult as the PSIA 2001 does not bestow any powers upon the SIA to regulate the training bodies who provide the training.

There have been other criticisms leveraged at the SIA. Notably, Lucia Zedner (2006, p. 280) is deeply critical of the SIA going as far as to label them as a “pimp” for the industry. In her scathing criticism, Zedner’s assertion is that the regulatory regime prioritises the reputation and customer confidence of the private security industry rather than prioritising the concerns for the public good (2006). Moreover, Zedner highlights that private security more generally is more concerned with “satisfying the personal demands of those who pay, ensuring a continuing return upon investments, and keeping shareholders happy. It has little interest in upholding the rule of law, providing authoritative expressions of common values, or ensuring social solidarity” (Zedner, 2009, p. 91). Zedner’s key assertion is that private security industry is not concerned with enforcing laws or national security, but rather it is about ensuring maximum profits for shareholders.

4.4.2 Training Door Supervisors

4.4.2.1 The Training Process

Before discussing the literature on door staff and the NTE in more depth it is worth exploring the mandatory training one must undertake in order to become a door supervisor in the UK. This process is often overlooked in the literature and yet it can provide knowledge of the mechanisms that give men and women the rights and authority to police customers of the NTE. This section uses academic articles and textbooks as well as a training manual (referred to from herein as ‘the training manual’) provided by “Get Licensed” who are an organisation that provide details of training providers for private security courses in the UK (Get Licensed, 2023). Training providers for the door staff qualification are ubiquitous and as a result of this there are plenty of training manuals available online to view. They are all broadly similar in nature, providing an outline of the course and what to expect. I chose to examine the manual provided by “Get Licensed” due to its in-depth explanation of what is required for prospective students for each of their modules. It is unclear how widely this training manual is used as other training providers are likely to have their own version of it that they distribute to their prospective students.

In order to get a door supervisor's license someone must be over 18 years of age, pass an identity check, pass a criminal record check, and possess a recognised door supervision qualification (SIA, 2020b). The door supervisor qualification became mandatory in 2003 and was designed to increase public confidence in door supervisors (Lister *et al.*, 2001). However, the qualification was provided by a variety of providers meaning that the cost, duration and content of the course varied greatly, and this variance causes inconsistencies in the "design, delivery, and therefore, quality of courses" (Lister *et al.*, 2001, p. 20). The training manual (Get Licensed, 2023) sets out the structure and rough timeline from applying to the course to getting a door supervisor's license (See Appendix One). Prospective students are first required to successfully complete an e-learning module before their in-person training starts. Once this is completed, they begin study on four units that run across six days of training. The students will then sit exams that cover topics that relate to their training. If a student is unsuccessful, they are able to re-sit exams – although this is at a cost to them of £90 per exam. If the student passes the exam, they can then apply to the SIA for their license.

4.4.2.2 Drugs Training: What The 'Get Licensed' Training Handbook Says About Drugs

Unit 2, Chapter 3 of the door supervisor handbook is entitled Drug Awareness and focuses on policing drugs and how to identify drug users in bars and clubs (Get Licensed, 2023, p. 88). It begins by providing the reader with the primary offences under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 including possession of a controlled drug and possession with intent to supply a controlled drug, it also lists different types of drugs; some images of those drugs and an overview of their effects. However, there is no specific focus on drug *dealers*.

The training then provides a table (see Appendix Three) describing how door staff should respond to particular customer behaviours. For example, if a customer of a bar is found to be unconscious the staff response should be that "the person should be placed in the recovery position by a first aid trained member of staff and kept warm. An ambulance should be called, and staff should be prepared to resuscitate the person if required" (Get Licensed, 2023, p. 91). Door staff are asked to consider what the customer might have taken. The examples provided are alcohol, ketamine, heroin, poppers or tranquilisers. This suggests that door staff should be

trained extensively on responses to various types of emergency situations resulting from the ingestion of different drugs. On page 93, the manual goes as far as to suggest that one of the main roles of the door supervisor is the “preservation of life”. This clearly places a tremendous burden of responsibility onto door supervisors.

As already pointed out, there is a much stronger focus in the handbook on the detection of drug users than drug dealers. It suggests that door supervisors should be on the lookout for “signs of drug abuse taking place at a venue” which could be discarded needles or syringes, rolled bank notes and tube straws. The list is not exhaustive but offers an insight to evidence that there could be drug dealing and/or consumption in a venue. However, with this in mind it is salient to highlight that the more common drugs that are used by customers in the NTE are recreational drugs such as ecstasy and cocaine (Sanders, 2005; Measham and Moore, 2009; Fisher and Measham, 2018) rather than the heroin that is implied by the training manual. The manual suggests that when dealing with customers who are in possession of drugs, door supervisors should take steps to ascertain what the drug is and why the customer has it. It also says that door staff should “follow your venue policies for handling drugs, i.e. flush, or keep as evidence/detain/contact the police etc” (Get Licensed, 2023, p. 93). The fact that the manual suggests getting rid of the drugs down the toilet, as opposed to keeping them to hand over to the police is very interesting as is the fact that they suggest that door supervisors should detain someone in possession of drugs, even though no additional powers of detention are conferred upon private security.

Finally, in relation to drug handling and detection, the manual tells door supervisors to place any drugs that they have found in a suitable place to be handed over to the police, whilst at the same time stating that door supervisors should “never put any drugs in your pockets because that would put you in possession of a classified substance (an offence) (Get Licensed, 2023, p. 93). Whilst this is true, a strict interpretation of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 would also mean that door staff who were putting drugs into a safe place for the police would also be in possession of a classified substance. The manual also specifies that door staff should place drugs in an evidence bag, maintain the evidence for the police, and fill out incident reports on the drugs that they have confiscated, all the while keeping themselves safe whilst acting within the law.

It is clear that a notable burden of responsibility is shouldered by the door staff in terms of policing intoxicated patrons. The door staff must be vigilant to signs of drug consumption and are asked in their training to perform tasks that one would normally have associated with the traditional role of the police, such as the protection of evidence, the confiscation and disposing of illicit drugs, and the interrogation of customers about what drugs they have and why they are in possession of them. This is again, an example of Loader's "policing below government" (Loader, 2000, p. 328) as it confers a level of responsibility onto those who are not the state police.

4.4.3 Licensed: The Role of the Door Supervisor

Once students of the door supervisor course have passed their exams, they can then apply to the SIA for their door supervisor license and once they are in possession of a valid license, door staff can then work at licensed premises. Sometimes door staff will be employed directly by a security company, but often door supervisors are self-employed and find work through private security companies who will offer them work at a venue. In this example, the private security company would be a contractor to a licensed venue and the door supervisor would then be the sub-contractor. If door staff are self-employed, they are not entitled to certain statutory benefits such as holiday pay or sick pay.

The main task for door staff is to control the private spaces of the venues that they are contracted to, and in this context, the space to control is a commercial premise (Lister et al., 2000; Liempt and Aalst, 2015). Hobbs *et al's* (2005) research provides evidence that much of the policing within the NTE is conducted by private security employees. They reported that in Manchester approximately 100,000 people frequent the NTE and there are around 40 police officers and 1,000 door staff who police those who come to drink. Given how few police officers are on hand in this example, serves to highlight how salient and necessary private security are in the NTE to maintain control. As the private security industry has grown, one consequence is that "security is now a major object of public policy, of private enterprise, as well as hybrid public/private ventures" (Zedner, 2009, p. 2) meaning that the operational boundaries between public and private policing are now undeniably blurred, especially with

door staff outnumbering police 25:1¹⁶. However, it is key to hold in mind that “public policing is primarily offender-orientated and private policing property orientated” (Liempt and Aalst, 2015, p. 1257). This “skewed division of labour” (Suonperä Liebster *et al.*, 2020, p. 1383) raises fundamental questions on the role of door staff and how they police customers of the NTE. Any discussion on policing of the NTE by door staff also raises fundamental questions of power. Namely, from where and how do door staff derive their power? They are not given any additional powers under the PSIA 2001 and there are clear limits on what the door staff can and cannot do, for example they are not permitted to search anyone against their will.

There is a substantive body of research that discusses how door staff use have used violence and force (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, *et al.*, 2005; Hobbs, O’Brien and Westmarland, 2007) to control the customers of the NTE. However, there is a significant void when it comes to research exploring how door staff police drugs in a night club setting. Hobbs (*et al.*, 2003) briefly discuss a police directive where door staff are expected to have a ‘drugs box’ (p. 189). This drugs box is used where illicit drugs are taken away from customers and then stored in the box and scrutinized by the police at a later date. Rather surprisingly the authors bypass a (much needed) discussion on the implications of bouncers and venues being in possession of illicit drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. The only comment passed on the confiscation of drugs is that that drugs box scheme would “require particularly ‘prudent’ implementation strategies” (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003, p. 189) without further discussion on what this might mean.

Despite this lack of research, the sale and consumption of drugs has nevertheless been acknowledged in studies as a prominent feature of an illicit night-time economy (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). Sanders (2005) has written one of the few articles with an explicit focus on drugs and door staff. However, the focus of this study is not the policing of drugs by door staff, but rather how door staff were supplying ecstasy pills in a London night club. According to this research “only a small handful amongst dozens of bouncers at Sam’s Club was involved in selling ecstasy and/or cocaine” (Sanders, 2005, p. 244). Door staff are in an advantageous position, and some use this position to capitalise upon the financial rewards of selling drugs in clubs (Sanders,

¹⁶ It is important to acknowledge that these figures are from 2005, and that given the effects of austerity these number of door staff are likely to have increased, however, accessing reliable and up-to-date figures proved difficult.

2005), through their control of patrons through the door and their position of power over those patrons (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Sanders, 2005).

4.5 Door Staff: From Professional Violence to Service Professionals?

4.5.1 Class, Violence and Door Staff

The quotation from *Vice* which opens this chapter aims to defend door supervisors by telling the story of how a member of door staff became friends with someone they saved from a savage and violent attack. This news article highlights the important, and often underappreciated, security work that door staff can be called on to do in the NTE and is a rare example of a media story that refutes the popular stereotype of door staff as people who revel in violence (Calvey, 2000; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). It is difficult to assess whether or not the public attitude towards door staff has shifted in recent years, however most news stories about door staff tend to focus on their misgivings rather than the more positive aspects of their role. In academic circles, the research on door staff has undergone a significant shift, from a focus on violence and door staff being the enactors of that violence, to an aim to demonstrate how there has been a concerted effort invested into bringing door staff into a realm of respectability through professionalisation (Hobbs, O'Brien and Westmarland, 2007; Sogaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019).

Past research, particularly in the UK, has tended to centre upon the violence of door staff (Lister *et al.*, 2000; Hobbs, Lister and Winlow, 2002; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Hobbs, Winlow, *et al.*, 2005), body build (Monaghan, 2002a, 2003, 2004, 2006a), and the demonization of door staff (Calvey, 2019). Discussion on door staff in Europe, particularly in Denmark (see Hobbs, O'Brien and Westmarland, 2007; Sogaard, 2014; Sogaard, Houborg and Tutenges, 2016; Sogaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019), directs attention to how the profession of being a door supervisor has undergone a shift from being part of an 'informal economy' (Calvey, 2019) to being a customer orientated profession (Sogaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019). This shift in how door staff are depicted demonstrates that not even the traditional working-class body is exempt from commodification under capitalism, as Sogaard and Krause-Jensen highlight that "the bouncers

are encouraged to think of himself as “sales representative” of the venue rather than merely a strong-man” (2019, p33).

4.5.2 Working Class Bodies

De-industrialisation of the 1980s generally undermined the labour market for traditional working-class men in the United Kingdom (McDowell, 2003). Earlier, empirical research has shown that door staff have a tendency to emanate from working-class environments where violent conduct is widely accepted and even venerated (Winlow, 2001; Hobbs, O’Brien and Westmarland, 2007). Therefore, working on the doors represents a dominion in post-industrial societies where working-class masculinities are capitalised upon (Winlow, 2001; Sjøgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019) and have thus become essential to the maintenance of order in the NTE (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Sjøgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019). These traditional masculinities are now seen as key assets in the protection of private property, especially within the context of the NTE, which could be viewed as a reversion to the type of ‘policing’ in effect before the advent of the modern police in the UK in 1829, where feudal lords hired local strong men to protect their interests (Reiner, Sheptycki and Bowling, 2019). Thus, traditional working-class masculinities have been reconfigured or ‘mutated’ (Sjøgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019) into desirable and marketable assets in the NTE (Monaghan, 2002a). The argument could be made that the traditional working culture of door staff idealises increased physicality, potential violence and the idea of toughness, traits that have their roots in male working-class values (Winlow, 2001; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). And that it is these values that have been ‘mutated’ by a capitalist need for the provision of security in an environment that is fraught with disorder and chaos, and that these mutations have occurred because this need for control cannot be met by the public police but can be filled by the market.

Discussions on working class attributes for bouncers often refer to their bodily capital (Monaghan, 2002a). According to Monaghan, bodily capital is constructed via two dimensions, body size (in regard to weight, height and appearance) and techniques of the body. The body size is an important consideration when discussing bouncers for “the physical body is their economic asset” (Monaghan, 2002a, p. 337). Door staff use their bodies to make money. The bodies of door staff are also useful for managers of venues, as a way to keep costs

down. Rather than bring in a large door team, venues tend to favour bringing in smaller numbers of larger doormen who derive and command authority through their sheer physicality (Hobbs, Lister and Winlow, 2002).

When Monaghan discusses techniques of the body, he is referring to the ability of the door staff to execute violence. This is in part because of the construction of the NTE. It is an environment that is suffused with chaos (as discussed in the previous chapter) and as a result the NTE is a potentially violent domain to work in. Door staff must be able to utilise their ability to enact pragmatic violence as a form of social control over patrons in the NTE (Lister et al., 2000), this pragmatic use of violence for door staff is arguably a relic of traditional working class male values (Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019).

The violence that Monaghan (2002a) discusses is not outright violence, rather the violence is controlled, thought out and executed only when necessary in a bid to control 'unruly' customers. The pragmatism of violence is part of the make-up of door staff. Techniques of the body often are discussed in relation to the size of the body. Monaghan highlights how door staff often discuss how their size impacts their work, for example one member of door staff he interviewed, Jack, was 5'7" and weighed around 13 stone. In this interview Jack openly discussed how if he was too big then it would not work to his advantage saying that "he would simply become too slow if, in his terms, 'I was all puffed up'" (Monaghan, 2002a, p. 342). It becomes essential for door staff to understand their bodies and how to best use them to their advantage in a space fraught with violent potential when controlling unruly and intoxicated customers.

4.5.3 Violent Arbiters of Justice

Research on how door staff use their body was explored by criminologists interested in violence in the night time economy (Hobbs et al., 2000, 2003; Lister et al., 2000; Hobbs, Hadfield, et al., 2005; Winlow and Hall, 2006) This early research on the culture of door staff showed how the expansion of night time leisure zones created an opportunity for "upwardly mobile entrepreneurs of violence who were previously restricted to unambiguously criminal markets" (Hobbs, Lister and Winlow, 2002, p. 367) to provide security to private venues. This

led to the role of the bouncer being typified by “toughness, power, control and violent potential” (Hobbs, O’Brien and Westmarland, 2007, p. 21) which ties into the techniques of the body, identified by Monaghan (2002). Violence, and the ability of door staff to do violence, was a common and recurring theme from research studies conducted in the early 2000s leading to links with “gangsterism and illegality” (Calvey, 2019, p. 250). Violence was deemed to be the salient ingredient for the constitution of door staff (Hobbs, O’Brien and Westmarland, 2007).

4.5.4 Bouncers: From Thugs Selling Drugs to the Realm of Respectability?

Trying to pinpoint the exact moment that bouncers became an integral part of a night out is challenging. Hobbs et al (2003) describe how various shifts in the economic landscape gave rise to conditions where security provisions became a necessity for club and bar culture. The argument involved two interrelated processes, first:

economic development from the industrial to the post-industrial; and second a significant reorientation of urban governance, involving a move away from the managerial functions of local service provision toward an entrepreneurial stance primarily focused upon the facilitation of economic growth. (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003, p. 15)

Essentially the crux of their argument is that the entrepreneurial stance created opportunities for cities to regenerate certain areas and with this came an increase in the number of bars, pubs and nightclubs (see Chapter Three on the NTE for further details) which required additional security because of an associated increase in intoxicated patrons. The limited resources of the public police have produced an inability to police the revellers properly which created a gap that was filled by the private security sector and thus door staff became the key preventors of crime in the NTE (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Windle, 2013). However, the economic shift is not the only reason why door staff became the most visible form of policing within the NTE.

4.5.5 Illegitimate Enterprises Vs Legitimate Enterprises

Hobbs et al's (2003) account of the rise of door staff focuses on legitimacy. It provides an account of the legitimate forces that created the need for door staff but not the illegitimate forces that influenced private security. Door staff were initially part of the "informal economy" where the door staff would be working as a second job and paid in cash (Calvey, 2000, p. 45) Whilst there is discussion on some illegitimate acts (such as the use of excessive violence against people) the way in which they discuss the birth of door supervisors focuses upon the economic conditions that created a need for private security. Indeed, there are very few academic studies that demonstrate how crime syndicates set up legitimate security businesses to provide door supervisors to clubs in order to facilitate the distribution of illicit drugs and retributive justice. One such study was reported by Windle (2013) who argues that the employment of some door staff was borne out of criminal enterprise, as a way for criminals to protect their assets in venues frequented by the public, often bars and nightclubs, which were owned by criminals. Windle describes 'Tucker's firm' which comprised of three core members, Tony Tucker, Patrick Tate, and Craig Rolfe, all of whom were ultimately murdered in a Land Rover in Essex in 1995¹⁷. In the research, Windle reveals that Tucker ran a security firm at a nightclub in Essex in order to facilitate the supply of illicit drugs within the venue. Tucker also "also used violence and intimidation to prevent the encroachment of competition security companies and maintain security within the venues they were paid to protect" (Windle, 2013, p. 386). Windle further details how the rise of door staff was closely intertwined with criminality than other accounts. There are details of extreme violence being used by door staff (one example being someone being knocked unconscious with a fire extinguisher). This is not unique to the work of Windle, as Hobbs et al also describe door staff using extreme violence but what they do not discuss in any detail is the fact that legitimate security companies were set up by criminals and provided the policing functions over clubs and bars.

¹⁷ Since the murder of the three men there have been three films made about their time as criminals. Essex boys, The Rise of the Foot Soldier and Bonded by Blood

The work of both Hobbs et al (2003) and Windle (2013) provide excellent accounts of how door supervisors emerged as a mainstay of the night-time economy. However, their discussions on their origins are diametrically opposed as Hobbs et al (2003) provides a discussion on the legitimate ways in which door staff began whilst Windle (2013) talks about the illegitimate conditions that gave rise to door staff in the night-time economy. At this juncture it is worth discussing that whilst the security businesses that Windle (2013) investigates were legitimate, they were set up by criminals in order to protect their interests. This analysis lends support to the proposal from Jay Albanese (1996) who suggests that there is a “spectrum of legitimacy” where traditional organised crime business is at one end and legitimate businesses are at the opposite end. This is not to say that at the time where door supervisors were becoming increasingly prevalent that all security was provided by criminal enterprises, but *some* of the security provisions were supplied by legitimate businesses ran by criminals. Moreover, some of the door staff who were working for the security companies were aware that their bosses were criminals.

Various research studies have identified a link between door staff and the distribution of illicit drugs (see Measham, Parker and Aldridge, 2001; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Sanders, 2005; Ward, 2010). But at the same time, as mentioned above, door staff were seen as the main preventers of crime in the NTE (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Windle, 2013). Windle (2013) highlights this irony, presenting Tucker’s firm as both crime preventers and facilitators. He goes on to discuss how being in control of doors was an advantageous position for the door staff to hold, because they were able to dictate who got into the clubs and bars and who did not. This meant that door staff could let in certain drug dealers known to them and would also be content to use violence to “prevent the encroachment of competitors and prevent disturbances within the venue they were protecting” (Windle, 2013, p. 389).

Windle’s work is certainly interesting but perhaps limited in its capacity to make generalisations about the nature of working on the doors. However, it can show us how a legitimate enterprise can be a facilitator of illegitimate activity. Windle focuses on one case study of a notorious crime gang in the 1990s whereas the work of Hobbs et al (2003) focuses on different door staff in different cities and is thus able to give a wider view of how door staff operated presenting a more nuanced portrayal of door staff. Nevertheless, Hobbs et al also

found instances of door staff involved in illicit activity, a view which has also been supported by the work of Sanders (2005) who conducted interviews with door staff who dealt drugs in a club further feeding into the image of door staff being unprofessional and potentially dangerous.

A report that considered the links between clubs, door staff and drug dealing highlighted that there were criminal gangs operating in nightclubs under the mantra of “control the doors, control the floors” (Morris, 1998, p. v). The report also discussed in depth how there were teams of door staff who worked effectively to eliminate criminal activity in the clubs that they control. Morris concluded with the recommendation that it was imperative that to impact on the criminal control of the door there should be an increased engagement with the door supervisor registration programme that was in operation at the time. When the registration of door supervisors was first introduced in late 1990s, it was administered by the local authority as it was deemed necessary to have a system in place that introduced regulatory safeguards that watch the watchers (Bowden, 1978). After various reports on criminal activity in some door supervisor networks and years of political wrangling (White, 2010; Smith and White, 2014) the Labour government, led by Tony Blair, introduced the Private Security Act 2001, wherein section 1 established the Security Industry Authority (SIA). As discussed above, the SIA required all contracted security operatives to possess a valid occupational license before they were able to work within the industry (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). The establishment of the SIA started the move towards professionalisation, taking door staff out of the informal economy (Calvey, 2000; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003) and into a more formal and codified role.

4.5.6 Collaboration: How Times Have Changed

Research on door staff took a short hiatus from around 2008 – 2015 with very few studies conducted. Research reports began to appear again around 2015 (see Liempt and Aalst, 2015), predominately from mainland Europe. This reinvigorated body of research took a different perspective on door staff and discussed the wider social policy issues surrounding them, rather than having a sustained focus on violence. For example, van Liempt and van Aalst

(2015) looked at the role of door staff the Netherlands as a form of pluralised policing, questioning whether or not bouncers were increasingly responsible for policing in the NTE.

Recent research discusses how the nature of being a door supervisor has changed and how there has been a concerted effort to professionalise the standard of people working on the doors, one of the operational aims of the SIA. Hobbs *et al* (2003) discussed the importance of a non-violent approach to door work and suggested that a more customer-oriented approach to working the doors was beginning to creep into the British door trade. But the only evidence of this professionalisation in the United Kingdom comes from O'Brien, Hobbs and Westmarland in 2008 who argued that certain (not all) security companies have attempted to distance themselves from the traditional image of a masculine and menacing door supervisor, instead promoting the counter to that image of a professional who is more civilised and is service orientated.

One of the most interesting discussions within the contemporary research literature discusses the relationship between door staff and policing. In his book, Rigakos (2008) highlights how some Canadian door supervisors are using the role as a stepping stone into the various Canadian state police forces. Moreover, researchers in recent years have argued that policing is becoming increasingly pluralised and that partnership agreements are also becoming increasingly important for the maintenance of law and order (Crawford, 2006; Dupont, 2006; Sjøgaard, Houborg and Tutenges, 2016). There is an argument to be made that door staff are part of a wider network of policing in the NTE. This argument has been made convincingly by van Liempt and van Aalst (2015) and by Friis Sjøgaard *et al* (2016). Furthermore, this argument suggests that there is the need to police intoxication. Which carries on the trends of previous eras where the responsibility for policing the intoxication was invested in to actors such as informants and excise men (Warner and Ivis, 1999; Warner, 2002) or pharmacists (Booth, 1997; Berridge, 1999), as demonstrated in Chapter Two. However, it could be argued that the policing of intoxication focuses on the drug of choice in the NTE, alcohol, and that any discussion on the policing of illicit drugs and the policing of drug consumption is scant.

Van Liempt and van Aalst (2015), in their study of door staff in two large Dutch cities, provide compelling evidence of a public – private collaboration that reveals a way of controlling public

spaces that is different from the more traditional ways of policing the same spaces, and question whether this creates an increased responsibility on the door staff for the maintenance of (dis)order in the Dutch NTE. These issues arose out of the introduction of an initiative called the Safer Nightlife Policies (SNPs) which emerged in the mid-1990s in the Netherlands. The SNPs aimed to build a more “structured collaboration between the city council, the nightlife industry and the police in monitoring and governing the city at night” (Liempt and Aalst, 2015, p. 1252). The authors conclude that “collaboration between public and private actors affect the distinction between public and private space” (Liempt and Aalst, 2015, p. 1260). This is because collaboration between the public police and door staff in Holland has redrawn the operational boundaries for door staff, and they have been given increased responsibility by the SNPs for securing public spaces. This redrawing of the boundaries is fraught with ambiguities, not least of all because door staff are increasingly controlled by managers of venues within the NTE, meaning they still must operate with a dual consideration of what is the right course of conduct. Moreover, this was one of the findings from this research, more of which is highlighted in Chapter Seven. Their research shows that despite intense collaboration between public and private policing actors “practices of negotiating order in the Dutch NTE are (still) clearly riddled with tensions and ambiguities that cannot be resolved by simply collaborating with other actors” (Liempt and Aalst, 2015, p. 1260). Dutch door staff have to demonstrate to the police that they are reliable colleagues but must also demonstrate their ability to the venue managers that they understand what is good for business (Liempt and Aalst, 2015), or as Hobbs *et al* (2003) say, “the bouncer operates according to a highly ambiguous cocktail of law, occupational codes, and personal discretion that is underpinned by an interpretation of what is good and what is bad for business” (p15).

Friis Sjøgaard *et al* (2016) discuss how door staff operating in Denmark experience the police as a partner in informal policing networks. The authors show that this informal relationship has emerged out of a ‘war on biker gangs’. In this article the authors demonstrate that there are a number of components that help to sustain the policing - door supervisor network. One of those components is inter-agency trust. This trust was borne out of changes to structural processes in Denmark in the 1990s which “contributed to the gradual formation of informal collaborative relationships between bouncers and police officers” (Sjøgaard, Houborg and

Tutenges, 2016, p. 138). This is not too dissimilar to how the relationships between police and door staff were formed in the Dutch study (Liempt and Aalst, 2015).

These two studies from Holland (Liempt and Aalst, 2015) and Denmark (Søgaard, Houborg and Tutenges, 2016, p. 138) highlight how radically different door staff are in the present day compared to the late 1990s and early 2000s. Not least of all because the earlier wave of door staff showed a reluctance to collaborate with the police because their subcultural tendency was to resolve conflicts via private and retributive justice rather than using the route of public justice (Lister et al., 2000; Søgaard, Houborg and Tutenges, 2016). There have been other attempts to show how working on the doors has become increasingly professionalised and at the same time has fallen victim to labour market service paradigms (Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019). Authors of a study on Danish door staff discuss how the repositioning of the role as service orientated is “fraught with ambiguity” (Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019, p. 31). They show that the environment in which door staff work is a “chaotic space suffused with erratic behaviour and potential aggression, enhanced by the consumption of alcohol and illicit drugs” (Ibid). The authors highlight that the emphasis on customer service does not sit neatly with the uncooperative and recalcitrant behaviour of inebriated patrons. Furthermore, the emphasis on customer service makes it incumbent on door staff to contribute to the construction of a pleasurable and enjoyable atmosphere that facilitates the consumption of alcohol by hedonistic revellers.

Comparing contemporary research with that from the 1990s and early 2000s demonstrates how dramatic a change the door supervisor’s role and the private security industry has undergone. The role of the bouncer has shifted away from the arbiters of violence with little respect for the customer experience in the NTE (Lister et al., 2000; Hobbs et al., 2003) to providers of security working alongside the police (Liempt and Aalst, 2015; Søgaard, Houborg and Tutenges, 2016) who must also ensure that the customers in their work environment also enjoy a pleasant experience (Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019). In this regard, the work environment of door staff has become reoriented and structured by contradictory and competing interests.

4.6 Conclusion: Where are the Drugs?

Research on door staff arguably lacks meaningful discussion on how door staff police drugs. The only study (to the best of the author's knowledge) to explicitly tackle the issue of drugs and door staff is that by Sanders (2005). The information presented in that article shows how a minority of door staff who worked at the club (known as Sam's Club in the article) engage in dealing illicit drugs to their customers. Sanders' research cannot be said to be indicative of all clubs, or even the majority, because the information that has been presented has been gathered from just one site. If there had been research from other sites, or even researchers, to corroborate Sanders' article then it would strengthen his arguments considerably. Therefore, given that little academic attention has been afforded to the policing of illicit drugs in the night-time economy, this thesis attempts to fill that gap by developing a deeper and wider understanding about the policing of drugs by door staff, demonstrating that private companies are now policing the intoxication of patrons.

Indeed, door staff often act on incidents within their work environment and take the 'policing' into their own hands (Hobbs et al., 2003; Monaghan, 2003; Hobbs, Winlow, et al., 2005; Liempt and Aalst, 2015). It has been documented that some venue owners will tell their security staff to ring or contact the police only as a last resort, partly because the sale of illicit drugs aids "the club's overall longevity" (Sanders, 2005, p. 254) and also because a consistent police presence on a venue can affect the license of a venue (Hobbs, Lister and Winlow, 2002). Therefore, what we begin to see is that private security poses something of a paradoxical dilemma. It is a *prima facie* solution to police forces shackled by budgets, but it is also a potential problem if door staff are policing matters that extend way beyond their paygrade or jurisdiction (Smith and White, 2014). Especially in relation to drugs, door staff are being asked to police intoxication by confiscating drugs from people and putting them somewhere safe. But because the NTE is replete with venues that curate atmospheres conducive to drug consumption (Silcott and Push, 2000), as will be demonstrated in Chapter Seven, some venue managers are asking door staff to turn a blind eye to drug use in order to generate more revenue for the venue. Door staff are tightly wedged between a proverbial rock and a hard place.

5 Methodology

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter highlighted that studies focusing on door staff have generally failed to highlight how door staff police drugs. Any mention of drugs and door staff are not detailed if discussed, and, as drug use is commonplace within the NTE (Measham, Parker and Aldridge, 2001; Measham and Moore, 2009) there is therefore a demonstrable need to understand how drugs and intoxication are policed in this location. Furthermore, there is a wealth of literature that explores how intoxication has been central to the pursuit of hedonism for centuries. The literature review exposed that intoxication has also been policed in various ways, initially by informants during the gin panics (Warner *et al.*, 2001b; Warner, 2002) and pharmacists in the opium years (Anderson and Berridge, 2000; Berridge, 2013). 1916 arguably marked a turning point that brought the policing of intoxication to the attention of the Home Office, through the policing of illegal cocaine consumption in London's West End (Kohn, 1999, 2001). The police remained a central figure in the policing of intoxication as, for example, they sought to control intoxication from ecstasy in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Critcher, 2000, 2003; Colin, 2009). As illegal rave organisers decided that they were going to take their companies and make them legitimate; intoxication moved into clubs and bars in city centres and the police were then unable to manage the ensuing drug consumption and so the policing landscape arguably shifted, with door staff becoming the primary policing agents in the NTE responsible for the policing of intoxication. Yet sparse academic attention has been afforded to this shift.

This chapter presents a discussion of and justification for the philosophical standpoint of the research methodology. The research design is then outlined. The initial research design to recruit door staff to the research was relatively unsuccessful. So, both methodological successes and failures will be outlined. I also consider the lessons that I have learnt from those failures and reflect on how this study might have contributed to a new way of conducting research on door staff. I then outline my analysis strategy followed by a discussion on ethics. This chapter closes with a discussion of reflexivity, where I discuss myself in relation to the research before, during and after the process.

This research project aims to discover how door staff police intoxication from drugs in the night-time economy of the UK. To answer this, I have taken a qualitative dual-methods approach where I have blended 20 semi-structured interviews conducted on Zoom with four periods of observation in a large bar in the heart of a large northern city. The respondents for interviews were, mainly, recruited through online social media platforms. The use of social media as a recruitment tool was employed following a long period of failed recruitment attempts by visiting bars and clubs in person (this is discussed further below). – and allowed me as a researcher to reach a significant number of potential respondents. Social networking sites such as Facebook involves each individual user being:

directly linked to his or her personal “friends,” whilst also having access to membership of one or more of the millions of Facebook groups that connect other users throughout the world. Facebook groups are virtual communities linking people with some shared interest, attribute, or cause (Bhutta, 2012, p. 58).

To recruit interview participants, I joined several Facebook groups dedicated to working as a door supervisor in the United Kingdom. To advertise the research, I created a poster (see Appendix Four) and posted it in the group, making it clear that I was joining for the purposes of recruiting participants for my research. People then interacted with the post using the ‘like’ function and commenting about their interest in participation. Interviews were conducted through the video conferencing platform, Zoom.

In embarking on my PhD, my initial research question was:

- 1) How do door staff police possession and supply of illicit drugs and intoxication from illicit drugs in the United Kingdom’s night-time economy?

The empirical material produced during the data collection can also function as source for generating research questions (Alvesson and Sandberg, 2013) and as the research progressed, other questions arose and so the research also sought to answer the following two questions:

- 2) Do door staff have sufficient training and tools in order to police drugs effectively?
- 3) What is the nature and importance of door staff's relationships with each other, the police, bar staff (including managers) and customers?

These subsequent questions became apparent as the themes of tools, training, and relationships emerged as very prominent themes that aligned with the primary research question from the data. As this is an area that has not previously been studied the research questions were not simply derived from gaps in the research but gathered from the empirical data.

The research aims of this thesis were:

- To provide a clear picture of the dynamics of how door staff handle both drugs and their customers;
- To map the relationships between the door staff and the police and venue management and explore what these relationships mean for the policing of drugs;
- To understand how the training that door staff receive on drugs (if any) is put into action in the night-time economy.

