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Towards a normalisation of young people's drinking practices: a Chicago School ethnographic study in the Canterbury night-time economy

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Abstract

This PhD thesis is an ethnographic investigation into the drinking practices of young people undertaken in the Canterbury (Kent, United Kingdom) night-time economy. This research took place across a series of fieldwork sites, including: pubs, night-clubs, the street, and young people's houses across the city. The research included an in-depth ethnography which took place in a city-centre pub where I was working as a bartender, which adapted the methodological approach of the Chicago School of Sociology to urban studies in a contemporary context. Specific examples from the research included a case study with two young men in the pub who were drinking after work, and a wide-range of other ethnographic examples taken from scenarios arising through my position at the pub resulting from bar conversations and informal interviews. These were selected from a number of literally thousands of young people who I encountered across the two years of fieldwork in the pub. The licensee of the pub, Andrew, acted as a gatekeeper for the research, as his approach to the pub business corresponded to interaction and the possibility of building ethnographic relationships with young people. Other ethnographic data examples were also taken from the wider Canterbury night-time economy, away from the pub at the centre of the in-depth ethnography. The variety of data sets included participant observation, conversation, informal interviews and the field diary. Drawing from the accounts of participants in the fieldwork and emergent themes in the ethnography, the thesis argues that young people are the subject of a normalization of extreme drinking practices in the night-time economy. This is explored through the adaptation of the model of drug normalization theory, where young people's experiences of alcohol and extreme drinking practices are examined in relation to specific dimensions of drinking. The media stereotyping of extreme drinking practices by young people is also subject to critique, where it will be argued that the term "binge" drinking is an imprecise and moralistic view of young people's activities in the night-time economy.

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Introduction

This PhD is an ethnographic research project which was undertaken from within the role of bartender in a city-centre pub in Canterbury (Kent, United Kingdom). The central research aim was a specific focus upon young people engaging in alcohol consumption and extreme drinking practices, with no focus upon other recreational leisure pursuits such as illegal drug taking. Throughout this thesis, the city of Canterbury and the drinking spaces within it will be referred to as the "night-time economy" (Hollands, 1995) which was a site of pleasure seeking and leisure pursuits by young people where the research took place. A sample of 110 young people participating in the Canterbury night-time economy feature within the fieldwork data chapters. The research is of an interdisciplinary nature and encapsulates perspectives from the literature arising from alcohol studies, sociology, cultural studies, criminology, youth studies and media studies. Engagement with this literature has helped to establish and inform a relevant academic, theoretical and methodological background with which to design, undertake, negotiate, and complete research which has aimed to engage with human samples from within the context of their leisure time and leisure spaces inside the night-time economy.

The research focuses upon two central aims: 1) the adaptation and utilisation of the Chicago School approach to research in urban areas; 2) the adaptation of drug normalisation thesis to extreme drinking practices by young people in the Canterbury night-time economy which were encountered during the research. The Chicago School approach is embedded within the research through an in-depth discussion of the processes of immersion which were required to utilise the role of bartender towards the role of research, in particular its impact upon researcher positionality and how the autobiographical background of the researcher can affect the research. The adaptation of drug normalisation thesis is developed from the work of Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998) and Parker, Williams and Aldridge (2002), who attributed specific dimensions to young people's recreational drug use; the discussion in this thesis sees the development and adaptation of these dimensions into how extreme drinking practices by young people can also be attributed to specific dimensions which outline young people's participation in and use of extreme drinking practices. It is argued that these actions have become a normalised product of participation the night-time economy for young people.

The thesis is structured to discuss the two central research aims sequentially. Firstly, the thesis builds upon my methodological position in the Canterbury night-time economy, where I became an 'insider' immersed within the culture at study through the role of bartender. This position also led to a series of encounters with young people drinking in other locations within the night-time economy such as further pubs and bars, clubs, houses and the street. During the fieldwork, my position as bartender within *The Mitre* was exposed to dual functions (bartender–researcher) in order to utilise ethnographic research methods within the research. Initial use of the method of participant observation was implemented to elicit an organic engagement with young people within the leisure spaces of the Canterbury night-time economy, whereby a naturally occurring sample could be identified and further ethnographic methods utilised. Chapters Two, Three and Four of the thesis see an extended discussion of the various methodological approaches which I took in the fieldwork, including immersive techniques; fieldwork management; participant observation; note taking; mapping the city and the night-time economy. It is here that the methodological traditions of the academic research undertaken into gang-life in urban Chicago is discussed and adapted through their process of 'mapping' the city (Quinn, 1925) and their intention to engage with a "naturalistic" view of the normality of people's social and cultural lives through strategic immersive techniques (Thrasher, 1928; Cressey, 1927/1983).

The second focus of the thesis is the adaptation of drug normalisation theory to extreme drinking practices by young people in the Canterbury night-time economy, which results in the argument towards a normalisation of young people's drinking practices. Consequently, Chapters 5, 6 and 7 highlight upon the alcohol consumption which was prevalent among young people in the Canterbury night-time economy during the fieldwork. This used a similar approach to Hollands (1995: 7) to demystifying the activities of young people:

> Rather than assume an implicit social problem perspective, the primary rationale of this research is to start with what young adults [people] actually do on their nights out and seeks to provide them with a voice to interpret their own activities.

This approach to 'voicing' young people is ultimately presented as representing a shift towards the normalization of extreme drinking practices amongst young people which has occurred in the UK by adapting drug normalization theory to alcohol use by young people.

This approach aims to remove the moral marginality of young people surrounding extreme drinking practices and participation in the night-time economy, and to analyse it subjectively through the experiences and voices of young people through ethnographic data analysis. Consequently, thesis Chapters Five, Six and Seven sequentially examine the contemporary alcohol consumption practice known as "binge" drinking and how negative media representations of young people and this practice has produced moral indignation and marginality in the UK (Cohen, 2002). This examination resulted in the adaptation to drug normalization theory to extreme drinking practices by young people made in Chapter Seven of the thesis, as firstly Chapters Five and Six locate and discuss the extreme drinking practices observed during the research and how young people consumed alcohol in the Canterbury night-time economy. Chapter Five depicts the 'cultural entrenchment' (Fry, 2011) of these drinking practices in the night-time economy which is driven by the commercial objectives of alcohol industry which had developed into the 'new culture of intoxication' (Measham and Brain, 2005). Chapter Six argues that media terms such as "binge" drinking create negative connotations which act to marginalise young people in the UK today, and that prioritising the experiences of young people and alcohol consumption can lead to a reframing of the term to: "calculated hedonism" (Griffin et al, 2008). The attribution of agency to young people in managing their alcohol consumption towards safe outcomes is highlighted through the data from the fieldwork, and develops into the discussion of the normalisation of extreme drinking practices made in Chapter Seven.

Structure of the thesis:

Chapter One: Literature Review

The literature reviewed in this chapter outlines the prominent areas which form the basis of this research. Key texts within areas such as alcohol studies and "binge drinking" (e.g. Plant and Plant, 2006), urban studies (e.g. Park, 1915; de Certeau, 1984), and cultural studies (e.g. Hoggart, 1957; Thompson, 1963) form the background to research into alcohol consumption and reinforce the methodological position from which the research was undertaken. Subsequent literature reviewed regarding the New Deviancy Committee, cultural criminology and drug normalization (e.g. Lindesmith, 1938; Parker et al, 1998) serves to help develop the

aims of this research to analyse young people's alcohol consumption from outside of a moralistic standpoint of the negative terminology "deviant" (Matza, 1969) where young people are participating in activities they consider to be 'normal' and mainstream society consider to be deviant. The moral panics associated with the consumption habits of young people and the condemnation of their behaviour develops the picture of young people's extreme drinking practices has become the subject of controversy in the media in contemporary UK society (e.g. Cohen, 1972; 2002; Young, 1971).

Chapter Two: Methodology

The methodological position of the research is outlined in this chapter, with particular emphasis placed upon the research traditions of the Chicago School in urban areas and gang life (e.g. Thrasher, 1927; Whyte, 1943). This builds the theoretical methodological framework from within which the fieldwork was strategically designed and undertaken in relation to the urban context of the Canterbury night-time economy. Consequently, the fieldwork setting and position are outlined and described, including Canterbury and the pub at the centre of the research. The chapter also contains further emphasis upon aspects which formed the key basis of ethnographic fieldwork undertaken within the Canterbury night-time economy: sampling and the sample; participant observation; field notes and recording and ethnographic interviewing.

Chapter Three: A Multiplicity of Roles: Flexibility in the Field

The multiplicity of roles which is engendered by research undertaken from the perspective of bartender within the Canterbury night-time economy is examined in this chapter. Areas featured are the impact which this multiplicity has upon fieldwork 'management', for example how to navigate a spontaneous "set-up scenario" in the fieldwork location of the urban pub, as well as the specific skills which had to be acquired prior to the study (Cressey, 1927/1983). This is related to how reflexivity and flexibility in the field allowed space for me to undertake research in potentially difficult situations in an urban research context, and to build "rapport" (Thrasher, 1928) with research participants through aspects of both my personal and professional autobiographical background (Measham and Moore, 2006). Further discussion is made regarding the effect this multiplicity has upon the research process, data collection and the data results in relation to the introduction of ethnographic data gathered from a hard-

drinking/hard-grafting subculture of young adult men drinking outside of the workplace represented by the "Rock n Roll builders" who feature in the chapter which developed on the role of alcohol consumption in working class men's lives outside the workplace (Hoggart, 1957; Thompson, 1963).

Chapter Four: Mapping the Canterbury Night-Time Economy

This chapter details the process of familiarisation with aspects of and immersion into the Canterbury night-time economy and the leisure spaces within it. Analysis of aspects of the fieldwork data are used to utilise the work of Michel de Certeau (1984) the Chicago School (Cressey, 1927/1983; 1932) and form a diagrammatic 'mapping' of the city and how transitional and migration patterns can be recognised within these patterns which are argued to be "liminoid zones" (Roberts, 2015) where specific drinking practices occurred. *The Mitre* is also mapped in a descriptive way to show how the fieldwork occurred across different areas of the pub where distinct drinking practices by young people would take place. Fieldwork data and some of the research participants are introduced in this chapter to show how groups of young people negotiated the Canterbury night-time economy through their experience and knowledge of specific spaces where extreme drinking practices were expected and often encouraged.

Chapter Five: Playing Games: 'Shot Culture' and Extreme Drinking Practices

This chapter analyses aspects of the fieldwork data, which support the argument of Measham and Brain (2005) towards a "new culture of intoxication" and the subsequent "cultural entrenchment of extreme drinking practices" (Fry, 2011: 65) identified during the fieldwork. Emphasis is placed upon the presence of extreme drinking practices by young people in the Canterbury night-time economy, which are embodied through activities such as: "shot" drinking; "speed" drinking; drinking games; "pub golf". It is argued that this evidence from the fieldwork data supports the normalization of extreme drinking practices within the night-time economy, where these practices often provided a structure to young people's prolonged drinking sessions which were observed in *The Mitre* and across the Canterbury night-time economy.

Chapter Six: Work and Play: Managing Alcohol Consumption

Three separate case studies from the fieldwork data are featured in this chapter. Each of these provides evidence which supports the identification of calculated drinking behaviour in the night-time economy through specific strategies of management of alcohol consumption and behaviour by young people. The chapter argues that the commonly used term "binge" drinking which defines young people in the night-time economy is unnecessarily emotive and that the more inclusive term "calculated hedonism" (Griffin et al, 2008) highlights the self-control and group management of alcohol consumption observed during the fieldwork where positive outcomes to prolonged drinking sessions were sought by young people. Each of the case studies features individuals and groups of young people seeking positive outcomes to their alcohol consumption in the Canterbury night-time economy, where pleasure and togetherness are at the forefront of young people's motivations towards management and control of behaviour and consumption.

Chapter Seven: The Normalisation of Extreme Drinking Practices

Several examples of young people drinking or discussing drinking practices from during the fieldwork are used in this chapter to support the argument that a normalization of extreme drinking practices by young people was present within the Canterbury night-time economy. Historical background regarding the potential normalization of alcohol use throughout the UK is made to build a position from which to adapt the drug normalization model of Parker et al. (1998; 2002) to four key dimensions of extreme drinking practices: Exposure to/availability of/access to alcohol; Alcohol trying and usage rates; 'Being alcoholwise': Accommodating attitudes to 'extreme' alcohol use especially by irregular or non-users; Cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices. 'Poly-alcohol use' is also discussed in this chapter, primarily in how young people used 'shots' alongside more traditional types of alcohol such as beers, wines and mixed spirits to seek higher levels of intoxication in relation to cost and time effectiveness. Each of the dimensions cited form the structure around which a normalization of extreme drinking practices amongst young people is presented in the chapter, as the accounts and actions of young people during the fieldwork established the centrality of extreme drinking practices to young people's leisure pursuits. However, this was in accordance with the specific management and strategic usage of alcohol and specific practices which showed young people using alcohol recreationally to enjoy themselves, as

drug normalization theory also focused upon recreational rather than problematic drug use by young people.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

The conclusion chapter of the thesis is focused upon the two main findings of the thesis. The chapter looks at my methodological position and the profound influence of the Chicago School approach to research in an urban location, where my approach to immersion into the context of *The Mitre* and the Canterbury night-time economy are discussed. It reflects upon my adaptation and application of the approaches of Thrasher (1927; 1928) and Cressey (1927/1983; 1932) in ethnographic fieldwork. It also engages with how extreme drinking practices by young people were identified during the fieldwork, and how young people's experiences were 'voiced'. Furthermore, it looks at the adaptation and application of drug normalization theory (Parker, Aldridge and Measham, 1998; Parker, Williams and Aldridge, 2002) to alcohol and extreme drinking practices by young people in the night-time economy. Here, a rejection of a 'convergence' between young men's and young women's drinking (Measham and Ostergaard, 2009) is also supported (Blackman, Doherty and McPherson, 2015).

Chapter One: Literature Review

1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the main areas of literature of this research. This literature serves as a foundation to the empirical study. There is brief historical context regarding the prominence of alcohol use in the UK as outlined within Plant and Plant (2006), alongside the more specific discussion of the Licensing Act 2003, and the 'new culture of intoxication' (Measham and Brain, 2005). Reference to the research undertaken by Nutt et al. (2010) shapes the argument towards a more scientific understanding of the debate regarding alcohol consumption within the UK. Discussion is made regarding how common usage of the media-influenced term "binge" drinking can be seen as loaded with negative connotations towards alcohol consumption and its connection with young adults, and how it can be argued that this term can be reframed to "calculated hedonism" (Griffin et al., 2008). Subsequent passages focus upon the methodological and theoretical underpinnings of research within urban spaces, with particular reference to the innovative research into gang-life undertaken by the Chicago School in the 1920s and 1930s. The philosophical framework regarding the research of urban life by Michel de Certeau (1984) is outlined as central to the focus of the research and its urban location. A critical engagement with and selective review of the field of cultural criminology to research which analyses youth deviancy in a late-modern society is also undertaken, alongside an emphasis upon the literature surrounding drug 'normalization' theory.

1.1 Alcohol consumption in Britain: some definitions

The following sections will introduce literature related to the central context of alcohol use in the UK. This will outline both in a contemporary context where urban areas have become the subject of media concern in relation to "binge" drinking and anti-social behaviour by young people in the night-time economy, and also within an historical context where it will be seen that alcohol use has a long and complex history which has never been far from controversy. The complexity and confusion behind the term "binge" drinking, and the alternative definition

of "calculated hedonism", will also be introduced and defined. This will be alongside a discussion of how new practices of drinking associated with a "new culture of intoxication" have recently developed within the urban night-time economy.

1.1.1 Alcohol consumption in Britain – history and 'harms'

In *Binge Britain – Alcohol and the National Response* (Plant and Plant, 2006: 1) the key historical position held by alcohol in British social history is emphasised: "alcohol has played a major part in British life for centuries. It has led to the rise and fall of governments, financed wars, provoked civil disorder and even acts of terrorism". The authors use several examples in order to outline the persistent feature of alcohol use throughout many centuries, such as from A.D. 616 when Ethelbert, Anglo-Saxon king of Kent wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury informing him that: "'In your dioceses the vice of drunkenness is too frequent. This is an evil particular to pagans and our race'" (p. 3). This example serves to demonstrate that alcohol use has long caused moral and social debate situated around the behaviour of people drinking in public places, which is still featured within the contemporary academic and media debates which surround this topic. Nicholls (2009: 1) outlines this complex and controversial history in greater detail around more recent times:

> the half century between 1870 and 1920 had seen elections fought and lost on the issue of alcohol control, the creation and abandonment of asylums for the treatment of drunkards, repeated Parliamentary efforts to introduce prohibition, the establishment of a pub company by an Anglican Bishop, the partial nationalisation of the alcohol industry, and drink described by the serving Prime Minister at the outbreak of the First World war as a greater threat than Austria and Germany combined.

Plant and Plant's examples of the moral and social debate surrounding alcohol consumption throughout many centuries serve to highlight that alcohol use in the UK is a long-term cultural issue, and that within this context it can be argued that there have been repeated failures to make any negotiated conclusions which might enable a satisfactory conclusion to this debate. More recently, the potential harms associated with alcohol consumption were highlighted by particular criticism of the current drug classification system by Professor David Nutt – former

chairman of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) – who controversially claimed that: *Alcohol more 'harmful than heroin'* (BBC News Online, 1st November 2010). Citing research which appeared within his paper published in the medical journal *The Lancet* 'Drug harms in the UK: a multicriteria decision analysis' (2010), Nutt et al. analyzed drug use over sixteen different harm criteria set out within the multicriteria decision analysis (MCDA) which they outlined as integral to analysis of the harms associated with intoxicants ranging from alcohol through LSD and onto heroin. Nine of these criteria regarded harm to the individual and seven to the harms to others i.e. on a societal level in order to assess their overall propensity to cause harm. These drugs were then scored on points out of 100, with zero indicating no harm whilst 100 was assigned to the most harmful drug (Nutt et al, 2010: 1559). The consequence of this study showed that although harder narcotics, i.e. heroin (34), crack cocaine (37) and metamfetamine (32) were more dangerous to the individual in the 'overall harm score' gauged by MCDA, that alcohol accrued the highest overall combined score (72) and the highest harm to others (related to anti-social behaviour and disorder) score (46). Consequently, these findings led to the conclusion that:

> findings lend support to previous work in the UK and the Netherlands, confirming that the present classification systems have little relation to the evidence of harm [... and that] aggressively targeting alcohol harms is a valid and necessary public health strategy (Nutt et al, 2010: 1564).

Nutt faced much controversy when advocating this message, as the legality of alcohol and how the drug classification system in the UK operates mean that its wide-spread usage is perceived differently within society to the harder, illegal drugs which this study suggests consumption of can potentially carry less overall harm. By suggesting that alcohol consumption should be targeted for health reasons, this research would support the news that, for example, alcohol-induced illness in the Kent area rose from 21,000 to 29,000 in the calendar year 2010-11 (BBC News South East, November 2011) and that moves supporting Professor Nutt's claims require serious consideration in order to quell daunting rises such as this. Whilst Professor Nutt's view was constructed through scientifically supported research, the evidence regarding the view of alcohol and drug consumption from the higher echelons of the British government is commonly clouded by moralistic and ideological judgements which can be critiqued as being influenced by the drug classification system and the portrayal

of alcohol and drug use through the media. This evidence ensures that alcohol consumption is a controversial and contradictory topic to analyse through academic research, in particular relation to the media-friendly term "binge" drinking which this thesis examines.