5.2 Research Paradigms

5.2.1 Paradigms in Social Research

Thomas Kuhn (1962) is credited with introducing the concept of paradigms into social scientific research (Blaikie and Priest, 2017). He argued that “scientific communities share a paradigm, or ‘discipline matrix’, which consists of views of the *nature of reality* (ontological assumptions), concepts, theories and techniques of investigation that are regarded as appropriate (epistemology)” (Blaikie and Priest, 2017, p. 8 emphasis original). According to Kuhn, a paradigm is a term that suggests:

some accepted examples of actual scientific practice – examples which include law, theory, application and instrumentation together – provide models from which spring particular coherent traditions of scientific traditions (Kuhn, 1962, p. 10).

Kuhn alludes to the notion that within the varying fields of natural science there are sets of ideals that underpin research. He goes on to suggest that when new scientists begin to engage with the community in which they wish to study (eg: a new scientist in the field of biology), that the paradigm prepares the new scientist for ‘membership’ of that field.

Furthermore, Kuhn was adamant that those who adhered to opposing paradigms lived in different worlds (Kuhn, 1962; Blaikie and Priest, 2017). His premise was that the concepts, theories, and practices that each disciple of paradigms followed were diametrically opposed and there was little to no common ground between them, rendering them as irreconcilable rivals. Blaikie and Priest assert quite rightly that “Kuhn may have somewhat overstated the case for the incommensurability of the paradigms” (2017, p. 9). However, the importance and the relevance of paradigms to researchers cannot be overstated.

The notion that social theories can be seen as adopting different points of view is now well established within the social sciences (Bryman, 2012; Blaikie and Priest, 2017). When considering social research, the researcher must be clear about their assumptions on the nature of social reality, or ontology. But they must also go further and indicate their epistemological assumptions, to indicate how the knowledge of their assumed social reality can be obtained (Blaikie and Priest, 2017). The paradigm that is selected for the research should be the one that is able to answer the research question most satisfactorily.

There are numerous research paradigms in the social sciences including but not limited to positivism, neo-positivism and interpretivism (Bryman, 2012; Blaikie and Priest, 2017). There is not the space within this chapter to go into an in-depth discussion about the merits and weaknesses of each and every paradigm available to the researcher, rather it is the role of this chapter to identify which paradigm is the best fit for the research and justify that stance. This research aligns itself with the interpretive research paradigm.

5.2.2 Justifying the Interpretive Paradigm

The Interpretivist paradigm is well established within the social sciences and has “a number of antecedents and a variety of manifestations” (Blaikie and Priest, 2017, p. 99). Historically, the paradigm emanates from a German intellectual tradition from scholars like Schlierermacher, Dilthey and Husserl (Blaikie, 2007). Some of the most important contributions to interpretivism have come from the German sociologist, Max Weber (1864 – 1920). Primarily, Weber was concerned with the subjective meanings that social actors attach to their actions, and the interpretation of the sociologist against those actions (Blaikie and Priest, 2017). This is made clear in his definition of sociology:

Sociology is a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social order thereby to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects. In ‘action’ is included all human behaviour when and in so far as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it. ... Action is social [when] it takes account of the behaviour of others and is thereby oriented in its course. (Weber, 1947, p. 88).

Whilst Weber was certainly an important contributor to Interpretivism, he was not alone in making a contribution. One of his German counterparts, Alfred Schutz (1899-1959), also provided important insights into the philosophy. The work of Schutz did not come to the attention of English speakers until his work was translated from German in the 1960s. In his writings he argued that:

The world of nature as explored by the natural scientist does not ‘mean’ anything to molecules, atoms and electrons. But the observational field of the social scientist – social reality – has a specific meaning and relevance for the beings living, acting and thinking within it (Schutz, 1962, p. 59).

The research questions of this thesis are centred upon understanding how door staff police drugs in the NTE and to explore events and relationships around the policing of intoxication and interpret the meaning behind the actions. In this instance a positivist stance would not be an appropriate paradigm for this research because the role of research within a positivist

paradigm “is to test theories and to provide material for the development of laws” (Bryman, 2012, p. 27). The positivist paradigm in this instance is too limited in its capacity to deliver an effective answer to the research question. This research is not testing a hypothesis, rather, it is about exploring previously uncharted territory and exploring the complexities that door staff face in the policing of drugs.

Blaikie and Priest (2017, p103) note that interpretivism has six main characteristics. The first characteristic is that social reality is socially constructed. It is constructed via the skilled accomplishment of human beings being active in a society. The social reality is a product of its inhabitants who are constantly reproducing and maintaining it as a necessary part of their everyday life. The second characteristic of interpretivism relates to the interpretation of social reality in that the social reality is already interpreted before a researcher begins their investigation. Therefore, it is incumbent on the social researcher to understand and ‘grasp’ these interpretations if they want to successfully explain social life. For example, door staff will have constructed their own social reality in relation to their work and their skillsets and training will have provided them with tools to police people in the NTE. It is this part of their social reality that this thesis aims to investigate.

The third characteristic of interpretivism is that language is seen as the medium of social interaction (Blaikie and Priest, 2017). In this instance, language underpins the social reality and helps to construct it. Researchers must grapple with the language used by the research subjects in order to fully understand them. Door staff are likely to use terminology that directly relates to their role that lay people may not fully understand, but will need to be explored, discussed, and investigated to make sense of their social reality. Blaikie and Priest’s fourth characteristic of interpretivism is that the paradigm has the aim of producing an objective science of the subjective. Essentially, it allows the researcher to be able to produce verifiable knowledge of the social world that is being documented. The aim of this thesis is to understand the *policing* of drugs by agents who are not police officers. Each interviewee, as a human being, will have their own subjectivities and biases when it comes to opinions on drugs and drug use within their establishment. The interpretivist paradigm gives the flexibility to collect these nuances and provide an objective view of their subjective understandings.

The fifth characteristic is that social researchers must focus upon meaningful social actions (Blaikie and Priest, 2017). These actions are used to understand the patterns and regularities that occur in the social life that is being researched. Interpretivism provides a platform whereby the researcher can apply their focus to the actions that hold meanings for the social actors and that can be explored and discussed. The final characteristic of the interpretivist paradigm is that the regularities or patterns from the fifth characteristic can be understood “in terms of typical meanings used by typical social actors engaged in typical courses of action in typical situations” (Blaikie and Priest, 2017, p. 103)

5.2.3 The Researcher’s Stance

It is important that the stance of the researcher in relation to the research is discussed in detail, as well as having reflexivity within the research. The stance of the researcher is salient because it is a determining factor in the relationship between the researcher and the researched and shall be discussed below (Blaikie and Priest, 2019). As with the choice of research paradigm, this thesis stresses the importance of explaining the explicit choice of stance that the research has taken.

Blaikie (2007) has identified six possible stances for a researcher to hold. The first stance is the *detached observer*. This is a more traditional ‘scientific’ stance where the researcher is an uninvolved spectator, especially during the process of data collection. There is an argument that the values of the researcher are a threat to the objectivity of the research and thus that detachment is a requirement that assists in producing sound and reliable knowledge. The second stance is the *empathetic observer*. The aim of this stance is similar to the first in that the aim of objectivity is still important but the stance “insists that it is necessary for researchers to be able to place themselves in the social actor’s position” (Blaikie and Priest, 2019, p. 44). Overall, the position dictates that it is only by grasping the subjectivities that are used by the various social actors can their actions be fully understood, often referred to as *verstehen*, a concept devised by Weber (1947). The third position, according to Blaikie and Priest (2019), has developed out of the second and is the *faithful reporter*. In this stance the researcher is much less detached and allows the research participants’ voices to be heard. The task of the researcher within this position “is to present the social actors’ point of view; to do

this it may become necessary to become immersed in their way of life” (Blaikie and Priest, 2019, p. 45). This position has been adopted throughout many research projects on door staff, where authors have situated themselves in the role of a door supervisor, lived the experience and used that experience to directly inform their research (see Hobbs et al., 2003; Monaghan, 2006; Calvey, 2019).

The fourth position rejects the idea of detachment but is an extension of the third position. In this position the researcher becomes the “*mediator of languages*, between everyday language, lay language and social scientific or technical language” (Giddens, 1976; Gadamer, 1989; Blaikie and Priest, 2019, p. 45). Parallels are drawn between social life and the examination of a text where both rely on the interpretation of the reader. In this position the researcher is constructing accounts based on the accounts provided by the research subjects, and this process is not seen as neutral as a researcher will put a part of themselves into their account of the social reality. The penultimate position is where the researcher views themselves as a *reflexive partner*. In this position the research is “committed to the emancipation of the participants from whatever kind of oppression they are experiencing” (Blaikie and Priest, 2019, p. 45).

The sixth and final position identified by Blaikie (2007) is the *dialogic facilitator*. This position is a combination of the fourth and fifth position. Here the researcher is seen as an active actor in the social fabric that is being investigated. In this position the researcher draws on elements from the *mediator of languages* and *reflexive partner* and aims to reduce the influence of the researcher by allowing more voices to be expressed. In this instance the researcher will still rely on their understanding of the situations being researched but will attempt to minimise their bias by letting those who are participating in the research “speak for themselves as much as possible” (Blaikie and Priest, 2019, p. 46). Fontana (1994) holds that one of the aims for the *dialogic facilitator* is to produce a ‘polyphony’ of voices rather than just a single voice in an attempt to reduce bias.

It is impossible to escape the fact that as the author of this research I will have a particular stance on the research being conducted. It is therefore salient to make this stance explicit and justify the position of the researcher. The stance that is best suited to this research is that of

the *dialogic facilitator*. Ultimately, the aim for this research is to answer questions on how drugs are policed by door staff and the feelings that are attached to those actions. As a researcher I aim to understand those actions, but it is also important that the research echoes the voices of those who police drugs. Whilst the *faithful reporter* can be seen in some research on door staff, I am not concerned with working as a member of door staff, in part due to my stance as a pacifist¹⁸ and reluctance to engage in covert ethnography (discussed below).

The importance of the researcher having a particular stance cannot be overstated, but there is a related concept that must be discussed as well, that of reflexivity. According to Blaikie and Priest reflexivity is central to the researcher's "views on how social actors make their actions and their social world meaningful to themselves and others" (Blaikie and Priest, 2019, p. 46). Reflexivity was central to the work of Giddens, and he incorporated the idea into his structuration theory as the 'reflexive monitoring' that social actors engage in to sustain continuity in their practices. Giddens makes the salient point that reflexivity is not simply about self-consciousness, it is about actively monitoring the ever-running flow of social life (Giddens, 1984, p. 5). This is an important point, and one that must be considered alongside the relationship of the researcher and the researched for, if reflexivity is a key element of social practices, then it must be used by social researchers too. Where new knowledge has been generated via processes of interaction between a researcher and the researched, the researcher must draw upon the same skills that the social actors have used to make their actions comprehensible (Giddens, 1976).

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) argue that reflexivity comes with the implication that the orientations of those conducting research are 'shaped' by factors such as their socio-historical locations and the resulting values that those locations confer upon them. Blaikie and Priest see this as a "rejection of the idea that social research is, or can be, carried out in some autonomous realm that is insulated from the wider society and from the particular biography of the researcher in such a way that its findings can be unaffected by the social processes and personal characteristics" (Blaikie and Priest, 2019, p. 47). The importance of reflexivity has

¹⁸ I do not believe in using violence to resolve situations. Whilst the role of the door supervisor has progressed from needing to use violence, there is still an element of violence (due to the occasional need to use force) in the role, which I am unwilling to actively engage in.

also been highlighted by other researchers, such as Mason (2002), who argues that active reflexivity is one of the quintessential features of qualitative research:

qualitative research should involve critical self-scrutiny by the researcher, or *active reflexivity*. This means that the researcher should constantly take stock of their actions and their role in the research process, and subject these to the same critical scrutiny as the rest of their 'data'. (Mason, 2002, p. 7).

I wholeheartedly agree with Mason (2002) who said that a qualitative researcher cannot be neutral, objective or detached from the knowledge and evidence that they are gathering and producing. It is salient that I, as the researcher, should also seek to understand my role in the process by reflecting on my own beliefs, social position, and experience and how these may affect all stages in the research. This is discussed below, in Section 5.8.

5.3 Research Design

Much of the previous academic research on door staff has been ethnographic in nature and has focused upon understanding the lived experiences of door staff in relation to themes such as violence (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003), danger and risk (Monaghan, 2003, 2006) and drug dealing (Sanders, 2005). Furthermore, most of this research has been undertaken where the researcher has situated themselves undercover or covertly as a member of a functional door team and collected their data whilst 'in the thick of it' (see Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Calvey, 2019). A robust review of the literature has identified little research on door staff that has been conducted using quantitative methods (see Maguire and Nettleton, 2003 for a quantitative analysis). This following section outlines the recruitment of door staff to the research, whilst also highlighting how one of the methods failed and was then adapted to an online method for recruitment. This research uses two qualitative methods to answer the research questions and is therefore a qualitative dual method design (Hunter and Brewer, 2015).

The initial design was to recruit door supervisors face-to-face for interview and then ask them for their permission to observe them during the course of their work and to use their place of

work as an observation site. However, this method failed as none of the approached door supervisors were willing to be interviewed. Eventually, I approached a venue who were receptive to the idea of observing their door and they gave me permission to conduct observations. Following this permission, they gave me the contact details of their head door supervisor and I emailed them information (in the form of the pre-approved information sheets and consent forms) about the research and he then passed that information onto his team of two door supervisors who all agreed that they were willing to be observed. Following a successful period of observation the head door supervisor and one other door supervisor were willing to be interviewed for the research. The third door supervisor said they were not willing to be interviewed when I invited him to participate. One additional interview was snowballed from the door supervisor. At this point the recruitment of interviewees moved online, and I joined Facebook groups in order to try and garner more interviews. This section then is structured in the way that the research events unfolded, beginning with the observation sites before moving on to discuss the use of Facebook groups for recruitment.

5.3.1 Observation Sites: Choosing Observation Sites

Previous UK-based research studies on door staff have not had to go through such a complex approach to finding a research site because the researcher's role as a member of door staff provided them with a site from which to do the research (see Calvey, 2000; Winlow *et al.*, 2001b; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003 in Chapter 4). In a Danish study on door staff by Thomas Friis Sjøgaard (2014), the researcher recruited venues to conduct observations, although it is not entirely clear how the venues were recruited and chosen. For this research the establishments were approached on the basis of their suitability for the research. The criteria for suitability were that establishments must, at a minimum, have a security presence of at least one door supervisor, and should be located within a city centre so as to ensure adequate footfall. It was also hoped that at least one of the observed bars would have a DJ playing, but if they did not have a DJ then that would not necessarily exclude them from the research. A DJ was a desirable trait for a bar because a DJ can help to foster "a club atmosphere without having to go to a club" (Ward, 2010, p. 36) and could have therefore created an atmosphere that was more conducive to drug consumption.

My ethical approval stipulated that I required the permission of the venue managers to use the bar as a site for observation and, that once venue managers had given their consent, I should then get the consent of the door staff to observe them. However, recruiting bars to the research proved very difficult because as soon as the study's focus on drugs was mentioned a refusal from the managers usually followed, and as a result only one bar and their door staff agreed to participate. This was a large bar in a metropolitan northern city, which attracted a varied demographic and on Friday and Saturday nights had a DJ playing popular dance music. The bar had at least one member of door staff working every night.

5.3.1.1 Observation Activities

The ethnographic element of this research on door staff differs from the previous research. Once the observation site had been confirmed I set up an initial date to come and observe the door staff. I purposefully chose a Tuesday night as my initial date because I was told that it was generally one of the quieter nights of the week and I wanted to take that opportunity to have time to speak to the door supervisor who was on duty and create a rapport with them. The first shift was from 19:00 until 23:00, and during this time the head door supervisor showed me round the building and talked to me about the role generally. Most of the time we were stood at the main door in the foyer (a floor plan is attached at Appendix Five). As the shift went on the bar got steadily busier, so I purposefully put some distance between myself and the observed door supervisor so that I could watch them and then ask them questions about what they were doing at a later time. I asked questions about how the door staff checked IDs and what signs they were looking out for in relation to drug use by customers. After a while we walked round the venue together to use a cocaine wipe (see Appendix Six). The cocaine wipe is a piece of red cloth that turns blue after it comes into contact with cocaine, door supervisors use this to try and detect cocaine use on busy nights.

Field Diary entry, 6/10/2021

“We took a drug wipe and went to test the toilets for cocaine. The drug wipe comes in a packet and is like a wet wipe. It is red in colour and when it detects drugs it changes colour. We wiped three cubicles and turned up no positive results.”

I returned to the venue three more times, one Friday night and two Saturday nights and accompanied the door staff as they carried out their duties in the bar. There were periods of mundanity, where nothing was happening, which provided the time to talk to the door staff about how they looked for signs of drug use. Using this method, the “ethnographic data are elicited and elaborated upon in the investigator’s presence, which provides opportunity to respond immediately to materials that are unclear, puzzling or unexpected for any reason” (Shover, 2012, p. 141) I also used these quiet periods to make notes on my mobile phone, so that I could then type them up when I returned home at night.

5.3.1.2 Utility of Observational Data

There were significant challenges in recruiting venues to use for observation. During the time trying to recruit venues as sites of observation I took notes about the conversations between myself and the venue management. Here is an extract from my field notes:

Field Diary Entry, 03/09/2021

Difficulty recruiting bars, first bar I went to I asked to speak to the manager about potentially using it as a site for observations. When I walked into the bar, I asked a member of staff to direct me to the manager. Eventually spoke to the GM of the venue and once I mentioned researching drugs and policing, they told me they would not be interested in speaking to me and asked me to leave and escorted me out of the venue.

Whilst this is an extreme example, and other venues were much more apologetic in their declining of the invitation, the end result is there is significantly less observational data gathered than had initially been hoped for. The consequence of this has been that reference to observational data within the analysis chapters is relatively sparse. However, it has been

included in the analysis where it further elucidates comments made by other respondents in this research.

5.3.2 Sampling Strategies

The following section outlines the sampling strategies that were used to recruit door staff to interview. Again, it unfolds chronologically beginning with the original sampling strategy before moving on to discuss the adaptation to online sampling strategy and its limitations.

5.3.2.1 Convenience Sampling: In Person

To recruit door staff to the research I employed convenience sampling, which is about “selecting cases that are convenient, easy, and straightforward” (Boeri and Lamonica, 2015, p. 128). Initially, door staff were thought to be relatively accessible, as they are usually stood on the doors of venues within the NTE and, having initially selected two northern cities as my research sites, one large and one small, both of which were familiar to me, I felt that having a good understanding of the NTEs of both cities would provide me with a solid foundation upon which to approach door staff. However, this was not the case. Using this method, it became apparent that door staff are sceptical to outsiders. There were three occasions where I felt I had successfully recruited door staff to participate in an interview, set up a meeting to conduct the interview, but they failed to attend.

5.3.2.2 Convenience Sampling: Online

It is not entirely clear why there was such difficulty in recruiting door staff using face-to-face methods. It might be that the Covid-19 pandemic created a scepticism of meeting people in person or that there was a limited motivation from the door staff to participate. There might also have been some concern from door staff – who were approached in the NTE – surrounding their anonymity, and they might have felt insufficiently reassured of their anonymity in the research. To counteract these potential obstacles the recruitment of door staff was moved online, more specifically to the social networking site (SNS) Facebook. There

is a wealth of research on Facebook itself, and also a growing number of studies whose central focus is on using Facebook as a tool of research itself (see for example Bhutta, 2012; Norman, Grace and Lloyd, 2014; Roberts, 2014).

Bhutta (2012) shifts the emphasis from research *about* SNSs to research *through* SNS and her research using SNS, although quantitative in nature, recruited over 4,000 participants through use of the 'groups' feature on Facebook. The groups feature connects people who share a common interest and allows the users to post conversations and interact with other people (Bhutta, 2012, p. 58). By exploiting this feature, researchers can access large groups of people virtually for free (Bhutta, 2012; Roberts, 2014). Other studies have involved the researchers paying for advertising to reach certain groups (e.g. Roberts, 2014) or creating and managing Facebook group pages for research (Norman, Grace and Lloyd, 2014) but for the purposes of this research simply joining relevant groups was sufficient.

Using Facebook as a recruitment tool was a three-part process. The first process was to create a poster that could be posted into a group (see Appendix Four). The poster contained details of the study – including specifying that I wanted to speak to licensed SIA door supervisors - my contact details; and the logo of the University of York which was included to add a layer of authenticity to the poster. Once the poster had been created the second step was to join Facebook groups that had been created for door staff. Facebook allows people to create their own groups, and whilst this has been done for the purposes of research before (see Bhutta, 2012 for a detailed discussion on creating groups for research) creating and populating a group for door staff would have been time consuming and unnecessary, as searching for terms such as “bouncer”, “door supervisor” or “private security” returned results for groups that were well populated. Some of the groups had as few as 100 members but others had over 64,000. Where there were less than 250 members in a group I decided to not join the group and post as often there was little activity within these groups and as the time to conduct the fieldwork was running out it was more appropriate to focus energy on the groups that were more heavily populated so that the flyer (see Appendix Four) could reach more people in a shorter space of time. There were broadly two classifications of groups that I joined. Typically, they were either groups that were used as jobs boards, where companies could post about any availability that they had in order to try and recruit, these have been labelled recruitment

groups. Alternatively, other groups were focused on being places where door supervisors could discuss their role but were not necessarily focused on providing spaces designed to recruit door supervisors, so these have been labelled as discussion groups. Interactions have been taken to be any form of 'reaction' to the post or a comment on the post. When people commented on the post expressing their interest in participation, they were then sent a direct message to which contained the information sheet and an invitation to organise an interview.

	Type of Group	Number of Members	Interactions with the post	Number recruited to interview
<i>Group One</i>	Recruitment	9,700	18	2
<i>Group Two</i>	Recruitment	13,900	12	3
<i>Group Three</i>	Discussion	6,310	9	0
<i>Group Four</i>	Recruitment	64,708	26	6
<i>Group Five</i>	Recruitment	10,528	3	1
<i>Group Six</i>	Discussion	3,319	6	1
<i>Group Seven</i>	Recruitment	22,832	56	4
Total (n of recruits to interview)				<i>N</i> = 17

Figure 3: Numbers of interviews of door staff through Facebook groups

Even online it is clear that door supervisors are wary of outside presence as when I requested to join groups, I often had to submit statements to the administrators of the group explaining why I wanted to join them before I was granted access. In these instances, I was always honest and expressed that I wanted to conduct research and usually this was sufficient to allow me access to these networks. Once I was accepted into these groups, I posted the flyer with a message about my research for the group members to see. The third stage of the process was to invite people to the research once they had a chance to read the flyer. Most often, people would leave comments on the post saying they would be willing to take part in the research. Figure 3 outlines the interactions with the post and how many were then recruited to interview. Interactions in this instance refers to the individual comments that were left on the post. Following expressions of interest in participation I would then send them a private direct message which included some extra details on the research, usually in the form of an information sheet. We would then organise a time and date for interviews normally by my sending a confirmation zoom link both to their email and in our private message exchange.

5.3.2.3 Limitations and Implications of Using Online Methods

The internet has been useful to researchers who want to research clandestine networks, especially those networks who use or take drugs (see Fernández *et al.*, 2005). Furthermore, Facebook is a useful tool for researchers as it enables access to hard-to-reach networks or groups much more easily (Norman, Grace and Lloyd, 2014). By using Facebook groups for this research, I was able to reach a large number of door staff by posting in several dedicated door staff Facebook groups. However, the use of Facebook as a recruitment tool is not without its drawbacks. Most importantly, sampling from Facebook excludes those who do not have the requisite technology skills from the research (Roberts, 2014). However, this method is usually suitable for the purposes of exploratory research that does not aim to be representative (David and Sutton, 2011; Roberts, 2014).

A core limitation of using an online method for the recruitment of door staff to this study is that the door staff who might have been involved in either drug consumption, drug dealing, or other illegal activities (see Sanders, 2005; Windle, 2013; Berry, 2020) might not have come forward for an interview. Although, in some interviews the respondents did suggest at times they had worked with other colleagues who had consumed drugs during the course of their shift. There are numerous reasons as to why those who were engaged in illegal activity might have chosen to not engage with the research, for example they may have deemed it too risky to reveal their transgressions to a researcher and so it could have compromised their safety. Research on door staff that has explored the dealing of drugs from door staff, and indeed had interviewed door staff who did so (see Sanders, 2005; Berry, 2020), both involved the researcher having worked on the doors themselves and so they were able to build the trust of their participants over a much more protracted period of time than I was able to as a researcher. Therefore, this sample of door supervisors who were recruited through Facebook cannot be said to be representative of door staff who are engaged in illicit activities during the course of their work and therefore might underplay the extent to which illicit activities may continue despite a concerted effort to professionalise the role of the door supervisor.

5.3.3 Interviews

Interviews are the most commonly employed qualitative research method and are often presented as the gold standard for qualitative research (Barbour, 2014). Qualitative research interviews differ considerably from, for example, quantitative surveys in that:

In qualitative research we are not seeking to measure attitudes or specify the exact nature of relationships between variables, but are, instead, concerned with eliciting in-depth accounts from people, with room for them to select which aspects they wish to emphasize. (Barbour, 2014, p. 113).

Semi-structured interviews were chosen for two reasons. First, is that they provide a means by which some set questions are asked, but they also give the respondent the capacity to provide their own reflections and insights with as much or as little detail as they see fit (Bryman, 2012; Barbour, 2014). Second, is that they are flexible enough that if the interviewee goes off topic or departs from the interview schedule then new lines of enquiry can be opened up and further questions can be asked of the interviewee (Bryman, 2012). A topic guide for the interviews can be found at Appendix Five.

It is worth reflecting upon some of the weaknesses of semi-structured interviews and provide some consideration on how those pitfalls can be minimised. Whilst the flexibility of semi-structured interviews is one of its key strengths, one could also make the case that it is one of its greatest weaknesses too. There is the possibility that an interviewee could go so far off-topic that it is not relevant to the subject at hand. With this in mind, the researcher needs to employ reflexivity in the interview process and consider at all times whether or not the interview has gone too far from what is relevant and attempt to bring the interview back on to the right track. Another weakness could be that the semi-structured approach could potentially open the door for the interviewer to ask the respondent a leading question. Qualitative researchers are strongly advised against asking leading questions, but mistakes can still be made (Barbour, 2014). To avoid this, again, reflexivity in the interview was employed. Before following up with a question, I took the time to consider the phrasing of my questions

so as not to lead the respondent into an answer. The answers must come as naturally as possible from the respondent to maintain the role as a *dialogical facilitator*.

5.3.3.1 Using Zoom to Conduct Interviews

Once the door staff had agreed to the research they were then interviewed on web-based video conferencing software, Zoom. Using Zoom to conduct the interviews has a number of advantages (Archibald *et al.*, 2019). It allowed me to conduct the interview at a time and a location that suited the respondents to the research. Furthermore, research has suggested that using Zoom to facilitate research interviews is useful for constructing and maintaining rapport with interviewees (Archibald *et al.*, 2019). Moreover, research has suggested that interviews on Zoom provide the interviewees with “safety and control” (Olliffe *et al.*, 2021, p. 6), which are provided by factors such as the interview being conducted in the participant’s home or somewhere that is comfortable to the interviewee (Olliffe *et al.*, 2021).

It has been argued that conducting interviews on Zoom has the potential to be the most appropriate choice to conducting interviews, rather than utilising a face-to-face method (Żadkowska *et al.*, 2022). Another key argument in favour of using Zoom to conduct interviews is that it provides a cheaper alternative to face-to-face interviews, as travel costs to the interview sites for both parties are minimal (Olliffe *et al.*, 2021; Żadkowska *et al.*, 2022). Notwithstanding these benefits, there are some disadvantages to using Zoom to conduct interviews. Using Zoom provides the interviewer with less control over the surroundings for the interview. For example, in this research, one of the interviewees often had to pause the interview so that they could tend to their pet. Another interviewee was also in the room with someone else who the interviewee would often turn to and speak to. This is not intended to be a criticism of the interviewees “but rather insights that Zoom interviews can be (and often are) distracted and distracting” (Olliffe *et al.*, 2021, p. 4).

Finally, when discussing Zoom interviews there is a point that is worth making that is both a strength and a weakness. Given that the interviews for this research occurred during the second wave of the pandemic most of the participants are likely to have had experience of using Zoom or other conferencing software and appeared comfortable when using Zoom.

Often because of this comfort participants often would go on long discussions “to the extent that it was often challenging to punctuate and pause some participants’ narratives to insert a question” (Oliffe *et al.*, 2021, p. 3). It was beneficial to the research to have the door supervisors feel they were comfortable enough to discuss sensitive issues at length, but it was key for me as a researcher to not interrupt their flow, so I would often keep detailed notes throughout the interview where I would write questions that came as a result of the long narratives. The weakness to this was that sometimes there was not an appropriate point to ask the question and so it was missed. However overall, the benefits of using Zoom are that it created a comfortable environment between the researcher and the interviewee which produced a rich dataset (Archibald *et al.*, 2019; Oliffe *et al.*, 2021; Żadkowska *et al.*, 2022)

5.3.4 Sample and Representativeness

The final interview sample for this research consisted of 20 active door supervisors who all had different levels of experience working within the NTE of the United Kingdom. Of these 20, only two were female. Working on the doors is a profession that is dominated by males (Hobbs, O’Brien and Westmarland, 2007; O’Brien, Hobbs and Westmarland, 2008) and there is a lack of up-to-date statistics on the gender make-up of the security industry. However, in 2020 a freedom of information request¹⁹ revealed that 10.1% of the security industry as a whole was made up of women (SIA, 2020a). In this regard, this research is roughly representative of women within the industry, but it is unclear whether this figure is representative of women who specifically work as door supervisors. Most of the respondents in this research were white British, and with one participant identifying as being of Asian descent. There were two participants who did not disclose their ethnicity. Unfortunately, in the freedom of information request the SIA concede that there are no available statistics on the ethnic makeup of door staff (SIA, 2020a) so it is unclear how representative this sample is of the private security industry.

¹⁹ This freedom of information request was not made by me.

Name	Region	Time as Door Supervisor	Ethnicity	Gender	Length
Door Supervisor 001	Yorkshire	3 years	White	M	54:20
Door Supervisor 002	Yorkshire	2 years	White	M	51:49
Door Supervisor 003	Yorkshire	2 years	White	M	55:59
Door Supervisor 004	Yorkshire	12 years	White	M	44:43
Door Supervisor 005	Yorkshire	4 years	White	M	49:32
Door Supervisor 006	Midlands	8 years	White	M	49:04
Door Supervisor 007	Scotland	6 years	Unknown	M	48:52
Door Supervisor 008	Yorkshire	4 months	White	F	35:47
Door Supervisor 009 ²⁰	Midlands	2 years	White	M	32:24
Door Supervisor 010	North East	11 years	White	F	49:33
Door Supervisor 011	Yorkshire	1 year	White	M	38:33
Door Supervisor 012	South East	10 years	White	M	34:59
Door Supervisor 013	London	20 years	White	M	40:03
Door Supervisor 014	North West	8 years	Unknown	M	20:16
Door Supervisor 015	East Anglia	25 years	White	M	56:28
Door Supervisor 016	Unknown	3 years	Asian	M	45:00
Door Supervisor 017	South	3 years	White	M	42:19
Door Supervisor 018	South West	8 years	White	M	41:35
Door Supervisor 019	North East	6 years	White	M	54:48
Door Supervisor 020	South West	20 years	White	M	1:04:29

Figure 4: Summary of data collected

5.4 Covid-19: Issues in the Field

The global Covid-19 pandemic changed our worlds in a myriad of ways, in late 2019 and early 2020 many social gatherings and other occasions ground to a halt (Mazierska and Rigg, 2021). This research was given ethical approval on the 27th of July 2021 which was just as the UK was in the process of ‘opening up’ the economy and the field work continued until February 2023. Even before the Covid-19 pandemic, the status of a nightclub could be considered precarious as they often run on tight profit margins, are subject to seasonal patterns, and clubs often have a high payroll to sales ratio – due to relatively low value transactions that are also labour intensive (Mazierska and Rigg, 2021).

²⁰ Door supervisor 009 had over 20 years of experience of work in the Republic of Ireland and had been on the doors for 2 years in the UK. In this interview I was explicit on drawing on his experiences in the UK

Covid-19 did not just leave clubs in a vulnerable position, it also left workers in the NTE highly vulnerable too. There were eleven government schemes that aimed to support workers and industries throughout the pandemic, three of which could be utilized by the sector. For door staff, as they are predominately self-employed, they relied upon the self-employment income support scheme (SEISS). One issue that I faced as a researcher was when explaining the research to potential interviewees, they often rejected participating on the grounds that they would not have sufficient time to complete the interview as they needed to work as much as possible. During the fieldwork stage, one prospective respondent told me that they were working six days a week so they could make enough money to have some in reserve should the country have to lock down again.

In keeping with the *dialogic facilitator* stance for this research, I made the conscious decision to not return to door staff after their first refusal. I made this choice in the light of the Covid-19 context, as I did not want the door staff to give me an interview out of a need to placate me, rather I wanted door staff to participate in the research because they felt they had something to contribute. I felt that if door staff were giving me an interview as a way of getting rid of me then the quality of the interview might have been poor so instead, I aimed to recruit enthusiastic participants who readily agreed to take part as they felt they had something to contribute to the research. There is also an ethical dimension to the decision too. If potential interviewees had genuine concerns about discussing the policing of drugs, then pushing them for an interview could have been regarded as unethical.