1.1.2 The Licensing Act 2003

Plant and Plant (2006: 84) detail other occasions throughout history where the profile of alcohol has caused both division and concern within British society, and also transport the debate closer to the present day in which the conclusions of Nutt et al were reached. For example, they begin to reveal the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 proposed by the Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell MP and produced by the then Labour government which related directly to the contemporary culture of alcohol consumption in the UK. The stated aims of this Act – advocating the possibility of flexible twenty-four hour seven days-a-week opening of licensed premises – were to "eliminate problems of disorder and disturbance associated with fixed and artificially early closing times" (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2002). Theoretically, this would be have been achieved via the transportation of continental café-style drinking culture into UK drinking culture; a theory which is commonly regarded with much scepticism within academic circles where recent literature has considered:

> who and what is involved in producing nightlife spaces; who and what is involved in negotiating them; who and what are the consumers and consumption practices that are present in the consumption practices which surround them (Jayne and Valentine, 2016: 147).

Certainly, the very idea that greater control of drinking practices by consumers of alcohol in the UK could be obtained via the extension of licensed drinking hours throughout the nation seems misguided. This view was supported by doubts amongst law-enforcement bodies themselves: "The Association of Police Officers (ACPO) was also cited as believing the new arrangements would increase anti-social behaviour" (Plant and Plant, 2006: 88). The staggering of closing-times would effectively make the job of law-enforcement more difficult; periods of concentrated man-power would become more difficult to judge, and the possibility

of alcohol-induced incidents occurring even later into the night would become even more likely.

By granting even greater flexibility to licensing hours, law enforcement agencies such as the police would have been potentially unable to practice the current trend of targeting certain times and places upon which to focus their man-power and attentions under the current licensing restrictions. Under these conditions – as demonstrated by the reservations of the law enforcement agencies themselves – the likelihood of uncontrolled anti-social behaviour only becomes more plausible and far more complex to quell (Hayward and Hobbs, 2007: 437). On this evidence alone, criticism of government legislation upon alcohol in the UK, seems difficult to argue against as staggered closing times might have only served to further stretch the effect upon urban town centres of alcohol-fuelled behaviour in the night-time economy.

1.1.3 The "new culture of intoxication"

Within contemporary British society it is common to be faced by negative media perceptions and terminology (i.e. "binge" drinking) regarding alcohol consumption and its potential relationships with "anti-social" behaviour by young people and a lack of "control". These media products are never seen to portray an image of young people enjoying alcohol safely or sensibly in the night-time economy, a factor which empirical evidence from fieldwork within the Canterbury night-time economy exposes and supports as a commonplace occurrence. However, tabloid television products and tabloid newspapers have expressed concern at the consumption of alcohol amongst young people within the night-time economy, portraying urban centres as bedevilled by the intoxicated actions undertaken by participants within the night-time economy which focus purely upon bad or immoral behaviour. Young people have long been associated with being 'folk devils' who are morally marginalised by the moral indignation and controversy related to media portrayals of recreational substance use (Young, 1971).

Measham and Brain (2005) term the upturn in young drinkers throughout the UK during the 1990s and 2000s as the "new culture of intoxication". Research on young people's alcohol consumption supports the use of this term, as it has indicated a pattern of increased heavy

sessional drinking in the UK from the early 1990s (Griffin et al, 2009). It can be argued that the emergence of rave and dance culture in the late 1980s saw a shift from the use of alcohol to dance drugs such as ecstasy, and the alcohol industry responded by recommodifying alcohol as a psychoactive product targeted at a more diverse group of young consumers. Blackman (2004: 80) expands on this idea:

> It is possible to suggest that the alcohol industry responded with a calculated strategy which utilized aspects of dance culture at a general level through marketing and advertisements but at a particular level has also used specific images and brand names directly related to illegal drugs.

Consequently, from the early 1990s, a wider range of alcoholic products appeared (Brain et al, 2000). More recently, Smith (2014: 8) argues that the retail trade has been transformed describing them as producing: "specific cultures of alcohol consumption – the determined drunkenness commonly referred to as 'binge drinking' against the commodified experience offered by the night-time high street". This has seen the emergence of cafe bars, dance bars and themed pubs in most city centres, broadening the traditional customer base well beyond the traditional pub clientele of white, working-class, heterosexual men to include more culturally and sexually diverse groups in the 18-35 range (Chatterton and Hollands, 2001). This example was demonstrated through fieldwork observations where it transpired a wide and varied class and cultural demographic frequents the Canterbury night-time economy on a daily basis and which was represented by a specialized 'cluster' of venues (Roberts, 2015).

1.1.4 Media discourse "Binge" drinking or "calculated hedonism" – defining and reframing of a problematic term

Media discourse regarding substance use amongst young people in particular has long been highlighted as being a both marginalizing and myopic view. Cohen (2002: 7) described the negative impact of misleading media representations upon public perceptions in *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* as a strategic media amplification of certain 'facts' which was originally associated with his study into the youth subculture of Mods and Rockers in the 1960s; Hollands (1995: 4) also describes this moralistic approach to the narrative of young people's

lives: "Media approaches by their very nature focus on the extreme and the dramatic, while remaining highly critical of any alternative analysis". This is a view which is also explicitly linked to the contemporary media representations of UK 'binge' drinking as exemplified by headlines such as: "UK among worst 'binge drinkers'" (*BBC News Online*, 1st June, 2006), "Britain is the 'binge-drinking capital of Europe'" (*The Telegraph*, 22nd April 2010) and "UK's teenage girls are biggest binge drinkers in Europe" (*Mail Online*, 1st July 2012). Kelly (2006: 30) argues that these representations became a source of "Stories perpetuating negative images of youth [which] apparently appeal to many adults and sell newspapers". These negative images evoke tensions within public perceptions which are the result of the translation and portrayal by media outlets, ranging from tabloid newspapers to local press and television documentaries, which create a "discourse of moral panic around young people's 'binge drinking' [which] has pervaded popular media, public policy and academic research" (Griffin et al, 2008: 3).

Tellingly, "binge" drinking featured as the first two words of the then Prime Minister David Cameron's foreword to the Government Alcohol Strategy (2012: 2) which highlights the negative social and cultural connotations associated with alcohol consumption:

> Binge drinking isn't some fringe issue, it accounts for half of all alcohol consumed in this country. The crime and violence it causes drains resources in our hospitals, generates mayhem on our streets and spreads fear in our communities. My message is simple. We can't go on like this. We have to tackle the scourge of violence caused by binge drinking. And we have to do it now.

This account from the then British Prime Minister reinforced the moral marginalisation of alcohol use by using the term "binge" drinking alongside emotionally resonant language such as "crime", "violence", "mayhem", "fear" and "scourge". The Prime Minister further declared that "Binge drinking is a serious problem. And I make no excuses for clamping down on it" (p. 2). Consequently, it will be argued in this thesis that the constructed media representation of "binge" drinking has defined a moral marginalisation of young people and alcohol use within public perceptions. Alcohol use is historically a normative presence within society, which is

outlined by its position as a legalised intoxicant within the UK. However, Griffin et al (2008: 4) assert that "binge" drinking is an emotionally charged term due to its common usage in media circles. It is a term which is difficult to define with any accuracy due to the multiple connotations its definitions carry. According to Plant and Plant (2006: viii), "binge" is a terminology which has been "has been used in two distinct ways" with regards to the consumption of alcohol. Initially, "binge" was a term used by health professionals to describe the activity of going out on a "bender", which was "a prolonged drinking spree during which an individual drinks in a sustained manner and gives up other activities for at least two or three days" (p. viii). Subsequently, they argue that "binge" has been redefined into a more popular meaning, which "relates to a single drinking session intended to or actually leading to intoxication. This session need not be prolonged but is assumed to be at least potentially risky" (p. ix). Where these perspectives meet in agreement is within risky behaviour by consumers of alcohol. The impression created is of how an individual connected with the term 'binge' is the subject of a negative connotation for individuals with regards to their lifestyle choices and leisure activities.

Further uncertainties and contradiction surround the term "binge" drinking. Bodies such as the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) (USA) and the UK Home Office respectively define 'binge' as "a pattern of drinking alcohol that corresponds to consuming five or more drinks for a male or four or more drinks for a female in about 2 hours" (NIAAA, 2003), or "people who reported having felt 'very drunk' once or more in the past 12 months" (Plant and Plant, 2006: xi). The ideas emerging here concern less the length of duration of alcohol consumption, but a proposition of the idea framed within the NIAAA perspective that consumption *versus* time = binge. Consequently, speed and volume of consumption become the focus of the definition. The Home Office perspective cited above suggests that even drinkers who may abstain for long periods of time are still subject to "binge" drinking and the negative connotations it carries, outlining the difficulties which definition of the term brings. For example, these perspectives do not consider the range of tolerance levels within individuals of either sex which make the effects of alcohol even harder to gauge in general terms. More supportive of the term "new culture of intoxication" outlined by Measham and Brain (2005) is the assertion that "the term 'heavy episodic drinking' [...] gives a clearer impression of what is meant" (Plant and Plant, 2006: xii). This term defines

alcohol consumption which is lengthy in duration or heavy in volume and quickly consumed, as it does not solely reference the consumption of alcohol in terms which could be considered neglectful and irresponsible. In this thesis, alcohol consumption by young people across an extended span of time and consumption are termed "prolonged drinking sessions", where the drinking practices were open to observation and analysis in a neutral context.

As outlined earlier in this section, media outlets – ranging from tabloid newspapers to local press and television documentaries – can create a "discourse of moral panic around young people's 'binge drinking' [which] has pervaded popular media, public policy and academic research" (Griffin et al, 2008: 3) as they reflect a microcosm of human activity. These images portray young people as undertaking alcohol consumption in a thoughtless manner, which leads to negative outcomes for individuals and groups related to anti-social behaviour and violence in urban spaces throughout the UK. The media profile of alcohol and "binge" drinking can attach stigmatisms to alcohol users. This can be recognised in much the same way as how the media furore surrounding the acid house movement of the late 1980s, a movement which academic research argues had a profound effect upon the alcohol industry, provoked widespread interest in and condemnation of the drug ecstasy and its users (Collin, 1997: 306). Young (1971: 415) expands upon the theme of moral indignation in *The Drug Takers: The Social Meaning of Drug Use.* For Young's subject 'drug taker' it is easy to reframe as 'binge drinker':

> the mass media portrayal of the "binge" drinker [or drug taker] is not a function of random ignorance, but a coherent part of consensual mythology … by fanning up moral panics over "binge" drinking [drug use], it contributes enormously to public hostility toward the "binge" drinker [drug taker] and precludes any rational approach to the problem.

In keeping with previous "moral panics" (Cohen, 1972; 2002) regarding youth and intoxication, such as the examples which Young would have observed in the late 1960s where the Mods who were aligned with amphetamine use; the Hippies with LSD use – alongside the era of clubbers and ravers with ecstasy in the 1980s, so alcohol use has become the prevalent moral issue within UK media circles since the turn of the millennium. Despite the intrinsic part which alcohol use can be seen to play throughout the majority of social strata within British

social life, concocted media portrayals fashion a reckless image of alcohol use by young people; ergo, participants featuring within the night-time economy are scrutinised through images of this reckless behaviour which can be examined through ethnographic research in the night-time economy.

Consequently, the media framing of the terminology "binge" drinking is relevant to how public perceptions to young people and alcohol can be skewed by the popularisation of this term. However, Griffin et al (2009: 3) suggest a move away from this term, instead preferring to cite "the pervasive culture of 'determined drunkenness' in which drinking to intoxication is a normal part of many young people's lives". They argue that a more relevant term to reframe "binge" drinking within a positive context is: "calculated hedonism" (Griffin et al, 2008). Their view of "determined drunkenness", alongside Plant and Plant's "heavy episodic drinking" can both be seen to concur with the notion that intoxication is both a regular feature within society, and that these drinking sessions are the result of the intent of the individual to become intoxicated. Where these perspectives differ is within their intent; by offering a less pre-determined appreciation of the activity Griffin et al. place less emphasis on moral blame and try to confer agency upon the drinker. By doing this, researchers are permitted a space to investigate the activity of alcohol consumption which is uncoloured by stigmatisms attached by media perpetuated terms to young people's lives. "Binge" drinking has become more prevalent in the UK, as young people are deliberately and shrewdly targeted by the national chains of bars that now dominate the night-time high street which offer the attraction of hedonistic pleasures to young people (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003). Hayward and Hobbs (2007: 446; emphasis added) argue that with the high street's particular emphasis on the 'new' and the 'now' that:

> this segment of hedonistic consumer culture separates young people from the consequences of their actions and makes them more likely to engage in a pursuit of excitement – **binge drinking being an obvious example** – which may well be reckless and damaging both to themselves and to others.

However, the view of Griffin et al. is that the concept of 'calculated hedonism' refers to ways of managing alcohol which may be seen as excessive as enacting specific forms of pleasure for young people (Griffin et al, 2008: 3-4), rejecting the notion that all excessive alcohol

consumption is neglectful to themselves or others. Measham (2004: 319) defines how this sense of calculated hedonism can be interpreted in the night-time economy with a focus upon specific activities within a specific space and time:

> culture of consumerism and hedonism prioritizes and commodifies pleasure and in particular altered or heightened states of physical pleasure through pharmacological and behavioural means. This hedonism is a calculated hedonism, however, most usually within the boundaries of time (the weekend), space (club, bar, private party), company (supportive friends) and intensity.

By raising the possibility that drinking can be both excessive *and* fun, and within specific spaces where this activity is contained, the term "calculated hedonism" can also be used to empower young people with the responsibility to understand and tailor their consumption within the context of their own leisure time without the stigmatisms aroused by media perceptions or the influence of the term "binge" drinking. In this context, this activity constitutes a 'calculating hedonism' (Featherstone, 1994); a form of liminal experience in which the individual strategically moves in and out of control, enjoying the thrill of the controlled suspension of constraints, where "The user not only pursues a desired state of intoxication, but also attempts to avoid an undesired state" (Measham, 2004: 319).

1.1.5 Space, place, and the city: the night-time economy

The night-time economy with its concentration of licensed premises, is a complex, multi-faceted area of urban space which demands closer inspection and analysis in order to gain deeper insight into the meanings and experiences which lie within this setting. Chatterton and Hollands (2002: 95) describe urban spaces as such:

> Sites of entertainment and pleasure seeking [where] a central focus of recent rebranding has been the promotion of the night-time economy, much of which is characterised by the ritual descent of young adults into city-centre bars, pubs and clubs especially during the weekend.

Consequently, sites of pleasure and entertainment attract vast amounts of young people into the night-time economy making them vital spaces of research into human activity as all cities are subject to the "cultural collision caused by any substantial concentration of people, industry and capital, [where] there emerges a congress of feelings, impressions and emotions that collectively constitute the urban experience" (Hayward, 2004: 1-2). Lovatt and O'Connor (1995: 130) define the night-time economy as a multi-faceted place which has been developed to attract bursts of human activity and interaction:

> The festivals, the cultural initiatives aimed at bringing people back into the city, the offices and residential developments that either incorporated or pointed to the cultural facilities of the centre, the promotion of the city as a culturally vibrant realm all these explicitly or unconsciously incorporated the idea of the nightlife of the city, a realm of play, of socialisation, of encounter and of evasion associated with the night-time.

Whilst this view expresses how the night-time economy has evolved and developed into a site of pleasure-seeking across various platforms, where "In a time span of 10 years, many English town centres have been transformed from being relatively deserted at night to being filled with concentrations of young drunken people out on the streets until the early hours of the morning" (Roberts, 2006: 331) it should also be noted that the night-time economy has been discussed in terms which incorporates pleasure, but also potential disorder and the demands of social control:

> The night-time economy is also an environment diffuse with various forms of disorder, and its clientele, attracted as they are by the promise of pleasure, excitement, and excess, need to be controlled (Hobbs, Hadfield, Lister and Winlow, 2003: 14)

As a result of these negative outcomes of human activity in the night-time economy, previous research into alcohol use by young people by Hollands (1995: 5) in the Newcastle night-time economy had been the subject of heavy media attention and criticism:

> Sociological research on youth cultures then is often greeted with derisory comments from the media and this project proved no exception. Before it had even commenced, national media coverage of the research criticised it for being common sense and a waste of money, attracting such headlines as "Boozy Bob's Going on a £16,000 Pub

Crawl" (Daily Star, 28.8.93). local newspapers and television also highlighted the cost and 'pedestrian' nature of the project, labelling it as the so called 'Bigg Market drinking study', rather than picking up on its wider concern with the changing meaning and social context of young adult's [young people's] leisure practices, and their connection to a rapidly evolving economic, domestic and cultural landscape.

These myopic views of research into young people's drinking behaviours embody the agenda of the media towards young people. However, research into young people's drinking practices in the night-time economy can seek to examine and locate a more balanced view, based upon observations and interactions with human activity. Harvey (2003: 939) argued that urban spaces were the closest representation of human life affecting its very surroundings, and shifting the nature of the urban space through human activity and experience. Hubbard, Kitchin and Valentine (2004: 4) assert that the use of "spatial thinking in human geography to illustrate the diverse ways in which space and place are presently conceptualized and analytically employed to make sense of the world" can reveal patterns of human behaviour, where "place thus represents a distinctive type of space that is defined by the lived experiences of people" (p. 5). From within the place of the night-time economy, authentic views of the activities of young people can sought from within specific spaces which are encountered in the pursuit of leisure and pleasure.

1.1.6 Alcohol consumption rates and hospital admissions: statistical evidence of young people's drinking patterns in the UK and Kent

This section provides reference to some available social statistics regarding alcohol consumption rates and hospital admissions, which help to contextualise the research aims and the need for enquiry of this research. Certainly, there are social statistics which support the dim view taken of alcohol use by young people, and the negative effect which this has upon invaluable resources such as the emergency services. For instance, the Office for National Statistics, (2012: 1) states that alcohol use amongst young people across the UK has risen to the extent that: "Young people (those aged 16-24) were more likely to have drunk very heavily (more than 12 units for men and 9 units for women) at least once during the

week (27%)". Similarly, Alcohol Concern (2013) have identified that "the problems caused by alcohol misuse continue to rise which is putting an increasing strain on our NHS", whilst Public Health England (2014) report that "Accident and Emergency attendances (about 70% related to alcohol at weekends) and hospital admissions have more than doubled over the last 15 years to approximately a million episodes". As these statistics show, there is a strong body of evidence which supports and illustrates the extra pressure which alcohol use, and the results of it, have upon vital services, and that there is evidence which supports how young people (16-24) drink both heavily and regularly. However, these statistics fail to make any reference to how the drinks industry itself operates, and the huge profit margins which see their negative influence upon social issues with alcohol consumption: 'Problem drinkers account for most of alcohol industry's sales, figures reveal' (*The Guardian*, 22nd January 2016), where "The alcohol industry makes most of its money – an estimated £23.7bn in sales in England alone – from people whose drinking is destroying or risking their health, say experts who accuse the industry of irresponsible pricing and marketing" (Boseley, 2016).