Covid-19 also had a wider impact, following the nationwide lockdowns some venues did not reopen which meant there were fewer venues for door staff to ply their trade. Official figures for this are unknown, but door staff I approached in person also told me that the venues that remained open were struggling to recruit door staff as during Covid they had moved into other areas of security they could still work in with their door supervisor's license.

5.5 Analysis Strategy

Interviews for this research were audio-recorded using the record function within the video conferencing software, Zoom. All of the interviews were then transcribed verbatim and imported into the qualitative analysis software, NVivo, alongside fieldnotes from the observation sites. I chose to employ thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is one of the most common approaches to analysing data within the social sciences (Roulston, 2001). More detailed discussion on thematic analysis has been expounded by psychologists Braun and Clarke (2006, 2022; 2017). According to Braun and Clarke “thematic analysis should be seen as a foundational method for qualitative analysis” (2006, p. 78). The value of thematic analysis is that it is a flexible and adaptable method for analysing data sets that “can provide a rich and detailed, yet complex, account of data” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 78; Clarke and Braun, 2017). However, due to thematic analysis’ flexibility and its less structured approach (than quantitative analysis) there are potential opportunities for the researcher to influence the research and so a reflexive approach to research must be adopted in the research process to minimise the possibility of “undue influence” (Riger and Sigurvinsdottir, 2016, p. 16).

Phase	Description
1. Familiarising yourself with your data	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas
2. Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systemic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code
3. Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme
4. Reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating thematic ‘map’ of the analysis
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis

Figure 5: Phases of thematic analysis (taken from Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 87)

There is no one set way to conduct thematic analysis as the process is requires constant reviewing and refining, however, Braun and Clarke (2006) outline a six-phase method for the analysis. It was this process that was adhered to; however, for this research the phases 3, 4

and 5 were repeated several times because as the dataset expanded it required further reviewing and refining.

For this analysis, a list of 11 main codes were created, and each code had a sub-code. A full list of codes is available in the Appendix Eight. As an example, the code 'Signs of drug use' included 15 sub-codes which included 'Facial signs'; 'Drugs dogs'; and 'Frequent toilet trips'. As with any qualitative study, not all of the data from these codes were included in the final analysis. Quotes were selected from the data that supported the key themes that were emerging from the data (Riger and Sigurvinsdottir, 2016).

5.6 Ethics & Data Management

5.6.1 Research Ethics

One of the many challenges that a social researcher faces is ensuring that their research meets strict ethical standards. It is important that the research conducted does not cause harm, either physically or mentally, to any participant of the research. Not only that, but the researcher must consider how they are going to respect participants' privacy and protect the data that has been given to them by the research subjects. In doing so, ethical considerations do not apply just to the moment that the researcher engages with the participants and for the duration of their encounter; but rather it means that ethical considerations must be at the forefront of the researcher's mind throughout the entirety of the project. Thus, the ethical efficacy of the project from start to finish is a salient part of the whole research process.

Whilst some might argue that door supervisors are not a vulnerable population by virtue of their strength and position of power (Monaghan, 2002a, 2004; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003) it is worth considering that they could be placed into situations that make them vulnerable, such as potential reprisals from drug dealers if they have confiscated drugs from someone. Therefore, researchers who investigate sensitive topics with vulnerable populations have a responsibility to ensure that their research is held to strict ethical standards, especially in regard to issues

of informed consent, anonymity, and the safety of the participants in the study (Liamputtong, 2007).

The British Society of Criminology outlines their code of ethics for researchers in the field of criminology. The guidance that they provide covers an array of areas to consider which include responsibilities towards colleagues and towards the discipline itself. Importantly for this study Section Four of the guidance outlines the responsibility of the researcher towards their participants. The first point stipulates that those conducting research should:

Recognise that they have a responsibility to ensure that the physical, social and psychological well-being of an individual participating in the research is not adversely affected by participation in the research. Researchers should strive to protect the rights of those they study, their interests, sensitivities and privacy. Researchers should consider carefully the possibility that the research experience may be a disturbing one, particularly for those who are vulnerable by virtue of factors such as age, social status, or powerlessness and should seek to minimise such disturbances. Researchers should also consider whether or not it is appropriate to offer information about support services. (British Society of Criminology, 2006)

This research received approval from the Social Policy and Social Work ethics board²¹ at the University of York on the 27th of July 2021, and the amendment to move the research online was granted on the 2nd of September 2022 having clearly articulated the ways in which I would keep research participants safe. As participants were being asked about drugs, which can be a sensitive and emotive topic, I had taken precautions in the ethical approval to stipulate that if the participants became distressed by the topic, I could stop the interview and, if needed, refer them to the Samaritans as per the BSC Guidelines to ensure the well-being of the participant. This was also outlined in the information sheet for the study which was given to each participant before the interviews commenced. Each participant was given a consent form to sign before the interview commenced which explicitly stated that they were able to

²¹ The documents that were submitted to the ethics board were an information sheet, consent form, data management plan, risk assessment and an interview topic guide.

withdraw from the interview at any time, without question. Once the forms were signed and sent back the interview was then started. None of the participants in this research needed to withdraw from the interview nor did any participant request to be referred to the Samaritans. One key ethical consideration that is worth expanding on within the context of this study is the protocol for the disclosure of illegal issues. The consent form that was provided to the research participants outlined that if I felt that anyone was in immediate threat of physical or mental harm or danger that I would break the confidentiality and ring the police. For issues relating to admissions of drug dealing and possession, there was a protocol in place that I would inform my supervisors and we would discuss whether or not we should call the police. I was aware that there could be instances where the door staff might confiscate drugs from people and then have to respond to another situation and remain in possession of the drugs, these instances were not deemed sufficient enough to warrant police intervention.

5.6.2 Data Management

Another key focus for the ethical approval was the management of sensitive data. As a precaution, all respondents in this research were anonymised and in the final text referred to as Door Supervisor 001, Door Supervisor 002 etc. Where door staff mentioned names of venues, these venue names have also been changed to add another layer of anonymity. There is considerable debate within criminology surrounding the disclosure of criminal activity (Finch, 2001). For this research, the participants were assured that their contribution would be confidential and anonymised in the final output, but I reiterated to them if I felt that anyone was at risk of immediate harm then I would have to escalate the issue further. None of the participants in this research provided any information to suggest that they were putting anyone at the risk of immediate harm, but a few of them did raise the point they were aware of some door staff in the industry were engaged in some criminal activity. I was never placed in a position of having sufficient information to take this further.

All data, in accordance with the data management plan, was stored on the internal server of the University of York's Department of Social Policy and Social Work in a secure password-protected area. Data was backed-up on my own portion of the University's Google drive. The

field notes were stored in a password protected Microsoft Word document. None of the interviews were shared with anyone.

5.7 Research Reflexivity: Being A Researcher with Insider Knowledge

As Mason (2002) has argued (see Section 5.2.3), qualitative research requires self-scrutiny (see also Braun and Clarke, 2006; Riger and Sigurvinsdottir, 2016; Clarke and Braun, 2017). This section outlines how my own personal beliefs and lived experience within the NTE has shaped this research and how the research has shaped me. Moreover, I also reflect on measures that I have taken to avoid bringing in my own personal beliefs into the research so that door staff are able to have their own voices heard.

5.7.1 Pre-Research Reflexivity

Before commencing my PhD, I had spent over sixteen years working in the NTE behind the bar or working in a late night off-licenses: much of this time in city centre locations, and I am therefore equipped with insider knowledge of how the NTE operates and how frustrating it can be when dealing with often intoxicated and sometimes recalcitrant customers. Indeed, I came into academia through acute frustrations of working in the NTE, suffering verbal abuse and threats from inebriated customers. It was this abuse that spurred me on to pursue a degree in Law and then a Masters in Global Crime and Justice. Whilst these frustrations could be utilized as a way of creating rapport between the researched community and me, I made a conscious choice to not reveal this to any of the interviewees unless they asked me during the conversation. This is in keeping with the role of *dialogic facilitator*. I wanted this research to centre on the voices of the door staff and their experience of working in the NTE by allowing the door staff to draw exclusively on their experiences, rather than relying on our shared experiences and understandings. Whilst it might seem counterintuitive to have done this as it makes me more of an 'outsider' than an 'insider,' it provided me with a firmer basis on which to answer the research questions. By taking the stance of a *dialogic facilitator* I wanted the research to focus on the participants' construction of their social reality and did not want to

elicit any information about my own experiences that might influence or change their responses.

There is a fundamental and timely reflexive question being asked within some criminological circles about whether the researcher should divulge their experiences of taking illegal drugs (Ross *et al.*, 2020). I agree with Ross *et al.* (2020) that silence on this issue amounts to bad science and believe that one must be honest and open about prior use of illicit drugs. I have had first-hand experience of being policed by bouncers whilst intoxicated on illicit drugs and whilst most of these policing interactions have been benign, consisting of the usual ID checks and being asked to wait in queues there are two notable exceptions. One incident involved my friends and I being searched aggressively in a renowned and highly venerated nightclub in central London, with one member of the group being found to be in possession of drugs. The drugs were hidden in her bra and a female bouncer discovered them. The door staff in this incident had acted illegally by searching inside clothing²². The search was done on the door by a female door supervisor and not in a private area. This incident resulted in the whole group being refused entry into the club and threats to call the police. The second incident was in a smaller, less well-known nightclub in Sheffield. I was caught by a member of security in possession of drugs, but the policing experience was markedly different. The only repercussion of this was that I was asked what the drugs were, and they were then confiscated. The door supervisor was jovial and polite, gave me a warning and did not eject me from the premises. Interestingly, I was told that if the confiscated substance had been cocaine, then I would have been ejected, but as it was MDMA I only got a warning.

These two incidents of being policed by door staff are unquestionably significant to me as a researcher. Initially, I was guilty of stereotyping door supervisors as a group of people who were only interested in being aggressive, intent on impeding people's hedonistic desires, and that part of the fun of getting into a club was finding ways to deceive door staff. However, after the second incident where I had my drugs confiscated, my overarching opinion of door staff began to change. That incident demonstrated to me that different bouncers, at different clubs,

²² Door staff are only able to search bags and the outer pockets of clothes such as jackets or trousers. The Security Industry Authority stipulate how and to what extent searches can be carried out, and highlight that it must be covered in the training [which is outlined in Section 2 here](#).

and even in different cities, have different attitudes towards illicit drugs. After this incident I became more considered in my views of their role. Even though I have had a myriad of casual interactions with door staff, those two incidents feel particularly pertinent to me as it began to raise questions for me about how door staff police drugs in clubs and bars in the NTE and what they were doing with the confiscated drugs.

Another important consideration for reflexivity is my political beliefs and the implications they might have for my research. I would describe myself as a socialist. My political beliefs have had a significant impact on how I view policing and drugs. My extensive reading of books on drugs has led me to one simple conclusion: that drugs are a fundamental part of human life, and that global, national, and local drug laws are generally ineffective at stopping the flow of drugs across borders or venue thresholds. I believe that, at the very least, that possession of drugs should be decriminalised and that governments should be prescribing drugs such as heroin, to those who are addicted. In terms of drugs policy in the UK I believe drug laws are fundamentally flawed and unfit for purpose. This view has developed through exposure to various mediums including academic literature, journalistic writing, podcasts but also my own experiences of drug use and drug policy. There is no escaping the fact that I have a strong bias against current UK drug policy and have needed to reflect on this so that it does not unduly influence my analysis of the accounts of who participated in this project.

My viewpoint is starkly different to that of the door staff from previous research, where being “anti-drugs is not an entirely unusual stance” for door staff (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003, p. 111). For my study this means I would likely speak to people who hold fundamentally different beliefs about drugs to me. I made the conscious decision to not divulge any of my views on drugs or my drug taking experiences to the door staff who agreed to participate in this research.

5.7.2 In-field Reflexivity

In order to recruit bars and clubs to the study, I initially thought that the best approach was to physically go into the venues and speak to the management, discuss the research with them and ask if they would be happy for me to use their venue as a research site. I was aware that as soon as the topic of drugs was mentioned some venue managers would not consider taking

part in the research. But I was keen to learn from every interaction I had with venue managers, so after each occasion, I would sit down and make a note of how the meeting went and what I could improve on for next time so that I could be more prepared and learn from each experience. For example:

Field notes entry dated 12/08/2021

“Approached large chain bar.

Rejected on grounds that it would be too distracting for door staff to participate.

Need to reiterate that on the night of observation that engagement with bouncers would be minimal, and that interviews will be outside of their working hours.”

From this experience that I learned of the importance being articulate and accurate in describing the research to potential venues. Admittedly, I felt very nervous when I approached the above bar to try and recruit them. But their rejection made it clear to me that I needed to be more precise in discussions with the venue managers about what I was planning and how I would conduct myself. It became apparent that I needed to demonstrate that I would not be trying to ask questions to bouncers at crucial times during their working hours, for example when they were ejecting customers from the venues. When I made further pitches to venue managers, I made this clear and this helped to create more promising leads.

The feeling of rejection was a common emotion during the field work, as it happened often. Rejections ranged from the door supervisors saying no, to being walked out of venues for mentioning drugs. Dealing with the rejections was difficult as it began to make me question my own research. However, frequent meetings with my supervisors were pivotal in reinvigorating my drive to recruit people to the research and reaffirmed to me that this research was timely and necessary. During the fieldwork stage I was able to reflect on what I might have been doing ‘wrong’ in terms of trying to recruit door staff and I realised that I was approaching them at both the wrong time and the wrong place. Approaching them whilst they were working meant that I had to consider how to approach them when they were off duty. It was this consideration that triggered the idea for moving the methods online, so by being reflexive within the research process I was able to come up with a new and innovative way of researching door staff.

5.7.3 Post Research Reflexivity

Having completed the research and reflected on the process I have learned some significant lessons as a researcher. The key lesson that I have taken from this is that change can be beneficial. As it became increasingly difficult (and exasperating) to recruit door staff in person, moving the methods of recruitment online was perhaps the most beneficial decision taken during the project. The success of recruiting online has opened up a new interest for me in using social media as a tool to undertake research, although there are some disadvantages to using social media as a recruitment tool, for this research the benefits far outweighed the negatives (discussed in more detail above in section 5.3.3). The final point on reflexivity “invites the researchers to consider where they are in their practice, how they got to that point, and in which direction they wish to proceed” (Attia and Edge, 2017, p. 42). As a researcher, I feel that I am only just at the beginning of my practice and that there is much more that I wish to explore and learn. I got to this point through an enduring interest in clubs, drugs and policing which has been spurred on and revitalised through meetings with supervisors and discussions with other academics at conferences. This is a practice I wish to continue as I feel the NTE is a space that requires significant academic attention.

6 The Fundamentals of Door Work: An Introductory Analysis of Door Staff

Being a bouncer is an actual job, with specific restrictions, targets and non-negotiable orders from bosses. Appreciating that they're not just there to make your night miserable will help you on your way to treating them with a bit more understanding. "Us bouncers see ourselves as artists, trying every night to paint the most beautiful picture by bringing together the right mix of people and energies"
(Vice, 2018)

"Clubber who headbutted bouncer at Stirling nightclub admonished"
(Daily Record, 2023)

6.1 Introduction: Contextualising the Interviews

The following section provides an analysis of how door staff got into their roles and their feelings towards their employment. Initially, my interview plan was to focus on how door staff policed drugs in the NTE, but it became clear to me that that such a discussion cannot be had without an introductory exploration of more general aspects of the role and indeed, important themes emerged from the resulting data. Given the nature of these findings, the chapter is descriptive in parts as opposed to being an analytical account. It also means that whilst there is not a lot of discussion on the policing of drugs directly, what it does is demonstrate how door staff acquired their knowledge on *how* to police drugs and intoxication. Ultimately, this is a foundational chapter that lays the groundwork for the following chapter which has a stronger focus on drugs and policing. This decision was made primarily to ensure that the reader has a fuller understanding of the introductions that the interviewees had to working as a door supervisor in the private security industry.

The first section in this chapter will discuss how the interviewees made the decision to start working on the doors, exploring avenues such as personal networks and gaps in the security

market. The following section discusses their first shifts on the door and attempts to link the initial observations of the first shift to the policing of intoxication. The third and final section discusses some of the issues that door staff have experienced in relation to the statutory body who oversee the private security industry, the SIA. For this Chapter and Chapter Seven, any names of people or venues and locations have been altered. Where venues are mentioned, they have also been given a pseudonym.

6.1.1 Working as a Door Supervisor

Before proceeding with the analysis of the door supervisors' role in the policing of drugs in the NTE, this section shall briefly outline the conditions under which door supervisors work. One key observation that I made during my fieldwork whilst observing door supervisors was that they rarely, if ever, took any breaks which makes their job physically demanding. For the entire time I was conducting my observations the participants not once took time to sit down or have any time to themselves during their shift. During the observations they told me that they could be working up to 14 hours a day, although that was rare. This was reiterated to me in an interview with Door Supervisor 002 where he discusses his first shift (see below). The hours that door supervisors work are long and unsociable, when I was trying to recruit venues to the research I asked some of the venue managers how long they had door staff working, during the week days door supervisors could start at 16:00 and not finish until 02:00, on a Saturday they could start as early as 11:00 and not finish their shift until the bar shuts at 04:00. During my first period of observation the door supervisor I was observing told me that during a week he often is working alone on the door, usually stood outside waiting for people to come up to the venue, that his involvement inside the bar was minimal and that therefore his role can be quite isolating.

Another key contextualisation is that the role of the door supervisor is relatively low paid. A search for the average wage of a door supervisor suggests that they earn on average £21,883 per annum (Glassdoor, 2024). Various jobs adverts on the website Indeed advertise wages between £11.45 and £16.80 per hour. This is arguably relatively low pay for a role where the door supervisor is expected to put their health and safety at risk during the course of a shift. Research conducted on Danish door supervisor shows that 40% of door staff surveyed had

been threatened with a weapon and 58% reported they had suffered physical abuse, 16% reported feelings of stress and 50% were reporting sleeping difficulties (Tutenges *et al.*, 2015). The role of the door supervisor can thus have implications for the physical and mental health for those who undertake the role. Although this research was conducted in Denmark it is worth discussing it in this thesis as relatively little has been written on the working conditions of the door supervisor in the UK (Tutenges *et al.*, 2015).

Whilst some respondents mentioned their working conditions during interview, these topics were not explored in depth. There was a concerted effort to keep the interviews focused on drugs and the policing of drugs. Having been faced with considerable difficulties (discussed in further depth in Chapter 5) during the recruitment phase the decision was made to keep the focus of the interview narrow. Moreover, had I included a substantial section on the working conditions of door staff it would have consumed the valuable time that the Door Supervisors had given me, and I would possibly not have been able to elicit the rich data which helped to answer the central focus of the thesis. Given that this information is missing, it is a possible direction for future research to take (discussed in Chapter 8) What follows is an exploration of how door supervisors undertake their role and how they police drugs in the NTE.

6.2 Getting on the Door: How Door Staff Got Started

The aim of this section is to provide an account of the ways in which door staff got onto the doors of pubs, bars, and clubs in the United Kingdom. Most²³ of the interviewees were asked how they got into their jobs on the door and why they wanted to work within that environment. This was an opportunity to find out how long the door staff had been in the role, and how they were recruited into the private security industry, and what attracted them to the job. The newest recruit to the world of the door staff had been working on the doors for 3 and a half months, whilst the longest serving had been working on doors since 1996.

²³ For five of the participants, it is unclear how they got into the role, as the conversation took different turns and I felt it was best to build rapport that way than suddenly ask them a question we were not talking about at the time.

6.2.1 Personal Networks

One common way route of getting into door work was through the door staff's own personal networks.

Sam:

"How did you get into working the doors?"

Door Supervisor 003 (M):

"My very first experience with it all, my brother worked doors for probably only about six months himself. Chatted to him about it was kind of like "oh, that sounds quite fun", and then forgot all about it. When I was at uni I was into Brazilian jujitsu. Met a few guys there who were working doors and got encouraged to get into it myself. I applied for a licence²⁴ right as COVID hit so everything got frozen. And obviously, there were no jobs. And then as soon as the economy started opening up again I was just leaving uni. There weren't really any jobs going because lot of stuff was still in lockdown but the one thing that there was an abundance of was security jobs, because a lot of guys who'd done doors had moved on to other areas of security during COVID and they needed some people to come in fresh."

The route into his role for Door Supervisor 003 came from two different personal networks. Whilst the interviewee was revealing their story it felt as though there was a sense of camaraderie between him and the martial arts group, and that they felt that the interviewee could offer something valuable to a door team. Thus, his initial interest in his brother's positive experience as a member of door staff has been reawakened by his peers in his martial arts group. Moreover, martial arts groups are an arena in which people are able to demonstrate their physical ability, which is a trait that Monaghan (2002a) has highlighted as a key feature of performing hegemonic masculinity which is venerated by fellow door staff, especially if they possess a more superior physicality. Getting recruited through trusted personal networks was also highlighted by another interviewee:

²⁴ When door staff talk of 'applying for their license' or 'getting their badge' it is worth highlighting that in order to get to that stage they must have successfully completed a Security Industry Accredited training course through a private provider.

Door Supervisor 004 (M)²⁵:

"I started out doing general crew work at festivals in the summer, then I was stewarding²⁶ at a cricket stadium in Large Northern City. My boss at the time was like, "Oh, why don't you go get your SIA badge?". Yeah, that was 12/13 years ago now and I whizzed through the ranks and now I run a security company."

A significant observation from the above quotations is that both interviewees referred to working at festivals in some capacity (although with Door Supervisor 003 this is indirect through his brother). There are some noticeable similarities between festivals and the night-time economy. In Europe, festivals have grown both in size and in number and are spaces that attract a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds (Ivers, Killeen and Keenan, 2022). Both are spaces where people gather for hedonistic purposes and there is widespread drug consumption (Ivers, Killeen and Keenan, 2022). Both are also spaces that are seen to require some form of policing, primarily offered by private security firms. It is unclear from these exchanges whether this reflects a wider trend of festivals providing pathways into door staff work, but it is a plausible hypothesis. Some interviewees already had experience of working within the private security industry and were persuaded to join the doors through their employment networks.

Door Supervisor 010 (F):

"It took me a good while to get on doors. I was working a TV set²⁷ in North-East City. And a guy who I was working for was basically begging us to come work with him. He was like, 'I need a female [to work on the doors], this that and the other blah, blah, blah'. And I was like, 'No, don't ever want to work doors, not for me, not doing it'. He talked me into it."

²⁵ Door Supervisor 004 was one of the managing directors for a security firm but also regularly worked on the doors of bars in a large northern City. He provides an interesting contrast to many of the other respondents. He was one of the few respondents who was in a managerial role.

²⁶ The role of 'steward' is different to that of door staff. Stewards cover bigger events, such as arenas and sports events. A steward tends to help people at large events to their seats, however there are some similarities in the role in that they are enforcers and do eject people if they are breaking the rules, they undergo training as part of their role, but are not required to be licensed. Stewarding is an under-researched area of plural policing, for a more comprehensive explanation of stewarding in sports see Atkinson & Graham (2020).

²⁷ For context, Door Supervisor 010 was working as a private security guard on a TV set

Traditionally, the doors (and private security more generally) have been dominated by men who, it has been argued, bring with them a cultural capital that “reflects physicality and a predisposition to utilizing both violence and the negotiation of violence” (Hobbs, O’Brien and Westmarland, 2007, p. 24 see also: Lister et al., 2000; Hobbs, Lister and Winlow, 2002; Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, et al., 2005 and see Chapter Four) but women now play an important role within the NTE, with female door staff being deemed a ‘necessity’ (Hobbs, O’Brien and Westmarland, 2007, p. 24). Door Supervisor 010 said that she was ‘begged’ and ultimately ‘talked into’ working on the doors by the person for whom she was working. This suggests that those who are in the management positions, responsible for fulfilling contracts between security companies and venues in the NTE, can appreciate the necessity of having female door supervisors, as it could be a licensing requirement for a venue (Hobbs, O’Brien and Westmarland, 2007). There is an apprehension amongst male door staff about accusations of improper conduct from women, especially regarding searching customers (Hobbs et al., 2003, pp. 132–136). The rule of thumb (discussed further in the following chapter) is that male door staff search male customers and inspect male toilets, and female door staff search female customers and inspect female toilets. During the recruitment phase of the research, most door staff I approached for interview were male, and the majority of people who responded to the poster that advertised the research were also male which suggests that even the online social networks for door staff are male dominated. It became apparent that personal networks frequently had a key role to play in the recruitment of door staff.

Door Supervisor 015 (M):

“I got in before the SIA came into effect. So, it's like, basically unlicensed to a degree, the council used to give you a badge. But that was about it. [...] I was just working for a friend, cash in my back pocket. And it was quite an easy job because most of it was people were off their faces on ecstasy back then.”

Here the interviewee has discussed how simple it was for him to get a role as a member of door staff, when it was unlicensed and unregulated before the SIA came into effect. The *raison d'être* of the SIA was to eliminate this grey market in security and to regulate the private security industry more robustly (White, 2010). Door Supervisor 015 also highlighted that the

role was simpler in the past because it involved managing crowds who had consumed ecstasy. This intimates that door staff are aware that some substances are perhaps easier to police than others. From this quotation there are two of the three prongs that Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) have identified as constructing dirty work. There is the social taint, as Door Supervisor 015 has identified that he was coming into contact with people who were consuming drugs, who were demonised and vilified by the media in the late 1990s (Cricher, 2003) and the moral taint as this is a role that at times must employ a confrontational method (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999, p. 145).

6.2.2 Opportunities and Gaps in the Market

There were other pathways to becoming a door supervisor. One interviewee details her frustration with being rejected from job applications and how she decided to look for holes in the job market that needed to be filled:

Door Supervisor 008 (F):

“I've had my licence for three and a half months now. And I wanted a job basically. I was applying for loads of stuff during the summer. And I wasn't getting any responses. So, you know, I looked into like what industry really needs people, and they can't get people in. Security popped up. And I've really enjoyed it so far. I think it was a good fit for me.”

Door Supervisor 008 highlighted that there was a lack of security operatives, and that the industry was struggling to recruit people to the roles. It is possible that one (but probably not the sole) reason for this could be that, as outlined by Door Supervisor 003, the COVID-19 pandemic impact on the NTE meant that many door staff either left for new jobs or moved into other areas of security when there were no open bars or clubs to work at. Door Supervisor 008 has also shown some ingenuity in seeking her job. She noticed that there was a gap in the labour market that needed filling and applied.

Furthermore, being a woman could have been an advantage to Door Supervisor 008 in that, as mentioned earlier in relation to Door Supervisor 010's recruitment, it has become increasingly recognised that a mixed door staff team is useful in managing a wider range of

clients within the NTE. Some research has suggested that as patterns of consumption evolved in the NTE, from being a primarily male dominated drinking sphere, to a space where women are now equal participants, (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003), the increased female participation required security companies to hire more female door staff (Hobbs, O'Brien and Westmarland, 2007; O'Brien, Hobbs and Westmarland, 2008). Section 128 of the Licensing Act 2003:

created conditions that favour the employment of women as door staff, particularly for the purposes of searching. Under the act the employment of women can be stipulated as a condition of a venue's license, and this is most likely to be the case for those venues encouraged to enforce a search policy, typically nightclub venues (Hobbs, O'Brien and Westmarland, 2007, p. 24).

Other respondents had seen the way in which some door staff were acting and felt they could do the job more efficiently, so they decided to apply. One respondent decided to get their security badge because their company were willing to pay for the training, which can be expensive.

Door Supervisor 011 (M):

"I'm very lucky, the unit paid for my licence and my course. So that's how I got into it. That's why a lot of people are getting into it in Small Northern City."

To contextualise this quote somewhat, Door Supervisor 011 is a rarity within the NTE. Rather than work as technically self-employed, and claiming his pay from the security company, he is employed directly by a venue to provide security. This venue was keen to recruit an inhouse team and as a result they paid for the recruit to undergo the training and licensing.

Two of the interviewed door staff got into door staff work before the introduction of the SIA and mandatory badging (one of which was Door Supervisor 015, as mentioned above). There were fewer regulations when these respondents started, and their responses give some indication as to why the SIA was introduced to regulate the industry.

6.2.3 Simply the Best: Better than all the Rest?

Finally, there were two members of door staff who were interviewed who felt that they were better suited to the role than some of the door staff they had seen. One of the interviewees already had some hospitality experience when they decided to apply for the role. It is unclear if Door Supervisor 002 had any prior experience in hospitality, but he did provide the following justification for getting onto the doors:

Door Supervisor 002 (M):

"I've always been interested in being able to stop certain things from happening. Mainly your basic fights or idiots starting things, de-escalating situations that I've seen, some people with a badge have that ego trip, that power trip, thinking just because they've got a badge they're all God Almighty, when they're not and it's like I could do that 100 times better, why don't I do it? I thought you know what, give it a go. Got my badge and that's what I've been doing ever since.

Here, Door Supervisor 002 sets out his case for being a door man based on control. He is interested in a role that prevents or puts a stop to certain behaviours. Somewhat ironically, he suggests that other door staff have large egos and that he is able to execute the role in a more efficient manner than other door staff that he has seen. Door Supervisor 002 is positioning his masculinity as the driving force for his route into the role. Morgan alludes to masculinity as "the maintenance of certain kinds of relationships between men and women, and between men" (Morgan, 1992, p. 67). Door Supervisor 002 feels that he is better equipped to deliver security as he has an interest in preventing and de-escalating certain situations. The rationale for Door Supervisor 006 getting into the doors was similar as evidenced in the following quotation:

Door Supervisor 006 (M):

"I worked in a bar, and I was watching all the fights breaking out, I'll call them door staff, but they weren't really door staff, they were crap. I always thought I could do a better job so went and did me training, got me badge. And basically, became a door staff that way."

Like Door Supervisor 002, Door Supervisor 006 felt that he was able to perform to a higher standard than those in the role at the venue he worked at. There is then a parallel with some of the policing literature, where it has been suggested for police officers “they and they alone are the most capable of sensing right from wrong; determining who is and who is not respectable and most critically, deciding what is to be done about it” (Van Maanen, 1978, p. 222).

Overall, the most common route into working on the doors was through the door staff’s personal networks. A common theme was that as a result of conversations with family or friends they were encouraged to see themselves as suitable for the job. Another important issue to explore in terms of recruitment is that at least two of the interviewees suggested that their role as a member of door staff has come as a result of a working or hearing about working in security at a music festival. It is unclear exactly what role festivals play in this environment but there is a theme of door staff working at festivals and then moving onto door work.

6.3 On the Door: First Shifts and the Role of the Door Staff

6.3.1 The First Shifts: Quiet Nights and Bar Fights

Armed with the knowledge of how door staff got onto the door, the line of questioning changed. Door staff were asked about what their first shift on the doors was like.

Sam

“Can you remember what your first shift work in the doors was like?”

Door Supervisor 003 (M)

“Yes, my first shift was a bar sports²⁸ venue. But it's quite an upmarket bar sports place in Northern City. And it was pretty uneventful. Had a really good team. There's three of us, really strong couple of guys who've been doing work in that specific venue for a while. It's probably

²⁸ The original description of the venue has been changed.

a good introduction because they knew what they were doing. But there was no rush to do anything, and everything we dealt with in there was generally slower paced, you kind of had a little bit of time to talk to people and come up with a bit of a plan before you had to do anything. It was a good first shift. Quiet. A lot of standing around, a lot of chatting but very much a "okay, cool, grab that list, go check some IDs". "Well, how do I check it out?" "Okay, here's what you're looking for now go do it". So, it's quite good in that from the very get-go it was very hands on just "here's what you're doing go do it". A sink or swim introduction, which I think is quite common on doors. It's sort of get in and get stuck in from the get-go."

Door Supervisor 003 has mentioned that the people he started his shift with were strong, which could be interpreted through the masculinity framework as the projection of a more forceful masculine identity allows door supervisors to attain a higher level of respect by possessing and displaying superior physicality (Monaghan, 2002a). Here the member of Door Supervisor 003 also emphasises an important theme that recurs throughout many of the interviews, which is the importance of ensuring that in the early days of working with a new team they show themselves as being willing participants in any situation. Not all of the first shifts were so peaceful, others had a tougher induction.

Door Supervisor 006 (M):

"I learned the hard way. I went for the toughest door I could find and joined the toughest door²⁹. And yeah, it was one of them doors where it wasn't if it was going to kick off, it was when it was going to kick off. So, it was not if but when. So, my first door shift, I learned the hard way of having to fight my way through a bulldozer."

Sam

"What happened?"

Door Supervisor 006 (M):

"A lot of fighting, I recall a lot of fighting and kicking off and at points we had to deal with it."

²⁹ It is unclear as to how the interviewee had found out what he deemed to be the "toughest" door was.

It would appear that Door Supervisor 006 had decided to challenge himself. He sought out a notoriously troublesome door to work. Door staff are required to control situations and one of the tools in the arsenal of door staff is the use of force (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). However, more contemporary research has refuted the idea that being a member of door staff is all about the use of force to resolve conflict. For example, research from Sjøgaard and Krause-Jensen highlight that “the bouncers are encouraged to think of himself as “sales representative” of the venue rather than merely a strong-man” (2019, p33 and see Chapter Four). Nonetheless, door staff are likely to face violent situations in their role. There is explicit focus on this in the “Get Licensed” training manual, however they have reconfigured this as “conflict management” (Get Licensed, 2023, p. 109) and focused on resolving conflict through communication rather than using violence to resolve situations. This is something that was picked up in some of the earliest literature on door staff with researchers highlighting that with the training of door staff “there exists a profound gap between the trained and the lived realities of the role” (Lister *et al.*, 2001, p. 21). This comment also demonstrates that Door Supervisor 006 realised that there is a fundamental element of danger in their role. He was aware that a fight was likely to break out and he could have been in danger of being harmed. This reflects the physical taint of the dirty work framework (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999; Hansen Løfstrand, Loftus and Loader, 2016 and see Chapter Four). Here the Door Supervisor has also framed his role in the first shift as being necessary as he had to resolve the issue, thus Door Supervisor 006 has constructed his work as “important and necessary” (Hansen Løfstrand, Loftus and Loader, 2016, p. 312). Not only does this quotation expose elements of dirty work, but it also demonstrates some elements of masculinity. One could suggest that Door Supervisor 002 wants to project a “forceful masculine identity” (Monaghan, 2002a, p 339) in order to gain the respect of his colleague more rapidly as “masculinities are configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action” (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 836). Door Supervisor 002 also had a testing first shift on the doors.