This evidence of increased drinking – and specifically increased heavy or extreme drinking – is also something which is specific to Canterbury itself, as recent research by the Kent Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (Kent JSNA) compared the local centres of: Ashford; Canterbury; Dartford; Dover; Gravesend; Maidstone; Sevenoaks; Shepway; Swale; Thanet; Tonbridge and Malling; Tunbridge Wells. This research categorised drinkers into four categories: Lower risk drinkers; Increasing risk drinkers; Higher risk drinkers; Binge drinkers. It showed that across Kent in particular "23% of the population is estimated to be drinking at either increasing or higher risk levels" (Kent 'Alcohol' JSNA Chapter Summary Update '2014- 15': 6). Even more pertinently to this research, the report also stated that "Canterbury is estimated to have the highest numbers of higher risk and binge drinkers" (p. 6) of all urban centres across Kent. These results provide context to Canterbury as a location of specific interest to research with young people and into their alcohol consumption, as the document reinforces Canterbury's unique characteristic over the other urban centres mentioned as "Canterbury has a considerable student population" (p. 3), which may have seen the acceleration and growth which gave Canterbury this dubious honour. However, there are also some alternative views supported by evidence from the Office for National Statistics (2015; emphasis added):

According to national and local trends the rate of alcohol related hospital admissions in Kent is expected to continue to rise across all age ranges with the exception of those aged under 25 years. **Those aged 16-24 years are the only group who have shown a decreased trend in hospital admissions.** The number of young adults reporting being teetotal has increased by over 40% to 27% in 2013 equalling the numbers of those aged 65 years for the first time.

Whilst this report maintains the evidence that national and local trends show that the pressure will be maintained upon the emergency services by alcohol misuse, there are some exceptions as there is a fall in hospital admissions for young people, and also there is evidence of an increase in teetotalism: "There are now higher reported national rates of alcohol abstinence and fewer alcohol-related hospital admissions in Kent" (Proposed Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2017-2022: 2). These statistics underlined Canterbury as an insightful and relevant location of academic research into young people's drinking in the night-time economy, where drinking which is both problematic in social terms is in evidence, but also there is evidence of young people considering their attitudes towards alcohol use, and declining hospital admissions which are at odds with media representations of young people and alcohol use. The Institute for Alcohol Studies discusses how young people are drinking today, in that there is a reduced participation during the week, which leads to heavier participation at the weekend:

Today, young people's drinking habits differ from older generations. Recent trends suggest that they drink less often during the week, but that they are more prone to heavy episodic or binge drinking when they do. At first glance, official figures on drinking habits indicate that in recent years, while young people have been drinking above the average unit consumption per week, they now drink less than the UK average. Young people also drink fewer times during the week than most other age groups. But when they do drink, a significant proportion engage in heavy episodic or 'binge' drinking.

Consequently, as these statistics and analysis suggest that young people have been consuming alcohol in greater volumes across less drinking events, the research aims of this research to examine young people's extreme drinking practices became clear. By researching

into this specific trend, the intention was to gain insight into how young people were consuming alcohol in the Canterbury night-time economy, and to see if there could be alternative analyses made of young people's alcohol consumption where young people were actively seeking agency in their actions rather than fulfilling media stereotypes of binge drinking.

1.2 The Chicago School: Robert E. Park, Frederic Thrasher and the Study of Urban Life

Research within the urban domain of the Canterbury night-time economy fits within the tradition of sociological research prevalent within the Chicago School of urban sociology, whose first major body of works emerged during the first half of the twentieth century. Hart (2010: 29) outlines the vast array of topics they studied in urban areas:

> race, immigration, media, crime and delinquency, the law, suicide, martial conflict, entertainments, prostitution, age structures, ghetto life, high society life, gang cultures, hotel life, a multitude of occupations including shopgirls, peddlers, vaudeville performers, all that and more became the topic of student observational studies.

The Chicago School was the Sociology and Anthropology department within the University of Chicago, who were a group of researchers – including Robert E. Park, Nels Anderson, Ernest W. Burgess, Frederic Thrasher, Paul Cressey, Vivian Palmer, Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay – that combined theory and ethnographic fieldwork. These researchers were:

> strongly motivated by a drive to view the city as an object of detached sociological analysis … [and] were fascinated with the complexities of the urban community and the prospect of discovering patterns of regularity in its apparent confusion (Wright, 1945: viii).

Robert E. Park (1915) outlines this new approach to research within urban communities in '*The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behaviour in the Urban Environment'* as a potential research framework within an urban environment. Within this essay, Park sheds a fresh light upon the myriad of opportunities presented for research within an urban environment, and also suggests at an adaptation of the observational research methods

traditionally employed by anthropologists in their study of primitive peoples towards the study of human behaviour within the confines of city life. The influence of this essay led to the classic example of research in an urban environment by Frederic Thrasher: *The Gang: A Study of 1,313 gangs in Chicago* (1927). Further examples of urban research were undertaken by Cressey (1932) in *The Taxi-dance Hall: A Sociological Study in Commercialized Recreation and City Life*, Whyte (1943) in *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum* and Colosi (2010) in *Dirty dancing? An ethnography of lap-dancing* which were situated in urban areas, but in Cressey and Colosi's case, within specific licenced spaces where research within an urban context became possible through immersion which my study sought to emulate.

Influenced by Georg Simmel, Robert E. Park was one of the earliest exponents of the study of urban life, observing that the multi-faceted nature of the city featured a multiplicity of research opportunities which lent themselves to the study of the impact of the city upon human life and vice versa. Park argued that outside the rigid geographical orderliness of the city there persists a complex system of human life experience based around the economic, cultural and social backdrop of the areas in which varying forms of human life inhabit the city which "is rooted in the habits and customs of the people who inhabit it" (Park, 1915: 578). This is a view which is clearly outlined in the opening paragraph of his essay:

> We can think of the city, that is to say, the place and the people, with all the machinery, sentiments, customs, and administrative devices that go with it, public opinion and street railways, the individual man and the tools that he uses, as something more than a mere collective entity. We can think of it [the city] as a mechanism – a psychophysical mechanism – in and through which private and political interests find corporate expression (Park, 1915: 577-578)

For Park it is when the conflicting elements of the city *collide* that ordinary buildings and geographical topography become part of the 'living city' and human nature can become the subject of detached sociological analysis. Recognised within this environment can be not only the impact of the environment of the city upon the lives of its inhabitants, but also the impact which the inhabitants can have upon the shaping of the environment of the city itself. By methods of close observation within the urban environment including: "ethnographic

fieldwork, participant observation, life histories, personal documents (letters, diaries), population statistics, maps, real estate pricing, and interviewing" (Hart, 2010: 2) the true nature of this relationship and existence within this environment would lend itself to the analysis of the detached sociological researcher. Blackman (2010: 195-196) also supports this tradition: "Contemporary accounts of ethnography as a research method usually cite the Chicago School of Sociology under Robert Park and Ernest Burgess as the starting point for urban participant observation, the use of life history and the gathering of personal documents as valid sources of ethnographic data collection".

Significantly to the methodological aims and operandi of research taking place within the Canterbury night-time economy, Park saw that any research which focussed upon how the individual life experiences of people – bound within the constrictions of an urban conurbation – could only be undertaken by utilising the types of observational research which had been prevalent in the field of anthropology. By utilising the research methods commonly associated with the field of anthropology within the city, with its high concentration of human life and behaviour, Park was guiding the study of urban life into fresh, uncharted territory. These were the methods which Thrasher (1927) employed when undertaking the huge amount of fieldwork which constituted the study of 1,313 gangs in Chicago. Thrasher's research into gang life picked up the mantle laid down by Park which alluded to the sociological opportunity of research within the city and significance which could be apportioned to research within an urban environment:

> It is in such regions as the gang inhabitants that we find much of the romance and mystery of a great city. Here are comedy and tragedy. Here is melodrama which excels the recurrent "thrillers" at the downtown theaters [*sic*]. Here are unvarnished emotions. Here is also a primitive democracy that cuts through all the conventional social and racial discriminations. The gang, in short, is *life*, often rough and untamed, yet rich in elemental social processes significant to the study of human nature (Thrasher, 1927: 3)

Thrasher's study of gang life in Chicago sought to facilitate the methodological approach outlined by Park in his essay – as will be alluded to within the methodology chapter – undertaking extended periods of observational work and also including transcripts of aspects

of interviews with members of gangs within the urban environment – or laboratory – as described above by Park: "*The Gang* is not only a product of the enthusiasm of the Chicago school but its methodology and theoretical orientation as well" (Short, 1963: xvii). This methodological approach enabled the development of an impression of the urban environment based upon a mapping of specific areas of the city, and the relationship between the gang and this environment which revolved around rich, experiential data. The nature of these sources ground the research within authentically gathered data which is conducive to Park's assertion that the city can be viewed as a "laboratory or clinic in which human nature and social processes may be conveniently and profitably studied" (Park, 1915: 612).

1.3 Michel de Certeau: *The Practice of Everyday Life* – a framework for the study of urban life

Michel de Certeau's work *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) is relevant to this empirical study, as it offers a "tentative framework" (Hayward, 2004: 2) of research which is of particular substance to research within an urban locus. Michel de Certeau was a French scholar, whose work combined history, psychoanalysis, philosophy and the social sciences. Widely influenced by Sigmund Freud, he was a founding member of *Ècole Freudienne de Paris* – an informal group which acted as a focal point for French scholars who specialised in psychoanalysis. Within his proposed framework de Certeau (1984: 94) asserts that:

> if one adopts a type of distant view of the city – an abstract 'gaze' that 'lifts one out of the city's grasp' and transforms one into an isolated observer, a 'voyeur' – it becomes possible, indeed beneficial, to think of the city in terms of a **duality**.

De Certeau's formulation of this concept of a *duality* can be recognised as an understanding of city space from two perspectives: (1) the "*concept* of a city" (de Certeau, 1984: 94) – a geometric understanding of the city – as viewed by planners, cartographers, developers and the like, and (2) the "urban *fact*" (de Certeau, 1984: 94) which understands the rich 'experiential dimension' of urban life (i.e. the authentic *lived* experience of urban life) and is guided by an anthropological view of the city. Whilst the first perspective offers a view of the city which is still and unchanging, easily analysed and understood as it is firmly structured and

clearly mapped out, the second is suggestive that should the researcher extract oneself from the common vision of urban life, it also becomes possible to extract a deeper critique of urban life.

Ian Buchanan (2000: 110) describes how de Certeau came to be influenced to think of the city in terms of a *duality*: "Looking down on Manhattan from the 110th floor of the World Trade Centre de Certeau was struck by the fact that from there he could 'see the whole' of New York. From this dizzying vantage point the entire city was spread out before him like a map – if he wanted to he could read it like a map". De Certeau himself translates his experience of this viewpoint as such: "His [de Certeau/the researcher] elevation transfigures him into a voyeur. It transforms the bewitching world by which one was 'possessed' into a text that lies before one's eyes. It allows one to read it, to be a solar Eye, looking down like a god" (de Certeau, 1984: 92). Effectively, what de Certeau is implying here is that to view the multi-faceted layers of urban life more readily within urban spaces – to even fully comprehend that in actuality this is the *reality* of urban life – one should prise open the often suffocating grasp of city life which can colour views and perceptions by remaining closer to the periphery of the surroundings; only when permitting oneself distance from the relentlessness of urban life will the true meaning and personality of the city reveal itself to the researcher and further depth of critique become possible. Concentrating specifically on the nature of urban existence, de Certeau's perspective of 'urban *fact*' draws upon the nature of lived experience alongside the diverse life stories housed within "the cultural collision caused by any substantial concentration of people" (Hayward, 2004: 1-2) which express and exemplify the personality of the city. Buchanan (2000: 110) argues:

> The problem, de Certeau finds, is that the life of the city, the constellation of lives that make a city what it is, the actual experience of the city, in other words, is not contained in the concept of the city. Lives cannot be mapped this way – cannot be read – or even be rendered readable by maps (though of course it is only through maps that they can be read): something always slips away.

Certainly, it was possible to substantiate de Certeau's concept of a *duality* within urban spaces through analysis of fieldwork which has been undertaken within Canterbury's city-centre. The pub locus of *The Mitre* featured in much of this field work is positioned slightly away from the

high street, and not far from the recently redeveloped theatre in the city-centre. This establishment is a relevant fieldwork location due mainly to its position as one of only two traditional pubs within the city walls which carries a daily late licence and therefore is licensed to serve alcohol until the later time of 1am. Consequently, the pub gathered many differing social strata together under one roof by virtue of its hours of trade and its proximity to the theatre. This led to a very mixed clientele: mainly student-based, but also working-class youngsters, members of the Armed Forces, alongside other employees from within the Canterbury day-time and night-time economies, who utilised the extended drinking hours and comfortable atmosphere which the pub offered to customers. Simultaneously, there was also a demographic associated with the pub's location slightly away from the high street where the heavier day-time alcohol consumption existed, and also close in proximity to a vibrant new theatre which directs more middle-aged and middle-class customers to the pub – people who may have visited the theatre or made a day-trip into the city. Very often these diverse groups of social strata have mixed together under one roof, providing fascinating, rich data resources regarding their encounters and interactions. These types of human interaction appear key to de Certeau's concept of a *duality* within urban space, as they demonstrate the true personality of a city-centre pub which is counter-balanced by people in transit who use the city for its greater facilities such as shops, museums and theatres alongside those people who are more inclined to use the city for its multitude of licensed premises and continue their participation deep into the night-time economy.

Within the combinations of social groups which frequented *The Mitre* during the fieldwork such as theatre goers, student drinkers, local drinkers, working-class young people, and also members of the armed forces, the city of Canterbury became a fieldwork location which was 'live' or 'alive' with symbolic meaning through the everyday practices which were exposed in the urban location of the research. This space was one which existed outside the parameters of city–life as sketched out by mapping and planning, but was subject to the nature of the human activity which took place within its urban context; it offered up a rich fieldwork setting where the data gathered offered meaning, truth, context and knowledge to the everyday happenings within the city such as extreme drinking practices by young people in the Canterbury night-time economy.

1.4 Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), youth subcultural theory and youth agency in contemporary drinking practices by young people

This research aimed to apply youth subcultural theory to young people's extreme drinking practices in the Canterbury night-time economy, whereby youth agency could be detected within these practices where young people were observed during the research to exert an influence upon positive outcomes to their drinking sessions. This theory originated within the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), which was a group of scholars based at the University of Birmingham from its foundation in 1964 through to its closure in 2002. These scholars, including Richard Hoggart, Stuart Hall, Paul Willis, Dick Hebdige, produced work regarding working-class culture, popular culture, as well as youth subculture and resistance to mainstream culture through style. Their main protagonist in the 1970s, Stuart Hall, was a "prominent member of the British New Left, [and a] guiding influence in the development of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS)" (Mitchell, 2004: 160). Firstly Hall's own work in *Resistance through Rituals* (1976), and that of the CCCS such as Dick Hebdige's seminal *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (1979), with regards to youth culture, suggested that "resistance can appear ... in the development of a new subcultural *style* that takes the products and practices of the dominant culture and reshapes them into something new that gives a subcultural group an *identity*" (Mitchell, 2004: 162); developing the dominant Youth Studies theoretical paradigm of 'subculture' to define youth cultural activities. Their theoretical standpoint is echoed in the subsequent work of the CCCS and academics within the field of Youth Studies, who attempted to move deeper into the youth deviance/class debate as emphasised by MacDonald and Shildrick (2006: 125):

> "the ambition of the CCCS to understand not only the relationship between culture and social structure, but also the ways in which individual youth biographies evolve out of this relationship, remains a valuable one for the sociology of youth".

This debate was approached by trying to "dismantle the term in which this subject is usually discussed – 'Youth Culture' – and reconstruct, in its place, a more careful picture of the kinds of youth subcultures, their relation to class cultures, and to the way cultural hegemony is maintained, structurally and historically" (Hall and Jefferson, 1976: 5) within their work which has remained relevant to discourses of youth in relation to social structure to this day.

Blackman (2014: 496) stated: "Subcultures attract attention in culture, society, and the media because they have been theorized as not merely distinct from, but also in opposition to, the dominant culture". Similarly, whilst it can be argued that the subculture of young people drinking alcohol is wider in contemporary UK society than alternative subcultures which set themselves apart through style, or

alternative rituals such as drug use or extreme sports, as alcohol use persists as an integral of mainstream youth culture, it is within the media depictions of young people that a difference and *opposition* to mainstream 'norms' that the stereotypes of young people drinking which this research seeks to address can be located. Cohen (2002: 7) outlines this dominant view of young people's leisure activities has seen media headlines of instances of young people drinking:

> The media have long operated as agents of moral indignation in their own right: even if they are not self-consciously engaged in muck-raking, their very reporting of certain 'facts' can be sufficient to generate concern, anxiety, indignation or panic.

This view is also explicitly linked to the contemporary media representations of UK 'binge' drinking as exemplified by headlines such as: "UK among worst 'binge drinkers'" (*BBC News Online*, 1st June, 2006), "Britain is the 'binge-drinking capital of Europe'" (*The Telegraph*, 22nd April 2010) and "UK's teenage girls are biggest binge drinkers in Europe" (*Mail Online*, 1st July 2012). However, it is also neglected in the media as to how the role of the alcohol industry as a part of the dominant social structure impacts upon the activities of young people in the night-time economy. This has seen the underlying alcohol industry's policy agenda portray the idea that responsibility for reducing alcohol-related harm lies with the individual drinker, rather than the industry or society more broadly (Room, 2011). The industry emphasises the need for personal responsibility with alcohol consumption, arguing that the majority of drinkers consume alcohol in moderation. Consequently, this has meant that policy interventions have been targeted at problem drinkers, which are often exposed through media stereotypes of young people drinking, and moralistic views such as those elicited by the term "binge drinking", rather than aimed at their origins within the alcohol industry or the long-term presence of alcohol consumption in UK society and culture, and also images of young people consuming alcohol responsibly and for motives of fun and pleasure.

With this influence of the alcohol industry in mind, it is useful to consider the persistent role of subcultural theory in understandings of young people partaking in marginalised activities; especially in relation to extreme drinking practices which have become a commonly-occurring aspect of the night-time economy which seeks to allow young people to pursue pleasure and leisure within a concentrated area of town and city centres. Subcultural theory has been applied to intoxication and intoxicants previously: "Subculture has been an important conceptual and methodological tool in the ethnographic study of drug use and drug-related harm, particularly heavy drug use among marginalized populations" (Moore, 2004: 181). Similarly, this research seeks to apply explanations of young people's drinking practices by applying similar principles to those used by the CCCS, and to develop the notion that 'agency' can be detected amongst young people's actions in the night-time

economy. Hall and Jefferson (2006: viii) stated: "the project [of the CCCS] was concerned *both* to examine, concretely and in depth, one 'region' of contemporary culture *and* to understand how this could be connected in an explanatory ... way, to broader cultural and social structures". The argument that the alcohol industry enacted influence on young people's drinking as a part of the dominant culture, through marketing and advertising, and impact upon government policy through establishing a view that responsibility lies with the drinker individually, reinforces the view that: "relations between a subordinate and a dominant culture' are said to be 'always ... active, always oppositional" (Clarke et al 1976: 44). By undertaking a prolonged ethnographic study in the Canterbury night-time economy, the aim was to expose deeper and more authentic views of young people and alcohol consumption. Through this examination, the drinking practices of young people could be understood from within the social structure of government policy and alcohol industry intervention from which they originate and youth agency could potentially be applied to these activities away from marginalising views of young people within the night-time economy where pre-planning, fun and pleasure were also a part of the dynamic of young people drinking in the Canterbury night-time economy.

1.4.1 Richard Hoggart and E.P Thompson: Historic accounts of working-class alcohol consumption in *The Uses of Literacy* and *The Making of the English Working Class*

Alcohol use had featured as a part of the work of two highly-influential figures to the CCCS: Richard Hoggart (1957) and E. P. Thompson (1963). Hoggart was among the founders of the CCCS, and Thompson was a major influence on the CCCS approach within Cultural Studies; each had earlier initiated the examination of working-class life in their seminal texts and through accounts of alcohol consumption as a central feature of lifestyles. Hanley (2009: ix) describes the impact of *The Uses of Literacy: Aspects of Working Class Life* (Hoggart, 1957):

> It's amongst the first books that anyone who has a persistent interest in class reads in order to understand how this apparently egalitarian nation, with its universal health service and well-funded education system, props up rigid social divisions from generation to generations.