Door Supervisor 002 (M):

“First shift worked on the doors that I remember, that was at a venue called Eatery in a Large Northern City, just where the railway arches are. I'd say it was pretty good because that was with my area supervisor. And that went without hitch, they just knew I'd do well. They said, “Door Supervisor 002, we're just going put you on the exit gate, you do what you need to do.

And we'll watch you. If you need help, you've got it". They just let me do whatever I needed to do. They were sort of testing me at the time because normally they switch everything around. But they let me do like a 14-hour shift on the same gate without a break. They were like, just like, "you did whatever, you didn't complain and didn't do nothing". And by the end of it, they're like, "you did exactly as we thought, like you didn't come ask for any help. You didn't say, oh, can I go bugger off for a break, or nothing". I loved it".

Door Supervisor 002 was working alongside his area manager for his first shift, which could have added an extra strain on him to perform. What is also being revealed here is that an element of 'hazing' can occur on the first shift where the door staff work alongside one another. This did not come up in every interview, but several participants alluded to at least some form of hazing in the early days of their careers on the door. According to Schiffer, hazing "refers to any activity that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers anyone joining a group [and] often appears in various male-dominated social contexts" (Schiffer *et al.*, 2022, p. 1). The world of door staff is dominated by males (Hobbs, O'Brien and Westmarland, 2007) and by not allowing Door Supervisor 002 to take a break or change position, those he was working with have tested him, which, while endangering his wellbeing to some extent, also served to bond him to the group. There are two salient elements in the above extract from Door Supervisor 002's interview. The first and foremost is that this occurred under the supervision of his area manager, a colleague who was (at least) two rungs above him in the organisational hierarchy. For this behaviour to come from someone within his company in a position of considerable authority is significant as it demonstrates a disregard for the health and wellbeing of their employees and their working conditions. A second important feature is that Door Supervisor 002 did a 14-hour shift without a break. This action could be seen to threaten the safety of the patrons inside the venue, as well as the health and wellbeing of the interviewee³⁰. If there was a situation that suddenly needed dealing with inside the venue, could a tired and hungry member of staff respond to the issue in a timely and professional manner? This lax attitude toward safety is in clear contradiction to other findings discussed later, where the critical importance of the safety of patrons in venues was a prominent theme. Notwithstanding these practices, Door Supervisor 002 is also creating relationships with his

³⁰ If a shift is over six hours the worker is entitled to 20 minutes of uninterrupted break

new colleagues, and one could suggest that he is accepting his fate during that shift so as to establish his masculinity (Morgan, 1992; Cheng, 1996) and to demonstrate that he will be a competent member of the door team in future shifts. Door Supervisor 006 also suggested that there was an element of hazing of new members of staff:

Door Supervisor 006 (M):

I mean, and I don't mean to be horrible when I say this, but the newer generation, who've got a door badge, 90% of them are bunch of wankers who don't know what they're doing. We've learned terminology of it. We call them 'new fish'. It's like prison. They're new fish, they have to prove themselves."

What is clear is that for some door staff, the early days can be the most challenging - especially if there are established members of staff testing newer door staff through making already difficult tasks unnecessarily challenging. From the two above quotations, it seems that the onus is on a new starter to demonstrate to existing members of staff that they have the required character to excel in the role. In some senses this is an even more difficult task for new starters as learning the skills of the door is not something that can be taught quickly (see Chapter Seven). Some interviewees suggested that it can take up to a year to gain the requisite skills to be an effective member of door staff. For some of the interviewees their first shifts were challenging in a different way. When asked about their first shift, Door Supervisor 001 offered this response:

Door Supervisor 001 (M):

"It was scary. It was because it was in a local pub. It was literally just as my licence came through and they were like "we need someone tonight". But it was a local pub who had regulars, and you couldn't say no to the regulars. You could try, but guaranteed they'd be really good mates with the manager who'd be like yeah, let them in it's fine. The person would be too pissed³¹ or whatever, so it's just it was quite scary because you had no backup. You have no authority really."

³¹ Colloquial term for drunk

Here Door Supervisor 001 highlighted how daunting the first shift was for him. On their first shift Door Supervisor 001 lacked support from both the manager and other door staff. The NTE is an environment that is suffused with chaos and disorder and some bars and pubs can be aggressive environments, especially those frequented by young males (Graham and Wells, 2003). Door Supervisor 001 has also touched upon their lack of authority feeding into their concerns about their first shift. This could suggest that one of the concerns that he has is that if a challenging situation arose, then he would not be respected by anyone and could not control the situation. The first shifts described here demonstrate that door work can at times be frantic, requiring door staff to respond to volatile and challenging situations quite rapidly. Previous research has suggested that working on the doors can be rather mundane at times, albeit interspersed with periods that are hectic (Monaghan, 2002b; Hobbs, O'Brien and Westmarland, 2007). Door Supervisor 001 has also revealed that he felt scared during his first shift working on the door at this pub, and so there was a threat to his physical or mental wellbeing, which would be subsumed under edgework (Lyng, 1990). In his theory of edgework, Lyng (1990, p. 857) suggests that the "edge" can be constructed by the edgeworker in many different ways including "consciousness versus unconsciousness, sanity versus insanity, an ordered sense of self and environment versus a disordered self and environment". Door Supervisor 001 is trying to preserve order in an environment which is disordered as the locals were going to the manager of the venue to try and circumvent the order of the door supervisor.

During observation periods for this study, it often appeared on the face of it that door staff were not doing anything. However, as the observations progressed it became clear that door staff were constantly scanning the street looking at who was nearing the door and judging whether or not to let them in. Indeed, they were also scanning inside the venue. During one observation, on an evening where over 110 people were at an event that provided free food and drink, one of the door staff noticed that two customers who were not a part of the event had found their way in and were engaging with the function as these fieldnotes outline:

Field Notes Venue 001 – 21st October 2021

A situation unfolded where people who were not part of the function were spotted mingling at the function to get free food and drinks, and as such had to be told to leave and were duly escorted out using no force.

Thus, while seeming inactive, door staff are frequently maintaining a high level of vigilance, scanning their venue and its environs for evidence of trouble. In doing so they are arguably employing policing functions to minimise the chaos and maintain the control of customers inside the venue.

6.3.2 Door Staff: Customer Service or Security & Safety?

Door staff were also asked how they see their role, as understanding how door staff see themselves in the milieu of the NTE was important for this study given it might elucidate whether they see themselves as providing the primary policing functions in that setting (Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, Winlow, et al., 2005). The following quotation gives an insight into what it is to be a door supervisor at present.

Door Supervisor 014 (M):

“I’m front of house really. So, it’s pretty much what the first thing the customers sees before going into a venue. So, if they see someone being nasty that’s going to put a bad image on the premises, if you’re polite, that’d be a lot better for the customer and yourself.”

The quotation neatly encapsulates the exposed position of door staff. They are the most visible form of policing in the NTE (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003) and are often stood guarding the entrances to premises meaning they are the first staff members of the venues that the public interact with. Door Supervisor 014 suggests that that if people witness some ill-mannered behaviour before they even reach the entrance to the venue that could have an impact on how the venue is viewed and rated by other members of the public, potentially affecting both reputation and income. He also suggests that being polite to customers is beneficial to the door staff. However, not all interviewees were as conscious of the customer service element of the role as Door Supervisor 014. Others were more concerned that, without their assistance in controlling intoxication, the NTE could potentially be very different.

Door Supervisor 020 (M):

“If it wasn't for us, I dread to think clubs and pubs would manage. I mean, you know, I work in South England. We get the brunt of it all. You know, we've got to deal with the drugs. One weekend I had taken a girl to the hospital, to Royal Infirmary in South England, because she broken her ankle, we put her in the back of my car. We're not there to fight people, we're there to protect the staff and the customers. I think doormen are very underrated you know, the things we got to put up with every day, you know, being spat on, we got to deal with people hurting themselves, and don't forget we got an onus of care as well.”

Here, Door Supervisor 020 sees the role as protecting staff and customers, but that comes with complex relationships with members of the public who abuse them but also rely on them (albeit unknowingly) when a fracas occurs. Being a member of door staff for Door Supervisor 020 is about ensuring that the staff of the venue and the customers of the venue are in a safe environment, which he sees as a central element of his role. He also mentions having to deal with the issue of drug use in the NTE too but does not at this stage enlighten us any further. However, he has highlighted that he feels some people see door staff as less trustworthy, which resonates with the moral taint element of dirty work (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999) but also highlighted – under the physical taint of dirty work – the noxious conditions under which they might work for example getting spat on. There are also elements of Door Supervisor 020's quotation that one could analyse through the edgework framework. There is a very clear threat to Door Supervisor 020's physical wellbeing, but there is also the need for Door Supervisor 020 to be in control of his emotions, which was highlighted by Monaghan (2002a) a salient component of the role of the door supervisor, so that they can effectively deliver their duty of care to the patrons of the NTE. The theme of safety was also discussed by other interviewees.

Door Supervisor 002 (M):

“It's safety first. So my job is the staff and customer's safety. The venue's protection to make sure staff can come to work, do the job, and leave work without anything going wrong, without them getting hurt, without someone being rude to them and same for customers, them being able to come into the venue, be in the venue and leave the venue without anything happening

to them. And for the venue to remain how it was at the start of the shift, which is no damage to it.”

Safety was an acute concern for most door staff, they were concerned with ensuring the safety of everyone in the venue, but also for the venue itself. Door Supervisor 002 has touched upon the fact that part of his role is to ensure that the venue receives no damage. This could be viewed through two lenses. First, the physical lens. Door Supervisor 002 is trying to ensure that no physical damage can happen to the venue. The second lens this could be viewed through is an economic one. Door Supervisor 002 has a duty to uphold the reputation of the venue so that it remains a desirable place to come. This modality of thinking where door staff can play a central role in the ambiance of the venue has been extensively covered in previous research (see Hobbs, Lister and Winlow, 2002; Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, et al., 2005; Hobbs, Winlow, et al., 2005; Sogaard, 2014; Sogaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019) but there is a tendency to view the labour of the private security officer as being “governed *exclusively* [my emphasis] by economic imperatives” (Kostara and White, 2023, p. 6). However, Kostara and White highlight that, much like the findings from this study, that some door staff feel a genuine duty of care over the customers in the NTE. Indeed, not all of the interviewees saw their role through a safety lens.

Door Supervisor 003 (M):

“You are there for a customer service role. And you do have to remember that. If you want to do the job for a long time, you do have to remember why you're there. If you are friendly with people and you get on with people, you can have a laugh. But you can't be friends with everyone, there does come a point where you do have to step in and be a bit assertive, you can ask someone to leave a venue as many times as you want, if they're not going to leave, you have to make them leave. See, at some point, you do have to put on that front or just let that meaner side go and be a bit more assertive.”

The quotation from Door Supervisor 003 shows that they have an understanding that their job entails a certain level of control. Door staff must have the ability to eject someone from the premises but for the majority of the time their role is focused on the customer, which includes preserving their safety. There is the notion here that a central feature of masculinity

is being applied by the door supervisor here. Door Supervisor 003 asserts their masculinity when they deem they have to, which aligns Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) assertion that masculinity is configured differently, depending on the setting. Other door staff focused very much on their own safety.

Door Supervisor 006 (M):

"I always say we're not the police. We're not there to be the party police either. We want people to have a safe time. We want to go home at the end of the night. I don't want to end up in A&E or in a police station myself, or in the mortuary. So, every time I put my badge on, I know there's four things that can happen. I could end up in the nick, I could end up in hospital, I can end up in the morgue, or I could end up coming home. I'm acutely aware of the four things so for me, the role of the door staff is we're there to keep the order, we're there to try to prevent the arseholes getting in."

Door Supervisor 006 is aware of how dangerous their role can be at times, with risk of assault or death a real possibility and, to minimise that risk, they have to prevent people who could cause issues from entering the premises. Interestingly, Door Supervisor 006 is also aware that he is not immune from the law and that there are limitations to what door staff are able to do. There is here a clear instance of Door Supervisor 006's role as being one which could be subsumed in the edgework framework (Lyng, 1990). He is clearly aware that there are threats not only to his physical wellbeing but also his mental wellbeing, which are indicators of Lyng's (1999) theory of edgework. Moreover, he also clearly articulates that he does what he can to control the threats to his wellbeing which Sogaard and Krause-Jensen (2019) identify as key skills that make an effective member of a door team. Who might present as an unruly customer that would be refused entry to Door Supervisor 006 is unclear, and other research has also shown that this might not be clear cut as door staff are applying their discretion to their policing behaviours (Kostara and White, 2023). Moreover, Door Supervisor 006 recognises in his role that there is an element of customer service, but he frames it as ensuring their safety. In considering the quotation from Door Supervisor 006 there are two of the three dirty work typologies in action. First, there is the social taint in which there is a servile relationship towards other people (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999). The role is servile because the door supervisor must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the customer, and Door

Supervisor 006 recognises that relationship. There is also the moral taint, which was built upon by Hansen Löffstrand et al (2016). In reframing his servile relationship to the customers as ensuring security Door Supervisor 006 has undertaken a “positive reframing of their work as important and necessary” (Hansen Löffstrand, Loftus and Loader, 2016, p. 312) The issue of risk in the role was also discussed by Door Supervisor 001.

Door Supervisor 001 (M):

“The only people who have any powers of arrest are the police, we only have powers of citizens arrests. When it comes to my venue, I can remove someone, because once someone's been asked to leave, then they're technically trespassing. So, then we can use reasonable force to remove them. And same if someone gets assaulted, it's all about reasonable force. So, we can protect ourselves or someone else by using reasonable force. So, we have no powers at all we're just there to protect the licence of the premises. And by doing so, we have to refuse people, we have to be the punch bag of the business. But no, we don't have to have that much, if any, authority.”

The role of the door staff is complex, and their shifts can be riddled with challenges. Whilst there are periods of mundanity (Hobbs, O'Brien and Westmarland, 2007), when an issue requires action, door staff must consider what could be seen to be reasonable force. Door Supervisor 001 also suggests that the door staff are there to be the ‘punch bag’ which could entail taking physical abuse from the public. Which suggests that there are certain qualities that it is important for door staff to possess to be successful at the role.

6.3.3 Qualities Required in Door Staff

The analysis now moves to explore the qualities that are required for door staff, the aim of the following section is to elucidate the reader on what qualities the door supervisors in this study felt were essential characteristics for the role.

Door Supervisor 017 (M):

“Thick skin, a good sense of humour, you know, good customer skills, things like that. Because if you talk to someone nicely, then 9 times out of 10 it will avoid any verbal or physical

confrontation. So, you just got to be yourself and not be a dick. So, you've basically got to treat people how you want to be treated yourself."

Door Supervisor 017 suggests that being a member of door staff is a reciprocal relationship. If they can speak to customers in a pleasant manner, then their role becomes easier, and they will likely avoid a physical confrontation between them and the customer. Attitude is often discussed within the policing literature, research on policing discretion suggests that the attitude of the arrestee will dictate the attitude of the officer, for example if whoever is being arrested or talked to is being reasonable then the officers suggest they will also talk reasonably back (Grace, Lloyd and Page, 2022). Being able to communicate with customers effectively was reinforced in another interview:

Door Supervisor 010 (F):

"You've got to have the patience of a saint. You've got to be able to communicate with everybody regardless. And you've got to have that open personality, even though you're there as security, you've got to be able to be approachable as well."

Being able to communicate well with customers is therefore seen as a vital tool for door staff when it comes to attempting to control the behaviour of the customers. Door staff who are skilled socially are held in high esteem by security and venue management, not only for their ability to avoid violence but to diffuse potentially volatile situations in the building (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). However, there will ultimately be instances where using verbal skills will not be enough for the door staff and they may have to look to increase their levels of force to keep any incident under control (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). Hobbs *et al.* suggest that for the most part "being nice' is a tactic employed by bouncers in order to get people to do what they want with the least amount of effort, while being constantly mindful of the need to maintain face and present a palpable physical threat" (2003, p. 142). One interviewee suggested that what is required to be an effective member of door staff is a certain type of personality, and not everyone has the required traits.

Door Supervisor 012 (M):

“The challenge that we have at the moment, in terms of quality and resource levels is, you know, being a member of door security is not an easy task. It's not someone you can just take from DWP³² and put someone in a role and it's a skill they'll pick up, you have to have a certain type of persona to work within the security sector. And what we found with the quality is, you've got not only a high turnover, but the quality is low recently. Although the numbers are there, it is also pushing out the ones that were there that were good, because they don't want to work with poor quality staff”.

The industry is, according to Door Supervisor 012, now dealing with door staff leaving their roles because of poor-quality recruits that are coming through the SIA accredited training. Hobbs et al (2003) argued that licensing systems aimed “to bestow such professionalism through the expression of state-sanctioned legitimacy” (p204). Hobbs et al were writing at a time when the licensing system was just being introduced. However, what is clear is that the exercise of professionalism has been an ongoing challenge, and 20 years later the SIA is still wrangling with that professionalisation as some door supervisors behave in ways or have attitudes that are at odds with professional ideals and training. Some respondents also highlighted that there were certain types of personalities that they would be reluctant to work with.

Door Supervisor 017 (M):

“I'd rather that than work with the proverbial ‘shirt fillers³³’ that they get called nowadays in the industry. It's where someone just turns up. And if anything happens [like a fight], they run half a mile in the other direction”.

In this interview, Door Supervisor 017 has used the term ‘shirt filler’ as a derogatory term which insinuates that some of their colleagues are only there during the easy parts of the shift and leave when things get physical so as to avoid getting hurt. Here, Door Supervisor 017 has highlighted how important it is that members of door staff can rely on each other, and that

³² Here Door Supervisor 012 is alluding to a programme run by the Department of Work and Pensions that recruited directly from Job Centres into private security as part of an industry wide recruitment drive, [more information is available on the Get Licensed \(2022\) website.](#)

³³ Unfortunately, this term came up towards the end of the fieldwork which meant that this could not be explored consistently in future interviews.

door staff work together to protect each other. Indeed, this need to work as a team is spread throughout the door supervisor network, with door staff willing to assist on doors that were not their own. By doing so, they extend their policing boundary from their door to another. This was also discussed during one of my observations.

Field Notes 23/10/21

At one point during the evening a call came through the town radio and Observed Door Supervisor 002 took off down the road to go and assist at another bar with an incident. About 5 minutes later he ran back up the street towards the door saying that the downstairs bar had a "code red". The two remaining door staff left their positions and ran downstairs as fast as they could to deal with the incident.

This suggests that door staff place an emphasis on working as part of a team even beyond their immediate working group. If relationships were strained and they were not working effectively as a team this could lead to seeing an "increase in worker vulnerability, or at least enable certain door staff to claim that they are at an increased physical risk" (Monaghan, 2003, p. 20).

6.4 Door Staff and the SIA: Issues in the Drugs Training

The Security Industry Authority (SIA) is the body that are responsible for the private security in the UK. Their main role is to conduct background checks on potential new door staff and distribute the badges for people who have successfully completed an accredited training course. The SIA was a topic that arose in a couple of interviews and is worth dedicating some space to given that everyone who was working on the doors had to complete training that was conducted by an approved trainer, and that older research on door supervisors has not been able to reflect this shift in the training and the professionalisation of the role. Given the focus of the study, I was primarily concerned with trying to understand if the door staff felt that their drugs training, received as part of this general SIA training, was adequate to give them the requisite tools to police drugs.

6.4.1 Door Staff and Drugs Training

The Get Licensed handbook devotes two chapters to drug awareness and the preservation of evidence. It has details of the current drug classifications, examples of drugs that fit into those classifications, and their effects. There are some images of drugs to help door staff understand what some drugs look like (provided at Appendix Two). However, taking ketamine and cocaine as an example, it is often very difficult to tell them apart as they are both just white powders that have no discernible visible differences, particularly in a reproduced photograph in a handbook. This raises the question of how effective the SIA drugs training is for door staff.

Sam:

“What drugs training did you get when you were on your course?”

Door Supervisor 008 (F):

“None. We got a list of drugs and like brief descriptions of what they look like, and then what category they fitted into. But it wasn't like a massive part of the course. It was literally just ‘here's a list. You should look at these and you might be examined on them’. It wasn't very intense at all. You learn most of it on the job.”

The drugs training that Door Supervisor 008 had received was clearly minimal. She was simply provided with a list and a small description of what common drugs look like. She placed more emphasis on the importance of gaining the requisite knowledge of drugs by learning on the job rather than through training. Concerns about the content of SIA accredited training courses were also shared by Door Supervisor 013 when he was asked if he felt the drugs training that he received on his course was sufficient.

Door Supervisor 013 (M):

“No, no. They're not teaching you much, they're not. You know, it's like the very basics. The reason the SIA came about, it was a way of taxing the door men to stop the cash in hand jobs. That's what it was. And to sort of like, get that, get rid of that “bouncer” thing. A lot of people sort of had like a minor thing on their record they couldn't get a badge, but they were good guys. But just because you had something minor, they won't give you a badge and they give

badges now to anyone. And that's the sad thing about it. I'm not saying not for door men not to be polite but at the end of the day, the amount of crap you get, you know, there are things, occasions when talking doesn't work. But they don't want you to do that. It's sort of like becoming like the nine to five business environment, which doesn't work. And the thing is with the SIA the people who are in charge they haven't even done a day's work in clubs. I've got nothing against them. But what are you actually going to bring in that will make a difference. And that's the thing is, in my view, the searching course³⁴ should be mandatory. It should be pass or fail. Because the way I see people nowadays says and I'm ashamed, you're shaking my head and I'm thinking to myself, I can bring anything, it's just shocking how people are searching."

Door Supervisor 013 clearly feels that the training he received is at odds with the skills that are required to work on the doors in practice. In his view, there is a need for door staff to sometimes use physical force to remove someone from a venue, but the SIA have prioritised conflict resolution through de-escalation without the need for force, which Door Supervisor 013 thinks is ineffective. Previous literature has also indicated that there is an onus on door staff to ensure that situations are controlled otherwise they can escalate into physical altercations (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). Door Supervisor 013 also highlighted that the searching procedures he sees people conducting are also not sufficient and that is another flaw in the training. His suggestion that a searching course should be a straight pass or fail suggests that the searching training is insufficient and that that in itself lead to either drugs or weapons entering a venue³⁵. Hobbs *et al* (2003) writing nearly 20 years ago discussed how professionalism and the salience of a non-violent approach to working on the doors were finding their way into the door trade in the United Kingdom. Some twenty years later this process of professionalisation is still occurring within the British door trade and can be met with some resistance from door staff who have concerns that their training will not give them the adequate tools to work on the doors and protect themselves and the patrons of the NTE. There were also some more general concerns from door staff about the training they had received.

³⁴ He is referencing the searching unit of the compulsory training.

³⁵ For a more detailed discussion of the limitations of searching, see Chapter Seven.

6.4.2 General Concerns with Training

Some of the more experienced interviewees showed signs of resistance to younger people entering the industry.

Sam:

“Do you think that training is sufficient for people going into this role?”

Door Supervisor 015 (M):

“No, no, I'll give you a prime example. You have to be 18 to get a badge, and that's been my bone of contention from day one. A person at the age of 18, in theory, shouldn't have been going in bars and nightclubs, they shouldn't have been able to get in. So, they're going into a working environment in a place that's absolutely alien to them. I know most of them have been in a pub before. I mean, we're not stupid we know people get in somehow. But you're got an 18-year-old person with no experience of dealing with drunk people and you're chucking them into that environment and that's dangerous. They haven't got the life skills or the experience to deal with that kind of situation. Decent door staff will be watching what's going on. They'll be watching all the time. I get it from my missus in the neck all the time, we go out for a meal, and we go for a drink at a bar. I always sit facing the door. I look at every person that comes in. It's just something you do. You're weighing every single person up. You don't realise you're doing it, but you do. And these youngsters will come in and they're totally naive to that situation, which I think is a dangerous thing. The issue or the licence, I don't think should be issued to anybody under the age of 21. Because it's, you've got youngsters nowadays, without being disrespectful to them, the generations are very, very different they're very namby pamby nowadays, they have been wrapped in cotton wool and protected and they're very politically correct. They believe certain things to be absolutely true and correct. You get two blokes my age. I'm 53. You get two older fellas having a row about something. How are you going to get an 18-year-old person with no experience to try and deal with that situation with the training they're given?”

Primarily, Door Supervisor 015 is concerned about the quality of the recruits who are coming out of the training and into jobs too young and without enough life experience. Moreover, he feels that this puts him in danger because young recruits are not able to understand how to deal with certain situations. This line of thinking could be seen as irrational as people can only gain experience of how to work on the doors by going and working on the doors: it is a unique environment which cannot easily be replicated in a classroom (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, *et al.*, 2005). It is important to note that door staff have to complete a 'top-up' course every three years as a means of renewing their security license. The content of this 'top-up' course was perceived somewhat negatively by one interviewee.

Door Supervisor 006 (M):

"All door staff had to undergo top-up training recently. That was the biggest pile of shite that I've ever experienced in my life. The new training has completely changed. It doesn't work. Then there's no training on drug awareness. There's no training on spotting fake IDs or spotting what an intoxicated person's conduct, and behaviours are like, there's none of that. Most of your training is about pretty much being a brand ambassador. And that's not what door staff are there for. If you want to be a brand ambassador, go fuck off to a theme park or go work in a county mall. That's not going to work on the door. A doorman is there to be someone who has to enforce the rules. We are there to uphold the rules and be prepared to physically eject someone when it goes wrong. You know, someone on cocaine you cannot walk them out the door."

Here Door Supervisor 006 has emphasized the familiar theme that the training being delivered is at odds with what it is to be a member of door staff in reality. He has a clear view of what it is to be an effective door supervisor and does not believe the training gave him the right tools for the role. In terms of updated training, this is especially important with regard to policing drugs, as several interviewees highlighted that a key concern of theirs is the unpredictability of someone who is under the influence of drugs and their propensity to become violent (See Chapter Seven). The same interviewee also shared further concerns about the quality of the training and the recruits it was producing alongside consternation about the professionalisation of the industry.

Door Supervisor 006 (M):

I am very critical of the SIA for the training they provide. They want us to become brand ambassadors basically. That won't work on a lot of doors. You ask a lot of 'old school' doorman, and I wouldn't call myself 'old school', I'd class myself as experienced. I've worked with lads who've been on the doors 20/30 years and they're like me, they think the industry is just becoming a joke. You're getting too many idiots getting door badges, it's getting easier to get a door badge and I mean you may as well get it from a box of cornflakes nowadays.

Previous research on door staff has suggested that one of the vital elements of working on the door is that the “ability to fight is the bottom line. Of all the attributes we have afforded to bouncers verbal skills, local knowledge, and physical presence, the one that is non-negotiable is fighting skill” (Hobbs, Lister and Winlow, 2002, p. 360). This quotation stems from a time when there was no SIA or mandatory badging (both were introduced the following year) and one can see that there is then a resistance, in a similar way to the views expressed by Door Supervisor 006 to the move towards professionalisation. In the same way as Loftus has described police work as being “characterised by an underlying tension; the strain is between expectations of what police work involves and its daily realities” (2010, p. 8). The underlying tension in this instance comes from the SIA and their expectation of how door staff should conduct themselves and the reality of the role on the door. Arguably, door staff are expected to be another line of defence in the policing ladder, preventing criminal behaviour whilst being given none of the powers of the state that the police have and at the same time having their remit dictated by venue and security managers who are focused on prioritising ways to increase revenue. Whilst there is not enough data in this research to form any solid conclusions about the quality of the training itself or the quality of door staff that the training is producing, there is potential cause for concern here. If the training is not sufficient and the quality of recruits is low that then poses a danger in the NTE.

6.5 Summary of Findings

This chapter has explored in some detail, the introductory remarks made by door staff in their interviews. It has demonstrated that the routes into becoming a member of door staff vary

but can often rely on the use of personal networks and existing gaps in the labour market as a means of attaining employment in the private security industry. The chapter also explored some of the first experiences that door supervisors had within the role, demonstrating that door staff feel that they must show their employees and their colleagues that they are up to the task, but that there are also some rituals (such as a 14-hour shift with no break) and attitudes (such as unwilling to assist in conflict resolution) that could potentially endanger staff and customers in the NTE. Finally, this chapter has discussed some of the issues that door staff have raised about their general training and that received in relation to drugs. Some felt they the training was inadequate, and that the majority of the knowledge gained about drugs was learned on the job as working on the doors is an environment that cannot be replicated in the classroom. The following chapter focuses on the application of that knowledge and training, exploring door staff's policing of drugs within the night-time economy. Some of the key themes in this section, such as tensions, teamwork, experience and, learning are further explored.

7 “Anywhere they think we can’t search; they will hide it” – Policing drugs in the night-time economy.

“Our industry is subject to three of the most fickle things that you'll ever get in a marketplace, music, fashion, and people. And if you can keep up with one of them, you're doing a good job”.

Bouncer 012 (2023)

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores further findings from the analysis of interviews with twenty door staff working in the United Kingdom. The role of this chapter is to unpack how door staff police-controlled drugs, as private security agents in the night-time economy, and aims to describe the formal and informal strategies that the job of being on the door requires. As touched on in the last chapter, door staff do not have any additional powers at their disposal to police drugs: they operate as ordinary citizens but adhere (mostly) to “a highly ambiguous cocktail of extra-legal maxims, occupational codes and personal discretions, underpinned by an interpretation of what is good and what is bad for business” (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003, p. 119). The chapter starts by unpacking the relationship between the door staff and venue managers and the conflicts that arise between them about the appropriate courses of action; and also discusses some of the wider concerns that door staff have when it comes to policing drugs in licensed premises and working alongside the police.

7.2 Knowing the Door: Door Staff, Venue Management and Drugs.

Before the strategies of drug policing can be explored it is important to discuss the relationship between door staff and the managers of the venues at which they work³⁶ before the policing

³⁶ As a reminder, door staff are not often employees of venues that they work at. They are employed by a security company who are contracted to provide security services to particular venues.

methods employed by door staff can be discussed, because the aims of door staff and venue management can often be at odds. Most significantly, it is the venue management who dictate the policy for the venue and whether they require the door staff to conduct drug searches even though under Section 9 of the Private Security Industry Act door supervisors are required to take reasonable steps to reduce criminality. When door staff take on a new position at a venue in the NTE “they are given a set of contractual assignment instructions by their manager which enumerate in often minute detail their roles and responsibilities within the premises” (Kostara and White, 2023, p. 11) In this study, door staff suggested that drugs are one of their key concerns when they were working, and that these concerns can either be aggravated or mitigated by the venue management. This is unsurprising as illegal drugs are often used in conjunction with a night out for the enhancement of pleasure within the NTE (Measham and Moore, 2009) and bars and clubs create atmospheres that are conducive to drug consumption (Silcott and Push, 2000).

Door Supervisor 006 (M):

“I would say at least 75% of my incidents now I'm dealing with are drug related. Catching drugs at the front door is becoming a full-time battle”.

Sam:

“And what are you doing to try and catch them?”

Door Supervisor 006 (M):

“Again, this is where it really depends on the venues because a lot of venues will let us do it. But there are some venues where they won't let us do it. The venue I'm working at the moment we're a completely hands off venue and we've a lot of problems with drugs at the moment. And that venue is now facing issues with the licencing department because of how many issues we're having.”

One of the core responsibilities for door staff is ensuring that the licensing laws, set out in the Licensing Act 2003, are upheld whilst they work. Door staff are therefore potentially placed in a difficult position, which is dependent upon which venue they have been assigned to work. Venues can be referred to the local licensing department if they are considered to be in breach

of the Licensing Act 2003. Under the Licensing Act, Local Authorities are only able to evaluate licensing disputes across four criteria (Meers, 2023) outlined in Section 4 (2) which are:

- (a) the prevention of crime and disorder;
- (b) public safety;
- (c) the prevention of public nuisance; and
- (d) the protection of children from harm.

Breaches of licensing conditions can take many forms and are contained in Part 7 of the Licensing Act 2003, which has the details over 50 offences (Light, 2005), but are only able to be evaluated against the four criteria set out above (Meers, 2023). Some of the offences that can take place include the sale of alcohol to children under the aged of 18, the sale of alcohol to someone who is drunk and disorderly on licensed premises. A venue can be submitted for a licensing review through multiple avenues, including the police and local government inspectors. In respect of drugs, there is discussion on the types of drug issues that door supervisors are dealing with further below, but for the moment it is worth reflecting on the quotations from Door Supervisor 006 and what he thinks he should technically be doing. Even though he has been told by the venue manager not to search people, as his venue is 'completely hands off'; in contrast he is required in law to take reasonable steps to assist in reducing criminality which is detailed in Section 9 of the Private Security Industry Act 2001. More specifically, Section 9 (1)(b) which states:

conditions as to the manner in which the licensee is to carry out specified activities of a security operative that he is licensed to carry out

In respect of drugs, this suggests that door supervisors are supposed to take reasonable action by searching for illicit drugs in order to prevent incidents and reduce criminality in their venue. This includes trying to reduce transgressions such as possession of illicit drugs for personal consumption. Therefore, door staff are legally in a position to override the wishes of the managers despite being contracted by the venue. Later in the interview Door Supervisor 006 does highlight that when he catches people in possession of illicit drugs he confiscates them and disposes of them somehow, and even suggests that the police are not interested in dealing with smaller amounts of drugs that he finds as it would reflect badly on him.

Door Supervisor 006 (M):

“The police don't want to arrest everyone for possession of drugs on a Friday and Saturday night, they they're not interested. If I caught you on the front door with a bag of weed, I'm taking the weed off you and I'm fucking telling you to piss off. I'm not going to call the police down, because then they're just going to tell me piss off... I've lost them down the toilets, I've lost them in drains, I've accidentally lost them. They've fallen into sinks sort of situations.”

If venue management are to adopt a lenient policy with regard to door staff searching for drugs and the venue is referred to the licensing department then this can have a domino effect, resulting in the venue being forced to close, and one less venue for door staff to work at. The worst-case scenario would be that the door staff then lose their security badges as well if they were found to be in breach of their SIA terms and conditions³⁷. For example, Door Supervisor 006 has explained that his current premises were under review by his local licensing department, meaning that for him there is the potential loss of future earnings. Thus, it is important for door staff to have a good working relationship with the managers of their venues if they are to protect their future incomes. Door Supervisor 006 has also raised the point that he feels that the majority of his issues are drug related, but he is limited as to what he is able to do (in terms of finding the drugs, “we’re a completely hands off venue”). Recent research by Kostara and White (2023) suggests that private security work is a balancing act of weighing up economic and moral standards. In this instance the economic standard has prevailed through Door Supervisor 003 respecting the mandate of the venue management despite his better judgement and the problems that have then arisen. When asked about responsibility for finding drugs and the actions they are supposed to take Door Supervisor 004 says the following:

Door Supervisor 004 (M):

“It varies venue to venue. Generally, the venue has a blind drop safe and it would be recorded over the radio, to the senior door supervisor. If it's someone on their own it might be reported

³⁷ The SIA can choose to review a door supervisor’s license if they receive reports of illegal behaviour. The report can be submitted on the SIA website, and anyone can submit a report.

to the venue manager. The drugs are then taken to the office where they are placed in a drugs safe and witnessed by a member of staff. The official process would be the door staff deposit [the drugs], witnessed by the bar supervisors and signed off in the log book, as "bag of white powder believed to be cocaine confiscated off male, found in toilets and male ejected, bags put in drugs safe" signed by both people. Generally, it sometimes gets more messy. You know, I've had a couple of occasions where you've confiscated drugs off someone, you've heard on the radio a fight is kicking off, you've got to be like, BOOM attend to that and you've got the drugs in your pocket or wherever and suddenly you get home and there's a bag of drugs and then it's like, shit what do I do with this? Generally, it's just a case of flushing it at home. But ultimately, it's a judgement call but that sort of thing that can happen because as much I'd love to say we have the resources to do it but if it's a busy night and there's only a few of you on, stuff does get missed"

From this quotation it is clear that some venues have a policy of depositing drugs in to a designated safe, witnessed by another member of staff and then signed off by both people. However, given the chaotic nature of the NTE there are times where, having confiscated drugs, door supervisors need to respond to other situations and so hold onto the drugs themselves and forget about them and then are in possession of drugs themselves rather than having followed the protocol above. As such the drugs must be disposed of at their home. Depositing of drugs in a drugs bin has been discussed by Hobbs *et al* (2003) as a legitimate course of action having confiscated drugs, but the contents of the drugs bins are scrutinised by the police and used as an indicator of whether or not to submit venues for licensing reviews. This was discussed in the following interview:

Door Supervisor 006 (M):

"The venues have a legal and licencing responsibility to seize the drugs and hand them into the police. Most venues have a drugs bin. However, if that drugs bin is full the police then normally turn around and go "well, you've got a bit of a problem". So, the venue doesn't want it rammed full of drugs, because then it proves that there's a drug issue with the venue. And then the police sometimes go for licencing review on that basis. So, it's kind of a double edged sword. We've got to stop the drugs getting in. Seize them, or accidentally lose them down the drain if you know what I mean"

There are clearly some set procedures as to what door staff should be doing once they find drugs on someone in that they should be confiscated and held in a box for police to possibly scrutinise. This though creates a dilemma for some door staff as if the box is too full this could then be a cause for the police to submit a licensing review for that venue, as the venue would be contravening Section 4 (2)(a) of the Licensing Act 2003, in that they were failing to prevent crime and disorder. This could potentially lead to a venue being shut rendering the door supervisor with one less venue in which to ply their trade. Therefore, they must weigh up the economic and moral imperatives of how to proceed when confiscating drugs in light of trying to maintain the relationship between the venue managers and the police. The relationship between door staff and the police is examined in further detail in section 7.5

For Door Supervisor 006, there is evidence of the moral taint, as expounded by Hansen Löffstrand *et al* (2016), when exploring 'dirty work'. The police have viewed the work of Door Supervisor 006 as untrustworthy by insinuating that the problem with the drugs is his and not theirs. As a result of this condemnation of untrustworthiness the door supervisor has highlighted how his role in the venue is one of necessity, by suggesting it is his responsibility to prevent drugs from entering the venue. It is unclear if this is to help foster a more collaborative relationship with venue management or the police or whether it is a method of positively reframing his role. The complex relationship between the door staff and the venue management was explored in several interviews.

Sam:

"What's the relationship between door staff and venue managers like?"

Door Supervisor 011 (M):

"It's good. We work alongside each other quite a lot. It's good normally, yeah. Because, you know, you have to communicate with them. What do they want in the venue? What's the entry price? What's the searching? What do they want, and then at the end of the day, it's your door. The venue's theirs, but the door's kind of yours. Because if, you know, God forbid, we let someone underage inside and they got injured, and then the police found out, that's my badge on the line. That's my licence, that's, you know, the bar staff or the management might lose

their licence and get a fine, but I also get a fine. So, it's very important that we have our door and we know what we're doing because we're trained for it."

In this quotation, Door Supervisor 011 endeavours to maintain the relationship with the venue management by fulfilling the management requirements albeit with the caveat that they have control of the door. The language that Door Supervisor 011 uses when he discusses his work is interesting: it is possessive and inclusive of his fellow door supervisors. It is their door, and they are in control of it as a team. For Door Supervisor 011 there is the understanding that there are clear implications for them if they are found to breach the laws of the liquor license. In addition to that, they are also acutely aware of the effect of a breach on other people who are working in the venue. He also underscores the importance of working with the venue management. If the venue management discuss the ideal clientele that they want to be given access to the venue, then that makes door staff complicit in helping to construct the desired ambience inside. Thus, for bars and clubs, the setting of the door policy is incredibly important as "the process of selection that takes place at the door is crucial, it sets the tone for the ambience inside the venues, which is an environment that is considered relatively marginal, chaotic and difficult to manage" (Hobbs et al., 2003, p. 120). Moreover, the door staff have a servile relationship with the venue managers, which is the second dirty work prong identified by Ashforth and Kreiner (1999), in that the managers dictate to door staff what they want to see in their venue and the door supervisors then comply. Consequences for non-compliance could range from being admonished by the venue managers, to being taken off the door completely and therefore losing out on work which creates a fractious environment for the door supervisors to navigate.

7.2.1 Navigating Tension

Understanding 'the door' is crucial to the role of the door supervisor, as Calvey has discussed in his ethnographic research on door staff. He said "it is vital for door people to 'know the score' in terms of who controls the door so they can manage accordingly" (Calvey, 2000, p. 50). Calvey goes on to suggest that if a door is mismanaged then it poses the risk of acute repercussions for the entire door team, so it is vital that door staff and venue management work together to understand who can come into the venue. However, not all door staff are in

as advantageous position as Door Supervisor 011. Other door staff discussed the varied attitudes of venue management towards drugs.

Sam:

"Is there a tension between club managers and security?"

Door Supervisor 003 (M):

"I've worked some places where they're really glad you're there, and they are really responsive to what you say, and if you make a suggestion they're like "no, that's cool. You guys do what you need to do". Equally, I've worked some places where you get bollocked³⁸ for phoning an ambulance, because someone's gone down outside a club [and] I've gone "oh, shit", phoned an ambulance and afterwards, it's "why did you phone for an ambulance, that looks bad on our licence?" It's like, "well, hang on a minute. I was doing my job, you know? Would you rather that I just left them in a heap outside and hope for the best?" Sometimes you get a lot of push back from venue managers."

Door Supervisor 003 has highlighted that within their milieu there are some managers who want to take a proactive approach to the safety of the patrons in their venues and there are others who want to take less action. What is striking about this quote is the assertion that some venue management place a higher priority on maintaining a 'clean' image for their venue than the safety of a patron. This can create complex problems for door staff to navigate. As discussed in Chapter Six, many door staff see a key part of their role as keeping people safe, which is at odds with the scenario that Door Supervisor 003 has just described. This demonstrates that there can be tension between the door staff and management, creating a complex dynamic. Door Supervisor 003 observed that some venue managers, who are more inclined to preserve their liquor license than the safety of their patrons, present as a threat to their existence. Even though he has not explicitly made this claim, it is not necessary under the edgework framework that the subject knows they are putting themselves in a harmful situation (Lyng, 1990). The venue managers here are a threat to the Door Supervisor because if he does not provide assistance to those who require it he could potentially have his door

³⁸ Slang for told off

supervisor license suspended or revoked which would render him unable to legally work on the doors. Moreover, by prioritising the safety of the customer he is in control of his circumstances, which has been identified by Søgaaard and Krause-Jensen (2019) as a core tenet of edgework. Navigating this situation is something that Door Supervisor 010 discussed in relation to their venue's drug searching policy.

Sam:

"How difficult is that to navigate? If some venue managers don't want people searched, but other managers do?"

Door Supervisor 010 (F):

"It's hard. I mean, you're seen as somebody that's upholding the licence for the venue. And so in theory it should be down to the door staff to search and sort of overrule management. But obviously, it's management that are governed by the owner of the bar. So, if the owner of the bar turns around, said "I don't want people searched" then I can't force that. So basically, I normally turn around and say, "well, if you didn't want me to search a person then anything's found anything happens, then that comes back on you, not me.""

Sam.

"Is that a pressure you feel when working, that you're somewhat responsible for upholding the licence of the venue?"

Door Supervisor 010 (F):

"With your SIA licence, you are there to basically stop drugs from getting into your venue. I mean, I know you can't stop everything. But when a manager or owner turns around and says I don't want a person searched, it's sort of breaching your SIA licence Terms and Conditions³⁹. Which means if like, if the police came in, started searching people and found drugs and you turn around and say "well, the manager told me not to search", the SIA can still turn around

³⁹ There is a code of conduct by which all private security operatives must abide. There are certain stipulations such as a commitment to taking all reasonable steps to prevent and reduce crime. Acting against these principles is a criminal offence under Section 9 of the Private Security Act 2001.

go "well, hold on, you're not deemed to be doing your job properly". So yes, that is a big pressure."

Door staff report being under tremendous pressures from not only managers but venue owners and are conflicted by what they should do to preserve their SIA accreditation against the wishes of those who provide them with work. Door staff are in a precarious legal position in their role, and ultimately can risk arrest and prosecution by the police for enforcing the policies of the venues (Monaghan, 2004). Door Supervisor 010 has discussed elements of her role that could be subsumed under the dirty work framework. Her description of not being allowed to search people for drugs could come under the physical taint, in that her role is being performed whilst being subject to dangerous and noxious conditions (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999, p. 415). Being explicitly told not to search someone for drugs makes the role particularly dangerous for Door Supervisor 010 because there is the threat that something drug related could unfold that could have been prevented earlier. Moreover, there is also the threat for Door Supervisor 010 that they could be found in breach of the SIA code of conduct, which is a criminal offence under Section 9 of the Private Security Act 2001. Door Supervisor 010's quotation also contains elements of the social taint, as she has highlighted that she is working at the behest of the venue managers and even highlights that there is a hierarchy in that the managers are only doing what the owners of the bar are telling them. When it comes to dealing with difficult venue managers other door staff also described taking actions to protect themselves. One interviewee, when asked about the pressures of ensuring the safety of customers in the bars he worked in, said that he seeks written confirmation from some bar staff that he has given them advice and they have ignored it.

Door Supervisor 009 (M):

"It worries me when the landlady and bar staff override you and say "nah they're alright, we can serve them couple more they'll be fine" that worries me because if something was to happen inside the pub, or the police or an ambulance had to be called for that specific person. It's our responsibility but why did you allow them to be served more? You knew they were drunk? So why didn't you cut them off at the bar? Why don't you tell them not to serve them? I've had it before, where that's happened once in a pub, and the police asked us, "Why didn't we cut them off?" And we said, well, we told the staff to cut them off, they refused. We can't

stop them serving alcohol, we can only advise them. But when the police asked the staff, the staff said the security never told us to stop serving [them]. So now what I do is I get them to sign a piece of paper on my notebook stating that I have told them to cut someone off and they have said no. So that way if it ever happens again, I've got proof that I did request that they were cut off."

Even though this quotation from Door Supervisor 009 is in relation to alcohol and not drugs it does still demonstrate that the relationship between management and door staff can be tense and complex to navigate. The quotation amplifies the potential differences in approach to intoxication, demonstrating that door staff have an interest in ensuring that intoxication levels do not reach a point where harm could occur, whereas venue owners may be simply looking to bring in as much revenue as possible. Such tensions have resulted in some door staff taking extra measures to ensure that they have evidence of their actions in case the police get involved. Door staff could in theory, take similar measures to those outlined by Door Supervisor 009, by getting the management to co-sign a document that provides evidence of the management policy for that venue. But this seems to be an isolated incident, with no mention in the literature of door staff taking such precautions. However, another interviewee suggested that he would just be unwilling to work with managers that would willingly jeopardise their license.

Door Supervisor 013 (M):

"Because what the management want is just manic, let everyone in, then it's us, the doorman who have to deal with everything. The management don't realise in the long run that they can have the licence suspended. Because if the police get called to a certain venue [too many times] then the local licencing officers get involved, and then this is when things start going wrong. And this is where they can close the place down. And then you know, everyone's losing money. But yeah, it has changed a lot, very rarely now are you going to get support from your management. You know, I've had my time with some good managers. I've had my time with some, you know, not some good guys and I just walked off, I walked off from the shift before."

In some instances, door staff have expressed both concern for how venues are operating in terms of drugs, but also for their own license and their own employment. This is evidenced in the following quotation.

Door Supervisor 003 (M):

"I have had situations with venue managers, where the venue manager said, "look, we're a drug friendly venue". I'm like "what do you mean?" like, "oh, well, we don't care. Just don't stop anyone for drugs". And I'm like, "Well, what do you mean, don't stop anyone for drugs? Do you mean drug dealers? Do you mean people on class A's? Class B's? Do you mean people smoking a bit of weed? Like, what? What are we talking here?" I think that those venues are probably the worst. Where you go to a venue and the venue is saying, "No, we don't care about drugs", and you're like, "well, your licence does, and I do because I'm not losing my job over it. So do you want me to go home, do you want me to not work?" Because often, you'll end up doing a couple of shifts and not going back. But if the work is not there, and you need to work somewhere, it can be a little bit uncomfortable sometimes."

Door staff were aware of the implications of drugs and their effects on their SIA license and the license of the venue. That is not to say that venue managers are not as aware, but there seems to be, at least from the point of view of the door staff interviewed, the belief that some managers have a flagrant disregard for how illegal drugs can affect the licencing of the venue. This disregard can ignite an internal battle for the door staff. They are effectively at the will of the venue managers who want to create a particular atmosphere for the customers of their pubs, bars and clubs. This is not to suggest that all venue managers are happy to pose this risk to their venues and the door staff, as highlighted above there are some effective relationships between the door staff and venue managers. It is at the discretion of the venue management how they decide to operate, Hadfield (2006) alludes to the fact that on certain types of night "where there is an enhanced risk of surreptitious drug-related activity, the dance floor may be kept dark, but additional lighting used to illuminate obscure areas of the venue. Similarly, on mainstream 'party' nights where greater levels of alcohol consumption and aggression are found, rapidly moving and disorientating lighting effects such as strobe and smoke may be avoided" (p. 83).

There was great concern expressed by door staff that venue owners are sometimes ‘themselves involved in drug taking on their own premises. . One member of door staff discussed this concern with me. Below, Door Supervisor 007 tells the story of an interaction with another member of door staff on his first shift at a new venue⁴⁰.

Door Supervisor 007 (M):

“One of them [current members of door staff] told me at this bar that I worked at, pointing out who the owner was, “don’t do anything”. Because apparently, he [the current member of door staff] didn’t know who the owner was. He went downstairs caught him [bar owner] doing drugs with other people. And when he went to go take it off him. The guy phoned up his [door staff] boss and told him to take them off the door and said don’t come back here. Yeah, we got to be careful because the owners could be in on it as well. That’s another worry.”

What door staff are faced with here is further complexity in their role. It is imperative for them to balance and manage various forces without aggravating those who employ them. They must even balance these forces when there is illegal behaviour from the people who are responsible for running the bar and providing their companies with contracts for security work. This is then a negotiation between ignoring criminal behaviour and preserving economic interests. Consequently, these situations that exhibit careful consideration, thought and discretion “defy the boneheaded stereotype” of the door supervisor (Hobbs et al., 2003, p. 229).

7.2.2 Door Staff and Concerns for Specific Drugs

Door staff also expressed concern about the types of drugs that are prevalent in the NTE. Cocaine was a drug that was talked about by most door staff in this research, and it generates concern for a number of reasons, one being its sheer ubiquity in the NTE.

Sam:

⁴⁰ This conversation requires a lot of contextualising, so for clarity I have included some comments in square brackets to clarify the conversation.

“Do you think drugs are more prevalent now than they were before?”

Door Supervisor 015 (M):

“Absolutely, yeah, absolutely. Cocaine nowadays it's everywhere. It's the people you wouldn't even consider using coke, it's massive. It's a lot bigger than most people are comfortable with admitting, it really is. I went in my village pub, just up the road. A month ago, on a Tuesday night and there's a bloke in the toilets, with a snowball stuck round his snout. And that's on a Tuesday night in a village pub. So, imagine what it's like on the weekend in the cities.”

The fact that cocaine is a very popular drug within the NTE is confirmed by other research. In their self-report survey, Measham and Moore (2009) found that 36.3% of bar customers and 83.3% of club customers had tried cocaine at least once in their lives, and that 2.9% of bar customers and 11.8% of club customers admitted to having taken cocaine on the day of their field work. Moreover, the Crime Survey for England and Wales has found that from April 2022 – March 2023 17.6% of 16-24 year olds reported that they had consumed any illicit drug within the past year (Crime Survey for England and Wales, 2023). Moreover, in the same report 42.5% of respondents who frequented nightclubs 4 or more times a month had consumed any illicit drug (Crime Survey for England and Wales, 2023). The same survey also shows that 10.% of 16-59 year olds who attended nightclubs between 1 and 3 times a week reported taking cocaine, and 19.1% of 16-59 year olds who attended nightclubs 4 or more times per month reported using cocaine (Crime Survey for England and Wales, 2023). Customers in the NTE who have taken cocaine can pose a challenge to door staff because of the effects the drug has.

Door Supervisor 014 (M):

“Cocaine can make you violent, unpredictable”.

The effects of cocaine were also voiced by two other respondents:

Door Supervisor 002 (M):

“If someone's on cocaine, a lot of the time their strength is increased, and they've become more aggressive”.

.....

Sam:

“How big an issue are drugs are in a night-time setting?”

Door Supervisor 013 (M):

“The biggest issue anyway, especially cocaine, because cocaine makes people superman. I mean to the point where you're taking someone out, you force them out and you drag them out, the SIA don't teach us these kind of things”.

These door staff were clearly worried about the increase in aggression from customers as a result of cocaine consumption. Door staff are entitled to be increasingly concerned about the effects of cocaine as “recent increases in production, more successful new trafficking routes, restrictions in the availability of common cutting agents and the impact of the dark web imports have led to this increased incidence of high purity cocaine” (Fisher and Measham, 2018, p. 22) However, interviewees also highlighted that there is a lack of training on the issue of drugs and their effects, which was discussed in the previous chapter in further detail. Lack of training on drugs could be considered as a dangerous condition under Ashforth and Kreiner’s (1999) dirty work framework. If door supervisors are not being given the appropriate training to manage their working environment safely, it creates dangerous conditions in which to work and so could be subsumed under the dirty work framework. Moreover, incidents like this can also be examined through the edgework framework as the door staff feel that those on cocaine could pose a threat to their physical wellbeing (Lyng, 1999). Søggaard and Krause-Jensen (2019) have suggested that door supervisors are routinely exposing themselves to threats of potential violence. Some research has similarly suggested increases in aggression associated with cocaine use (see: Licata et al., 1993; Newson, 2021). Alongside cocaine, door staff were also concerned about another drug, ketamine.

Sam:

“If you think about the drugs that people do in bars and clubs which drug do you think is the hardest to police?”

Door Supervisor 003 (M):

“I tend to look at it from “what are the effects of these drugs? What is this going to make these people do?” If they're taking coke, my biggest issue is they're going to get violent towards other people. If they're taking loads of ket⁴¹, my biggest concern is they're gonna have a medical condition, and we're gonna end up having to call an ambulance or look after them because they take too much.”

Door staff are therefore showing acute concern about the use of drugs in the NTE. From the above quotation, it is also evident that door staff demonstrate a relatively sophisticated knowledge of the likely impact of various drugs on customers and how they are expected to deal with those situations accordingly. This is interesting in light of the fact that the drugs training that door staff received was largely deemed to be insufficient (discussed in the previous chapter) and that the requisite knowledge of drugs and their effects therefore tended to be accumulated through proactively learning on the job (discussed in further detail below). As discussed earlier, in relation to drug policing, door staff are routinely required to balance the orders of the management in relation to drug policies against both the wellbeing of the patrons of the NTE and their own SIA licensing conditions. Door staff though are understandably concerned about the effects of drugs on the customers because there is always the potential that they could be dealing with potentially traumatic incidents. This was discussed in an interview where one of the door staff described an incident the previous weekend at a venue that had explicitly told him that no one was to be searched on entry and where he had subsequently found someone who had overdosed on ketamine.

Sam:

“What happened in that incident?”

Door Supervisor 006 (M):

“A male had overdosed himself on ketamine, and he'd become such a state that he managed, he passed out to the point where he was completely comatose. I couldn't even get him round; nothing I was doing was getting a response from him.”

⁴¹ Slang for ketamine

Door Supervisor 006 went on to describe performing CPR on the person who had overdosed on ketamine. The reality for door staff is that if drugs are coming into venues, then there is a chance that someone could overdose and that they could be called upon to deal with the emergency. Door staff are given first aid training as there is a high importance placed upon customer welfare and providing first aid is within their remit. However, in this scenario there is arguably a clear injustice. The door supervisor is having to deal with a situation that could have potentially been prevented at the door if the venue had allowed the security team to search people on entry. Overall, the door staff have been placed in a tortuous position. One that is caught between profit and image-driven venue managers and owners and their own desire to uphold not only the licence for the venue, but their own SIA license whilst also managing the risky behaviours of patrons in the night-time economy. Door staff are thus making complex choices that involve weighing up the economic benefits and moral judgements in various situations (Kostara and White, 2023).

7.3 Experience, Judgement, Tactics and Tools in the Search for Drugs on the Door

The door to a venue is an important strategic location for door staff. Indeed, its importance cannot be overstated because “once customers enter the premises, policing them is far more difficult, and every effort is taken to exclude potential problems at the door” (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003, p. 120). One of the potential problems that door staff try to exclude are illegal drugs. To do so, door staff deploy a set of strategies to detect those whom they suspect of being on drugs. These strategies, as discussed below, are a combination of formal and informal training, tactics to delay a customer’s entry to a venue, the use of resources that are either supplied by the security companies or funded straight out of the pocket of door staff, and intuition learnt over many shifts stood on the doors. The door is an important point of control, but it also serves another purpose as it provides the door staff with the opportunity to surveil and assess incoming patrons as they make the journey up to the door.

7.3.1 Judgement and Experience on the Doors

The process of making a judgment on whether someone is on drugs cannot be taught instantly, rather it something that is learned through constantly being on the alert to the effects of drugs on those coming to the door.

Sam:

“While you are working are you ever looking out for signs of drug use?”

Bouncer 006 (M):

“Over the years, I've become adaptive as to what I'm looking for. But when I first joined the doors, I wouldn't know what I was looking for. So, there's a lot of times a few years ago that I let drug users by without knowing what they were up to. Like but nowadays, you just, it's hard to explain, it's kind of experience [that] tells me ‘I know what I'm looking at here’ and ‘this guy is high as a kite’, or ‘this guy's pupils are dilated’”.

Looking out for tell-tale signs of drug consumption is clearly a skill that takes time to learn. As discussed in the previous chapter, the drugs training that door staff received varies from brief to non-existent. Bouncer 006 is underscoring the importance of experience. He has built up his knowledge of drugs and their effects over a period of time which has supplied him with the requisite tools to identify signs of drug use in order to conduct his job efficiently. The important of knowledge and experience was also highlighted in another interview when discussing what door staff are looking out for in terms of drug consumption.

Door Supervisor 013 (M):

“This doesn't come on day one, when you go to a pub, or like, if it's your first day. It will come with time and experience you will realise when someone is on something. It's more like they think like you will know from day one, you know what I mean?”

Sam:

“It takes time to get”.

Door Supervisor 013 (M):

“Yeah, it will take time”.

Sam:

“And just how long do you think it took you to get to that point?”

Door Supervisor 013 (M):

“Six months to a year because, you know, I've learned from others”.

Developing this skill is therefore seen as important for door staff. It must become a part of their arsenal of tactics to assist them in minimising the volume of drugs that come into their venue. Utilizing this skill can assist door staff in different ways. Primarily, it gives them the tools to understand what to look out for that could suggest those wishing to gain access to the bars, pubs, or clubs are on drugs. The consumption of drugs in the night-time economy, from the customers' point of view, contributes to the enhancement of the enjoyment of a night out (Sanders, 2005) so door staff need to be aware that customers are likely to try and bring drugs into their venues. As Door Supervisor 013 touches upon, the importance of the door team is that they are able to teach each other skills that will help the whole team to police drugs. Once that skill is learnt, the signs become easier to spot. It is vital that door staff are able to identify these signs so they can mitigate the physical and commercial dangers that come with drug consumption in the NTE. When asked about the signs that would indicate intoxication, Door Supervisor 004⁴² said they were looking out for the following:

Door Supervisor 004 (M):

What we'll be looking for is people coming up to the door who have slurred speech, eyes dilated, incoherent, rings of powder around their nose, acting evasive, having been looking at us searching people and or people arriving at the door then seeing our search people and sort of turning away whispering something to their mate, and then some sort of flurry of activity around their boxer shorts or whatever.

⁴² Bouncer 004 was the most senior member of door staff interviewed in this research. He is a director of a security company based in the north of England; he regularly did door shifts.

From this it is clear that door staff are continually multi-tasking. For example, they are having to read the body language of people further down a queue whilst also conducting searches on people who are at the front of the queue. They then must make a judgement call on the way in which people are behaving. However, some of the signs that Door Supervisor 004 discusses are clearly a subjective assessment of drug use. For example, someone might choose to watch someone get searched simply so they know what to expect and not because they have something to hide. It is also interesting that only one of the signs they are looking out for would directly indicate drug use (the residue of powder around someone's nose) rather than other forms of intoxication including drunkenness, which would provide just as good an explanation for a customer having slurred speech.

Once door staff understand the signs that they are looking out for, they can then put their knowledge into practice. There are numerous ways that door staff will search for drugs at the doors of pubs, bars and clubs, but only if the management of the venue allows for customers to be searched.

7.3.2 Tactics and Tools: Searching for Drugs on the Door

Each venue will have a different approach to searching for drugs depending on its type. As a very rudimentary guide, pubs will be less likely to have strict searching procedures in place; whilst a nightclub that caters to 'underground' types of music where drug consumption is likely to be more common (Measham and Moore, 2009) is more likely to have some form of searching in place. The door is a site for inclusion or exclusion and door staff use the opportunity of people coming up to that door as a chance to interact with customers to assess their 'worthiness' for entry into the venue.

Door Supervisor 005 (M):

"You want to see how they walk up to the door, how they are with you how they are with their mates. Sort of how they're talking, how they're walking. If they look a bit weird, or they seem a bit off, or they don't seem right for the venue, you might almost stop them. Shake their hand say, "Oh, hey, how's your night been tonight? How's your night going?" Engaging in conversation, and just kind of see what kind of person they are. You don't have a long time to

*judge someone, and you do because you can keep him there at that front door as long as you want. They're not going in until you say they can."*⁴³

Door Supervisor 005 is highlighting the control that they have over the customer. They have the ability prevent someone entering into a venue until the door staff deem them "right for the venue". Interestingly, Door Supervisor 005 suggests that if someone looks 'a bit weird' then they might be inclined to stop them just to ensure that the customer meets the standards requested by the venue management. Another interesting aspect is that Door Supervisor 005 highlights that there is time pressure on them to make a judgement call, but that they can employ tactics to try to give themselves extra time to assist them in making the correct decision. There are some elements of masculinity here that are able to assist the door supervisors in trying to make their judgement call. By using their physicality and their position to stop someone in order to interrogate them they are positioning themselves as a point of authority who can make the judgement on who is able to cross the threshold into the venue. They are also applying their judgement as to who they should search based on their demeanour as they walk up to the door. It is clear from this that door staff apply their discretion over who can come in, weighing up their economic and moral standards as to who to allow across their threshold (see also Kostara and White, 2023). These discretionary tactics were commonplace amongst interviewees.

Door Supervisor 010 (F):

"If you come to my venue, I'll always speak to you whether I'm in a good mood, bad mood, shit mood, whatever. It's always "Hi guys. How's your night going?". 99.9% of people talk to you on the way in. Especially being a female, right. When that one person doesn't talk to you, that gives you like an indication. Are they drunk or they on something? So, you might just stop and go "you alright there darlin'? Everything okay?". And they might sort of give you like a glazed, glakey⁴⁴ look as we call it up in North-East City. And it's like, indications of the eyes, are they bloodshot? Are the pupils dilated? Can they speak to you? Can they even stand up straight?"

⁴³ This quote seems confusingly contradictory. My interpretation during the interview was that Door Supervisor 005 means they do not have a long time to judge someone before they became agitated and that the managers of venues will be keen to get the customers into the venue as quickly as possible too but that they do have the discretion to stop a customer for a longer check if they feel that is required.

⁴⁴ Glakey is slang in the North East of England for 'not quite right'.

When it comes to drink you'd sort deem off the rest of their friends, if they're drunk or not. And if the friends are a little bit drunk, you can sort of deem they're drunk. But men are the worst especially if they've taken drugs, they'll talk 100 miles an hour. They'll repeat themselves. They're worse than women, it's hilarious".

There are similarities between the views of Door Supervisor 010 and Door Supervisor 005. Both door staff employ a tactic of comparing someone that they are suspicious of against the people that they come up to the door with. They make a judgement on intoxication levels by looking out for physical signs of drug use, such as pupil dilation and the way that the customer acts. Interestingly, Door Supervisor 010 highlights that the speed at which someone talks could be an indication that a customer is on drugs, along with repeating themselves, which would be enough for the door staff to pique their suspicion. Door Supervisor 010 has also highlighted a way in which a door staff's gender can have an effect on their role. She believes that most people would stop and have a chat with her *because* she is female, which gives her an advantage in trying to make the judgement about whether someone is on drugs and whether to allow them access to the venue. Again, similar to Door Supervisor 005, she is using her physical presence as a means of engaging customers to work out their levels of intoxication and their suitability for her venue. Door Supervisor 010 is successfully performing hegemonic masculinity (Cheng, 1996; Monaghan, 2002a; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). It has been asserted that most male door staff fail to see the benefits and value of such 'policing' by female door staff (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Hobbs, O'Brien and Westmarland, 2007). However, in this instance, the female door staff appears to have used her gender to her advantage.

The search procedures that are conducted by door staff are dictated by the venue management, as discussed above. Venue polices will yield different types of searches. One member of door staff highlighted the different types of searches in a club.

Door Supervisor 020 (M):

"You've got three ways of doing a search in a club. You've got random search, which means you can pick anybody out, you know, from crowd; you got general search where you search everybody. And then you've got specific search. Now, there will be a, like a poster on the wall,

saying like this, this company, you know, this venue does searches, and we like to do it, and we're trained to do it. It's in our licence".

Door Supervisor 020 went on to discuss how the different types of searches can be implemented at different stages of the night. If it is quiet and the door staff have the capacity to do so, they can do a general search where everyone is subject to a search but if it begins to get busy, they can alter their searching accordingly and pick out random people to search or just stop the searching all together. There is then a fluidity to searching, the rate of searching can be adjusted given how busy or quiet the door is at any time. Some door staff are keen to search for drugs, as it is part of their licensing conditions under Section 9 of the PSIA 2001 to take reasonable steps to reduce criminal behaviour. However, some door staff argued that the searching of patrons coming into a club can be too slow, and often are under pressure to get people inside venues. Specifically, the full search, where everyone is searched, concerned some door staff:

Door Supervisor 010 (F):

"I mean, like I say venues won't have a search policy where you have to search everybody going in. And if we want to take the biggest nightclub in North-East city, which is Casio nightclub - holds two and a half thousand people, right? If we search every single one of them coming in, by the time we shut at four o'clock in the morning, half of them probably wouldn't be in".

Once again, it is clear here that door staff are balancing the commercial needs of the premises that are employing them against security needs, a theme which often arises in the literature on door staff (see Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Sogaard, 2014; Liempt and Aalst, 2015; Sogaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019). Nevertheless, some interviewees saw the benefit in conducting a search of everyone who came into their venue.