In his account of English a working-class life from which he himself derived, Hoggart discussed the influence and presence of alcohol:

> There are occasions – festivals, celebrations, cup-ties, trips – when anyone might be expected to drink quite a lot. It is understandable that certain situations might 'drive anyone to drink'. On the whole, the emphasis is a double one: on the rightness of drinking in itself, and on the

realization that if it once 'gets hold', complete collapse – a near-literal home-breaking as the furniture is sold – may well follow (p. 78)

This account is insightful to my research in two distinct ways; it makes a clear allusion towards the centrality of alcohol use across UK social and cultural history, but also reinforces the controversy and scepticism which its potential misuse held during the middle of the twentieth century. The implication is that alcohol use is seen as a reward for celebrations and being away from the workplace, but should not impinge upon the ability to maintain and keep "house" through responsibility to work and family. In *The Making of the English Working Class* (Thompson, 1963) alcohol use is also equated with the notion of hard work and relaxation outside of the workplace, although alcohol use was clearly vital in working people's lives:

> Between 1820 and 1840 there was a marked increase in the consumption of gin and whiskey. Once again, this is a cultural as well as dietetic matter. Beer was regarded – by agricultural workers, coal-whippers, miners – as essential for heavy labour and in parts of the north beer was synonymous with 'drink' (p. 350)

These texts support the notion of an historic normalization of alcohol use across the last previous two centuries, building a view of how alcohol use has remained a vital aspect not only of people's lives. Studies of working class cultures by the CCCS have seen how subcultures have arisen which feature substance use and the media demonization which often follows this. Hoggart and Thompson revealed that not only has alcohol retained a distinct presence in English working-class life, but that it has been understood as both negligent and also rewarding whilst falling in and out of favour in social and cultural terms: "There is no doubt that per capita beer consumption went down between 1800 and 1830" (Thompson: 1963: 350).

1.5 Cultural Criminology

Cultural criminology is a still emergent and relatively new paradigm in criminology, founded in both the UK and the US, which emphasises the importance of including the cultural dimension (e.g. the role of consumer culture) when trying to understand crime or deviant behaviour. It has been concerned with intoxication and risky activities by young people, and emerged in the mid-1990s (Ferrell and Sanders, 1995). Unlike prior analyses of crime and deviancy formed within the criminological tradition such as: "classical [criminological] theory [which] is above all a theory of social control" (Taylor et al, 1973: 2-3), cultural criminology

focuses on the cultural processes of crime and the construction of crime and crime control as social products, and situates this in theories of everyday life and transgression (Ferrell et al, 2008). Cultural criminology firmly rejects the origins of classical criminology and the positivist revolution, whilst emerging from the development of the new deviancy theory, labelling theory and the new criminology which invigorated criminological analysis so sharply in the 1960s and 1970s. Today "cultural criminology attempts to conceptualize the dynamics of class, crime and social control within the fluidity of contemporary capitalism" (Ferrell et al, 2008: 15), and locate its relevance within the social and cultural climate at the centre of this study. Specifically, Cultural criminology provided a supporting methodological outline to the approach to research in the urban context, through its flexible approach to research in an urban location and towards perceived deviant behaviour by young people such as "binge" drinking.

1.5.1 Origins of cultural criminology – the New Deviancy Conference

Drawing upon the rich tradition of criminological work within sociology – linked to David Downes, Stan Cohen, Paul Rock, Laurie Taylor, Ian Taylor, Paul Walton and Jock Young – and many of the key theories and ideas within this field, cultural criminology is "a rather more complex co-evolution of sociology, criminology, and cultural analysis" (Ferrell, 1999: 1). Crucial to its origins is an outline of the integral part played by the main scholars within the National Deviancy Conference (NDC) – namely Ian Taylor, Paul Walton and Jock Young – and their seminal text *The New Criminology* (1973). This study contextualised the argument towards a 'new criminology' by offering sharp critique of classical criminology (derived from the early 19th century work of Cesare Beccaria) and positivism (which sought to quantify crime and deviancy via scientific methods).

When measuring the value of the NDC's new approach to criminological analysis, it is vital not to understate the relevance of the Marxist position occupied by the NDC scholars which emerged in the 1970s. Their critique was central to the proposed movement away from classical criminology and positivism towards a new "criminology which is to be adequate ... to deal with society as a *totality*" (Taylor et al, 1973: 278; emphasis added), whereby overall social and cultural issues and status were considered within the analysis of crime and how

this affected the analysis of crime and deviance within criminology. Alvin Gouldner (1973) supports the NDC's assertion of society as a *totality* in his foreword to *The New Criminology*:

> "the Marxist has few illusions about the 'freedom' or spontaneity of the deviant, no impulse to romanticize his life; and he recognises that the deviant's existence, however authentic, does not really transcend the limits of larger society" (Gouldner; foreword in: Taylor et al, 1973: xiii-xiv)

Gouldner also makes clear parallels between the Marxist perspective of the NDC and the new direction being taken in criminology through *The New Criminology*: "the proper study of criminology is made thoroughly clear: it is a **critical understanding** of both the larger society and the broadest social theory" (Gouldner; foreword in: Taylor et al, 1973: x). As a consequence of this refined position, crime and the deviant would become located within a wider social and political context than previously considered:

> most of the classical and earlier biological psychological positivists are unable to offer out even a satisfactorily social explanation of the relationship between the individual and society: the individual in these accounts appears by and large as an isolated atom unaffected by the ebb and flow of social arrangements, social change and contradictions in what is, after all, a society of social arrangements built around the capitalist mode of production (Taylor et al, 1973: 276-7).

In bemoaning the clear lack of individualisation with which deviancy was regarded by positivism, and making clear their Marxist position, it is obvious that the NDC were keen to outline the role which positivism played in the nature of how "outsiders" became marginalised within the clearly defined social structures prevalent in society. This new approach to criminology was in response to the approaches initiated in sociology towards the definition and study of "deviants" across the previous decade, principally by Howard Becker and David Matza. Both Becker and Matza "set about challenging the 'absolutist monolith' which portrayed drug use as a disease found at the edges of society among the 'sick' and undersocialised" (Measham and Shiner, 2009: 504). Becker (1963: 149) relates definitions of young people as "deviant" to the notion of the 'Moral Entrepreneur' where he explains that "moral crusades are typically dominated by those in the upper level of social structure – [this] means that they add to the power they derive from the legitimacy of their moral position, the

power they derive from their superior position in society". In this way, Becker (1964: 2) saw the study of deviancy as "an interactive process involving deviants and non-deviants" where social and cultural norms created a sense of "outsider" which the "deviant" was enforced to subscribe to by "non-deviants" through attached social and cultural practices. Matza (1969: 181) also related deviancy as being placed upon groups by social and cultural norms in what he described as "labeling [*sic*]" where "subjects become deviant 'because' such a status is conferred upon them" by a dominant social structure.

Whilst, to its credit, the positivist revolution had evoked a unification of scientific methods within criminology which enabled society and man to be studied using the same analytical tools used in order to study the physical world (Taylor et al, 1973: 11), the NDC were keen upon "stressing the creative characteristic of culture, and hence the human creation of deviance *and* the human creation of the systems attempting to control it" (Ferrell et al, 2008: 31). Rather than assessing deviancy from the perspective of how the social conditions surrounding and pervading an individual's life might determine their actions – in fact deviancy might be a response to the controls and pressures stipulated by *imposed* social conditions – positivism reflects a society which does not recognise its own power to shape the experiences of individuals within it. Taylor et al (1973) express this succinctly: "It is important, at the outset, to realise that at the simplest level the positivist, by placing himself in the middle of the posited consensus, defends the reality of his own world" (p. 32-33). The NDC cite the positivist work of Cockett (1971) with working-class drug takers to exemplify this point:

> [they] were shown to be rather more suspicious and withdrawn than non-drugtakers, more emotionally tense and excitable, and more radical or less conservative in temperament, but to have relatively poor self-sentiment formation—persistence, will-power, social effectiveness and leadership (Cockett, 1971: 142)

Rather than understanding and analysing the drug takers from within their social and cultural conditions, or contextualising their drug use within the social and cultural landscape of the era, "All of this reinforces the middle-class professional world of the expert; his stable employment and marriage, deferred gratification and planning are all indices of his own 'strong' personality and social 'adequacy'" (Taylor et al, 1973: 33). By placing judgements upon the drug takers and setting-up oppositional perceptions between the worlds of

researcher and researched, the inherent values of the positivist researcher are effectively defining the very nature of 'deviancy' from within the values of his own world.

1.5.2 Cultural criminology, ethnography and '*criminological verstehen*'

Ferrell et al. (2008: 179) assert that cultural criminology "should be defined by an ethnographic sensibility" making this a methodological approach which resonated with the demands of undertaking research within the Canterbury night-time economy. This was an approach which outlines a relevant and sensitive methodological position from which to gather research data in keeping with cultural criminology's aims to evolve and integrate sociology, criminology, and cultural analysis. This theoretical framework and methodological approach has come to be defined as a process whereby "the criminologist can become part of the process by which meaning is made, witnessing the ways in which such people make sense of their experiences through symbolic codes and collective conversations" (Ferrell et al., 2008: 177). Use of this methodological position ensures ethnographic emphasis will be placed upon the assertion that contemporary cultural criminology responds to a society where:

> "contemporary capitalism is a system of domination whose economic and political viability, its crimes and its controls, rest precisely on its cultural accomplishments. Late capitalism markets lifestyles, employing an advertising machinery that sells need, affect and affiliation as much as the material products themselves. It runs on service economies, economies that package privilege and manufacture experiences of imagined indulgence" (Ferrell et al, 2008: 14).

Positioning itself within a cultural and social climate where systemic control of desire and lifestyle aspiration can feasibly be forwarded as one of the main driving forces behind waves of crime perpetrated by youths such as the riots which raged throughout the UK (6th-10th August 2011), and where mass looting of consumer products was one of the primary features, cultural criminology occupies a salient position in regards to unravelling the motive forces behind such violent, opportunist criminal actions as the "goal of gaining deep cultural and emotional knowledge is embodied in the concept of *criminological verstehen*" (Ferrell, 1997).

A concept developed by Max Weber, "*verstehen* denotes the subjective or appreciative understanding of others' actions and motivations – a deeply felt understanding essential for fully comprehending their lives" (Ferrell et al, 2008: 177), making this the ideal theoretical foil to adapt de Certeau's framework of a duality, to pursue his "urban *fact*" (de Certeau, 1984: 94) which understands the rich 'experiential dimension' of urban life (i.e. the authentic *lived* experience of urban life) and is guided by an anthropological view of the city. The ethnographic approach advocated by cultural criminology to research within an urban locus has been shown to be of great value within the context of the field work undertaken, and will be demonstrated by examples from the field work which will feature within the subsequent data chapters.

1.6 Illegal Leisure: The normalization of adolescent recreational drug use

Drug normalization theory has been used to describe the recreational drug use of young people (Parker et al, 1998), where drug use has become commonly understood as a part of young people's leisure pursuits. Coomber, McElrath, Measham and Moore (2013: 76) describe normalization as: "a concept which was developed to explain a significant increase in adolescent recreational drug use", specifically in the 1990s. This theory defines only recreational drug use or specific *types* of drug use, which are not defined by young people as "hard" or problematic drug use. This is a point upon which any link between 'normalization' theory and alcohol consumption by young people will reflect; to analyse and empathise with specific *types* of alcohol consumption amongst young people which demonstrate control and management of intoxication in the night-time economy. Further, this is considered to be a relevant theory with which to explain the recent advent and upsurge of extreme drinking practices amongst young people in the UK. Normalization thesis will be applied to both historical accounts of alcohol consumption and contemporary accounts of extreme drinking practices in the UK amongst young people. This approach will offer the opportunity to observe how these activities could be analysed minus the influence of often negative media coverage and ambiguous labels such as "binge" drinking which portray alcohol use by young people in a primarily negative light. The following literature traces the history and development of

normalization theory towards the normalization of extreme drinking practices featured in this thesis.

1.6.1 Contemporary 'normalization' theory: widespread 'recreational' drug use in the UK

Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998) identified and popularised the use of the term 'normalization' following their longitudinal ethnographic study of young people in the North-West of England during the 1990s – as outlined in their book *Illegal Leisure: The normalization of adolescent recreational drug use.* As indicated by this title, 'normalization' theory has primarily been applied to adolescent recreational drug use. The 1990s, the decade at the centre of the research, saw "the emergence of something quite unprecedented – widespread drug use amongst very large numbers of ordinary, conventional young people" (Parker et al., 1998: 1). In order to illustrate how drug use became more readily associated with a wider proportion of young people, and to advance the notion of a normalization of drug use, Parker et al. highlight different *types* of drug use which are represented by a perceived differentiation between 'hard' drug use and 'recreational' drug use: *"*young Britons have become ... such determined consumers of 'recreational' drugs to the point that we can begin to talk about the normalisation of this **type** of drug use*"* (Parker et al., 1998: 151; emphasis added). With the focus being placed upon differing *types* of drug use, this enables the application of 'normalization' theory towards adolescent drug use to concentrate specifically upon 'recreational' substances such as cannabis and ecstasy. These drugs, whilst classified, can be considered to be less harmful than, for instance, heroin and crack cocaine, which are defined as 'hard' drugs as they are more harmful to the individual and society in general (Nutt et al., 2010).

By indicating that drug use could be associated by research with "ordinary, conventional young people" (Parker et al., 1998: 1), the application of 'normalization' theory by Parker et al. can be seen to prompt and utilise a potential shift away from the classic image of drug use as a mainly deviant activity towards an image more readily associated with commonplace behaviour amongst young people. Consequently, Parker et al. are unerringly particular in specifying the substances which they connect to 'recreational' drug use in their study in order to present this differentiation between *types* of drug use: "[normalization] refers only to the

use of certain drugs, primarily cannabis but also nitrates, amphetamines and equivocally LSD and ecstasy. Heroin and cocaine are not included in the thesis. Similarly chaotic combination drug use and dependent 'daily' drug use form no part of our conceptualization." (Parker et al., 1998: 152). This outline of a specific set of substances, upon which 'normalization' thesis concentrates, also reinforces a differentiation between *types* of drug users and *types* of drug use, which can also be identified in different *types* of drinkers and *types* of drinking style or practices**.** This is a view which is further supported by the assertion that their research has indicated that an active form of organic self-differentiation exists within the culture of drug use amongst young people: "the minority of young people who use 'hard' drugs the hard way are not regarded as recreational drug users by most of their peers" (Parker et al., 1998: 151). The inherent suggestion within this statement is that the majority of young people who take drugs are aware of the potential pitfalls of 'hard' – or by implication problematic – drug use, and indicates that a modicum of human agency can be applied to the actions of young people who use recreational drugs. Whilst this view can be seen to disregard any negative effects or connotations of recreational drug use – i.e. that drugs such as ecstasy and cannabis could also be misused or abused by users – the view of these substances as less harmful to the individual than hard drugs such as heroin, crack cocaine and Metamfetamine is supported by recent scientific evidence with regard to the overall harm of drugs (Nutt et al., 2010: 1561; *Figure* 2).

The research of Parker et al. was undertaken during a period of time where recreational drug use became widespread amongst young people. Further to this, they are promoting a theory which portrays young people as complicit within their own decision-making with regard to the use of classified substances and of being able to make rational, considered decisions regarding their own personal consumption of these substances. This point is illustrated by their drawing of the attention towards "abstainers, cautious drug users and indeed many of our regular drug users [who] do not accept or accommodate such approaches to drug taking [i.e. hard drug use, chaotic or dependent drug use]" (Parker et al., 1998:151). These young people can be viewed to reflect a controlled understanding of their own consumption within which they feel comfortable.

1.6.2 Alfred D. Lindesmith and the origins of contemporary drug 'normalization' theory

The origins of contemporary drug normalization lie further back in the twentieth century than the work of Parker et al. in the 1990s. Blackman (2004: 137) states: "from the outset, the term 'drug normalization' has been used to critique inaccurate descriptions of drug users" and identifies the work of Alfred D. Lindesmith (1938) as the "first modern sociological application of the term 'normality' applied to drug consumption" (p. 137). Indeed, the argument of Parker et al. regarding the complicity of young people within the decision-making process – and the self-differentiation between hard drug use and recreational drug use – can be seen to reflect Lindesmith's initiation of the use of the term 'normal' to argue against these inaccurate descriptions of drug users and to focus upon a concentration upon the individual drug user. Lindesmith, whose work focussed upon users of opiates, asserted that approaches to "current theories of drug addiction tend to be moralistic rather than scientific" (Lindesmith, 1938: 593), which can potentially conceive a "misinformed view about drug use [which] is not only widespread among psychiatrists but is popularly held as well [throughout society]" (Blackman, 2004: 137). Furthermore, these moralistic theories can be seen to highlight how a negative impression of drug users has developed because "psychiatrists have ... viewed addicts as defective persons" (Lindesmith, 1938: 594), which culminates in the obvious effect of casting addicts within a negative light to the outside world.

In order to embellish this point, Lindesmith plays upon the term 'normal' with regard to drug use and hints at a level of ambiguity within its definition within this context: "the addict invariably claims that all the drug does is cause him to feel "normal"" (Lindesmith, 1938: 596). Therefore the implication is that addicts inhabit a differing perception of what defines "normal" from non-addicts; this they seek by pursuing their addiction – their 'normality'. On the contrary, ""normal" persons who are presumed by implication to be immune [from addiction]" (Lindesmith, 1938: 594) perceive their normality differently, and pursue this accordingly. The differentiation is embodied within the external perceptions of people who indulge in drug use, where the moralistic stance of labelling a drug user as "the "psychopath", who is assumed to be susceptible to addiction" (Lindesmith, 1938: 594) is central, and the purely defined 'normal' which is decided by social and cultural norms within society. The differentiation between and aversion to moralistic approaches argued by Lindesmith is in keeping with his demand for a more scientific approach to understanding drug use and the drug user. This approach also goes some way towards explaining the relevance of

contemporary 'normalization' thesis as presented by Parker et al., as this can be seen as a key with which to unlock further understanding of young people's recreational drug use without any pre-disposed moral judgements being placed upon the subjects of research within this field.

1.6.3 The role of deviancy within 'normalization' theory

Shiner and Newburn (1997), whilst reluctant to accept 'normalization' thesis with regard to young people's drug consumption, discuss Becker's (1963: 8) definition of deviance: "the application by others of rules and sanctions to an "offender"". They highlight this in order to outline how the process of 'normalization' might take effect. As with Lindesmith's contention that there are designated labels by which addicts and non-addicts are defined by psychiatrists, and resultantly by the wider society, it is implied by Becker that deviance is set-up in opposition to "normative" rules which are enforced by external forces onto the "offender". Becker's implied opposition between "deviant" and "normative" is also supported in greater detail by Matza (1969). He describes the process by which 'deviance' is decided or imposed as being the result of a complex set of oppositions and significations between society at large and the individual where the individual, or the potential "deviant", is the subject in relation to correction: "agents of signification complete the symbolic representation of a deviant person by claiming to cure or fix him" (p. 197). As such, it is invaluable to recognise that in order to negotiate a shift from common perceptions of "deviant" behaviour towards perceptions of "normal" behaviour that "it is necessary to show that as well as being widespread, this form of behaviour has become accepted as normal by the relevant audiences" (Shiner and Newburn, 1997: 512). Essentially, the demand is that the behaviour is seen to shift from the margins of what is accepted within normative society to being accommodated within normative society. These ideas can be seen as an articulation of the negative labels which can be effectively bestowed upon individuals and groups regarding behaviour and activities which might be considered to be outside of the social "norm" such as drug takers or "binge" drinkers.