Door Supervisor 018 (M):

"Going back last year spiking became a big, big problem. So, what our club did was we set up searching, and everyone got searched on the door. And that all goes back to 2021. For freshers. That's when we started it. And it does work. And we found that the queues were longer, but

people and the reaction we were getting from people is greater. And they feel safer and they're saying, "well, you're the only club in town that was doing that still. I feel so safe coming in knowing that you are searching for everything".

The quotation from Door Supervisor 018 highlights that the club they work at have taken measures to search everyone for drugs on the door as a result of spiking incidents. Whilst he acknowledges that it takes longer for people to get into their club, it is interesting that the customer's feel that their experience is enhanced primarily because they feel much safer. This is likely due to fears that customers have surrounding drinks spiking (see Sheard, 2011 for further discussion on drinks spiking in the NTE). Moreover, it is also interesting that that he highlights he feels that the measure is effective, other door supervisors in this research have suggested that searches for drugs are largely ineffective (see below for further discussion). Searching people on a door can be invasive. Door staff, though, are also aware of their limitations when they do perform searches on people. Interviewees were asked how searches are performed:

Door Supervisor 004 (M):

"We would be operating some sort of search policy, whether that be just a quick glance in the bag, quick pat down in the pocket, or it's a full pat down".

.....

Door Supervisor 011 (M):

"Pockets, empty pockets, searching wallets, search phone cases, search bags. We don't search people because it's just too slow. And if someone has gone to the trouble of hiding drugs on their person, they're most likely going to be in a place that we wouldn't find them anyway, you know, be that in their underwear or, you know, in their bra, or you know, under the shoe".

.....

Door Supervisor 003 (M):

“Some of the Student Union led nights they're quite happy for us to set up a search queue. And in which case, great. You know, you come in, you'll have two guys with you. You do bags, I'll do people, empty your pockets onto the table, drop your bag, give everyone a good pat down. Give them their stuff back. If you're searching everyone coming into a venue, obviously you can't search everything. If somebody really wants to get something like a little baggie of drugs into a venue, they will get it in. But you can stop dealers getting in. You can stop guys with 50 bags and a wad of cash getting in quite easily. You catch them with a couple of hundred quid all rolled up nicely with rubber bands. You just say 'no, sorry, mate. not tonight'”

It is clear from this that the searches performed by door staff vary in their intensity. These interviewees explain that there is a range of searches that can be performed but Door Supervisor 011's comments demonstrate that door staff can increase the intensity of the search if they want. The search can be more in depth, with pockets being emptied and searched as well as wallets. The intensity can be quite invasive for whoever the search is being conducted upon. However, interviewees also conceded that door staff are limited in their power to search, and they know that if customers want to bring drugs into a venue, then they will simply hide them where door staff cannot legally search them. Door Supervisor 003's comments demonstrate how different venue policies set by management can dictate the search procedure. They also show that door staff have a tremendous amount of discretion in their role over who to let in and who to exclude. Perhaps the most surprising element of Door Supervisor 003's comments is that he would prefer simply to turn a drug dealer and did not mention that he would also ring the police. Indeed, some of the interviewees conceded that if drug dealers were determined to bring drugs into a venue, then they could achieve that rather easily because of the limitations of the door staff searching capabilities.

Door Supervisor 013 (M):

“If the drug dealer is all clued up, they know we can't put hands into someone's trousers, or into their underwear or down inside the socks. If they want to get stuff in they can, easy. Because they know that you know there's no intimate searching and it's like we're not allowed to do intimate searching, you know? You're going too personal, that's sort of what the police do and they do that in a cell, they don't even do that on the street”.

Door Supervisor 013 has highlighted that although door staff are a policing presence, they do not have the authority of the public police. This has clear implications for the policing of drugs and private security. They are aware of their limitations, but they are also responsible for doing their utmost to prevent criminal behaviour and in their view their limitations impede this. With door staff being conscious of the fact that there are areas of the person they cannot search, some of the interviewees were asked how fruitful searches were for finding drugs:

Door Supervisor 004 (M):

“In terms of bringing controlled substances to the venue. Not completely ineffective, but largely ineffective. Anyone who knows what they're doing will have stuffed the drugs down their trousers where we can't touch.”

.....

Sam:

“Are there any searches that do often yield results for drugs?”

Door Supervisor 005 (M):

“Not within the nightclub setting, no”.

.....

Sam:

“Searches like that, do they often turn something up for you?”

Door Supervisor 008 (F):

“Nothing to me personally. That was a real kicker, especially during freshers”.

.....

Door Supervisor 018 (M):

“Well, we must have confiscated a fair share of cocaine, and it is the biggest drug now is cocaine. We're seeing less and less weed. Cocaine, and MDMA are the biggest drugs we have seen in our line of work”.

Many of the respondents in this research conceded that they were not finding drugs on people during their searches on the door. However, there was one interviewee who said that they were confiscating drugs from customers - Door Supervisor 018 – who discussed his company’s implementation of the full search of people coming into the club. Although a full search of people coming into a venue takes longer it suggests that it is potentially more fruitful in terms of confiscation of illicit drugs. Furthermore, these findings demonstrate that, whilst door staff are performing searches for drugs, they are also hoping to find them on the customers and are disappointed when the search proves fruitless. Door staff are limited in their capacity to detect drugs outside the venues and thus may then move their policing effort towards customers inside the venues – which is discussed in Section 7.4 of this Chapter.

Door staff do not just use their intuition and their suspicions to try to detect if people are on drugs before they enter the venue. There were instances where door staff also used their own resources that were not supplied by their company to try and detect drugs.

Door Supervisor 007 (M):

“What I used to do is carry a UV torch with me. Cocaine glows like a greenish colour. And that's where I if I catch like a little green light greenish powder on it, like residue in their bag. I will be putting it on the floor, and I'll be taking everything out. I'll be like putting it all inside out and ask them to turn their pockets out if I'm suspecting something. Because we're not allowed to physically search like touch and search on the door. So, if they refuse to, we turn them away. If we can't find anything there's nothing you can really do. They've already taken it. As long as it hasn't already kicked in, they're not showing signs you can let them in. But if they're already showing signs, you're like yeah, no, can you go somewhere else, because that's the drugs taking effect”.

.....

Door Supervisor 010 (M):

“I always carry a torch, which is a white light and a UV light. So, I normally have the torch in my hand at all times. So, I have this little sort of trick of when I'm checking IDs, I'll put the UV light on the phone because a lot of them get their IDs out their phones⁴⁵. And if there's an indication of a little bit of white powder on the back of the phone case, that's when I start shining UV light up their nose, and you'll normally get like a white powder, or you'll see traces of white powder round the nostrils. And that's normally an indication it's like, right, “you've had something, unfortunately, I can't search you coming in the venue⁴⁶, but because I believe you're on something you're not coming in” because their behaviour can be quite normal going in, and within 10 or 15 minutes of taking something their behaviour could be erratic, disruptive, or even just to the point of them falling asleep and pass out.”

Sam:

“What colour does it shine when you put the UV light on it?”

Door Supervisor 010 (F):

“Put it this way, if they've got coke under the nose, it's the whitest white you could possibly imagine. It's like a UV white, like, you know, when did you ever see Friends when Ross Gellar⁴⁷ had his teeth done? It's like that.”

In order to police drugs effectively, these two-door staff provided themselves with extra resources. The companies that employ them did not provide them with the torches, but their use of these resources contributed to how they exercised their control over customers. Door Supervisor 007 suggests that as soon as he gets a glow then he is more proactive in trying to find something, but also goes on to say that if he does not find any drugs on someone then there is very little that he is able to do unless they are exhibiting signs of drug use. As discussed above, in the early stages of someone's door staff career such signs are not always

⁴⁵ Door Supervisor 010 here is that a lot of people keep their ID on the back of their phone, which is covered by their phone case. So when she talks of getting their IDs out of their phone, they are pulling it out from behind the protective case.

⁴⁶ By virtue of the management search policy

⁴⁷ The interviewee here is referring to a particular episode of the US TV series 'Friends' where a character has had their teeth whitened and they glow fluorescent white when the lights are turned off.

immediately obvious. Door Supervisor 010 though, takes a contrasting approach, and as soon as she suspects that someone has consumed drugs simply refuses them entry to the venue because of the risk that the customer could pose inside. It is widely accepted by door staff that if you stop any potential danger outside, it makes controlling those who are inside a much simpler exercise (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003).

7.4 Inside the Venue: The Chase Continues

Once customers have navigated the door their night of hedonism continues inside the venue, as does their desire to consume illegal drugs. It is once the customers are inside a venue that the role of the door staff becomes increasingly more challenging. However, despite the extra layer of difficulty, door staff described their attempts to remain vigilant and continued to be on the lookout for those customers consuming drugs no matter how furtive they try to be. Notwithstanding, door staff are aware of the challenges of policing drugs that face them once they move inside the venues.

Sam:

“How challenging is it to monitor drug use inside a venue?”

Door Supervisor 017 (M):

“I think is extremely challenging, because depending on the size of the venue, and the amount of door staff you have on duty. I mean, I've worked in a venue where there's been as little as two people working. Because unless you search every single person that comes in then I don't think you'll ever stop it [drug use] to be honest. Because there's so many ways that people can hide things nowadays. People are getting so savvy, and how they hide things nowadays, so unless you know what to look for and how people hide things, I don't think you're ever going be able to police it.”

.....

Door Supervisor 003 (M)

“Once we've stopped letting in, we'll go into the venue and start policing indoors. I get the opportunity, at least for the first half of the night, stood on the door with the head door, doing a lot of the intake. So I know everyone's faces, I've spoken to everyone, I've said hi. Maybe I've even searched everyone coming, in which case if I catch them taking drugs in the venue, there's a weird dynamic there where they're taking drugs, and I was the one who searched them.”

Door staff are aware that at times there are not enough staff working on the doors to effectively police drugs which means that drugs are getting into venues. Customers are also exhibiting extreme shrewdness when it comes to smuggling drugs into venues and door staff feel thwarted with their limited powers to deal with them. Above, Door Supervisor 017 goes as far as to say that there will never be enough door staff to make a tangible difference. He also discusses that it is salient that door staff know what signs to look out for, and as has been discussed earlier, this skill and knowledge comes with time and experience working on the doors of bars and clubs.

7.4.1 Policing of Controversial Spaces

Door staff continue to search for drugs in the venues, and one of the most obvious spaces for the consumption of drugs is the toilets. The toilets can provide customers with a degree of security when it comes to consuming drugs as they can isolate themselves from crowds by going into cubicles. However, despite the layer of security, toilets can be a place that rouses the suspicion of the door staff as they are equally aware that the toilet is an ideal space for a patron to consume drugs.

Door Supervisor 020 (M):

“I walk into toilets at the end of a shift because you know, once we got everybody out we got to do all the toilet checks make sure nobody's in the toilets. Before we can deem the place empty, if you see the amount of little baggies I see on the floor you know and we do our best to try and check but you know tiny baggies are easy to hide”

Door Supervisor 020 highlights just how easy it can be to get drugs into a venue. It is interesting that there also seems to be a flagrant disregard from the customer when it comes

to disposing of the evidence of drug consumption and that once the baggie is empty, it's simply thrown on the floor. However, the isolation that the toilets provide is a double-edged sword for customers, because in isolating themselves they also arouse suspicion from door staff as the following three interviewees highlighted:

Door Supervisor 018 (M):

"9 times out of 10 if they if they are wired, their drugs are normally down their trousers. So, we're watching them. And normally the first thing they do is go straight to the toilets, if they go straight to toilets, then that's a little bit suspicious. And we'll follow them up a couple of seconds behind them and we'll do a toilet search. They normally go with their friends, and they'd very rarely do drugs solely, so they normally go with their friends so when they do go into the toilets, and if we look around and we see two people have gone in there [a cubicle] and there's no one in there [an empty cubicle]. That's when we're going to start looking at the cubicles, and we're going to have to start looking over the top of them."

.....

Sam:

"Are you looking out for any signs of drug use while they're in the venue?"

Door Supervisor 001 (M):

"Yeah, an obvious sign is people go into the toilet together. So that's when we do a toilet check. In an ideal scenario, we'll have a male and a female door supervisor so we can do both toilets. But if not, we can't really do the female ones, unfortunately, unless we get a female member of staff to go in. People in the same cubicle together, that's the biggest giveaway. Because there's only one or two things you're going to be doing in there. And one of them is drug use, and the other one is rumpy pumpy."

.....

Door Supervisor 014 (M):

“Or later on in the night you'll notice a group of lads going into the toilet, and you'll catch them doing it.”

Door staff are clearly suspicious of people who head straight to the toilets upon their entry to the venue and will then decide on how to proceed. Usually, this entails following people into the toilets to ensure that they are not furtively consuming drugs. However, policing of the toilets is, again, complex terrain for door staff to navigate. Door staff are limited by their gender in their ability to search the toilets. Male door staff can only search male toilets and female door staff can only search women's toilets. Nevertheless, door staff are prepared to invade people's privacy and glance over the top of the cubicles to check if people are consuming drugs. There is no guarantee that just because more than one person is in a cubicle that they are consuming drugs. It is then a trade-off between invading someone's privacy and checking for drug consumption in the toilet cubicle, and the latter usually prevails. However, not all toilet searches proved fruitful:

Sam:

Have you caught people in the toilets doing drugs before?

Door Supervisor 008 (F):

“Not myself personally, because I'm really the worst person to ask about this, because nothing really happens in the women's toilets. But people get dragged out of the men's all the time for it”.

Door Supervisor 008 suggests that most drug incidents come from inside the men's toilets, rather than the women's toilets. It is necessary to critically reflect on this, as the consumption of illicit drugs “occurs across a full range of demographics” (Fisher and Measham, 2018, p. 23). Therefore, this comment could appear to be naïve. Door Supervisor 008 did have the least experience of working on the doors out of all the door supervisors interviewed for this research and as mentioned above, knowledge on signs of drug use and the consumption habits of customers is learned over an extended period of time. The more one works as door supervisor the easier it becomes to spot the signs of drug use. Given her limited time working on the doors of bars and clubs it is plausible that she simply has not encountered anyone

consuming drugs when she has been conducting toilet checks. Nonetheless, in a further quote below from Door Supervisor 008 it is clear that she does know some of the signs of drug use to look out for in the toilets. One of the signs that aroused the suspicion of the door staff in the male toilets is when people are seen to be sharing a cubicle. For some interviewees, this approach was rather gendered and caused an internal conflict but nonetheless warranted.

Door Supervisor 007 (M):

“You do a toilet check. And there's two lads in cubicle. Like, it is a bit sexist because girls go into cubicles together all the time. Why can't two lads go in together? But traditionally, it is like, okay, ‘what are you doing?’ You'll see three girls in a toilet cubicle all the time. Like, it's just a thing that happens. Whereas with the lads if there's two people in a cubicle, the assumption is you're either doing something sexual, or you're doing drugs. Which to be fair, is a rule that hasn't gone badly in the time that I've been working but it is a little bit sexist, really.”

The toilet checks, for door staff, are a key tool to help them prevent drug consumption inside venues. Not a single respondent in the research took umbrage with having to routinely go into the toilets and look for signs of consumption, for them it was just a standard practice in their job. Under the dirty work framework, the checking of toilets could be considered of a “dubious virtue” (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999, p. 415), as it is a behaviour that many would see as invasive. There were a number of indicators that door staff were alert to that could suggest that someone was in the toilet cubicle consuming drugs.

Door Supervisor 009 (M):

“If they're disappearing into the toilets then two minutes later, he's going back into the toilet. Or if he comes out of the toilet with a runny nose. That's a dead giveaway is the runny nose, or sniffing as soon as he walks out of the toilet. 9 times out of 10 they know they've been caught, so they just want to keep whatever they've got on them and just leave. It's easier just to leave because if you start kicking off, I'm gonna search you and then whatever I find on you I'm gonna confiscate”.

.....

Door Supervisor 008 (F):

“I think it's the only tell-tale sign that you can really look out for is how often people go into the bathroom. [...] You look under the stall to see where their legs are. If they're sat down on the toilet, you know they're probably not doing anything. But they don't do it on the toilet seats like you often hear about, it's on the toilet roll holders. So, you look if their feet are pointed towards the toilet roll holders that's probably where they're sniffing off. Unless they use a key or something. If you hear a snort, you tell them to get out right now.”

Door staff are assuming that the toilet has been co-opted for the purposes of recreational drug consumption when they hear sniffing rather than there being any other rational explanation such as someone being distressed and crying. However, door staff were both proactive and took a pragmatic approach to this issue in their venues. Hegemonic masculinity is being deployed in these situations, where the door staff are giving people the option to leave without the need for physical intervention (Monaghan, 2002a). The door staff are keen to avoid using the physical intervention but are willing to use it if they have deemed it necessary, something which Hobbs et al (2003) have suggested that door staff also did in their study. When asked about how door staff differentiate between someone sniffing drugs and an innocent sniff one interviewee elicited this response:

Door Supervisor 011 (M):

“It might, you might have literally been blowing your nose. But better, but I always think that to play it safe. Better to have one disgruntled customer, rather than one person on drugs in the venue, which could be an issue later on.”

Door staff are aware that inside the venue, drugs are harder to police and therefore more likely to be an issue further into the night. They are willing to take the risk of accusing somebody and checking them to ensure that they do not have drugs on them. In doing so they are arguably attempting to keep everyone who is in the venue safe. If, however, the sniff has not been an innocent one and door staff believe that a customer has consumed drugs then the door staff must eject people from the venues. This can be met with resistance from customers, but in this instance door staff wield a considerable amount of discretion:

Door Supervisor 008 (F):

“And when they do come out of the stall, you say you will have to be searched right now by me or we're gonna have you ejected basically.”

.....

Door Supervisor 018 (M)

“We'll do it in pairs because, you know, there's no cameras in the toilets. And people who have got drugs on them will try and attack doors off, straight off. We'll just take him straight back downstairs re-search then and eject them or give him the benefit of the doubt. But normally, we'll eject them straight away.”

It is clear from this that getting caught consuming drugs in the toilets does not always result in being ejected from the venue. Whether customers are given the opportunity to remain in the venue is entirely at the discretion of the door staff, and it is unclear under what circumstances door staff might decide that a customer can remain in the venue. Finally, when it came to policing the toilets of bars and clubs, one interviewee had a rather controversial opinion on how to make the policing of drugs easier for door staff:

Door Supervisor 006 (M):

“Now, I know it's a controversial subject. And I know a lot of people get really angry about this, but I'm quite a big advocate for cameras in toilets. But you have to be careful in that situation. It's so we can see two people going into the same cubicle, that would be a big bonus for us. We can do toilet check, but we can't always be in the toilets. So when we see on the cameras two people in the cubicle, we can then go, bang, bang, bang, catch him.”

This example highlights how seriously some of the door staff take the policing of drugs. Some of them would be prepared to trade the right to privacy for technology that makes their role more straightforward. There is no specific legislation that mentions the use of CCTV in toilets, so installing it would not be illegal but there are certainly concerns when it comes to privacy. Door Supervisor 006 suggests that they cannot always be in the toilet, but they also cannot look at a screen all the time either. It is also salient to mention that it would be illegal for

someone to watch the CCTV without the correct SIA license. There is a separate license that CCTV operatives must have in order to watch CCTV and having a door supervisors license does not give them the requisite license to handle CCTV.

7.4.2 Policing of Open Environments

There were instances when interviewees had seen customers take drugs in a more open environment. This situation was not particularly common, and only discussed in two interviews. However, it is worth exploring as one of the interviewees offered an interesting opinion as to why that might occur. Door Supervisor 014 was asked what he would do if he saw someone consuming drugs in one of the venues that he worked at:

Door Supervisor 014 (M):

“I approach him politely, ask him to leave the premises and I’ll escort them out”.

Sam:

“Would you take the drugs off them at all?”

Door Supervisor 014 (M):

“Yeah, obviously if it’s unsafe then you do it with another colleague you don’t take them off all the time as it could be unsafe for yourself”.

After this exchange Door Supervisor 014 was asked why it might be unsafe to do it on their own, but they were not forthcoming at that point. However, further along in their interview, they did suggest they were often wary of drug dealers whilst working. One could also infer from other interviews that door staff are worried about the possible consequences of drug and alcohol consumption in that they feel it makes people more erratic, which poses a challenge to the door staff when trying to confiscate drugs or eject patrons from venues. Another interviewee discussed how they felt patterns of drug consumption have changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic:

Sam:

“When you’re working inside a venue, are there any signs that you’re looking out for that somebody might be on gear?”

Door Supervisor 004 (M):

Yeah, usually the fact that they’re doing it out in the open, in front of me. Literally like walking around a venue, there will be some idiot. But we’ve seen a lot more since lockdown. So, the generation of young people 18 to 21, who have grown up with bars and clubs shut. We’re seeing much, much higher incidences of drug use on the dance floor, they don’t have that sort of “let’s go to the toilet and do this, let’s go somewhere discreet”. They’ve grown-up in house parties and student flats where they’re round their mates and they can do it. We’re seeing a massive, massive spike in people just openly doing it on dance floors, young people post lockdown. You’ve gone over to them, and they say “oh, well, yeah, drugs are illegal, shit - sorry”.

There is a suggestion here that younger people are less aware of what is and is not illegal or that they think that in certain venues that no action would be taken against them. Given that earlier some of the interviewees suggested that some venue managers see their venues as being ‘drug friendly’ it is plausible that younger people could think the same. It is interesting that the door staff have noticed these changes in the patterns of consumption as a result of COVID. This was also discussed by another interviewee:

Door Supervisor 012 (M):

“People don’t understand their boundaries, because we’ve got 850,000 new 18-year-olds during the pandemic, and they’ve not been bedded into night-time economy as well”

It is interesting that Door Supervisor 012 suggested that the NTE requires its patrons to become ‘bedded in’ implying that, for patrons, understanding the rules, their own boundaries in terms of consumption, and methods of circumventing drug policing from door staff require the patrons to ‘learn on the job’ similar to door staff looking out for signs of drug use. It is also worth noting how big a challenge that poses to door staff, when a large section of the NTE patrons with little or no experience of the environment could be a danger to themselves if they do not assimilate fast enough.

There will be times when inside the venues people have consumed too much of a particular drug, with interviewees elucidating that the consequences can range from minor panic attacks to an overdose. In interview, door staff described the times that this had occurred, which often resulted in the administration of first aid and/or an ambulance being called.

Sam:

Have you had to call an ambulance for somebody who has taken too much of one substance?

Door Supervisor 003 (M):

We've had to call ambulances for people who are just completely fucked up. And that's often a combination of things. You know, "this person hasn't been in there long enough to get that drunk. So there's something affecting them". I've had situations where somebody thinks they're taking one thing. Usually it's coke or ket, you get people who think they've got coke and they take ket. And then all of a sudden, they think they've been spiked. You sit them down, you talk to them, and you go, "what have you taken tonight? And you say I'm not the fucking police. Just tell me what you've taken".

Door Supervisor 003 is doing something important here. He is trying to garner information from people to pass onto the medical crews about what the patron has taken. He does this by reminding the patron that as a member of door staff he does not carry the authority of the state behind him so that hopefully the patron feels more comfortable or able to discuss the fact that they have consumed illicit drugs in the venue. This suggests that door staff are applying their discretion as to when to put the wellbeing of the patrons of the NTE ahead of the economic dangers that might come with being labelled a venue that has a lot of drug issues (Kostara and White, 2023). As discussed earlier, door staff are often making decisions based on their moral standing and/or their economic rules and clearly in the above account the former was at the forefront of the door supervisor's decision making (Hobbs et al., 2003; Kostara and White, 2023).

Finally, as with the use of torches at the door, there are also instances when working inside a venue when door staff would use tools to help them search for drugs. One of the most

common tools that door staff used were cocaine wipes. The wipe comes in a sealed packet which is a pale red in colour. When the wipe is rubbed on a surface it will turn blue on contact with cocaine. One member of door staff discussed a situation where he had suspicions that someone in the venue was taking cocaine, but the door supervisor was unable to prove it. The person whom the door supervisor was suspicious of had shaken his hand.

Door Supervisor 002 (M):

“Being the sneaky pain in the arse that I am, I took one of the wipes out wiped my hand they’d just shook. It turned quite like blue, it wasn’t overly obvious but it wasn’t discreet. It was just there you could quite clearly see that it had turned blue. Went back up to him was “just to let you know mate like I do wipe all these toilets. But you just shook my hand and that’s just all turned blue. So, you’ve quite clearly got it on you. And you can tell obviously, you’ve admitted it to me, there’s things like this that we’ve got”. He was like “bloody hell, I didn’t realise crap like that existed.”

These wipes were used twice during the periods of observation:

Field Notes 6/10/21

We took a drug wipe and went to test the toilets for cocaine. The drug wipe comes in a packet and is like a wet wipe. It is red in colour and when it detects drugs it changes colour. We wiped three cubicles and turned up no positive results.

Field Notes 15/10/21

I did another walkabout with a different member of door staff who described himself to me as the ‘sniffer dog’ of the venue, a title he carried with great pride. When asked about this title he told me that he had an instinct about who was taking drug in the venue, and he used this to his advantage. It appeared to me he enjoyed the cat and mouse nature of trying to find who had drugs in the venue. He said he hated drugs because it was impossible to know what is in them and because people who use drugs are putting his future in jeopardy. We did a drugs wipe in the male toilet, and it returned a positive result for cocaine. He turned to me and showed me the wipe with a smile on his face, he said only one thing “it’s cocaine”. This alerted the door staff to

the possibility that there were drugs in the venue. This was communicated to the other door staff and the bar management via radios.

As with the use of UV torches, the cocaine wipes were not supplied by the security companies. Door staff were buying them out of their own wages. Whilst their use was not compulsory some door staff felt that the wipes gave them an extra edge in policing drugs as it at least ensured that door staff knew to be alert to drugs at any given time. In a reflexive entry in my field notes, I considered why door staff might be using certain additional tools whilst they were working. The doors of bars and clubs can be monotonous places that are interspersed with short periods of mayhem that need addressing (Hobbs, O'Brien and Westmarland, 2007; O'Brien, Hobbs and Westmarland, 2008) and one reflection that I made was that perhaps door supervisors are using these to manufacture work for themselves in order to make the role less mundane. Under the dirty work framework, specifically the moral taint which has been built upon by Hansen Löffstrand *et al* (2016), one could suggest that the door supervisors are questioning the legitimacy of their role as there is not a lot of work occurring and so they use the drugs wipes to create work for themselves to demonstrate that they are on the lookout for drug consumption in their venues and therefore “construct a positive reframing of their work as important and necessary” (Hansen Löffstrand, Loftus and Loader, 2016, p. 312).

Overall, the policing of drugs is a much more complex task once people are inside the venue (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). There are parts of venues that make it easier for people to consume drugs and hide their bodies (which might give away the tell-tale signs of drug use) from door staff. Door staff were not just relying on their intuition and tools purchased out of their own pockets to police drugs.

7.5 “It’s a 999”: Working with the Police?

7.5.1 Relationships with the Police

Door staff are the most visible form of policing in the night-time economy (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, *et al.*, 2005) but they also work alongside the police. The relationship

between door staff and the police in the management of drug use in the NTE adds another layer of complexity to the role of door staff. Interviewees in this research were aware of this complexity.

Sam:

How often do you get the police involved when you work the doors?

Door Supervisor 019 (M):

Depends, it really depends. If we have a very busy night, police will often come and do check ins. They'll basically come in, they'll say: "right, what's been happening?" Specifically, if you've called out over the network for city control⁴⁸ or if your venue's names come up on there, they'll come do a quick check in because they want to make sure that everything's going smoothly and that you're not dealing with incident after incident.

.....

Sam:

Do you think that there needs to be a better relationship between police and door staff to combat it [drug use]?

Door Supervisor 011 (M):

It is good in Northern City, but there are just not enough police. We just have to deal. Someone said the door staff effectively have all the risks that the police deal with, but we have no power.

.....

Sam:

What's the relationship between door staff and police like?

⁴⁸ City control is a network of public and private actors, usually the police, door staff and CCTV operators. It is a means of effectively communicating between the security provisions at night, without having to have different means of communication for different actors. This is not something that every city or town has.

Door Supervisor 003 (M):

It is usually quite good. You know, the police end up rocking up to our venue. It's always a bit chaotic, because there's always a lot of: "he said, she said" stuff going on. But you're normally the only one who is sober and acting professionally, not screaming and running around and throwing accusations around, and arguing with their mates.

.....

Sam:

Have you got a good working relationship with the police?

Door Supervisor 002 (M):

Yeah, to this day, I've never met a police officer that hasn't liked me or hasn't got on with me.

Some of the door staff interviewed for this research discussed a good working relationship with the police. Their answers to questions about the relationships between them and the police are revealing, highlighting that door staff understand that their role will, at times, require them to interact with the police. Some respondents went as far as to draw similarities between their role and the police suggesting that the role of the door staff is like that of the police but without their powers. This suggests that although door staff understand their responsibilities to the venue and to the customers, they are also aware of the limitations of their role. It is worth reflecting on the moral taint of dirty work, specifically drawing from Hansen L fstrand et al's (2016) interpretation. In their study they suggest that the moral taint can occur when the door staff are judged by audiences as being untrustworthy. Door Supervisor 019 suggests that the police are only willing to inspect a venue when they have heard that venue's name come over the radio network and are coming to check that the venue is not a site where there are multiple incidents occurring. This could be the police considering the door staff as unable to maintain the security in the venue, although it is not entirely clear as to what the police are coming to check, and no one elaborated further. It is worth reflecting further on Door Supervisor 011's comments. He highlighted that they have the burden of responsibility and risk but without the power of the police. This arguably puts door staff in a

precarious position as they often have to make decisions as to how to maintain order between members of the public without any state power. This gives credence to the claim from Hobbs et al that door staff operate according to “a highly ambiguous cocktail of extra-legal maxims, occupational codes and personal discretions” (2003, p119). Moreover, Door Supervisor 011 has made a concerted effort here to “construct a positive reframing of their work as important and necessary” (Hansen Löfstrand, Loftus and Loader, 2016, p. 312). Door Supervisor 002 appeared to be confident in his ability to work with the police as he suggests he is a popular figure amongst the police. However, working relationships in the night with the police are not always so positive, with some door staff suggesting that the police are reluctant to get involved in some issues that door staff face in the NTE, largely based on location.

Sam:

Do you have a working relationship with the police at all?

Door Supervisor 009 (M):

“In one of the areas I work, I get on great with the police, they'll drive past and they'll stop and have a chat with us and check to make sure everything is okay. In the area that I'm working this weekend⁴⁹, the police just don't care. They won't entertain us. We called them last week because of a drunk on the street getting physically violent and it took them 45 minutes to show up. They just don't care.”

.....

Sam:

“Have you had much input with the police in your time working as a door supervisor?”

Door Supervisor 008 (F):

⁴⁹ This interviewee was working in locations that had different constabularies.

“Not me personally, but my team as a whole, yes. Where I used to work in South East, obviously, it's a lot worse, the police would do check-ups⁵⁰, maybe like twice a week as opposed to where I currently work where it's once every two weeks.”

Door staff must work alongside the police in the night to ensure the safety of everyone in their venues. However, these comments demonstrate a reluctance from the police to get involved in some of the issues that door staff might face in their role. The reasons for this are unclear, but such situations can create a tension between the police and door staff as explored further in the following section.

7.5.2 Police Reluctance

Door staff were asked about whether they would be prepared to get the police involved for issues relating to drug use in their venues. The response was overwhelmingly negative, with some door staff expressing that they simply do not often see the police in their areas.

Sam:

Do police ever ask door staff to call them in for drugs?

Door Supervisor 005 (M):

I've never had police show up where it has been called. I've never seen police around my clubs or anything like that patrolling, you very rarely see them in the city centres.

.....

Sam:

When you're working if drugs are involved do you ever call the police?

Door Supervisor 003 (M):

⁵⁰ Check-ups are where police would visit pubs, bars and clubs to see if there is anything door staff might need help with

To be honest, it's very rare that you get the police involved for drugs. The only time would be your drug bin gets full and it's getting collected. And they come they take your log-book, they empty the drugs safe. And that's it.

.....

Sam:

How would the police react if you rang them to say you had confiscated a bag of coke from someone?

Door Supervisor 011 (M):

They'd tell us to fuck off.

Some of the door staff were clearly reluctant to get the police involved for drug incidents. It is somewhat unclear as to what their reasons were for this reluctance, but Door Supervisor 011 suggests that the police are unwilling to get involved in dealing with small amounts of drug possession and that door staff therefore feel they would be wasting the time of the police officers if they were to involve them for possession. Regarding police officers, research has suggested that there is clear evidence of discretionary practices from officers for example as to who to search and arrest for drug possession (Grace, Lloyd and Page, 2022) and it is possible that this discretion bleeds into the policing of the night-time economy by door staff. However, this is a considerable divergence from research conducted by Hobbs et al (2003), where they suggest that the police had asked door staff to report drug transgressions to them, but door staff were unwilling to get the police involved. Ultimately, if police are unwilling to get involved in dealing with cases of personal drug use or possession that then shifts the onus of policing onto the door staff who in turn have to then use their discretion about how best to proceed. Evidence suggests that they make this decision partly based on their personal beliefs on drug use (Kostara and White, 2023) and/or what may be considered good or bad for business (Hobbs et al., 2003).

Weighing up how to deal with drug incidents for door staff is difficult across the range of their responsibilities. As one interviewee suggested, the police will only come to their venue to

empty their drugs bin. However, if the drugs bin is deemed to be too full then the police have the powers to submit the venue to the local licensing department for a review which could result in the venue having stricter licensing conditions or they could lose their license altogether. The door supervisors above have acknowledged how rare it is for the police to respond to calls in the NTE, this was again echoed where one interviewee discussed getting the police involved for drug possession:

Sam:

How receptive are the police to phone calls about small-scale possession?

Door Supervisor 017 (M):

You could phone the police and say, 'we've just found this person in the venue they've got what looks like a bag full of this or a bag full of that. We need kind of police assistance as to what kind, of in a way as to what to do next'. But because the police are so understaffed, it will end up taking them like a month of Sundays to send someone out. So, unless you kind of like you flag one of them down, or anything like that you don't know how long you're going to have to wait until the police turn up to deal with it. By that time, you could have dealt with it yourself.

This suggests that in some areas whilst the police are willing to come out to assist the door staff, it is a low priority for the evening and it can take some time for them to arrive, unless the door staff are fortunate enough to wave down the police as they are driving past. Ultimately though the door staff are aware that within the timeframe of waiting for the police that incident could have been dealt with in-house. Often this delay resulted in door staff putting the drugs in the drugs box or flushing them down the toilet rather than handing them over to the police.

Sam:

Would you always try and pass the drugs on to the police? You wouldn't think of just getting rid of it yourself?

Door Supervisor 015 (M):

It has happened on occasion, we've come across stuff, and it's been flushed down the toilet. That's just being honest. We've come across more bags of cocaine, turn the bag inside out I put it down the bog and flushed, which isn't ideal because you then put it into the water system.

By flushing the drugs down the toilet, the door staff are at times taking control of the disposal of illegal drugs in the NTE into their own hands. These actions could be interpreted through dirty work (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999), especially the idea of physical and moral taint. It is physically tainted work as it is dangerous for door staff to be in possession of illicit drugs as technically they would be deemed to be in possession of a controlled substance under the Misuse of Drugs Act which would then mean that their license is in jeopardy. The disposal of drugs is also morally tainted as that would be seen by the general public as “defying the norms of civility” (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999, p. 415). Door staff are also reducing the evidence of the reality of the amount of drugs seized by not placing them in the drugs box which creates a skewed image (to the police) of how many drugs are being confiscated from a venue. In doing so, door staff are painting the venues that they work at in a better light, which suggests that door staff are aware that too many drugs on a premises might be bad for business.

7.6 Summary of Findings

This chapter has highlighted how there can often be a tension between door supervisors and the venue managers in the NTE. This tension arises when venue managers suggest to door staff that they do not want searches conducted on their doors, which can make it easier for the patrons of the NTE to bring drugs into a venue. The relationship between door staff and venue managers has hitherto been unexplored in the literature base. It has also found that door staff have concerns for the effects of certain drugs, specifically cocaine and ketamine. When at the door, the door supervisors are looking out for signs of drug use when customers are approaching the venue and that the knowledge for what signs to look out for is fine-tuned outside of the pedagogical framework through action and peer learning (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). However, some door staff are equipping themselves with tools such as cocaine wipes and UV torches to assist them in the policing of drugs. This chapter has also shown how the search for

drugs continues inside the venue and that the toilet is a key location for door staff that stirs up their suspicions if customers either head to the toilet straight away following their entry or frequent it too often. Door staff in this research spoke of being willing to invade the privacy of people in the toilets in the policing of drugs and would eject the people that they found consuming illicit drugs in their venues as they deemed that to be the right course of action (Van Maanen, 1978). Finally, door staff elucidated on the relationship between them and the police. This research has highlighted that the relationship between the two continues to be fractious, but there has been a change from the door staff who were reluctant to get the police involved for drug issues (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003) to the police becoming reluctant to get involved with issues relating to drugs.

8 Contracting of Control: From Violent to Vulnerable?

8.1 Introduction

This study focused on four key aims. They were:

- To provide a history of the policing of intoxication;
- To provide a clear picture of the dynamics of how door staff handle both drugs and their customers;
- To map the relationships between the door staff and the police and venue management and explore what these relationships mean for the policing of drugs;
- To understand how the training that door staff receive on drugs (if any) is put into action in the night-time economy.

The findings discussed in this thesis explored how door staff police drugs in the night-time economy of the United Kingdom, and illuminated the tensions, relationships, and strategies involved in doing so. Door staff are the most visible form of policing in the NTE (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003) but this research has demonstrated how both pressures from venues to allow people to enter with very few searches for drugs; and the police showing a reluctance to get involved with issues of recreational drug use in the NTE has created a working environment that places door supervisors in a vulnerable position in a milieu that encourages intoxication (Hadfield, 2006). This has ultimately left recreational drug policing in the NTE in the hands of the private security industry. Those who participated in the study suggested that the training they are offered in order to do this work is of a low standard and does not give them the information they required to do their job properly, placing an important emphasis on peer learning when it comes to policing illicit drugs.

Door staff do not have the powers that warranted police officers have, which results in them applying their discretion as to the best course of action to take when they catch customers breaking the law, consuming drugs and (as they tend to see it), putting the license of their venue in danger. It could be argued that this is a time of new insecurity for door staff who

were once portrayed in earlier studies as epitomising machismo and who were seen as being able to handle and deal with almost any situation through the use of force, which at times would cross a boundary and become explicitly violent (Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, et al., 2005; Hobbs, Winlow, et al., 2005). A major change here is the professionalization of the work of door staff. Door staff must now complete a mandatory training course in order to get a license that allows them to work. Professionalisation of the industry has increased the scrutiny that door staff come under, through their own regulatory body.

This chapter begins with a discussion on the key findings from the literature reviews and discusses how they relate to the role of door supervisors in the NTE. The chapter moves on to focus on the key findings from the empirical research and then examines the implications of the research. There follows a discussion on the three theoretical frameworks, masculinity, edgework and dirty work (see Chapter Four) and how those frameworks relate to door supervisors. The section that follows the frameworks explores some of the limitations of my research. The penultimate section provides some policy recommendations, examines the knowledge contribution, and offers some directions for future research. The final section of this chapter offers some concluding thoughts on door supervisors.

8.2 Summary of the Literature Reviews: Key Findings

It is pertinent here to provide a summary of the literature reviews and their key findings. A central aim of this thesis was to provide a history of the policing of intoxication and did so by examining three defined eras which each shared concerns over intoxication from particular intoxicants. In summarising the literature, I hope to demonstrate the key changes in policing of drugs in the NTE since the early 1700s. Chapter Two therefore provided a historical view of the policing of intoxication in the context of the use of alcohol, opium, and cocaine. This chapter showed how initially the control of intoxication in the 1700s surfaced through concerns that the working classes were too inebriated on gin to be fit for work, as the United Kingdom was experiencing a shift in the economy, from one based on agriculture to one based on production of goods and so there became a stronger focus on the need for labour (Berridge, 1999; Rogers, 2013). Various legislative measures were enacted which attempted

to curb the consumption of gin during the 18th Century with varying degrees of success. During the gin craze the policing of intoxication relied on informants providing information on the location of illegal distilleries to excisemen who would then use bailiffs to shut down the production and collect fines from the illegal producers. (Warner and Ivis, 1999; Warner *et al.*, 2001b; Warner, 2002). Following the gin craze, the concern surrounding intoxication morphed from gin to opium consumption during the Victorian era where concerns over the ensuing intoxication resurfaced and pressures from medical professionals led the Government to implement the Pharmacy Act 1868 (Berridge, 1999, 2013).

The control over the sale of opium was primarily invested into the Pharmaceutical Society following the enactment of the Pharmacy Act 1868 as a way of attempting to control intoxication by reducing the availability and ease of procurement (Anderson and Berridge, 2000; Hallam, 2022). The Pharmacy Act stipulated that opium had to be labelled as a poison, although in reality this measure was wholly insufficient (Berridge, 2013). The Act placed restrictions on opium at the point of sale, rather than restrictions on consumption or possession (Seddon, 2007). Opium had to be kept behind the counter and could only be sold to people that the pharmacist knew, and a log of all their sales had to be kept so that it could be audited by the Pharmaceutical Society (Berridge, 2013). However, this measure was insufficient as the drug could still be purchased using a prescription so those who were able to afford a prescription could purchase opium, and its derivatives, unhindered (Berridge, 1978b, 1999, 2013). The responsibility for policing the sales of opium was given to the Pharmaceutical Society, however, they were given insufficient powers to enter into pharmacies and check all the sales logs to ensure that pharmacists were obeying the law (Berridge, 1999). The link between the policing of intoxication of gin and opium and the door supervisors in this study is that in all cases the control of recreational consumption was invested in ordinary people, who do not have the power of the state behind them, but they are expected to ensure that laws are being obeyed. However, in contrast what the concern of cocaine represents is that there are points where the state feels it is necessary to step in and take over, a pattern we see occurring in the policing of illegal raves as well.

Cocaine was used recreationally in the Edwardian era and was available to buy in pharmacies (Hallam, 2022). As the first world war broke out, there was serious concern that cocaine was

rendering soldiers unable to fight (Kohn, 1999, 2001). In an attempt to control intoxication from cocaine, the Government used the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) to apply restrictions to the sale and supply of cocaine (Kohn, 1999, 2001; Shore, 2013; Hallam, 2022). The far-reaching regulations of DORA during the First World War, specifically regulation 40B, was used to try and ensure that soldiers did not obtain cocaine in nightclubs (Berridge, 1978c). The result of this shift was to bring the Home Office and the police to the centre of the response to intoxication. What this demonstrates is that there are times when the state deems it necessary to assume a central role in the control of intoxication because of wider societal issues, in this instance World War One. Various licencing policies were enacted during WW1 to restrict the opening hours of nightclubs (Berridge, 1978c, 1984; Hallam, 2022). But the nightclubs were defiant and moved underground with over 150 illegal clubs operating in Soho alone (Kohn, 1999, 2001). The policing response to this manoeuvre was to use plain clothed police officers to gather evidence of illegal recreational drug consumption but when doing so the police themselves were consuming drugs illegally and so this brought into question the breadth and scope of police powers in policing intoxication (Shore, 2013; Hallam, 2022). Moreover, when warranted police officers attempted to take control and police cocaine consumption, they did so with questionable results. The illegal nightclubs still opened and their customers, many of whom were soldiers, still consumed cocaine (Kohn, 1999, 2001; Shore, 2013; Hallam, 2022). The questions relating to power and scope endure to this day, where it is expected that the door supervisors provide security to venues in the NTE, however the difference is that there are limits on what the door supervisors are able to achieve as this research suggests they have not been given adequate powers or training in order to police drugs effectively. This chapter also demonstrates that even in spite of serious societal issues, there has always been an enduring desire for people to get intoxicated. This assumption of control also appears in the policing of illegal raves during the late 1980s and early 1990s when there were concerns surrounding the acid house movement (Merchant and MacDonald, 1994; Colin, 2009).

Chapter Three, which focused on the NTE, showed that in the late 1980s and early 1990s the police were again key players in the policing of intoxication. Illegal raves were becoming common in the UK and again, legislation in the form of The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (CJPOA 1994) was implemented to try and curb the ensuing hedonism from the acid

house movement where the consumption of MDMA was a key component. The role of the police here was to attempt to shut down any illegal raves before they could begin. Indeed, the threat from illegal raves were deemed so significant that a specialist unit – the Police Pay Party Unit – was set up in order to combat this particular pursuit of hedonism (Colin, 2009). At this point in history, it is clear that the police played an important role in the policing of intoxication. The CJPOA 1994 and policing were somewhat successful in preventing some illegal raves, however, by the mid 1990s the promoters of illegal raves made enough money from their ventures to warrant bringing their events into a legitimate realm and so nightclubs hosting raves started opening in the UK, albeit with the consumption of illegal drugs still a core component of the hedonist's pursuit of pleasure. This commodification and commercialisation of the rave brought with it significant change, in part due to the liberalisation of alcohol licensing laws following the Licensing Act 2003. The Act allowed bars, pubs, and clubs to open much later into the night, although there were some unintended consequences to this liberalisation in that increased intoxication from alcohol and drugs required policing and the public police were unable to police the NTE on their own (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). This necessitated a different policing style, and so the door supervisors became the primary policing agents within the NTE. The accession of the NTE to a key contributor to the overall economy (Furedi, 2015) highlights the insecure position of the door supervisor. This research suggests that the door supervisors feel there has been a withdrawal of the police from the NTE, the state cannot police the NTE adequately but because of the economic importance of the NTE it has to rely on commercial forms of security to provide the policing functions.

Chapter Four examined the role of the door staff in the NTE. This chapter showed that the initial wave of academic interest in door staff focused on their use of force and violence potential (Calvey, 2000; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Monaghan, 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, *et al.*, 2005). Initially, door staff did not need to be registered with a central governing body but had to be registered with the local council where they were exercising their duties (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). However, this early body of research was emerging at a time of structural change for the private security industry as a whole. The Private Security Industry Act 2001 implemented the Security Industry Authority who were given with the responsibility for the licensing, regulation, and training of private security officers, which included door staff (White, 2010). This was the beginning of the professionalisation agenda where there was a concerted effort

to move away from the violent image of a “bouncer” (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003) to the more customer oriented “door supervisor”. The role of private security officers was to assist in reducing criminality generally, and so they became a part of the pluralised policing network (Loader, 2000). This is most visible in the NTE where they provide security to venues who are licensed to sell alcohol (Crawford and Flint, 2009). Previous research had not focused on the policing of certain issues such as recreational drug use. The policing of drugs by door staff had arguably been neglected by academics and as such has not been able to highlight their now precarious position when policing drugs in the NTE.

The literature chapters have shown that there has always been an enduring desire for people to become intoxicated through the consumption of various substances and that with this desire there is also often a serious concern surrounding intoxication. However, these concerns have often come from different sources. There was a strong concern from the upper classes, landed gentry and factory owners surrounding gin and opium about the readiness of the working classes to work in the fields or factories (Berridge, 1999; Warner, 2002; Nicholls, 2009). When it came to cocaine, the general concern was that it was rendering soldiers unable to fight during the First World War (Kohn, 1999, 2001; Hallam, 2022). These concerns surrounding intoxication have endured and were also present during the acid house movement where there were disproportionate fears around the consumption of ecstasy (Critcher, 2003). There was even a concern that acid house and illegal raves stood counter to Thatcherite values and so the power of the state was mobilised against illegal raves (Hill, 2002, 2003). However, the commercial value of rave was also recognised and so raves began to move into licensed venues (Anderson and Kavanaugh, 2007; Colin, 2009; Ward, 2010). Moreover, the liberalisation of alcohol licensing laws following the LA 2003 created conditions that encouraged intoxication, largely because the NTE was seen as being beneficial to the overall economy of the United Kingdom (Hadfield, 2006). Understanding this backdrop is key to this thesis as it assists in understanding how the current concerns around intoxication in the NTE underpin the position of vulnerability that is experienced by modern door staff. These timeless concerns surrounding intoxication and timeless desire to become intoxicated meet and clash within the contemporary NTE, where the customers of the night come out to drink alcohol and consume drugs but are met with the door supervisor whose role it is to provide security to venues and to ensure that the licensing conditions of the venue are being upheld and play

out as contradictory forces that bear down upon door supervisors when policing intoxication. There are several sources of contradictory forces that the door supervisor must contend with and each of the forces require the door supervisor to conduct their role differently. Venue managers tell door staff that they need to allow people into the venues faster so that they can make more money, the SIA stipulate that door supervisors are there to help reduce crime, and finally, the police will often tell door staff that they are unable or unwilling to assist door supervisors with potential transgressions of customers in the NTE. It is in these situations that door staff must apply their discretion when considering what do, where the wrong course of action could have acute consequences.

The findings from the literature chapter exposes parallels between the ways in which drugs were policed historically by informants, excisemen and pharmacists and by door supervisors in the present day. Historically, significant responsibility in the policing of intoxication has been given to lay people who often were not given the requisite powers, authority, or protection to police drugs effectively. Door supervisors, then, present as another modality in the policing of intoxication who are not given enough security in their role. Door supervisors will police intoxication, however they have not been given any additional powers by the state in order to do so. Door supervisors are policing intoxication in the NTE are left vulnerable, as they are making a myriad of decisions on how to react to any given situation as safely and efficiently as possible.

However, there are instances where the state feels it needs to intervene to control the ensuing intoxication. Where the boundary between lay forms of control and state forms of control lie are inherently murky to say the least. With cocaine, the wider concern was WWI whereas with the acid house raves and MDMA the concern was that acid house presented as a “disruptive presence” (Hill, 2003, p. 220) to the hegemonic project of Thatcherism. One could argue that the state assumes control of policing intoxication when the state itself comes under threat, but what constitutes as a threat is certainly debatable.

8.3 Summary of the Thesis Research: Key Findings

Sparked by my own experience of heavy-handed policing by door staff on entry to one of London's most revered night clubs, the aim of this research was to highlight how door staff are policing drugs in the NTE, with a particular focus on the relationships between door staff, venue, customers, and the police; and the methods that they are utilizing in the course of their employment. The research took a dual-methods approach, by conducting 20 semi-structured interviews with active door staff and supplementing the interviews with four periods of overt ethnographic observation in a busy bar in the centre of a large northern city. By using these methods, it was possible to incorporate different perspectives from within the often clandestine and reclusive network of door staff, both through in-depth exploration in the interviews and through direct observation of door staff policing methods. What emerged from this research was that the policing of recreational drug use in the NTE is now largely done by door supervisors, that imposes responsibility onto them but gives them no additional powers. This research suggests that door staff feel unable to rely on the police should they require assistance as interviewees highlighted that the police are often slow to react to their calls or the police are not interested in dealing with relatively minor infractions of the MDA 1971. This reluctance is likely due to constrained police budgets, as was noted by some interviewees, as a result of austerity.

Interviewees also suggested that their training on drugs was insufficient to put into practice straight away and that their knowledge on drugs and the appropriate responses has to be learnt through knowledge exchange between peers. This has created a working environment for door staff that leaves them standing on a precarious precipice leaving them vulnerable in a variety of different ways. From the findings it emerged that there are three key pressures on door staff whilst they are working. The first pressure comes from the venues themselves, in that the venue managers often want to prioritise revenue generation and, if there are search queues to get in, customers might decide to try their luck elsewhere and so door staff can be instructed by the venue management to reduce or abandon their searching altogether. This means that customers can get drugs into venues with relative ease in these circumstances, which troubled interviewees because they were concerned with ensuring that customers in their venues were safe and about losing their SIA licenses, should anything happen. The second pressure comes from the SIA. Whilst the key aim of the SIA is to uphold standards through training and regulation, door staff in this research felt that the training they received

in terms of drugs did not equip them to deal with the issue of recreational drug consumption properly and as such they had to rely on peers- and on-the-job learning - which often took some time. This situation ultimately led to door staff achieving different levels of experience in the policing of drugs, unlike the uniform experience that the SIA might desire, which in turn led to a disjointed approach to the policing of recreational drugs. The third and final pressure that door staff face comes from the withdrawal from the police who appeared from the findings of this study at least to be reluctant to get involved with minor infractions of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (MDA 1971). Door staff expressed the view that the police would likely not come and assist them if they caught someone in possession of drugs, whereas in contrast previous research suggested that there was a reluctance from door staff to get the police involved (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). Respondents described disposing of the drugs themselves rather than putting them into an amnesty box that the police could later come and scrutinise. They explained that if they were to put drugs in the box, the police might examine the contents of the box and suggest to the council that they review the venue's license, potentially leaving the door staff with fewer venues where they are able to ply their trade.

These three pressures have created a working environment for door staff that is underpinned by a necessary discretion. At times door staff may have to abandon their moral standing on illicit drug use in order to satisfy their venue management. At the same time, they are also engaging in acts that could put their license in jeopardy. This was a concern for the door staff interviewed, who were cognizant that if they were observed doing something that contravened their licensing conditions, their license could be rescinded by the SIA. The threat of potential lost future earnings was of acute concern to door staff as without that license they would be unable to work on the doors. Not only are door staff therefore faced with the potential loss of their job, but they would also be under threat of prosecution from the police if it was revealed they were not policing illegal drugs properly. There is also a grey area in the law surfacing, in that if a door supervisor has to confiscate drugs from a customer, the moment they remove the drugs from the customer they are themselves technically in possession of illegal drugs and are contravening both the MDA 1971 and S9 of the PSIA 2001. This is another dichotomous position that door supervisors face, they are attempting to stop illicit drug use but could ultimately be punished for that act if they were caught in possession of drugs.

8.4 Implications of the Research

This research evidences a shift that has previously been unrecognised in criminological research. This shift has seen the status of door staff move from being seen as violent, strong and in control (Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, et al., 2005; Hobbs, Winlow, et al., 2005) to being in a position of precarity and vulnerability. Door staff are left vulnerable by virtue of a withdrawal of the police from the NTE, because the police do not want to or do not have the resources to deal with relatively minor infractions of the law. In addition, there appears to be a degree of neglect from the SIA who are focused on the professionalisation of the industry and maintaining an image of private security as a legitimate policing contributor, instead of being focused on the effective and appropriate training of that workforce. Alongside the police's withdrawal, door staff can also come under pressure from venue managers who are keen to get customers inside the venues as quickly as possible (Farrimond, Boyd and Fleischer, 2018) and as such create lax entry policies which allow some customers to get drugs inside the venues more easily. This could create, as one interviewee suggested, more potential chaos, in an environment that is already suffuse with chaos (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Søggaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019). Indeed, inside the venues has been described as "an environment that is considered relatively marginal, chaotic, and difficult to manage" (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003, p. 120).

In relation to the early wave of research on door staff this research has shown that contemporary door staff are no longer solely able to rely on their strength or force to resolve issues. Where unruly and rowdy customers could previously be forcibly ejected from a venue (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003) this research demonstrates a significant change, in that the transgressions of customers who are consuming drugs must be managed by door staff with much more sensitivity and discretion. This research has demonstrated that even when door staff are dealing with issues relating to intoxication, they are considering how that situation could affect them in a variety of ways; which include potential loss of their license, potential loss of future earning or the possibility of getting arrested by the police. They are also having to rely on training for drugs that they have themselves suggest does not equip them with the necessary tools or knowledge to deal with recreational drug consumption effectively. When discussing the mandatory training course that she had completed, one respondent highlighted that she 'might' get tested on the course content on illicit drugs at the end of their training

course. Furthermore, other respondents highlighted that they were buying equipment themselves to help them detect the use of drugs in clubs and bars, including drugs wipes and UV torches. This voluntary purchasing of additional equipment suggests a desire to be viewed by others, such as venue managers and the police, as professionals. This seems to suggest that door supervisors are aping the police, potentially using the role as a stepping stone into the police force, which was a theme picked up in Canadian research (Rigakos, 2008).

This research has also demonstrated how door staff are increasingly commodified but again, in a different way to that presented in earlier research. In previous years it was the body size of the door supervisor that was commodified, with a high value placed on men with a large build (Monaghan, 2002a, 2003; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). In the previous door staff epoch, the image of a masculine man who looked able to fight was paramount and valued by venue managers (Monaghan, 2002b; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003). Now there is more of an emphasis on door supervisors providing security services that are framed through a customer service lens (Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019). Door supervisors are now an auxiliary part of venues, part of the venue. They contribute to the atmosphere of a venue by deciding who to allow to cross the threshold and deciding what to do with illicit drugs that they might confiscate from customers. They are key in providing security but equally they can be admonished and castigated by venues or the police if they do something wrong.

8.5 Frameworks & Door Staff

Chapter Four contained a discussion on door staff and the conceptual frameworks, where I argued that due to the complex nature of the role of the door supervisor it is difficult to understand them through the lens of one singular framework. The three frameworks that were discussed were masculinity (Cheng, 1996), edgework (Lyng, 1990) and dirty work (Hughes, 1951, 1958; Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999). Each of these frameworks shall be briefly reviewed now and discussed through the findings of the study as well as highlighting some of the core limitations of each framework that have been applied in this study, beginning with masculinity.

8.5.1 Door Staff and Masculinity

Because of its centrality, this thesis has repeatedly returned to the emphasis of earlier research on door staff which placed a high value on the projection of a “forceful masculine identity” (Monaghan, 2002a, p. 339). Throughout this research, even though there has been a shift that emphasises conflict resolution rather than physical intervention, this research has uncovered evidence that physicality and masculinity are still traits desired by door staff. This was highlighted in Chapter Six, where door supervisors discussed the type of person they wanted to work with. This included ensuring that if a fight broke out that door supervisors would want to work with people who would stay and assist in the fight, rather than someone who backed off, or in other words “a willingness to risk one’s body in performance” (Monaghan, 2002a, p. 351).

The masculinity framework is also useful for assisting in understanding the role of the door supervisor when it comes to ejecting customers from the premises due to their use of illicit drugs. Respondents highlighted that they are likely to do ejections in pairs because they feel they might come under attack from customers who have drugs on them and doing the ejection as a pair not only increases their physicality, but also their presence. Although theories centred on masculinity provide a useful framework in understanding the role of the door supervisor generally, it is difficult to make sense of the policing of drugs through a masculinity framework. The masculinity framework was useful for Monaghan (2002a, 2002b, 2003) however, the nature of the role has undergone significant change since his time of writing and is no longer sufficient. Therefore, this framework has limited explanatory power to fully explain the findings of this study.

8.5.2 Door Staff and Edgework

Edgework was initially theorised by Stephen Lyng (1990) in his attempt to understand the voluntary risks undertaken in the process of skydiving. For Lyng, the key feature of edgework is that there is an “observable” danger to physical or mental existence (Lyng, 1990, p. 587). A subsidiary, but also fundamental, element of edgework entails stepping outside of one’s “comfort zone” and necessitates the “ability to maintain control over a situation that verges

on complete chaos” (Lyng, 1990, p. 589). Moreover, Lyng highlights that under this theory, those who do not fully understand what they are doing are putting themselves at an increased risk of harm.

Edgework has been applied to the role of the door supervisors in previous research (see Monaghan, 2006; Sjøgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019). Monaghan has applied edgework to his covert ethnographic research (see Monaghan, 2002a, 2002b, 2003) in which he suggests that edgework is a performative act that is comprised of a rationality that is socially situated and relates to the emotional experiences of the body (Monaghan, 2006). Indeed, door staff in the current research demonstrated that working as a door supervisor, at the macro level, is a highly emotive affair with one respondent even suggesting that he was aware that his life was in danger when he was working. When door supervisors are using their judgement on who to let in, they are effectively maintaining control over a situation that could in theory verge on complete chaos. When door supervisors are confiscating illicit drugs from NTE customers, they are legally endangering themselves. Removing drugs, through a strict interpretation of the Misuse of Drugs act, puts them in possession of a controlled substance under the MDA 1971 which also threatens their license. In relation to the policing of drugs, edgework therefore offers some explanatory power about the physical and legal risks door staff take in the course of their duties.

The initial formulation of edgework by Lyng (1990) was interwoven with the ideology of hegemonic masculinity and was limited in its “usefulness to boundaries that resonate for masculinity and masculine performance” (Newmahr, 2011, p. 685). This has resulted in a framework which details edgework from a deeply entrenched masculinist perspective. Discussion of edgework in this research is unable to untangle itself from this perspective and has therefore not been able to expand the framework into a more inclusive and accommodating model. That is not to say that women have been excluded from edgework framework in this research, but rather that this study has been unable to rectify the extent to which gender ideologies have been embedded within its theoretical lens. As Newmahr succinctly highlights, “the gender problem with edgework that has not yet been explicated is that the very conceptualization of the edge is gendered” (2011, p. 686). Further research on edgework could therefore be conducted with a larger sample of women.

8.5.3 Door Staff and Dirty Work

The dirty work framework was initially conceived by Hughes (1951, 1958) and then developed in 1999 by Ashforth and Kreiner (1999). Where Hughes described dirty work as that “which runs counter to the more heroic of our moral conceptions” (Hughes, 1951, p. 319) and then built upon it by suggesting that dirty work could be constituted as either physically, socially, or morally tainted (Hughes, 1958). It was Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) who elaborated on these typologies. For Ashforth and Kreiner, the physical taint occurs where a job is performed under dangerous conditions, for the role of the door supervisor the work is inherently dangerous in that they are at risk from a physical altercation. As discussed above, door staff are working in a role where they are attempting to meet the desires of the SIA, the venue management and the security management all of whom may have different and competing interests. Such circumstances create a conflicted work environment where door supervisors are applying their discretion to potentially dangerous situations (Kostara and White, 2023).

The second taint that Ashforth and Kreiner discuss is the social taint where the occupation has a servile relationship in relation to other people. The role of the door supervisor is replete with such servility. Increasingly, door supervisors are encouraged to think of themselves as being in a role that prioritises customer service (Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019) and that they play a key role in helping to construct and maintain the ambiance of a venue. In this way, they are servile to the needs of the customer. However, door staff also need to be mindful of the needs and expectations of the venue management. This research has demonstrated how managers and owners of venues can dictate orders to the door supervisors and control entry criteria to venues. While questioning some these decisions in interview, participants were clearly aware that disobeying such orders would endanger their jobs, and they were effectively disempowered in these relationships. In important respects, this dual servility to customer and venue manager were in conflict. In the standard situation where door staff were expected to remove customers in possession of drugs, they were caught between customer service servility and the servility of the managed. This servile relationship between the door supervisors and the customers can switch if the door staff find someone in the possession of drugs and the venue management have instructed door staff to remove people from the

premises who are found in possession of illicit drugs. However, the door supervisor must still apply his discretion about the correct course of action (Kostara and White, 2023) and choose to be servile to either the management or the customer. This suggests that when using the dirty work framework there should be a hierarchical consideration when reflecting upon competing servile relationships.

The final taint occurs “where an occupation is generally somewhat sinful or of dubious virtue or where the worker is thought to employ methods that are deceptive, intrusive, confrontational or that otherwise defy norms of civility” (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999, p. 415), and is known as the moral taint. Door staff are routinely demonised in the media (Calvey, 2019), however, rather than characterise the role of the door staff as sinful or of dubious virtue, this research demonstrates that the role is complex and multi-faceted, and that door staff put a strong emphasis on keeping the patrons of the NTE safe from harm - which is arguably the opposite of dubious virtue. However, the role of the door supervisor *can* be intrusive if the venues of the NTE are requiring door staff to conduct searches on people who are coming into bars, pubs and club. The role is also confrontational as interviewees talked about confronting customers who were consuming drugs in toilets. Therefore, the role of the door supervisor meets all three of the taints of dirty work and the framework provides a useful exploratory power in discussing door supervisors and the policing of drugs.

There is a paradoxical nature to dirty work, in that whilst often these roles are seen as degrading or undesirable (Hughes, 1951, 1958) they are also of extreme importance and necessary for societal effectiveness (Caridad Rabelo and Mahalingam, 2019). A limitation of the dirty work framework in this context is that it has only been applied to a single occupation in the private security industry, the role of the door supervisor. As such it is unclear whether using the dirty work framework to interrogate other occupations within the private security industry would yield similar results in the construction of their work. Therefore, more research into other aspects of the private security industry using the dirty work framework is needed.

Whilst each of the frameworks have their own merit in understanding the role of the door supervisors, the dirty work framework arguably provides the most useful theoretical understanding for the policing of intoxication as it is better and more efficient at elaborating

on the dynamics between door staff, the NTE and illicit drugs. Despite this, excluding masculinity and edgework would be unhelpful in the development of a comprehensive theoretical position. Whilst the literature base on door supervisors would benefit from further discussion on door staff through all three theoretical lenses, this study suggests that there is merit in a combination of the dirty and edgework frameworks in offering some explanation as to the nature of the work of door staff in the contemporary NTE.

8.6 Limitations of the Research

The initial research design was to focus attention on two cities in the North of England. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, it became apparent that the initial research design could not feasibly be achieved within the timescales, in part because the entire NTE ground to a halt and as such there was no site available to research. The final research design widened the scope of the research in terms of recruiting interviewees and was able to invite door staff from all over the UK to contribute. Therefore, rather than being able to provide a focused view of one region of the UK, this study gives a broad overview of the door supervisor landscape.

Moreover, another core limitation of this study is that 20 interviews is a relatively small sample size which can present some difficulties in making generalisations. This research was an exploratory piece and sought to investigate the ways in which door staff police drugs. The findings in this research have helped to open up new lines of enquiry. In spite of this limitation, it is inevitable that as a result of the detail and richness of narratives that qualitative researchers investigate, qualitative samples are often small (Emmel, 2014). In terms of sampling, this research employed a convenience sample as it is “quick, inexpensive, and straightforward” (Boeri and Lamonica, 2015, p. 128). Covid-19 imposed considerable difficulties to recruiting door supervisors to interviews which then impacted the available time to conduct the fieldwork, employing a convenience sample through Facebook’s groups feature was the most appropriate method to employ within these constrained circumstances. One of the key drawbacks of using this method of recruitment is that it would have likely had some influence on who was attracted to contribute to the research. One concern being that this research might not represent the views of door staff who might have been engaged in more

nefarious activity, specifically those who were working on the doors and involved in the drugs trade or organised crime to some extent (see Berry, 2020 for a detailed exploration and ethnography of organised crime among door staff).

This research also aimed initially to include more periods of observation. Again, Covid-19 played a part in reducing access to research sites and there were also difficulties in persuading venues to grant permission for me to use them as a research site (see Chapter Five). As a result of these difficulties, this research only contains ethnographic data from one venue, and the data cannot therefore be said to be generalisable to other venues within the NTE. Moreover, the ethnographic data that was collected only appears a limited number of times within the analysis. Gaining access to venues proved challenging and so there was only limited data that could be used in the thesis. Given this shortcoming the ethnographic data has only been used to compliment what has been said in interviews. Notwithstanding these limitations, the observations are designed to complement the data from the semi-structured interviews, and they provided the research with a more comprehensive view of how door supervisors police drugs within the NTE in real time.