It is possible to argue that within these ideas that an understanding of the nature of drug or alcohol consumption by young people can be sought. As Rock (1973: 84) asserts: "certain

kinds of deviancy may, indeed, become so normalised that they are no longer managed as deviant". Seemingly, it is to this end which Parker et al. strive to attain: "the concept of normalisation has been used in many contexts but essentially it is concerned with how a 'deviant', often subcultural, population or their deviant behaviour is able to be accommodated into a larger grouping or society" (Parker et al., 1998: 152). These ideas, and particularly the move to promote greater accommodation of perceived "deviant" behaviour within "normative" society, represent much of the strength which lies behind 'normalization' theory. Blackman reinforces this position: "One significant advantage of the normalization thesis with regard to recreational drug use is its potential temporarily to remove the moralistic and pathological understanding of drug consumption by placing it within the realm of cultural norms as a social practice" (Blackman, 2004: 138). By supporting the impression that primary amongst the strengths of 'normalization' theory are its capacity to eradicate – albeit briefly – the negative connotations imposed upon drug use by external forces, it is also necessary to reflect upon potential weaknesses within the application of the theory.

1.6.4 Critical application and inconsistency of 'normalization' theory

Critique of 'normalization' theory within the scope of this particular study is bound within the recognition of potential inconsistencies of the theory regarding the lack of any explicit connection between 'normalization' theory and alcohol consumption by young people. The aim will be to illustrate this potential inconsistency through making explicit reference to the normalization of alcohol use in British society historically, as well as highlighting potential areas where normalization can be potentially linked to current alcohol use through extracts from the fieldwork data regarding extreme drinking practices amongst young people. Via the introduction of further critique of 'normalization' theory within the argument of Blackman (2004), which identifies its emphasis upon only contemporary drug use as a weakness, it is hoped to demonstrate that a broadening of the focus of this theory can help to capture further understandings of drug and alcohol use which may so far have been overlooked. For instance, Measham and Shiner (2009: 507) argue that in relation to drug normalization theory:

Recent increases in drug use have been facilitated by the growing economic significance of leisure fuelled by the changing political economy of post-industrial societies and marked by growth of a massively expending, consumption-oriented night-time economy

In a similar fashion, it will be argued that the changing shape of the alcohol industry, influenced by the increase of drug use by young people, will show that not only does a normalization of alcohol use exist, but also that further practices of consumption such as extreme drinking practices which relate to the definition of "binge" drinking have become normalized in no small part by the shape of the night-time economy. However, the historic normalization of alcohol consumption will be used as a significant indicator of how alcohol has been positioned and possibly neglected within normalization theory.

To illustrate the point of a normalization of alcohol use, Parker et al. do define alcohol use as "a widespread, regular, legal and socially acceptable activity" (Parker et al., 1998: 51), and do allude heavily to alcohol use amongst young people in their research. They even concede that: "we can see that drinking is already **normalised**: it is the most widely practiced form of recreational drug use in the UK" (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 1986; cited in: Parker et al., 1998: 50; emphasis added). However, there is little further academic work to be found supporting this statement. Their view of drinking as a normalised activity is further supported by their contention that other everyday licit drug use such as tobacco smoking can also be seen as 'normal': "tobacco use is clearly normalised and most young people have tried a cigarette" (Parker et al., 1998: 152). This is a suggestion which clearly both regards and disregards the potential influence of these everyday substances upon the social lives of young people, whilst offering little contemplative analysis of the reasons as to why alcohol and tobacco use is so clearly normalized and is accepted as a social "norm" within the UK. Upon reflection, it is possible to argue that this statement suggests that the very ubiquity of alcohol use renders its position as a 'normalized' social activity as a given within British society and this may be why its position as 'normalized' has been subsequently overlooked in terms of in-depth research.

As previously indicated, amongst the most obvious strengths and benefits of 'normalization' theory are its capacity to temporarily neutralize the perception of drug use as 'deviant' or

marginalised behaviour and to draw its position closer to normative society. However, alongside the potential weaknesses with regard to alcohol use which this research will concentrate upon, further weaknesses have been previously identified in 'normalization' theory. For example, Blackman (2004: 133) suggests that the presence of drugs and their usage within various societies over thousands of years has become overlooked by 'normalization' theory: "Drugs have had a larger role in the evolution of human culture than has been previously acknowledged by academics". This is an argument he equates with the manner in which information regarding historical drug use has been tailored to suit European schools of thought: "bourgeois Victorian morality was influential and has shaped our understanding of the past through an exclusion or revision of the meaning drugs held within primitive cultures" (p. 132). Consequently, this manipulated moralistic reshaping of the understanding of historical drug use which deprives the role that intoxication has played within primitive cultures of the centrality of its relevance, unveils an opportunity with which to critique contemporary 'normalization' thesis: "a weakness of drug normalization theory has been its focus on the contemporary, where it lacks a historical context to understand drugs in society" (p. 127). Similarly, this can also be applied to alcohol consumption, due to its long-standing historical significance within UK culture and how its influence has fluctuated according to various laws and understandings of government across decades and centuries.

Such an argument reflects the space within which to expand upon the focus of 'normalization' theory, and to negotiate a space where alcohol consumption, or certainly the practices of consumption, can be allied with 'normalization' theory. Whilst Parker et al. have produced evidence towards a normalization of recreational drug use centred around the expanse in recreational drug activity in the 1990s, which was a result of the nascent and high-profile dance music scene of the late 1980s, it can be argued that examples of both ritualistic and social use of drugs can present a strong basis with which to support the notion of a normalization of drug use which persists historically over several centuries not just within the contemporary context featured in the research of Parker et al. which can strengthen the notion of how alcohol consumption can be identified with 'normalization' theory both contemporarily and historically. For instance, Levinthal (1985: 563) alludes to drug use within Classic Greek culture, where "opium was sold in the form of opium cakes and candies as well as beverages of opium mixed with wine", and within working-class nineteenth century Britain

"opium was a regular feature of Saturday night and the culture of the public house" (Blackman, 2004: 136). These illustrations of drug use in various cultures act as evidence of a rich and valuable source of human history which has been omitted and has altered the course of perception in relation to use of these intoxicants. Consequently, they also provide a basis with which to analyse and identify the historical use of alcohol as a normalised activity within society, and to reflect upon how the focus of 'normalization' theory may be broadened to analyse current drinking practices amongst young people such as extreme drinking practices (e.g. "shot" drinking, "speed" drinking) and how these practices are enacted within the night-time economy. Understandings of primitive drug use which was manufactured by elitist and moralistic views of history and anthropology in nineteenth century Europe, demonstrated the value in reassessing the historical position of substance use. Within this context, historical accounts of alcohol use may be reassessed in order to expose an explicit link to normalization which has persisted for thousands of years and may also be linked with current drinking practices amongst young people as exposed throughout the fieldwork of this study.

1.7 Conclusion

This literature chapter is based around an initial historical contextualisation of alcohol consumption in the UK, where the complexities of its social and cultural use are discussed and presented. Subsequently, a definition and potential redefinition of the term "binge" drinking in favour of "calculated hedonism" (Griffin et al, 2008: 4) is made, which supports the notion that young people's drinking has been subject to media and government attention which magnifies bad behaviour and focuses on a lack of "control" by young people. The overall depth of alcohol consumption in the UK both historically and contemporarily is highlighted not only by Hoggart (1957) and Thompson (1963) who depicted British working-class life with alcohol consumption at the centre of leisure outside of the workplace and during people's leisure time, but also by showing how alcohol is also perceived within media circles such as popular television products and the newspapers. The research of Nutt et al. (2010) provided scientific evidence supporting a reassessment of how alcohol is perceived within contemporary society. Further reference was also made towards the work of Park (1915) and Thrasher (1927) who were members of the Chicago School of sociology and Michel de Certeau

(1984) in order to position to the research methodologically, which acts to frame the research within the context of its urban location and the previous traditions of urban research which have supported research undertaken within an urban location. The introduction of academic research and theoretical frameworks which focus upon gathering human experience as the heart of studies in urban areas developed the methodological position to include the Canterbury night-time economy and the pub at the centre of the research as salient spaces of research. Finally, the literature regarding cultural criminology and drug 'normalisation' begins to formulate an argument towards how the potential of research within the framework of an ethnographic methodology in an urban space can support a theoretical framework which seeks to discern between the moralistic lens through which the consumption of alcohol and the activities of young people within the night-time economy are often viewed as "deviant" (Matza, 1969) within 'normative' society and the scientific approach to understanding drug use such as that outlined by Alfred D. Lindesmith (1938). This was adapted upon by Parker et al (1998) in their study into young people's adolescent recreational drug use which considers intoxication from outside of a problematic perspective as this research endeavours to research into how young people use alcohol in their leisure time to have good times with friends which did not result in negative outcomes for young people.

Chapter Two: Methodology

2 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodological approach taken within the fieldwork. Throughout the chapter, the key fieldwork position and domain will be contextualised and explained through descriptions of these areas of research and in relation to a potentially controversial field of study (Hollands, 1995: 4). Specifically this will relate to the Canterbury night-time economy, the pub where the research is focussed – which is named for the sake of anonymity within this thesis *The Mitre* – and how this was relevant to the aims and outcomes of the research. This will be allied with a discussion of the ethnographic methods used which were positioned within the tradition of ethnographic methodology within the Chicago School and a 'mapping' of the city, and how these have been utilised in the field to enable the gathering of a sample, the performing of participant observation and the undertaking of interviews (Bulmer, 1984). These methods are shown to be supportive of aspects of the cultural criminological approach detailed in the previous chapter, and also towards the biographical research approach forwarded in this chapter. The chapter seeks to position the researcher, the researched, and the fieldwork location within biographical research, whilst discussing further salient issues such as how the researcher can navigate the research process from inside this methodological position.

2.1 Locating *The Mitre*: the Chicago School urban ethnography tradition of 'mapping' the city

In this PhD research I have used urban ethnography methodology as devised at the Chicago School, which pioneered qualitative research methods focussed on using a "naturalistic" approach (Thrasher, 1927; Cressey, 1932). As outlined within the literature chapter, there is a clear impression that sociological research into gangs which built upon the methodological outline developed by Robert E. Park (1915) and was undertaken by Frederic Thrasher (1927) in Chicago was both challenging and innovative in the fashion which data was collected within the urban domain. In much the same way, the research at the centre of this study into the night-time economy of Canterbury city-centre sought to utilise ethnographic methodology in

order to unravel any potential myths surrounding alcohol use by young people and to present an authentic picture of the culture surrounding this activity within the city. This was in order to unravel the peculiarities which can be identified with the night-time economy of this domain, in alignment with Park's comments in the Editor's Preface to *The Gang* that: "Gangs, like most other forms of human association, need to be studied in their **peculiar habitat**" (Park, 1927: viii; emphasis added)**.** Consequently, this research focussed upon drinking patterns amongst young people within the *peculiar habitat* of the night-time economy of Canterbury, which featured the pub and club scene within the city where alcohol use amongst young people was ubiquitous, and particularly *The Mitre* pub in Canterbury city-centre where the research was primarily centred.

The city-centre of Canterbury as a potential site of research into the activities of young people within the night-time economy was conducive to research undertaken within the ethnographic tradition of the Chicago School, and the development of a detailed 'map' of this night-time economy of the city, the various forms of human life which inhabit it, and the prevalent modes of life present within this domain. Similarly to research aiming to unravel the media stereotypes and widely-held social perceptions regarding young people's alcohol consumption which colour the majority view of these activities, Thrasher aimed to make a break with the conventional view of urban life previously held: "The study is primarily an exploratory survey designed to reveal behaviour-trends and to present a general picture of life in an area little understood by the average citizen" (Thrasher, 1963: xi). As opposed to accepting an impression of urban life which is not the result of explicit research within the actual sites of human life under consideration, and integral to the ethos of fieldwork taking place within the night-time economy, the Chicago School demanded that their students gained an insight or a "feel" for the situation in which they gathered their field work data:

> [leaders of the Chicago School] were not afraid to urge their students to trust their feelings for a situation or an event, were not afraid to stress the role of insight, and to warn against a slavish devotion to figures, charts, graphs, and sterile scientific techniques (Wright, 1945: xix).

Via this exhortation to their students to immerse themselves within the "feel" of an environment which is the subject of sociological study, the Chicago School sociologists placed

emphasis upon "'how to get facts' and their dissection and classification" (Short, 1963: xvii-xviii). This led to the detailed analysis and descriptions of the city of Chicago as illustrated by Thrasher in *The Gang*. Bar work and subsequent participant observation within the Canterbury night-time economy as an approach to data collection was found to be sympathetic to the methods explored by the Chicago School, as the nature of spaces of alcohol consumption often demanded that I trusted my own feelings and instincts as researcher within the field. Examples of this 'trust' and 'feel' will be detailed through accounts from the fieldwork in Chapter Three. The following sections will unveil specific aspects of interest within Canterbury, the location of the fieldwork, and introduce some of the groups of people who occupied a position within the night-time economy.

2.2 Fieldwork setting and position

This research has been carried out within the urban setting of the Canterbury night-time economy in the South-East of the United Kingdom, utilising in particular my position as bartender in a vibrant city-centre pub *The Mitre*. The city of Canterbury, and much of its night-time economy, is enveloped with the city-walls which were first erected by the Romans in the late third century in order to defend the settlement from the threat of attack. By facilitating ethnographic methods such as observation, participant observation and interviewing, it was possible to create a distinct picture of the night-time economy in Canterbury and shed light upon how various groups of people interact and behave within the urban "laboratory" (Park, 1915: 612). Research undertaken within this fieldwork setting was well placed to offer a unique insight into the everyday social activities which occurred within the Canterbury night-time economy by virtue of the centrality of the pub to the night-time economy of the city. Parker (1974: 232), in his PhD research *'View from the Boys: A Sociology of Downtown Adolescents'* undertaken in Liverpool, noted the tradition of the Chicago school in relation to studies of groups of young people: "William Whyte noted the importance of having the support of key individuals in any group he studied ethnographically". During my research, the support of Andrew, the licensee of *The Mitre*, was critical in how I approached the research and research participants from within my position as bartender, as will be established in Chapter Three. Furthermore, Parker's research position also traced that of Matza (1969):

"Matza's demand is for a constant effort by the sociologist to stay true to the phenomenon he is studying" (p. 14). Similarly, in my research a specific focus was placed upon the phenomenon of consumption of alcohol by 18-30 year-olds within a city-centre location, alongside the investigation of the activity commonly termed "binge" drinking.

Furthermore, the aim was also to compare and contrast attitudes towards and the consumption of alcohol between student samples and young people involved in primarily manual-labour based workplaces from around the city of Canterbury and the surrounding areas. Indeed, this fieldwork location was conducive to research undertaken within the urban environment and within the parameters laid out by Park (1915: 586) regarding the breadth and depth of human life concentrated within this environment:

> Among the types it would be interesting to study are: the shopgirl, the policeman, the peddler, the cab-man, the nightwatchman, the clairvoyant, the vaudeville performer, the quack doctor, **the bartender**, the ward boss, the strike-breaker, the labour agitator, the school teacher, the reporter, the stockbroker, the pawnbroker; all of these are characteristic products of the conditions of city life; each, with its special experience, insight and point of view determines for each vocational group and for the city as a whole its individuality (emphasis added).

Whilst the specificities of vocational life may have differed within the ninety year period between Park's essay and this current research, the rich mix and blend of human life within a city-centre pub was still reflected within the patrons who frequented it; professional life was represented by white-collar workers who drink after their day's work, as manual-labour is reflected within the blue-collar workers who also frequented the pub. Class distinctions were easily identifiable within the patrons of the nearby theatre who frequented the pub and the demographics of those participants in the night-time economy who specifically frequented the pub for the primary purpose of alcohol consumption during a night out. Specifically, the shopgirl was represented manifestly through many encounters in the field and particularly by the sample accessed through acquaintances from a local supermarket, as was the cab-man (taxi driver), the school teacher, the reporter and, of course, the bartender who was represented throughout the network of employees who operate within the night-time economy and become familiar faces throughout this particular industry in the city and also by

the actual role of bartender occupied during much of the field work by myself within *The Mitre*. Further groups of prevalent within the night-time economy during the fieldwork were the ubiquitous student fraternity and also the members of the Armed Services who occupied the barracks in the city known as 'squaddies'. These were unveiled by the immersive qualities offered by the dual roles of bartender and researcher as occupied in the field which helped to produce rich data conducive to producing the 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973: 78)

2.2.1 My fieldwork position and researcher positionality

The position of bartender at *The Mitre* afforded me constant access to various groups of young people within the Canterbury night-time economy, as well as the eliciting of an intimate view of the workings of the network of pubs and licensed premises across the night-time economy as an 'insider researcher'. By positioning myself within the Canterbury night-time economy, and utilising this position to undertake an ethnographic data collection process, I was reliant upon my own instincts and judgements to support this process and also to maintain focus upon the sociological aspect of the research. This was characterised the data examples in the next section on 'insider research' and throughout this thesis where the drinking practices and activities of young people are detailed through ethnographic data passages taken from the fieldwork notes. Measham and Moore (2006: 25) argue that: "without a reflexive consideration of the social, emotional and intellectual location of the researcher and its implications for the research process, club research risks doing injustice to the millions of people for whom clubs and clubbing have become an integral part of their leisure time and possibly their identity". This reflexive approach also made the navigation of this research by me towards a theoretical understanding of the patterns of drinking and movements of young people within the night-time economy, where my social, emotional and intellectual location was often positioned from within aspects of my autobiographical background. The bartender's job at *The Mitre* occurred through a sustained spell of familiarisation which was undertaken within the Canterbury night-time economy at the beginning of the research. Having spent three years as an undergraduate studying in the city, I was familiar with certain aspects of, and the 'whereabouts' of, many of the licensed premises in the city, but was keen to build relationships with occupants within the night-time economy

in which I had not previously engaged. Through the utilisation of prior friendships with people who were more familiar with the workings of the night-time economy and the figures within it, I was able to strike up new relationships and friendships; this led to the offer to work behind the bar of *The Mitre*, the city-centre pub which became the focal point of the data collection. Having revealed the nature of my intentions to utilise this position to dual-functions (bartender and researcher), I was pleased to hear that the licensee of the pub had no issues with my using the peculiar habitat of the pub as a central focus for my research (McPherson, 2016: 95). This, of course, relied upon my ability to perform the necessary aspects of bar work within a busy city-centre environment to the best of my ability and within the parameters which the role of bartender demands. Situations faced during the fieldwork outlined the idea that these roles were not mutually exclusive, which will be alluded to in the subsequent data chapters.

As stated previously, my position as bartender enabled me to build relationships with potential participants which would have been much more difficult to achieve otherwise. It was suited to the process of ethnographic research as it is a naturally sociable one, which depended on interaction between the bartender (in this case myself as researcher) and the patrons who frequented the pub. Consequently, it became more convenient for me to mention the nature of my research during the everyday conversations which arise naturally between bar staff and patron within the pub habitat. This also enabled me to gauge the interest of the young people that I was conversing with in being a potential part of any research participation, and my own interest in including them in the research. Whilst this process often came to naught, often-times the persistent nature of the pub habitat would lead to familiarisation and comfortable relations between me and potential participants which grew in an organic fashion over a steady time-frame which developed into ethnographic opportunities or "to 'set-up a scenario' with willing participants" (McPherson, 2016: 95) where ethnographic data collection would transpire quickly due to the transient nature of the pub. A strong familiarisation occurred between me and several constant regular participants within the Canterbury night-time economy, as well as members of staff and other licensees who were prepared to speak with me about the nature of their own roles within the night-time economy. This enriched the data-collection process, alongside the immediacy of the pub which allowed for drinking scenarios to develop in front of me due to the

spontaneous nature of urban drinking spaces. Housed within the tradition outlined by the Chicago School, this successful process of immersion into the Canterbury night-time economy enabled the urban location of Canterbury city-centre and its attendant features to become the focal point of the research; such is the insight offered by combining the role of bartender and researcher, many unexpected avenues of research were unearthed.