Research from Berry (2020) has exposed that some door supervisors were engaged in illicit activity such as drug dealing and drug use. This was not reported within this study. One reason for this is that none of the respondents were asked if they knew of any door supervisors dealing drugs. Given that this was a piece of research which aimed to explore the policing of drugs by door staff, the interviews were about the tactics, procedures, and precautions that door supervisors take when working with customers who they suspect of being on illicit drugs rather than being a piece of research that asked about their colleagues who were involved in illicit activities. There was also the concern that given the difficulties in recruiting door supervisors to interviews that asking to discuss instances of criminality within the industry could have resulted in the interviews being shut down prematurely.

Moreover, another reason why Berry (2020) is likely to have been able to conduct research on door staff who are using or dealing drugs is that he had much more opportunity to find evidence of this given he had ingratiated himself into the door supervisor community, having worked on the doors of bars and clubs since 2008. There is also some discussion of drug

dealing in some research done by Calvey (2019), although the fieldwork for this study was conducted in the late 1990s and the early 2000s and the world of the door supervisor has undergone a significant shift since then. Calvey was also working as a door supervisor and was able to embed himself within the community much more effectively than I was able to. This study is not able to show these behaviours as the fieldwork could only be conducted within a very narrow timeframe and so it was effectively impossible to build a trusting rapport within the community with any door staff who might have even been willing to disclose to a researcher any information about their illicit activities.

Another limitation of this research is that it does not address the gendered aspects of the NTE. As was detailed in Section 3.4.1 men and women experience the NTE very differently, as women feel that it is imperative they must consider how to keep themselves safe from unwanted attention, unwanted sexual advances, and potential sexual assaults and as a result their enjoyment of the NTE is somewhat diminished (Du Preez and Wadds, 2016; Nicholls, 2017). It is within the remit of the door supervisor to deal with complaints arising from these situations, but this was not explored in the interviews in this research. This research was an exploratory piece and aimed to understand the policing practices of door supervisors more generally. Moreover, in interviews, door supervisors provided in depth answers on how they interacted with and policed drugs in the NTE and there was not sufficient time to explore how door staff might police the genders differently. Therefore, this opens up an avenue for future research to investigate the gendered nature of policing within the NTE and explore the role that door staff play in managing and dealing with these instances.

8.6.1 Limitations within the Literature

There was a considerable flurry of activity regarding the researching of door supervisors from the early 2000s to around 2009 in the UK (see: Calvey, 2000, 2008; Hobbs et al., 2000, 2003; Lister et al., 2001; Winlow et al., 2001; Hobbs, Lister and Winlow, 2002; Monaghan, 2002a, 2002b, 2003, 2004, 2006; Hobbs, Hadfield, et al., 2005; Hobbs, O'Brien and Westmarland, 2007; O'Brien, Hobbs and Westmarland, 2008). However, within the past 5 years in the UK there has been some publications of research studies on door staff (see Calvey, 2019, 2021; Kostara and White, 2023). There has been some research on door supervisors from

researchers on the continent, particularly from Denmark (Søgaard, 2014; Tutenges *et al.*, 2015; Søgaard, Houborg and Tutenges, 2016; Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019) and Holland (Brands, Schwanen and van Aalst, 2015; Brands, van Aalst and Schwanen, 2015; Liempt and Aalst, 2015).

The research from Denmark and Holland has been drawn on quite extensively throughout this thesis. There are clearly some similarities between door staff in these countries and the UK – for example, needing have to have a license in order to work. There are also likely to be important differences, such as different cultural attitudes towards drugs and intoxication. One key issue is that the requirements for a license to be a door supervisor in each country are likely to be markedly different. None of the research from the continent outlines how door supervisors get their license in any great detail, so it is difficult to gauge who has the more stringent licensing policies and how that affects the efficacy of the door supervisors. However, there are likely to be similarities in the training too – for example conflict management. Given that there are these similarities it would be worth conducting more directly comparative studies between door staff in different countries.

8.7 Implications for Policy, Knowledge Contribution and Future Research

In addition to this research highlighting the shift in door staff from violent to vulnerable, this thesis has made a wider contribution to criminological research on the policing of drugs and discretion and suggests that in order to create a safer working environment for the door staff there must be increased support in the NTE from the police as well as more rigorous training on illegal drugs and their effects for door staff.

8.7.1 Policy Recommendations

The private security industry in recent decades reconfigured itself from a position of relative obscurity to one of prominence in the United Kingdom (White, 2010). There has been significant reform within the industry to bring its operatives, specifically door staff, into a

realm of respectability. Whilst this is commendable, there are serious flaws in the professionalisation agenda that have exposed door staff to new insecurities.

8.7.1.1 Recommendation I: Decriminalisation

One broad policy change that would make the position of the door supervisor less vulnerable is the reform of drugs legislation. The legalisation or decriminalisation of the possession of drugs for recreational use would liberate door staff from their drug policing role on the door and decrease the tension between venue manager expectations and their professional responsibilities. Nonetheless, whatever model of decriminalisation were adopted, it seems likely that there would still be venue rules about where and when drugs were consumed, and door staff would still have to enforce such rules. Moreover, the effect of this would provide door supervisors with some added security when policing drugs because if they were to find drugs, or confiscate drugs from customers for whatever reason, it would mean they were not technically in possession of drugs and do not have to worry about reprisals from the police or the SIA. The wider consequences of decriminalisation for the NTE and venues would be that more attention could potentially be afforded to harm reduction measures such as drug testing, discussed further below. However, in the interests of providing a balanced argument it is necessary to reflect on how decriminalisation could make the role of the door supervisor even more challenging.

In 2016 the Drug Policy Foundation, Release, published a report in which they aimed to provide a comprehensive account of countries who have moved forward with policies of decriminalisation. In this report they say that “critics of a more progressive approach to drugs and drugs use continue to claim that adoption of decriminalisation will lead to a ‘Pandora’s box’ of horrors, increasing drugs use throughout all levels of society and thus the overall harms of drugs” (Eastwood, Fox and Rosmarin, 2016, p. 7). The challenges that door supervisors could face will be explored as if the box has been opened.

Should decriminalisation encourage more people to indulge in consuming drugs within the NTE one of the biggest issues that the door supervisors could face is an increase in people overdosing on substances. This poses a significant threat to the role of the door supervisor as

the respondents in this research lamented the quality of their training on drugs, their effects and how to deal with overdoses. This would likely increase the pressures on door staff and make their work more physically and mentally demanding. Another issue that the door supervisor could face following decriminalisation is that it might make it more challenging to ensure people's safety when periods of aggression break out if more people are inclined to take a drug such as cocaine on a night out. The door supervisors in this research highlighted that trying to either calm people down or eject them following the ingestion of cocaine posed serious challenges in their role as they suggested that those who had consumed cocaine showed heightened aggression and were more willing to try and fight. Certainly, should decriminalisation increase the amount of cocaine that is consumed in the NTE then this could potentially put door supervisors in an environment where there is an increased danger of harm to their physical or mental wellbeing.

Decriminalisation should not be seen as a panacea for every problem associated with drug use. The Release report shows that when decriminalisation is implemented efficiently it “does appear to direct more people who use drugs problematically into treatment, reduce criminal justice costs, improve public health outcomes, and shield many drug users from the devastating impact of a criminal conviction” (Eastwood, Fox and Rosmarin, 2016, p. 7). Therefore, when considering decriminalisation as a policy it should be coupled with increasing the funding to services who provide information and training to those who are likely to come into contact with drug users, recreational or habitual, in order to maximise harm reduction.

8.7.1.2 Recommendation II: Training

Door staff in this research expressed their concern with the training they received on drugs. As part of the door supervisor training and licensing there should be an increased focus on drugs with explicit attention afforded to how to search for drugs and how to deal with drug overdoses. Affording extra attention in the training syllabus to drugs would equip door supervisors with a better understanding of what signs of intoxication to look out for; would decrease the amount of time that it takes for them to put their training into action; and would make them more effective door supervisors more quickly. Such enhanced training might also help reduce their vulnerable and insecure position within the NTE as it could give them the

knowledge to make better informed decisions in certain difficult scenarios, such as drug overdoses, which would contribute to making the NTE a safer space for both door supervisors and patrons. Because of their prevalence within the NTE it could also be suggested that the drugs module of the mandatory training should be made pass or fail, with the prospective door supervisors required to pass the drugs module to pass the overall training, in order to demonstrate that door supervisors have a minimum threshold of knowledge when it comes to drugs, their effects and how to police them efficiently which would assist in reducing their vulnerability.

8.7.1.3 Recommendation III: Improving Multi-Agency Relationships

The final policy recommendation would be to construct better dialogue between the door supervisors and the police. Door staff are a part of the pluralised policing network (Loader, 2000; Crawford, 2005), and it would be salient to have a more efficient and effective working relationship with the police. Door staff in this research expressed that they have an admiration for the work that the police do but felt that their relationship with the police needed improving. Door staff felt that they were unable to rely on the police when they needed them. By creating better links with the police, the door staff could start to build a trusting relationship between the police and door supervisors and help to foster a safer and less chaotic NTE by focusing their attention onto more serious matters such as reducing violence. Furthermore, this recommendation could be amended should possession of drugs be decriminalised. The door staff and the police could work together to focus on reducing organised drug dealing within the NTE.

8.7.2 Contribution to Knowledge

The private security industry has changed from an industry on the periphery of relative obscurity to one where private security officers outnumber the police (White, 2010). Since The Licensing Act 2003, this change has been accelerated even further and now door staff provide the primary policing functions within the NTE. Furthermore, the role of the door staff has undergone a significant shift in the space of 20 years from one where a high value was

placed on the potential use of violence (Monaghan, 2002a; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003) to one that now seeks to resolve issues without having to resort to violence (Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019). Research on door supervisors has had the tendency to study them with a wide lens, focusing on their role within the NTE more generally. This study has taken the issue of recreational drug use and policing and zoomed in to explore drug use by customers and how that is policed by door staff in the NTE and in doing so has unearthed the techniques the door staff use, showing how their role has morphed from one which was relatively self-contained and used violence to resolve issues to one that is now predicated on customer service and vulnerable from an array of pressures.

In terms of analysing historical responses to intoxication, previous literature has had the tendency to focus on eras individually, rather than collectively. This thesis addresses that and has examined four distinct eras of intoxication and their collective responses, showing how each era fed into the proceeding one. By examining these eras collectively this thesis was able to demonstrate that control over intoxication has been a concern for those in power for centuries, and that door staff present as a new modality of policing intoxication. Moreover, the literature on door supervisors is predominately rather ahistorical, and this thesis has located the role of the door supervisor within the wider literature on the policing of intoxication.

This research is also one of the first research projects on door staff to utilize digital methodologies for the recruitment of door staff. Previous research had relied upon the either the researcher taking a covert ethnographic approach to research (see Calvey, 2000, 2008, 2013, 2019, 2021; Winlow *et al.*, 2001b; Monaghan, 2002b, 2003, 2006; Hobbs *et al.*, 2003), gathering data undercover, or recruiting door staff from the night-time economy, by forging connections with door staff and inviting them to the research (see Søgaard, 2014; Søgaard, Houborg and Tutenges, 2016; Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019). The initial research design had me attempt the latter. However, going out into the NTE and attempting to forge connections with door staff, who were at the time working, proved to be a difficult and time-consuming task. Moreover, when venue managers were told that the focus of the study was on the policing of illicit drugs there was then a reluctance for them to grant permission to conduct observations at their venue. Door staff are hostile to outsiders (Calvey, 2021), and

this was certainly true as I attempted to build rapport with them. As time was a precious commodity and the research design was failing, it became apparent that I would have to try another method to recruit door staff to the study. Facebook groups proved to be a successful space to utilize to recruit participants to the research. Facebook groups are “virtual communities linking people with some shared interest, attribute, or cause” (Bhutta, 2012, p. 58). A search of Facebook for terms such as “bouncer” or “door staff” or “SIA” returned hundreds of groups each with varying amounts of members. By joining these groups, I was able to reach more door staff in a shorter space of time and circumvented the need to go out into the NTE to recruit interviewees. This has implications for future studies who are attempting to reach clandestine groups, in that it provides a blueprint for how one might approach and research these groups.

8.7.3 Directions for Future Research

The findings of this research were shaped entirely from the point of view of door supervisors who are the most visible form of policing within the NTE. Policing is now no longer the sole responsibility of central government but is devolved to multiple agencies with a variety of remits (Loader, 2000; Crawford, 2006; Smith and White, 2014). As mentioned above, one of the limitations of this study is that it has only really focused on the policing of drugs by door staff. There are other stakeholders and organisations in the NTE who provide and manage these functions (see van Steden, 2018; Johns *et al.*, 2019). One direction for future research would be to provide a map of the wider policing network in the NTE, focusing on the hierarchy of policing, both above and below the door supervisors (Loader, 2000). The research could focus on the police (above) and networks such as the street pastors (below) (Johns *et al.*, 2019). Doing so would provide a more comprehensive account of the multiple networks who provide security functions in the NTE and form an account of how they work together.

There is another direction that this research can take. Previous literature, and this thesis, have focused on ways in which door staff police the NTE (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, *et al.*, 2005; Hobbs, Winlow, *et al.*, 2005; Rigakos, 2008; Sogaard, 2014; Sogaard, Houborg and Tutenges, 2016). There has also been an abundance of literature about drug consumption by patrons of the NTE (Measham, Parker and Aldridge, 2001; Measham and Moore, 2009;

Measham *et al.*, 2010; Ward, 2010; Measham, 2019). These two areas of research are very distinct and are yet to be bridged. There is scope here for a study that investigates *the policing* and *the policed*: that documents experiences of policing of drugs and the effect that policing has on the customer in the NTE. Focusing on these perspectives through a sample of different venues could provide a more detailed account of policing and its effects in the NTE.

Finally, the literature on the training that private security officers receive as part of the licensing conditions has largely been ignored by academia. Another possible future direction of research would be to afford critical attention to the training provided for door supervisors, and then examine how that is put into practice. There is the scope for a detailed study of the training provided to door staff, including ethnographic research on the impact of this training on the practice of the door supervisor. Doing so would provide a critical perspective on training for door staff, its utility and how it might be improved.

8.8 Closing Time: From Violent to Vulnerable?

This thesis has demonstrated that there has been a substantial shift in the role of the door supervisor, one that now focuses on their contribution to modalities of policing through non-violent discretion and decision making (Kostara and White, 2023). The research highlights door staff as a key component of the pluralised policing landscape but also exposes the inherent vulnerability in their role. Rather than seeing door staff as violent professionals (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003) they are reframed as exposed and vulnerable. This position has arguably come about because of professionalising the private security industry in the United Kingdom through the advent of a central body who are responsible for maintaining and regulating the industry, through the withdrawal of the police during a period of austerity, and through the commercialisation and commodification of drug use in the NTE. However, there are also wider issues that this thesis has illuminated. The thesis has demonstrated that often when it comes to controlling intoxication, there is, by design, a distance between who is doing the controlling and the state. For example, the Pharmacy Act of 1868 gave the Pharmaceutical Society the mandate to ensure that pharmacists were complying with the sales of opiates legislation but did not give the society the requisite powers of entry to check the logs of the pharmacists

(Berridge, 1999, 2013). This also rings true of door supervisors, where they are the primary policing agents in the NTE (Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, et al., 2005; Hobbs, Winlow, et al., 2005) but they are not given any additional powers to police illicit drug use. However, the state can step in at times where there is an apparent threat or wider issue at play. This was demonstrated during WWI where the police assumed a central role in policing cocaine consumption (Shore, 2013) and also in the response to the acid house movement during the late 1980s and early 1990s (Critcher, 2000; Hill, 2002, 2003).

With this new position, this thesis has provided key insights into how door staff police drugs in the NTE and that they do so through mandated training that has not given them the requisite knowledge. Rather it would appear that their knowledge on drugs and how to police them is constructed through peer learning and tools that they have supplied themselves. This research though, has also demonstrated that there has been a turn in relationship between the police and the door staff. Where previous research had suggested that door staff would be reluctant to get the police involved (Hobbs *et al.*, 2003), it is now the police who appear reluctant to get involved with any issues that door staff might have. This fracture in the relationship is not irreparable, but until a concerted effort to repair it is made then it is certainly another layer of vulnerability that door staff face whilst they are exercising their duty. Door staff in this research were exhibiting shrewd decision making as to what to do with confiscating drugs and were aware how economically damaging it could be to them and their venues if they were over-utilizing the drugs box.

In attempting to apply these findings to the working environment for door staff, this thesis has suggested that there needs to be increased attention and focus on the training that door staff receive on illicit drugs so that they are able to understand and identify the effects of illicit drugs and the appropriate responses to drug consumption and intoxication in the NTE. By making the drugs section of the training a pass or fail component this would improve the knowledge of door staff, so that they can put this into practice as soon as they start working, effectively making the NTE a safer place. This thesis has also called for policies that improve the communication between the police and door staff to facilitate a more effective relationship. Both the public police and private security play a key role in crime control in the NTE (Hobbs et al., 2003; Hobbs, Hadfield, et al., 2005; Hobbs, Winlow, et al., 2005; Sjøgaard,

2014; Søgaard, Houborg and Tutenges, 2016; Søgaard and Krause-Jensen, 2019). The popularity and draw of the NTE is certainly not going to wain anytime soon. Hedonists will still require security as they seek intoxication and pleasure in bars and nightclubs across the country, as they have done throughout history.

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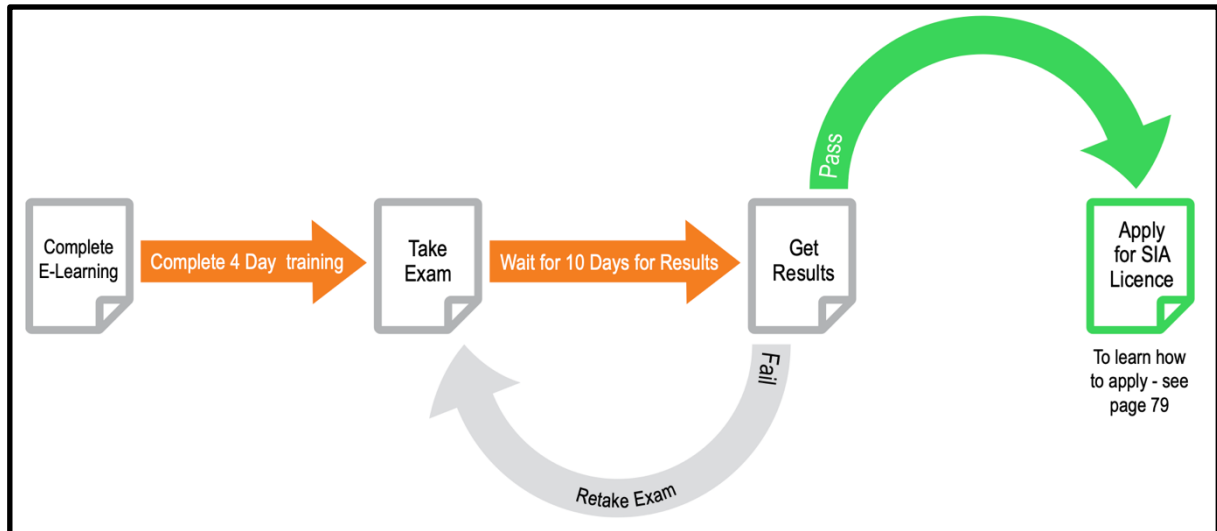
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Appendices

Appendix One: Flow Chart of training to become a door supervisor



CHAPTER 3 Drug Awareness



The primary offences under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 are:

- Possession of a controlled drug
- Supply of a controlled drug

Current Drug Classification in England and Wales:

Drugs are classified as either Class A, Class B or Class C.

Class A :

- Cocaine
- Crack Cocaine
- Ecstasy/MDMA
- Morphine
- Magic Mushrooms (Psilocybin)
- Methadone
- Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD)
- Methamphetamine

Class B :

- Amphetamines
- Cannabis
- Ketamine
- Synthetic cannabinoids (spice)
- Synthetic cathinones (mephedrone)

Class C :

- Anabolic steroids
- Benzodiazepines
- Gamma-Hydroxybutyrate (GHB)
- Gamma-Butyrolactone (GBL)
- Piperazines (BZP)
- Khat





Stimulants - Speed up the nervous system. An overdose of a stimulant can lead to a very high heart rate or in extreme cases, heart failure.

Examples: Cocaine, Ecstasy, Amphetamines.

Depressants - lowers neurotransmission levels, which is to depress or reduce arousal or stimulation, in various areas of the brain.

Examples: Alcohol, Tranquilizers, Opiates.

Hallucinogens - A hallucinogen is a psychoactive agent that causes hallucinations, perceptual anomalies, and other substantial subjective changes in thought, emotion, and consciousness. In other words, they change the way the brain perceives the world.

Examples: Magic Mushrooms, Cannabis, LSD.

What to look for:



Ecstasy: Normally sold in a small tablet form. It could be classified as both a stimulant and a hallucinogen, and it's known as a designer drug because it was created purely for recreational purposes. It produces feelings of increased energy. Customers taking this drug will often be sweating and can have a high temperature and dilated pupils.



Amphetamine: When sold illegally they are generally available in tablet, powder, crystal and liquid form. Amphetamines are stimulant drugs. Customers taking this drug will most likely be talkative and want to be social and have high levels of energy.



Cocaine/Crack Cocaine: It is often sold as a white powder. It can be snorted up the nose or mixed with water and injected with a needle. Cocaine can also be made into small white rocks, called crack. Crack is smoked in a small glass pipe. Customers taking this drug may be aggressive and will seem very confident. They may also need to "top-up" and use the toilet frequently to take more. Cocaine sold at a street level usually is less than 10% pure and is cut with a multitude of other ingredients including rat poison, baby powder, glass etc.





Heroin: It is sold as a white or brown powder. It's an opioid drug made from morphine, a natural substance in the seedpod of the Asian poppy plant. Heroin can also be smoked or snorted up the nose. All of these ways of taking heroin to send it to the brain very quickly. This makes it very addictive.



GHB: Gamma-Hydroxybutyrate Acid is a clear, colourless liquid that has a slightly salty taste or it is available as a white powder that is dissolved in alcohol or water or juice, it is known as a date rape drug as it has led to unconsciousness and blocks short term memory formation in the brain.



Methadone: This used to treat people with addiction to heroin. It is taken orally and comes as green, blue or yellowish liquid in a small bottle or clear plastic tub.



Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD): also known as acid, is a hallucinogenic drug. Effects typically include altered thoughts, feelings, and awareness of one's surroundings. It is often sold as a clear liquid which can be dropped onto the tongue or can be placed onto blotting paper tabs which are then sold. It can be absorbed through the skin so door staff should take extra care when handling LSD.



Cannabis: While CBD is currently legal in the UK, the psychoactive chemical (THC) in cannabis is not. Cannabis is usually smoked, but can also be consumed in edibles. Its strength does vary, but it is classed as a psychoactive drug.



Psilocybin (Magic Mushrooms): These mushrooms grow in the wild and have psychoactive effects on people consuming them. They are generally picked in the autumn, dried out and then consumed either on their own or possibly mixed into tea or food. It is currently illegal to pick, possess or process magic mushrooms in the UK.





Customer Behaviour	Staff Response	Have they used/taken?
Unconscious	<p>The person should be placed in the recovery position by a first aid trained member of staff and kept warm.</p> <p>An ambulance should be called, and staff should be prepared to resuscitate the person if required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Ketamine • Heroin • Poppers • Tranquilisers
Hot and Dehydrated	<p>Guide them away from crowded, noisy areas to somewhere cooler. Remove outer clothing to cool them down if necessary (and only if you have a witness). Encourage them to sip water. Stay with them and call an ambulance if their condition deteriorates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecstasy • Amphetamines
Anxious/Panicking	<p>Reassure the person that what they are experiencing will pass. Guide them away from crowded, noisy areas. Encourage them to take long, slow breaths (especially if they start to breathe quickly).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amphetamines • Ecstasy • LSD • Magic Mushrooms



 Amphetamine	 Cocaine	 Methylphenidate Ritalin
 Caffeine	 Nicotine	 Mephedrone
 Benzo Fury (5APB, 6APB)	 MDMA (crystal)	 Ecstasy (pills)
 Sniff	 LSD	 2C- family
 Magic mushrooms	 Ketamine	 Poppers
 Nitrous Oxide	 Salvia	 Synthetic cannabis
 AMT	 Cannabis	 Formula X
 Diazepam (Valium)	 Temazepam	 Alcohol
 Gas, glue, solvents	 Zopiclone (Zimovane)	 GHB GBL
 Heroin	 Tramadol (Zydol)	 Methadone
 Subutex (Buprenorphine)	 Codeine	 Mushrooms (other)
 Steroids	 PMA PMMA	 "Legal high" pill/powder

**Door Supervisors Main Responsibilities:**

- Preservation of life
- Preservation of evidence

Dealing with customers in possession of Drugs:

- Ask the customer what it is and why they have it.
- Follow your venue policies for handling drugs, i.e. flush, or keep as evidence/ detain/ contact the police etc.

Handling confiscated Drugs:

- Think Safety first
- Follow strict procedures and policies.
- Place in an evidence bag (if required to keep for evidence)
- Place in suitable storage awaiting the arrival of the police (drop safe, locked storage device)
- Fill out report (if you are unsure of what exactly the drug is you can just describe it, i.e. white powder, possible cocaine/ketamine)
- Never put any drugs in your pockets because that would put you in possession of a classified substance (an offence).

Signs of Drug abuse taking place at a venue:

- **Syringes**
- **Needles**
- **Small wraps**
- **Rolled banknotes**
- **Small bottles/vials**
- **Cling film twists**
- **Tubes Straws**





Drug-overdose Emergencies

If somebody is unconscious and then vomits while lying on their back, they can swallow their vomit and literally drown in it. That is why you should put an unconscious person in the recovery position and call for an ambulance.

The Recovery Position



Put the hand closest to you by the head (as if they were waving)



Put the arm furthest away from you across the chest, so that the back of the hand rests against the cheek



Hold the hand in place and lift up the knee furthest away from you, making sure the foot is planted firmly on the ground



Turn them on their side by pushing down on their knee

ANTIDOTES

Doctors and paramedics can administer an antidote to some types of overdoses caused by depressants. If it is an opiate (eg, heroin) overdose and there is naloxone available you should administer it as directed by its Patient Information Leaflet within the naloxone pack. It is perfectly legal for you to do so in an emergency.

In some areas naloxone is given out as Prenoxad, a licensed product but still containing naloxone HCL (at 1mg/ml).

CALLING AN AMBULANCE

Never hesitate to call an ambulance. In most areas, the police are only called to overdoses if there is a death or an under 16 involved, or if there has been a previous incident of violence at the address given. In some areas the police may also attend if the caller states that the casualty is not breathing normally or not breathing at all. In this circumstance their priority is the preservation of life rather than law enforcement.



Recognising the Signs of Drug Dealing on the Premises:

- Suspicious behaviour
- Frequent trips to the toilet
- Meetings with lots of different people
- Lots of people approaching one individual
- Covert exchanges of items/cash
- Appearing to be aware of where CCTV cameras are positioned and moving to areas of no coverage
- Appearing to be looking out for staff
- Information passed to the security team from other staff or customers
- Reduction in alcohol sales
- Drug litter found in the venue

Disposal of Drug Related Litter and Contaminated Waste:

- Use PPE
- Follow all safety procedures
- Use sharps boxes or bottles for needles
- Blood stained tissues can be flushed down the toilet or placed in a contaminated waste bin/bag



Appendix Three: Intoxication Responses

Customer Behaviour	Staff Response	Have they used/taken?
Unconscious	<p>The person should be placed in the recovery position by a first aid trained member of staff and kept warm.</p> <p>An ambulance should be called, and staff should be prepared to resuscitate the person if required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Ketamine • Heroin • Poppers • Tranquilisers
Hot and Dehydrated	<p>Guide them away from crowded, noisy areas to somewhere cooler. Remove outer clothing to cool them down if necessary (and only if you have a witness). Encourage them to sip water. Stay with them and call an ambulance if their condition deteriorates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecstasy • Amphetamines
Anxious/Panicking	<p>Reassure the person that what they are experiencing will pass. Guide them away from crowded, noisy areas. Encourage them to take long, slow breaths (especially if they start to breathe quickly).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amphetamines • Ecstasy • LSD • Magic Mushrooms

Tell us about your experiences as door staff

We are currently looking to interview door staff who work on the doors of bars and clubs to talk about their role.



Working on the doors is an under researched area, you could help to make the difference

I am looking to speak to anyone who works on the doors of bars and clubs and holds an SIA licence, regardless of how long you have been in the role. We wish to interview door staff who work on the doors of bars and clubs about the challenges they face managing intoxication and other risky behaviours

ABOUT ME

My name is Sam Hinrichs, I am a PhD student at the University of York.

If you are interested in taking part, either comment on this post, or contact me via direct message or via email:
samuel.hinrichs@york.ac.uk

This research has been given full ethical approval from the University of York and participation in it is completely anonymous

Appendix Five: Interview Schedule

Basics (this would be an opportunity to gather basic information from the door staff, when they got their license, how long they've been on the job, where they work)

How does the subject approach their role? (Do they approach it from a friendly point of view, or do they see their primary role as keeping order etc)

What are you looking out for? (What kind of people very generally do they look out for, and how do they identify them?)

Outside – in the queue and at the door (When people are queueing to come into clubs, what methods are employed, do they communicate with each other? What happens at the door? Is it just an ID check or is there a search? Are they looking for signs of drug use?)

Inside – at the bar and on the floor (What do door staff look for inside are there any signs of drug use inside they look out for)

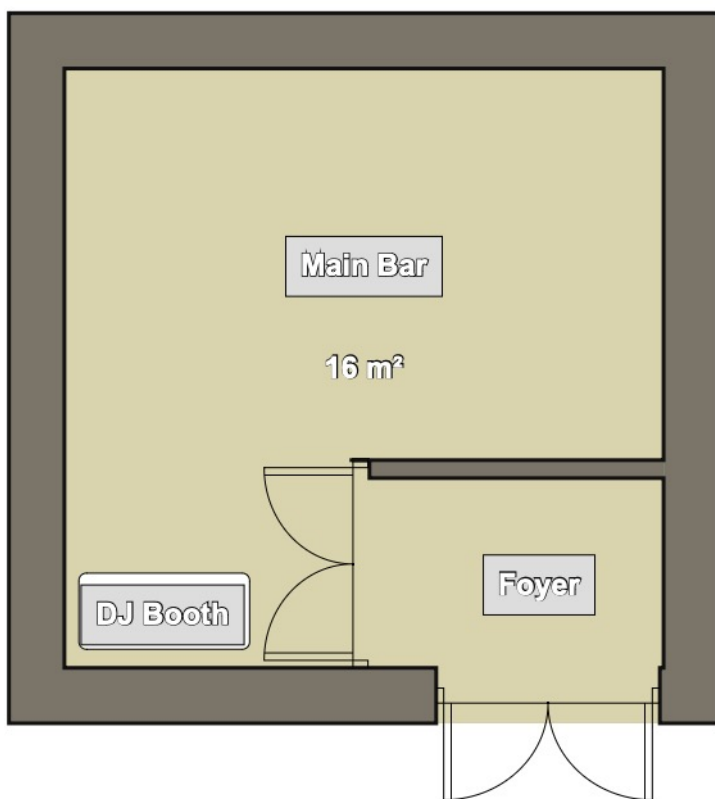
Outside again (what do they do with ejected patrons)

Confiscated items (what do they do with the drugs? Is there an honesty box? Do they know of times where people have kept/resold drugs? Is that common?)

Calling the police (When do they get police involved? Would they rather sort it themselves? What are the relationships like with the police? Do the police ask them to call them if they find drugs?)

Ending the shift (What do door staff do at the end of the shift if they have found drugs?)

Appendix Six: Floor plan for observations



Appendix Seven: Cocaine Wipes



Cocaine detection wipes. The wipes inside are red in colour, and if it comes into contact with cocaine, it will then turn blue.

Appendix Eight: List of Codes

- **Awareness**
 - Conflict of interest
 - Duty of Care
 - Limitations
 - Of different drugs
 - Of different venues
 - Venue Optics
- **Concerns**
 - About drugs
 - Concerns for customers
 - Concerns for staff
 - Concerns for themselves
 - Door staff who use or sell
- **Discretion**
 - Allowing drug users
 - Confiscation
 - Over customers
 - When to ring the police
- **Drug Knowledge**
 - Effects of drugs
 - How customers hide drugs
 - Incorrect knowledge
 - Knowledge of dealing from door staff
 - Training
 - Lack of training
 - Origin of knowledge
- **Handling drugs**
 - Calling the police
 - Challenges
 - Drug dealing
 - Drugs box
 - Flushing drugs
 - Holds onto drugs
 - Resources
 - Responses to drug use
- **Mentality**
 - Police type mentality
 - Suspicion
- **Role of the door staff**
 - Bouncers v door staff
 - Change in the role
 - Discussions of the role
 - Ejection
 - Intro to the role
 - Opinions on drugs
 - Pay Qualities
 - Teamwork
 - Training new staff
 - Utilizing other services
- **SIA**
 - Negative aspects
 - Praise

- Training
- Working with the SIA
- **Signs of drug use**
 - Aggression
 - Change in demeanour
 - Confusion between drugs and alcohol
 - Deciding between intoxication and disability
 - Drugs dogs
 - Facial signs
 - Frequent toilet trips
 - Interactions with friends
 - Language and speech
 - Overdoes
 - Physical signs
 - Seeing people in the act
- Spotting or being alerted to drug use
- Toilet checks
- Tools used
- **Tension**
 - Between customers
 - Between door staff
 - Between police
 - Between venue management
- **Working with the police**
 - Calling the police
 - Negative experience
 - Police (not) working with the door staff
 - Positive experience