Researcher positionality was central to the justification of the chosen research topic and context, and also the duality of roles presented by the bartender/researcher. This was related to the particular theme of 'personal stance', which was reflected in the beliefs and understandings of myself as the researcher in relation to my research participants and within my chosen research context (Measham and Moore, 2006). Savin-Baden and Howell-Major (2013: 7) argue: "Positionality emanates from personal stance. Positionality, however, is more narrowly defined than researcher stance in that it reflects the position the researcher has chosen to adopt within a given research study". My intentional choosing of the research context of the Canterbury night-time economy meant that the position of bartender chosen by myself as the researcher became integral to the research process, as I immersed myself into the social context of young people's leisure practices myself. Consequently my autobiographical background and personality became central to the research strategy and research practice, and to how I navigated the research through this position. Moser (2008: 383) describes the impact of researcher postionality:

> I found that it was aspects of my personality, such as my social skills, my emotional responses to and interest in local events, how I conducted myself and the manner in which I navigated the personalities of others that were the main criteria by which I was judged. This is turn affected my access to certain people, the degree to which they opened up and their shared stories and views, and ultimately had an impact on the material gathered.

Similarly, by building upon my own personal youthful experiences within sites of intoxication and workplace background within manual-labour jobs as well as the world of academia, the flexibility conferred upon the dual roles of bartender/researcher was used to establish my autobiographical identity and personality as a not only a key aspect of the research process, but also in justification as to my presence in the field. This flexibility led to intentional

fieldwork experiences with students and workers from around the Canterbury night-time economy, which built upon aspects of my autobiography and personality as a form of access where "occupying certain positions and being aware of them may, for example, encourage researchers to take up projects that will place them at an advantage as an 'insider'" (Moser, 2008: 385). As Savin-Baden and Howell-Major argue: "research necessarily will influence and be influenced by research context" (2013: 73); these autobiographical experiences exacted an inevitable influence upon the research process for me, and enabled me to position myself within a field of potentially controversial research where my reflexive approach enabled me to maintain a strong researcher identity aside from my position as bartender.

2.2.2 Insider research and the potential for 'role conflict'

During the research, I occupied the role of 'insider researcher' through the position of bartender at *The Mitre*. Merton (1972) stated that the 'insider' is an individual who possesses *a priori* intimate knowledge of the community and its members; although I was familiar with intoxication and sites of intoxication through my autobiographical background, I was also using this insider position to explore more thoroughly and gain deeper insight into young people drinking. O'Reilly (2009: 110) argued that adopting a position within your chosen research community enabled deeper exploration:

> The more or less explicit goal of thorough ethnographic research is to gain an insider perspective and to collect insider accounts. In order to achieve this insider perspective, it is considered best to adopt (if you do not already have one) an insider role within the community.

Insider research such as that undertaken through my role as bartender at *The Mitre* was aimed at locating this insider perspective across a period of time which allowed this position to evolve within the research setting. However, it must be noted that this position did require methodological choices to be made during various instances, where valuable data collection was potentially both gained and lost; this was often dependent upon my own previous knowledge of sites of intoxication, and also of individual communities such as manual workers

through my previous work experiences, and students through my role in academia. As a male researcher in his early 30s, whilst I was able to find access into groups of young male drinkers quite straight forwardly through the background of shared experiences (e.g. workplaces/motivations for drinking/sports/music), it was potentially more difficult for me to access groups or individual young female drinkers even in my role as an insider researcher. This was eased to quite an extent through the access granted to me of female colleagues at the pub where I could develop a relationship of trust across a sustained period and through shared experiences behind the bar, which also granted me access to female friends and other female acquaintances of theirs. Young female research participants were also located through male research participants, where mixed-gender groups were frequent, as can be seen later in the thesis through the groups at study in the data chapters. Whilst I found myself welcomed into these groups, I was never in a position to spend time away from *The Mitre* with all-female groups, and only encountered these drinking groups from my position behind the bar when groups of young women frequented the pub. Whilst these encounters did provide strong observations of the dynamics of young women drinking together, I was never able to gain the deeper insight into motivations which a female researcher may have been afforded, or possibly a younger male.

Chavez (2008) notes that in some instances insider researchers may be considered to be *total insiders*, who share multiple identities or profound experiences with the community they are studying, or in other instances *partial insiders*, who share a sole identity with a certain extent of distance or detachment from the community. During my research at *The Mitre,* the role of bartender gained me vital access as a *partial insider* within the group at study, as I was also distanced by the formality of the bar itself, and at times by the constraints of the business of the pub. During interactions at the bar, any commonalities which I had with patrons could then potentially enact an influence upon the methodological process. This enabled me to avoid too much subjective involvement with participants – rather than being a part of the group within the pub, the bar permitted critical distance from the group at study. Whilst this meant that at times I was part of interventions towards young people drinking where maybe arguments broke out, or there were instances of clear over-intoxication as mentioned previously, this meant I was able to avoid "subjective involvement – [which was] a deterrent to objective perception and analysis" (Aguiler, 1981: 15). Whilst this argues that the

perception of the insider researcher becomes narrowed, and too familiar, during my research I found that the role of bartender provided a useful distance where I was able to enact influence upon the immediate environment around me should my judgement deem it necessary, and also to maintain a crucial objective distance with the research setting and research participants. These positions did leave the potential space of 'role conflict' at stages during the research, where I had to assess the condition of young people drinking and the moral and ethical responsibilities which I had to both the pub and the university. For example, on some occasions, I did tell individuals that I was unable to serve them due to their state of intoxication where my judgement was supported by how the licensee Andrew wished his business to be run. In particular at times, I was asked to circulate the pub selling shots to customers ("Jager Runs") which feature later in the thesis during the data chapters. It should be noted that during these times I made judgements as to young people's states of inebriation whilst making decisions as to whether to partake or not in this extra alcohol consumption. This was again supported by the licensee of the pub, who was keen that we as bar staff were flexible in our approach to young people's intoxication and making judgement of this.

There are ways in which this flexible approach to insider research which was a blend of two roles, whilst potentially risking the authenticity of some situations within the pub due to soft or hard interventions, could also be seen to maintain credibility within a complex and spontaneous research setting. It is important to note that the individual research setting and has an influence upon this: "the experiences of individual researchers vary according to the nature of their research, the familiarity of the investigator with the participants, and the context under investigation" (Adam, 2013: 6). Guba (1981) suggests several techniques that may be employed to establish credibility as an insider: prolonged engagement and persistent observation, which I was able to achieve across the course of extended interactions with groups and individuals due to the recurring nature of my position within the research setting of the pub. Hellawell (2006) writes that he encourages his doctoral students to exercise reflexivity in their own research. He gives an example of how this may be accomplished through the writing of an extended methodology section of the thesis. This I also did by extensively discussing in particular the ethnographic scenario of the "Rock n Roll builders" which features in Chapter Three, and a discussion of how I negotiated my position as an insider through my familiarisation with the role of bartender and the duties this entailed

alongside how my own personal autobiographical background enacted an influence upon the research setting. During the Chapter Four, I also describe and map the pub and the Canterbury night-time economy to enlarge upon how my role of bartender extrapolated into a role of insider researcher within the wider Canterbury night-time economy. This extended discussion enacts a specific purpose and influence upon the research: to maintain a sense of reflexivity and objectivity which was developed during the immediate observations and interactions with research participants across an extended period of fieldwork in the research setting where both a workplace and research role were being enacted.

These approaches, which factored in the amount of time devoted to building and establishing rapport with research participants and also the research setting, enabled me to build convincing relationships with young people who were prepared to not only tell me about their individual and collective experiences, but also to share them with me as I observed them immediately through my position behind the bar at *The Mitre*, or joined them on evenings out around the Canterbury night-time economy. However, being entangled with my participants and sharing common experiences led me to encounter role ambiguity in my research journey to a certain extent. Role ambiguity is associated with role duality (being the researcher and the colleague), and role conflicts (doing research work and helping with participants' work), which are often claimed to be part of an insider-researcher's journey (Coghlan, 2001, 2007; Coghlan & Holian, 2007; Moore, 2007). During the research, I was always careful to maintain some distance from research participants as they, too, were often enacting two roles within the research process of colleague or patron and research participant; conscious efforts were made to not make others feel as if I was scrutinising their every move, and also to join them socially at the pub or elsewhere on occasion as befitted the role of a colleague rather than a researcher. Here, whilst I would share a few drinks with young people, it was clearly defined that this was a social situation rather than a research one. This was built from the evolution of relationships with research participants which were developed over the time which the fieldwork had allowed, and also reinforced the relationship of trust and respect which had formed through both the workplace and the research setting as "insiders believe they blend in more, gain more **rapport**, participate more easily" (Ellen, 1984: 114; original emphasis). As a consequence of this strong and flexible relationship where I was involved in research participants' lives on multiple levels, it also

enabled me to validate the veracity of their accounts through the depth of the relationships which were built. Research participants were prepared to share potentially embarrassing stories with me, based on how I had seen them socially in the pub, the sharing of stories and experiences with other people, and were also aware of my motivations behind the research as they saw me as a non-judgemental figure who was certainly a partial insider in the community at study, but not someone who was total insider through the ability to separate myself and allow young people the space to enjoy themselves without prior prejudice through the experiences I had gained during my prior adult life.

2.2.3 Canterbury and its night-time economy

Canterbury is a cathedral city based in Kent in the south-east of England. The city has a very traditional pub-based drinking culture which exists within the confines of the city, creating a distinct area within which a large proportion of the Canterbury night-time economy exists. Each of these pubs provided a different peculiar environment within which to undertake research as a direct result of the varying demographics of the patrons, and also often what the pub itself offers to these patrons by way of drink offers, entertainments (e.g. Sky Sports, pool tables), food, or licensing hours. The various demographics and entertainments of pubs which were available would often affect the nature of the alcohol consumption and how young people perceived the drinking space. Various sites became more prevalent during the fieldwork, due to the understandings shown by young people of specific drinking spaces and how they would be perceived in these spaces. Paradoxically, the main night-clubbing experiences could be found outside of the jurisdiction of these walls, in an effort to spread the night-time economy over a broader area of the city's main urban location, although late-night drinking and more contained night-club experiences are available in certain establishments around the city-centre. The mainstream night-clubs which exist outside the city walls could often be seen to be the centre of unrest in the early mornings (typically 2:00am) which requires the attention of the local police constabulary, although this was also notable within the pub scene around the city during the fieldwork. These concerns could be recognised to be related to private residential concerns within the city centre, which were a reaction to the more vast numbers expected at night-clubs, the nature of the loud music prevalent in these establishments and the later licensed hours bestowed upon such

establishments which dictate that patrons are often at the tail-end of an alcohol session which has left them worse-for-wear and potentially incoherent. Both the pub and club spaces became sites which were integral aspects of the ethnographic research undertaken, and were often guided by the activities of contacts made with participants through the role of bartender in the pub. Primarily, in this fashion, the ethnographic research was dictated by the movements of the participants around the Canterbury night-time economy or who entered *The Mitre* when I was present.

An additional element to the vibrancy of the Canterbury night-time economy during the fieldwork was the vast student population which featured prominently within the city. Canterbury was the site of two university campuses which are independent of one another: Canterbury Christ Church University and the University of Kent, with an aggregated total of around 30,000 students between them, as well as smaller Higher Education institutions. The occupation of the Canterbury night-time economy by vast numbers of student drinkers offered excellent insight into how students impacted upon the local economy, and how inclusion within this scene impacted upon the behaviour of the individuals and groups within it; this was something which was built from the students earliest arrival during Fresher's Week, where they would be guided around the city by second and third year students and shown to the specific licensed premises: "organised mass student excursions around spaces of nightlife that have proved controversial in many British towns and cities" (Hubbard, 2011: 265). This was due primarily to the vast population of young people aged 18-30 detailed by the statistics of the student population, which further showcased Canterbury as an urban space with a very active and multi-faceted night-time economy, and also as a site where intoxicated behaviour by young people would clearly be encountered. This also reinforced Canterbury night-time economy a site which was conducive to ethnographic research within the traditions of the Chicago School where wide numbers of a broad spectrum of groups of people were commonly identified and immersed into through the role of bartender.

Immersion into the night-time economy demonstrated that local businesses existing within the night-time economy (licensed premises, taxis, fast food) relied heavily on the income provided by students who were in and around the Canterbury pub and night-club scene throughout every night of the week, and offered the insight which Park alludes to when outlining the vast nature of occupations which can be encountered within the urban

environment. For example, during periods outside of term-time, there was an easily noticeable drop-off in numbers of students around the city-centre; a fact also borne out by the smaller amount of trade within *The Mitre* when it became noteworthy that there were far less students occupying the night-time economy. This effect upon the night-time economy was recognisable by primary observation and also within conversations with other bar staff, licensees, fast food workers and taxi drivers who noticed this trend the most due to the potential reliance of their business or employer upon the vast numbers of students.

Whilst the dynamic of the Canterbury night-time economy was heavily affected by the student population, there was also a large presence of young people who were native to the local area. Not only did young people from Canterbury frequent the city-centre, but there was a large demographic which travelled to the city from nearby towns such as Whitstable, Herne Bay, Dover, Faversham and Sittingbourne. Often these young people would be observed to be from primarily manual labour backgrounds who perceived Canterbury, with some justification, as a 'student city'; voicing opinions such as Carl (23, manual worker) who told me that he and his friends only came to Canterbury occasionally as *"Canterbury's full of students isn't it"* as if this made local young people feel like outsiders within their own locality. Hollands (1995: 27) commented upon the student/local young people divide in Newcastle during his research into young people's drinking: "[in the research there was a] well recognised distinction between local and 'studentish' pubs". Consequently to this divide, which was also present in the Canterbury night-time economy, these groups of local young people were often represented by fleeting, temporary encounters which took place primarily in the pub at the centre of the research but also in the street, other pubs and clubs as local young people used specific pubs or often passed through *The Mitre* quickly due to its position away from the main High Street and the large student fraternity it attracted due to its late licence across its weekly opening days of Monday-Saturday. These encounters were made possible as although there was often an easily identifiable air of an attitude of 'us and them' between locals and students, the young people from local towns were still attracted to Canterbury by its pleasant surroundings and the multitude of pubs and clubs which it offered. The presence of these groups further enriched Canterbury as a site of ethnographic research, and became easier to potentially access through the process of immersion into the night-time economy which my position as bartender made possible.

2.2.4 The pub and the surrounding area

The Mitre was particularly conducive to research undertaken within the Canterbury night-time economy due primarily to its position as one of only two traditional pubs within the city walls which had a consistent late licence. The pub served alcohol until 1:00am, before closing for business at 1.30am. This typically meant that many customers arrived from other pubs after their 'kicking-out time' of between 11:00pm and 12:00am in search of further alcohol drinking time within a licensed premises. These customers were often not interested in joining the more commercially driven 'clubbing' demographic of the city which features intense loud mainstream music, alongside the potential of expected codes of dress which may entail a collared shirt, trousers and shoes for males.

The Mitre was based within a fairly residential area, just away from being directly in Canterbury city-centre. Demonstrative of the concentration of licensed premises within Canterbury city-centre, it was situated within around 1-2 minutes' walk from fifteen other licensed establishments: two hotels, eight pubs, two restaurant/pubs, a music club and two bars. This statistic discounted restaurants whose primary focus was on serving food, of which several were also nearby. Within a five minute walk, there were also two J.D. Wetherspoon's pubs, which attracted plenty of custom due to their friendly pricing scheme and continual drinks promotions alongside various other pubs and bars within the city walls. Each of the other establishments mentioned (other than the Wetherspoon's pubs) had specific or general demographics which they are marketed towards, whereas *The Mitre* gathered many of these alternate social strata together under one roof as a consequence of its hours of trade. It was not a pub which contained a pool table, nor did it offer the attraction of Premier League football via big-screen satellite TV or provide cooked food. This led to a very mixed clientele: mainly frequented regularly by student-based customers; locally based working-class young people who tended to 'pass through' rather than stay for long; members of the armed forces from the army barracks based in the town; other employees within the Canterbury night-time economy; as well as middle-aged customers who may be shoppers or theatre goers who tend to leave the pub around the more traditional 11pm or even before. *The Mitre* was, by definition of its wide demographics, a licensed premises which was suited to Park's idea of

the city as an urban "laboratory", and the adaptation of this idea into the pub itself as an urban "laboratory" on a micro-level. Immersion into its daily-life and routine uncovered the many opportunities for ethnographic research to which Park alluded in his essay, and enabled this research to occupy a unique position from which to approach the data collection process.

2.2.5 Street space outside the pub

Further relevance to the focus of the fieldwork could also be placed upon the street space outside the pub, which has taken on a different characteristic since the UK smoking ban was enforced in 2006, as was also the case with many other licensed premises. A fair proportion of the patrons of the pub were smokers, which was undermined by the pub's lack of a beer garden to accommodate them. Consequently this established an enforced extension of the social space of the pub which stretched into the street, as smokers were forced into an outside area where there is no alcohol license. This then became an area with different guidelines from within the premises which required control by the licensee and staff, creating further demands within these roles which could be dictated by the behaviour of drinkers, relating to noise, mess and alcohol consumption; each of which was the responsibility of the licensee of the pub. Whilst the street was not in theory a site of alcohol consumption due to the absence of an outside alcohol license, it was inhabited by young people who were taking part in the consumption of alcohol, either by their participation in alcohol consumption, their state of inebriation, or often if they had covertly transported their drink outside the pub without the bar staff noticing. This street space again served as a site of data collection which in itself was different from inside the pub where I was able to make conversation with people and observe young people's behaviour. In this space of human activity, the different demands which were placed upon drinkers and licensees by the laws concerning licensing and smoking in the UK provoke varying actions and outcomes, often provoked different behaviour in young people from how they were acting inside *The Mitre*.

2.2.6 Positives and negatives of *The Mitre* as a fieldwork location

Bar work at *The Mitre*, one of the busiest and latest opening licensed drinking spaces in Canterbury, combined with primarily observation-based research was relevant to immersive ethnographic research methods such as those outlined by Hammersley and Atkinson (1995: 14): "Ethnographers sample (participate and observe in) settings, with people and groups, in various contexts and at different times of the day, month and year". The work patterns demanded by the hours of trade of *The Mitre*, entailed early evenings (5:00-9:00pm) and late nights (8:00pm-2:00am), and ensured a constant variety of people, days, times and contexts within the fieldwork location, alongside an inside view of the cycle to which the Canterbury night-time economy was subject throughout all parts of the year. This enabled me to position myself within the Canterbury night-time economy, and to observe current trends and themes relating to the consumption of alcohol within a site of alcohol consumption, aligned within a perspective of outside the consumer group. As stated previously, the position of bartender enabled me to interact easily with the majority of customers within the pub, to gain insights into people's motive forces and also to gain more local knowledge regarding the night-time economy. Often, the distinctly social nature of bar work enabled me to become involved in conversations effortlessly and seamlessly as an integral component within the social setting (McPherson, 2016: 98). This process was all made markedly easier as the role of bartender demanded the maintenance of my own sobriety, which made the data recording process more efficient and was particularly helpful when unexpected or spontaneous situations may have arisen in the field which required negotiation skills and clear judgement.

However, the hours concerned and the at times intensive nature of the bar work itself, whilst vitally opening up a site of rich data collection, could be very tiring, meaning that field observations were often written up at around 4:00am after a shift, and with reliance often being placed upon memory or rough notes made in spare moments. Such an undertaking also placed demands upon my stamina as a researcher, and further demands upon the other aspects of academic research which exist outside of the field. At all times, the fieldwork was guided by the spontaneous nature of the environment and actions of individuals and groups in the pub, including potentially risky encounters which could occur at any time during a shift. Importantly, a central positive of pub bar work was the potential to ensure an element of control for the researcher in terms of how potentially aggressive or anti-social behaviour could be managed or navigated through the responsibility conferred upon this role. This could

be utilised in any attempts to calm down potential trouble or conflict through showing, for example, a calm exterior or good communication and leadership skills in the field. Of course, the negative aspect was the potential for any conflict to go too far; possibly a threat could be made not only to those around you but also to yourself, as was experienced when a glass was thrown from the pub entrance towards the bar I was occupying by a particularly aggressive customer which narrowly missed me and also several customers. Whilst such incidents were extremely isolated, such flashpoints demonstrated that at times it can be stated with much certainty that the field and the night-time economy in general could be a dangerous place to occupy. This was the potential danger of spending time doing research in a site of alcohol consumption, but also resulted in some of the most vital and rich data collection.

2.2.7 The presence of illegal drug use by young people at *The Mitre*

My fieldwork position at *The Mitre* did have an effect upon my methodological decisions and did impact upon the findings, as *The Mitre* was not a leisure space where illegal drug use by young people was encountered. Leslie et al (2017: 27) discuss the presence of illegal drugs in the night-time economy: "Illicit stimulants are often combined with alcohol in nightlife entertainment districts". However, during the research, illegal drug use did not reflect any specific significance to the thesis, its research aims or the findings as it was not a visible feature in the fieldwork setting, nor was it the subject of the central research aims. Whilst Measham and Moore (2009: 438) argue that "The role of illicit drug use within the 21st century NTE and its relationship to alcohol-focused leisure has yet to be considered in detail", at the outset of my research the focus was upon identifying groups of young people who participated specifically in extreme drinking practices in the Canterbury night-time economy. This was to consider how their extreme drinking practices may reflect a normalisation of this activity within this specific night-time economy which might be considered across other night-time economies in the UK. When attempting to locate myself within the group at study by finding my access to groups of young people drinking, my initial approach was to spend time with some prior acquaintances from Canterbury, who used the night-time economy on a regular basis, and two of whom worked within it at *The Mitre*. During this period, my focus was upon engaging with the group which I was aiming to study: young people drinking. At this

time, I spent time talking to my acquaintances and building a relationship with Andrew which resulted in my being offered the role of bartender at *The Mitre*, and also where I began to gain insight into how different groups of people used and consumed alcohol. During my fieldwork at *The Mitre*, there was never any clear evidence of illegal drug use by customers, and neither did the young people with which I undertook research have any inclination toward the use of illegal drugs. There was evidence of the use of illegal drugs around the Canterbury night-time economy with tragic outcomes: 'Canterbury pond death pair had drugs and alcohol in bodies' (Kent Online: 08 March, 2012) and 'Kent's rising death toll from a drug '75 times stronger than heroin' which many users don't even know they're taking' (Kent Live: 04 February 2018). Two of the victims of these illegal drug and alcohol related deaths were familiar to me through my fieldwork at *The Mitre*, and this reflects that there were other spaces which I did not inhabit in the Canterbury night-time economy during the fieldwork where illegal substance use was commonplace; this was partly as a result of my research design, which was focused on young people drinking, and partly because I also did not encounter clear evidence of illegal drug use.

As an individual space *The Mitre* was not somewhere where visible illegal drug use was common. This was because of several factors, but mainly due to Andrew being a very present and active part of the pub every evening, the size and intimacy of the pub itself where clear and blatant illegal drug use would most likely detected, and also the wide-ranging nature of the clientele and opportunities to go to other places where maybe young people would be more comfortable with undertaking illegal drug use. The central aim of the research to examine young people's extreme drinking practices was possible due to the late license at the pub, and also Andrew's willingness to adapt the pub due to commercial objectives. Consequently, illegal drugs were not a visible feature of the research setting, and therefore the young people which the research became exposed to were not involved in the use of illegal drugs which entailed that they had no impact upon the findings of the research. Had it been that I had become involved with different groups of young people, through different establishments, it could well have been that illegal drugs were an emergent feature of the ethnography and of the thesis. The most noticeable feature of the research was the use of energy drinks alongside alcohol, as discussed in the data chapters. Here it can be seen that these stimulants were used in a way which reflects the effects of amphetamines upon young

people; they were used to reinvigorate and lengthen participation in the night-time economy, much as cocaine has been perceived to fulfil this role. Pennay et al. (2015: 356) describe how energy drinks have come to be a familiar part of the setting of the night-time economy as well as potentially illicit substance use: "Over the past 5 years the co-consumption of alcohol and stimulants has received increased attention, reflecting novel combined use of alcohol with illicit and licit stimulants, including energy drinks". This suggests that although it does not seem that these legal stimulants have acted to replace illegal drug use in the night-time economy, it certainly hints at the shift in the culture of drinking by young people where the alcohol industry has developed another way of maintaining participation for longer and to greater levels of intoxication which is a focus of this research. The use of these stimulants was one of the most prevalent and noticeable trends during the fieldwork, and became a central focus in my examination of how extreme drinking practices were conducted by young people in the Canterbury night-time economy.

2.2.8 Other pubs and bars

Observations made whilst working at *The Mitre* revealed further sites of potential data collection. Greater knowledge of the urban-centre of the Canterbury night-time economy, alongside the migration patterns of drinkers, trends in drinking (i.e. who, where, when) was acquired, each of which informed the research process towards a position where further data could be sought. Whilst *The Mitre* and its surroundings became the main site of the data collection, further fieldwork also took place throughout other specific areas of the Canterbury night-time economy. In keeping with the geographical make-up of the city, it was decided to concentrate on licensed premises which are within the parameters of the city walls as this was where the main core of the night-time economy existed. Many of the pubs and bars entailed by this geographical location were visited in the course of the fieldwork, sometimes alone, but most often with members of the sample when participant observation was taking place. These pubs and bars each provided a further source of rich data collection and ethnographic insight due to the differing nature of the people who frequent certain establishments, alongside how actions, style and music could highlight potential differences and similarities between individuals and groups of young people in the Canterbury night-time

economy. The details regarding fieldwork undertaken across other establishments will appear in Chapter Four, where a mapped diagram of the Canterbury night-time economy will develop upon the movements of young people across specific licensed establishments where they were at ease to undertake extreme drinking practices.

2.2.9 Clubs

The two exceptions to the decision made to research at licensed premises only within the city walls are the main night-clubs in the Canterbury night-time economy. For the purpose of anonymity, these clubs will be known as *Aspects* and *Planets.* Both clubs were positioned just outside the city walls, but remained reasonably central within the overall geography of Canterbury city-centre. These were important sites of data collection within the fieldwork, as they offered a direct comparison to the traditional pub scene in Canterbury due to their generally far later licensing, loud music, drinks promotions, dress codes and the explicit commercial objectives with which they could be seen to be run. Both of these clubs can be considered to be 'mainstream' in terms of their aims and objectives and clientele, as exemplified by the adherence to a strict policy of playing the latest chart music and the various drinks promotions and alcoholic products which they served to their customers. It was distinctly noticeable that their desire was to attract as many customers through the door on as many nights of the week as they possibly could, so for example there were no specific musical niches – just a concentration upon up-to-date chart-based music which will help to attract a 'mainstream' crowd. High volumes of custom were invariably achieved via the previously indicated price offers on alcoholic drinks, student discounts on entry, and the provision of an atmosphere which is conducive to young people's leisure pursuits late into the Canterbury night-time economy.

2.2.10 Young people's houses

During the fieldwork, the research also entailed visiting young people's houses both before and after entering the Canterbury night-time economy for an evening. These visits, exclusively to student housing where young people would drink before and after entering the Canterbury

night-time economy, again provided a rich site of data collection, as conversation flowed easily within this informal and relaxed atmosphere. Hey (1997: 43) in her ethnography of girl's friendship supports this approach: "Most of my data on the older middle-class girls came from informal interviews and their personal talk as well as our 'conversations'". Through this approach to the data collection setting, it was possible to observe the alcohol consumption of young people before they even leave the house for the evening, and how they often conceived a plan for a night out with regards to which places to go to and the build-up of excitement and levels of 'pre-drunkenness' through drinking in the home which were central features of the trends observed within this location. Also, the events observed after a night out were often seen to entail drinking to further excess until the early hours of the morning, often via the usage of commercial services such as 'Liquid Friends' – a late night alcohol delivery service operating in Canterbury by young people. Further details and observations made within the houses of participants helped to demonstrate how the night-time economy could be seen to spread into the private spaces of the home; reflection and analysis regarding the fieldwork undertaken within these houses will appear throughout the data analysis chapters.

2.3 Approaches to sampling, the sample, and ethics

The fieldwork at *The Mitre* took place across a sustained period of two years, commencing in June 2010 and ending in August 2012. In this period, I worked three shifts per week of varying days and hours, so the amount of shifts observed amounted to between 250 and 300. I was also invited on fourteen nights out with various research participants, of which nine of these ended at night-clubs or late-licensed pubs (which was often *The Mitre,* or *The Compasses*). During the extended fieldwork at *The Mitre*, I was exposed to literally thousands of young people drinking in the Canterbury night-time economy, from where the sample of 110 young people featured in this thesis was derived. The nature of the sample was split into two different categories related to specific characteristics: 1) transient groups and individuals 2) regular groups and individuals; this related to how the fieldwork scenario would be enacted with participants. Transient participants (e.g. the Rock 'n' Roll builders in Chapter Three; "Fly-bys" in Chapter Five) were passing through *The Mitre* either very quickly, or across the space

of a few hours maximum; these participants never seen again during the fieldwork. This meant a spontaneous and primarily covert approach to research with these participants was taken, where relationships were built through the access that the role of bartender extended, and where data was gained through 'bar conversation' rather than a formal interview (see Chapter Three). Alternatively, contact with regular groups and individuals (e.g. Sean, Gail, Carina, Nathan, James and Pete in Chapter Five; Toby in Chapter Six) from around the Canterbury night-time economy allowed more time and space to establish an ethnographic relationships with participants. This meant that I was able to become more familiar to and with young people, and was able to negotiate a more overt research position where the aims and objectives of the research were made transparent to participants. This access and approach resulted in the informal interviews with young people which feature in the fieldwork data chapters (i.e. Chapters Five, Six and Seven). These informal interviews were conversations with participants, where I may have jotted down a few points made during conversation, but also relied upon memory. No formal interviews were sought or undertaken, as this fundamentally opposed the naturalistic relationships I had built within my role of bartender. I would converse with young people, either across the bar or during shifts or on evenings out, and keep notes which were then written into fuller data passages on my return home. I had three fieldwork diaries, which were developed often from small note taken discreetly on my mobile phone, or which I wrote on small pieces of paper such as receipts which I kept in my wallet. I also relied heavily upon the quality of my memory, which has always been a particular asset, but this also demanded the immediate re-writing of these mental notes – guided by the small notes – when I returned from the research setting.

During the fieldwork, I encountered groups of working-class young men, and groups of working-class young women. I met both male and female travellers, and building site workers. I met street musicians, and homeless people. Mainly the exposure during the week in *The Mitre* was to students from around the city, who were either from Canterbury Christ Church University, or the University of Kent. Members of the Armed Forces (squaddies) were sporadic, but also enacted a healthy position during the fieldwork. Each of these groups of young people came into the pub as they were participating in the Canterbury night-time economy, and some of them I got to know well, whilst others were just passing by. I served each of the sample of 110 young people, conversed with each, and given the opportunity,

undertook research with them. I was prepared to demonstrate patience, and to build relationships over time, but also aware that I may see participants only once; in these instances I had to make the most of sometimes limited opportunities and often to make judgements on the spot. This demanded my following of my ethnographic instinct, as I was required to see the research value in any potential encounter.

The nature of my fieldwork position enabled me to spend extended periods of time with groups of young people through encounters which took place in the pub. Two student groups, with a core of five or six regular faces and varying numbers also involved allowed me to join them in participant observation exercises during their nights out around the city. This was where the further sites of fieldwork referred to outside of the pub were encountered. As well as these two groups, who were happy for me to participate in their evenings out and to be available for interviews at convenient moments, I also spent time with a group of young people from my previous workplace during my undergraduate degree, a supermarket in Herne Bay. This was a sample which was built from a small core of young people who were already known to me, fluctuating in size on the various nights out from sometimes around fifteen or twenty people for night out, but also could be as few as five or six. This manual-work based sample provided the comparative study which this research was intent upon at the outset, acting as a source of data collection as these young people often leave the workplace and spring directly into the night-time economy before returning to the workplace the following morning. At times, opportunistic sampling (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002: 104) showed itself to be absolutely invaluable in the research process, particularly involving encounters in the pub when it has not been too busy. For example, groups encountered included members of the armed forces who would be extremely difficult to penetrate otherwise, and also homeless people, as well as those young people from around Canterbury and the surrounding towns of Sittingbourne, Dover, Folkestone, Whitstable and Herne Bay amongst others. These fleeting opportunities required speed of thought and the right environment at the right time, but when they occurred they provided a fascinating insight into the Canterbury night-time economy which might not otherwise have been possible.

The decision-making process regarding sampling is a central aspect of ethnographic research. Merrill and West (2009: 104) denote sampling as: "the term used for the process of deciding how many institutions and people to work with". By positioning myself within the research

process as a bartender within *The Mitre*, I was able to utilise this institution as a focal point to gather a self-selecting sample which I encountered upon a daily basis through the cyclical nature of the pub environment. The nature of the rich data setting of the pub soon made it clear that this institution was to become the central focus of the data collection process, as intimate encounters were instantly made with participants within the Canterbury night-time economy which would have been previously far more difficult to attain and negotiate. My own personal judgements could be made regarding potential participants within this environment; I could choose to build and develop relationships over time, and be selective in my decision making regarding the potential sample. O'Reilly (2009: 194) supports use of this process:

> In social research generally, sampling involves selecting a group or setting (or sometimes people) from a broader set of choices in such a way that the subset (or sample) chosen is in some ways representative of the broader set.

By engaging with a wide-range of the social and cultural demographics which frequented the Canterbury night-time economy, I was able to navigate the direction of the research towards potentially rewarding avenues of data collection set within the aims and objectives of the research and to make important decisions which reflected the overall aims and objectives of the research.

Approaches to gathering an appropriate sample to meet the aims and objectives of research can differ. For example Harnett et al. (2000: 63) also used qualitative methodology but were restricted to acquiring a specific sample size and demographic as they aimed to undertake: "in-depth, unstructured interviews conducted with 40 young, white, male drinkers in a relatively deprived locality in East London". This is an example of the process known as 'purposive sampling' which is where "the sample is chosen for a purpose, in order to access people, times and settings that are representative of given criteria" (O'Reilly, 2009: 196). In this case the age, ethnic and gender parameters of their research dictated that their research needed to seek a specific sample size and set in order to fulfil their research criteria, which their work details they were able to detect via the avenue of local alcohol and drugs agencies and consequently to construct their sample from within this context. In comparison, the nature of my research into the Canterbury night-time economy differed from this, as it was

not gender-based, nor ethnicity based. This made the location of a sample more difficult for me to manage, as the only specific aim at the outset was the age group of 18-30. It initially became obvious upon contact with KCA (UK) the Drug, Alcohol and Mental Health Services in Canterbury that to detect a sample which was appropriate to the initially outlined age group of 18-30 of this research via this particular institution would be difficult for me, due to their primary dealings with young people below the age of sixteen. Further to this, it was clear that the nature of the outline of the research would require engagement with young people who would not necessarily be considered 'problematic' drinkers, but young people who potentially drank more responsibly within the Canterbury night-time economy in order to address the alcohol consumption of young people as a more generalised whole.

Instead, when the fitting position of bartender within the Canterbury night-time economy was obtained by me, it became possible to undertake the process of building a relevant sample to meet the aims and objectives of the research as outlined earlier. Positioning myself as bartender-researcher within the pub I was able to undertake a process of "bedding-in" within the field, which enabled the use of 'opportunistic sampling' which "relies on talking with people as they are encountered by the investigators. The researcher participates in and observes events as they arise" (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002: 104); this was suitable to the transient nature of the pub environment and the movements of participants within the night-time economy. Merrill and West (2009: 107) also support use of this method, as they state that taking the opportunity to interact with: "One person who volunteers willingly to tell their life story can be preferable to any number who are reluctant". The utilisation of this approach was suited to the job position of bartender, which entailed interaction with people as one of its core objectives (McPherson, 2016: 99). Rather than incessantly pushing and searching for appropriate subjects, patience and opportunism was employed in the field, which could be enacted with immediacy and at mutually convenient moments for both parties. Several instances took place where conversations in the pub turned into an informal interview, as people often wished to share their life experiences with the bartender within this social setting.

Whilst opportunistic sampling enabled informal interviewing to take place with individuals or groups during the fieldwork, it also allowed relationships to develop in an organic fashion with potential participants without any over-riding pressure of a lack of time affecting the process.

Consequently, by becoming a familiar face within the Canterbury night-time economy, relationships were built with many of the varying characters that were regularly encountered within the field and became of potential interest to the research. This approach to the research can and did lead to further developments of the sample, and particularly a process known as 'snowball sampling'. This is an approach which "[is]an informal method to reach a target population where the aim of a study may be exploratory or novel in its use of the technique … [and] which used initial contacts to generate contexts and encounters" (Atkinson and Flint, 2001: 2-3). As a result of initial opportunistic sampling, which became reinforced by snowball sampling where further encounters were made through the relationships built with other participants, these relationships built into immersion with participants from varying backgrounds within the Canterbury night-time economy alongside other licensees and bar-staff around Canterbury. Many of these participants agreed to more formal interviews within the research process and to my involvement within potential sites and occasions of participant observation through the use of 'snowball sampling'. This extended sample offered biographical "perspectives that incorporate social forms and inner worlds, and the dynamics between them, and do justice to what is unique but also representative" (Merrill and West, 2009: 105). By accessing further participants through pre-existing relationships, greater depth within the sample was achieved; one of the main characteristics of this decision-making process was to show an interest in anybody who frequented the pub. This was over and above any recognised excessive drinking or other distinctions, in order to build an over-arching picture of as many participants as possible within the Canterbury night-time economy. Only after becoming familiar with particular individuals did I mention to them the possibility of taking part in some more formal interview processes where the aims of the research were to be more precise than the act of observation, as "intimate study, familiarity and time are required, so that we can gradually come to know who are the relevant people to talk to, and can follow leads and pursue hunches by gathering more information from various avenues" (O'Reilly, 2009: 199).

Ethics were a complex aspect of my research. Zavisca (2007: 136) states that: "sociologists have conducted covert ethnographies in workplaces, hospitals, religious cults, and public parks". However, my fieldwork was complex in that it became a blend of covert and overt research, where these lines were blurred through the roles of bartender/researcher and

where primacy of those roles laid within a specific moment. This befitted a busy and loud workplace where opportunities to discuss fine details were often at a minimum, but also where over a period of time in the field I was often able to discuss my research with potential participants, as well as in quieter moments at the bar. I never asked for any formal written consent from participants, and had a verbal agreement with Andrew made upon the point of my employment by him to work at *The Mitre*. Zavisca goes on to describe how and why some researchers use covert research or do not ask for written consent:

> Some ethnographers engage in covert research, arguing that consent is neither ethnically necessary (because of the public nature of a setting or the high status of the participants) nor methodologically sound (because the data could never be collected without secrecy). Sociologists tend to be more open to covert research than anthropologists (p. 136).

Much of my ability to stretch and overlap my role of bartender into researcher through the types of naturally occurring interactions which occurred in *The Mitre* made the roles of Andrew, as licensee/gate-keeper, central to the research process and its success. Initially, I had made clear my intention to use the role of bartender to undertake research, to which Andrew replied: *"You can do what you want, I don't mind, but the pub always has to come first".* My intention was always to maintain a focus upon how the pub was operating, and that research would grow from my initial immersion in the role of bartender, which has already been discussed.

The Mitre as a research setting adhered to Zavisca's definition of public setting, and also the immediacy of the research context provided potential issues with informed consent when potential ethnographic scenarios unfolded. In these moments, the research position blended into the role of bartender and it was implausible to venture into the area of informed consent. Consequently, the research would remain covert in these moments. However, the benefit of time and space across the period of the methodology of the fieldwork enabled me to become overt in my research at times; through the building of relationships with participants by covert means, I would gain enough confidence in these relationships to venture to young people as to my academic background, and would provide them with details as to the nature of my research to reinforce the mutual trust which had already developed between us. As Whyte

(1943: 86) took to "giving small gifts and exchanging favours which were typical of the setting" to participants in his study *Street Corner Society*, I would provide background to participants as to my motivation, I would talk about my own experiences with alcohol both good and bad, and be prepared to exchange life experiences with young people in exchange for their openness with me.

Ethics became a process of negotiation and the research would become overt as I would reveal as much of the context of my research to participants as I would feel necessary. Li (2008: 101) supports the idea of ethics in ethnographic research as potentially part of a *process*: "ethnographic participant observation could be overt or covert, with or without revealing research purpose and research identity to the researched". The situation had to be right for this process to become complete, with trust developed on both sides of the researcher-participant relationship. Importantly in this process, my roles as bartender/researcher required adherence to the ethos of *The Mitre* as outlined by Andrew which entailed an adherence to people's safety and comfort, and the reputation of the pub. I responded to his requests to place primacy on the business aspect of the pub, and was also careful to make sure that the atmosphere of the pub was conducive to all. If people were behaving very anti-socially, I would use 'soft management' skills to encourage them to behave better, and if not, I was prepared to ask them to leave. I would remain sensitive to the scenario around me, and never forced the research process or undertook it to the detriment to my other duties and responsibilities. In this way, Andrew as licensee acted as both a visible and invisible gate-keeper within the fieldwork (McPherson, 2016: 99), through his agenda-setting towards his staff he maintained a presence over *The Mitre* which customers and staff understood. Whether Andrew was present or not, there were workplace parameters by which I abided. This was achieved by: him reminding me of my specific duties as bartender; how to approach these duties; the behavioural policy of *The Mitre*; the business philosophy of *The Mitre*. These parameters became central to the research process by contributing towards my own position and approach to bar work and research as bartender/researcher. I was able to build overt ethical relationships with participants over periods of time, or maintain strong ethical standards in the workplace/fieldwork location through covert research where my identity as a research remained unrevealed.

2.4 Ethnography and participant observation

Ethnography and participant observation represented the main fulcrum of research undertaken within the pub and club scene in the Canterbury night-time economy. This was due to the extended period of time spent in *The Mitre* by me, and within the wider night-time economy during the fieldwork. Participant observation built upon classic ethnographic studies in anthropology such as Malinowski (1913), and also sociology: Cressey (1932) and Whyte (1943). Blackman (2010: 195-196) describes this tradition: "Contemporary accounts of ethnography as a research method usually cite the Chicago School of Sociology under Robert Park and Ernest Burgess as the starting point for urban participant observation, the use of life history and the gathering of personal documents as valid sources of ethnographic data collection". Further to this, Bourgois (1995: 107) expresses the lineage, impact and qualities of participant observation during ethnographic fieldwork, and also begins to develop upon the techniques used by ethnographic researchers:

> the participant observation ethnographic techniques developed primarily by cultural anthropologists since the 1920s are better suited than exclusively quantitative methodologies for documenting the lives of people who live on the margins of a society that is hostile to them. Only by establishing long-term relationships based on trust can one begin to ask provocative personal question, and expect thoughtful, serious answers. Ethnographers usually live in the communities they study, and they establish long-term, organic relationships with the people they write about.

Brewer (2000: 59) speaks authoritatively on the topic of ethnography, and introduces the centrality of participant observation as a method:

> Ethnography is not a particular method of data collection but a style of research that is distinguished by its objectives, which are to understand the social meanings and activities of people in a given 'field' or setting, and an approach, which involves close association with, and often participation in, this setting.

Participant observation was at the very core of this research, as the role of bartender enabled me to pursue and potentially achieve the objectives outlined by Brewer within the context of

the Canterbury night-time economy. Whilst existing outside of the group via undertaking a different function to the other participants in the pub, the bartender is also an insider participating as an integral component of the fabric of the social setting. Brewer also expresses the value of this approach further:

> Participant observation is perhaps the data collection technique most closely associated with ethnography from its origins in classical British anthropology and the Chicago School of sociology. It involves data gathering by means of participation in the daily life of informants in their natural setting: watching, observing and talking to them in order to discover their interpretations, meanings and activities (p. 59).

Observations made in the field could involve anything from an understanding of how the 'pub circuit' in the city operates, including patterns of migration, pub 'loyalties', social/cultural differences, gender differences, consumer habits, social behaviour; what people drink, how and when; how local policy makers effect the day-to-day running of pubs; and how law enforcement agencies react in any different given scenarios alongside the expectations placed upon them and the licensees themselves. Importantly, particular characteristics and trends began to emerge with more frequency, and relationships could be built with customers who were a potential part of the research sample and focus of biographical research.

Participant observation was of further relevance to the research process. Following on from the embedding process at the pub, which was integral in the gathering of the sample, Brewer also raises issues of intrinsic importance to the observational aspect of the research:

> So different are the requirements and problems of using participant observation when the setting or field is either known or unknown that it is important to distinguish between 'participant observation', which involves the acquisition of a new role, and 'observant participation', which involves the utilisation of an existing role to observe aspects of either a familiar or unfamiliar setting (p. 60)

Within the context of this research, it could be suggested that I switched between these two roles as the research gained in momentum. Upon arrival in the fieldwork location of *The Mitre*, and having lacked any previous deep insight into the Canterbury night-time economy from this insider perspective, I was involved in 'participant observation'; at this point I was

literally noting down details regarding anything and everything I could. I became familiar with all the alcohol available, the prices, I made observations about gendered drinking patterns, and the drinking practices, I observed different social and cultural groups. I literally aimed to immerse myself in the surroundings and was intent upon "'going native'" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 98) as far as I possibly could. This approach enabled me to become familiar with the business, the surroundings, the atmosphere in the pub, and most importantly, the people. However, upon completion of this immersion, the setting became a familiar one and the research made a natural switch into the perspective of 'observant participation'. Having completed the familiarisation process with the business and the trends which persist throughout the night-time economy, such as *what* people drink and *when*, it became possible to focus the ethnographic lens more closely on other aspects of the research and to cast an even more keen observational eye and ear over goings-on in the pub without the distraction of unfamiliarity to the surroundings. At times, I actively sought out potential sources of data, such as going outside to smoke and speak with people out there or sitting and making conversation with people I am familiar with. It was possible to tailor my approach to the research objectives with greater confidence than earlier in the fieldwork.

This embedding process could be recognised throughout the fieldwork location. I became more familiar with the Canterbury night-time economy as a whole, more confident around intoxicated people, and more understanding of how and when to approach people. By also using the pub socially, I participated on both sides of the bar and came to understand my own limitations better. When I went out on participant observation exercises with my sample groups, I had developed a good understanding of how to express myself clearly and without guilt as I did not want to participate in getting intoxicated, which could have affected the research process negatively. In this respect, I specifically became involved in 'observant participation' where I was familiar with my surroundings and how to navigate my way around them in order to conduct ethnographic research within the Canterbury night-time economy.

2.5 "Pocket ethnography", Field notes and recording data

During the fieldwork, I was able to gather flyers advertising social drinking events from around the university campus, and also through handouts in and around the Canterbury night-time

economy from various participants within it. These would often relate to when and where young people would navigate their drinking, based upon specific entry details such as drinks promotions for students on specific nights. Often, people would come into *The Mitre* asking if we could put posters up advertising a specific event taking place in the Canterbury night-time economy, or wanting to leave flyers. Hey (1997: 50) described such artefacts as "pocket ethnography"; whilst she was referring to written notes between girlfriends from her ethnography in a school, these flyers also occupied a specific role in establishing for me relationships with young people, and furthering my knowledge of the Canterbury night-time economy around which I could base conversation. These flyers also demonstrated the key position which alcohol consumption occupied in the lives of young people around the Canterbury night-time economy, through the exposure they gave them to licensed premises and further access to alcohol. These flyers became a valuable data resource, as they recorded where and when specific nights took place, and also the drinks offers which were specifically designed to attract young people into the Canterbury night-time economy.

Most other data was taken from observations and conversations from participant observation in the field; here, there was a need for an accurate method of recording data with both subtlety and speed. Use of audio recording equipment was not suitable for the fieldwork locus, as although "taping events and conversations provides a highly detailed set of observations [...] the use of recording is limited by its effect on situations" (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002: 148). The perceived formality of this process can be seen as a barrier between interviewer and interviewee or researcher and participant, particularly in a site of alcohol consumption, and could have a detrimental effect on the data and relationships with participants. Instead visual observations, snippets of conversation between participants in the Canterbury night-time economy, and also between participants and the researcher were recorded in my field diary at convenient moments in time – either a break in service or activities behind the bar, or upon arrival at home after the shift had ended. The field diary is a small, conveniently sized book which was very useful in terms of the immediacy required in the field; Flick (2006: 287) states that: "these should document the process of approaching a field, and the experiences and problems in the contact with the filed or with interviewees and in applying the methods". Again, the nature of the work in the pub was conducive to recording observations and conversations as there were often windows of time between serving

customers which could be utilised in writing field notes. When the pub was busy, which it did become extremely so, other methods of recording had to be used in order to keep pace with the observations made during the evening's work, as outlined below.

Emerson et al (2001) distinguished between *head notes*, *scratch notes* (or jottings), and *full notes*, which O'Reilly (2009: 74) subsequently defined. Each of these approaches was of relevance to the field position which my research occupied, due to the potential fluctuation between roles during the fieldwork. Operating dual positions (bartender-researcher) required me to fulfil tasks relating to both positions. Consequently, at times I necessarily used *head notes* which are "notes held in the memory, observed and mentally recorded" (O'Reilly, 2009: 74), as there was no time to record observations physically. This specific technique of note-taking was also used by members of the Chicago School, and was reflected in the research of Cressey (1927/1983: 113) who stated: "[the researcher] must retain in his memory the substance of the conversation, along with a verbatim memory of the "high-points" of the conversation". My notes were often written up upon my return home, or in the morning if I was feeling extremely tired; if at all possible, I made sure to employ *scratch notes* which are "brief jottings that inform fuller notes and act as aide-memoire" (O'Reilly, 2009: 74) during a lull in bar-work duties – at times I would scribble on scraps of paper if I could not access my field diary. I often had four or five pieces of scrap paper in my back pocket upon my return home, but these scribbles could prove invaluable in establishing a fuller picture of the night's events. Fuller notes, known as *full notes*, were fully written up on arrival at home in hand-written form, as well as typed-up into more coherent passages at a convenient time. This was the point when analysis of the data commenced, as the observations begin to expand into potential narratives. Full notes "should include running descriptions of anything and everything thought relevant, and record the when, where, who and how of events" (O'Reilly, 2009: 74), establishing vivid descriptions upon which further narrative can be elaborated later in the research process.

2.6 Conversation and ethnographic interviewing

Conversations and interviews took place with participants within the Canterbury night-time economy, the people who work within it, and licensees through natural interactions. This was

often as the result of bar conversation which would have occurred in the natural setting of *The Mitre*, or outside on the street where I would join young people smoking during quieter moments at the bar; these took place alongside participant observation in which I intended to be as unobtrusive to the actions of the research participants as possible. This approach was used in various places: the pub, people's houses, the street, and within formal and informal settings. Bulmer (1984: 104) described the Chicago School approach to participation as "The blend of informal interviewing and observation", where these processes of data collection became unified. Thrasher (1928: 247) illuminates this point when discussing his approach to data collection with young people in *The Gang* where informal conversation in an informal setting would often transpire into being: "what may be called a "collective interview", although the participants themselves would not have recognised it as such". Often, the approach was used to negotiate access to individuals and groups of young people, which were able to progress across several interactions over a period of weeks and months, but this could also be employed on occasions where young people were passing though and may not frequent *The Mitre* regularly.

The technique and preparation towards conversation which blended with ethnographic interviewing was another key aspect of the ethnographic research process. Within ethnography, there are clearly distinguished lines within how the interview process should be approached, as Hammersley and Atkinson (1983: 113) illustrate:

> Ethnographers do not decide beforehand the questions they want to ask, though they may enter the interview with a list of issues to be covered. Nor do ethnographers restrict themselves to a single mode of questioning. On different occasions, or at different points in the same interview, the approach may be non-directive or directive, depending on the function that the questioning is intended to serve.

This description details that ethnographic interviewing is a skilled approach to data collection, which is reliant upon flexibility and reflexivity by the research in order to guide the direction of the interview. Rather than the pursuit of a specific line of questioning; ethnographic interviewing remains mindful of the position of the researcher within the research process. For example, Merrill and West (2009: 113) describe the performance of this role within the "practice of biographical interviews and how best to generate what can be called rich

description or 'good' stories", where the interviewer is complicit in a collaborative effect between the data gathering and its interpretation into narrative as "biographical research is an act of interpretation from the outset and the researcher shapes the process and its qualities" (p. 113). During the fieldwork, I occupied a specific space within bar conversations, where I never interjected into conversations without being invited into the interaction; I would show interest in what young people had been doing across their lives and in recent days, and would navigate conversations in certain directions by following the themes of the conversation. These often regarded young people's previous and current experiences with alcohol, so it was natural to emphasise upon certain points in relation to the stories which I was already being told. Exchanges would take place where I would speak about things that had happened in the pub, or may have occurred around the Canterbury night-time economy. I often relied upon my knowledge of the Canterbury night-time economy, or my understanding of university-life as a recent graduate to hold and maintain conversation with young people. Cressey (1932: 31) outlined how research within an unfamiliar context such as the taxi-dance hall required a period of acclimatisation towards this research context was necessary:

> For those that attend the taxi-dance hall, even irregularly, it is a distinctive social world, with its own ways of acting, talking, and thinking. It has its own vocabulary, its own activities and interests, its own conception of what is significant in life, and – to a certain extent – its own scheme of life.

Whilst Cressey was aware of this distinct social world providing potential boundaries of access and immersion to his research, I was able to quickly learn the specific requirements of bar work, and then to adapt my previous experiences of both manual labour workplaces and academia to inform my approach to conversation and ethnographic interviewing in *The Mitre*. I became knowledgeable about the Canterbury night-time economy, the popular places and where young people went, and also other young people from around the night-time economy and who knew who. This knowledge supported the reflections of Cressey (1927/1983: 111) on his research where he sought to immerse himself by immersing himself within knowledge specific to the research location: "In my dance hall study … a special study of vocabulary is frequently necessary. Conventional "slang" and its proper use is very important". By being

able to converse with young people knowledgably about the Canterbury night-time economy, I was further immersing myself into the research location and the fieldwork.

Taking into account this specifically acquired skill-set, and in pursuit of rich data which provides a basis for narrative interpretation, I took the care to make myself comfortable with the process and the style of this informal interviewing technique at the outset of the fieldwork. Attention was paid to the demands that a list of relevant themes which can hopefully be worked into conversations where possible, and to use the flexibility within this process to potentially prolong good research opportunities. I would often reflect upon specific themes which I might be able to add to the conversation which may produce insightful data. During the fieldwork, it became clear that to achieve the objective of gathering 'good stories' which are rich description of people's lives and experiences that: "The interviewer must be an active listener, he or she must listen to what is being said in order to assess how it relates to the research focus and how it may reflect the circumstances of the interview. Moreover, this is done with a view to how the future course of the interview might be shaped" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 113-114). During the course of conversations and ethnographic interviews, I relied upon my own instincts of empathy towards the lives of young people through my own familiarity with intoxication, with manual labour workplaces, and the pressures of academia. This often enabled me to navigate the direction of conversations through the strategic placement of themes into the process, but most importantly to allow stories of interviewee's lives and experiences to emerge.

2.7 The process of qualitative data analysis and the methods utilised

The process of qualitative data analysis led to insightful findings and conclusions being made from the research data gathered during this research in the Canterbury night-time economy. Miles and Huberman (1994: 1) state that qualitative data analysis is:

> "a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes in identifiable local contexts. With qualitative data one can preserve chronological flow, see precisely which events led to which consequences, and derive fruitful explanations".

During the research, I used ethnographic research methods to produce rich descriptions of young people participating in the Canterbury night-time economy, which saw the gathering of large amounts of data. In order to produce clear data analysis, I used a social interactionist approach where: "interpretation comes via the understanding of group actions and interactions. In both cases there is an inevitable 'interpretation' of meanings made both by the social actors and the researcher" (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 8). By placing interpretation upon my data, I relied heavily upon descriptions before approaching a process of "Sorting and sifting through these materials to identify similar phrases, relationships between variables, patterns, themes, distinct differences between subgroups, and common sequences" (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 9). This process of data reduction saw me undergo an intensive period of organisation where "the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written-up field notes or transcriptions" (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 10) was undertaken. From here, I was able to seek commonalties and differences between my descriptions and accounts of my research participants, and also to make reference to the research objectives as through this process "we can examine regularities, variations and singularities in the data" (Dey, 1993: 47) which help to make connections between individual data sets.

Utilised in this process was the method of triangulation which compares "evidence from different sources about the same events" (Gomm, 2004: 243), to seek to draw out potential connections which may have been less visible without using this strategic process. Dey (1993: 30) articulates how this process produces greater depth of analysis: "description lays the basis for analysis, but analysis also lays the basis for further description". Consequently, interpretation is placed upon individual descriptions which, leads to a deeper level of description and analysis as a result. During my research, I often found that my process of note-taking, which primarily sequenced from memory or very limited 'scratch' notes into fuller notes and then deeper 'thick description' saw my accounts become richer and more analytically engaged as a result. This made seeking connections between individual instance more viable and approachable, and helped to organise the data into similar data sets. Dey goes on to explain that the "First step in qualitative analysis is to develop thorough and comprehensive descriptions of the phenomenon under study" (p. 31), which enabled me to

approach the data analysis process methodically and apply further context. Again, Dey outlines the significance of context to the qualitative data process:

> "Contexts are important as a means of situating action, and of grasping its wider social and historical import. This can require detailed descriptions of the social setting within which action occurs; the relevant social contexts may be a group, organisation, institution, culture or society" (p. 32).

Throughout this research, the context of the Canterbury night-time economy, and *The Mitre* especially, features at the heart of the qualitative data analysis. Using specific background to discuss and underline the role of alcohol within the night-time economy, and the role of media in portraying young people as reckless and thoughtless in their approach to alcohol consumption leads to findings and conclusions which characterise Canterbury as a place with its large student community and concentration of licensed establishments within the night-time economy itself. By illustrating vital context within the research setting, and the research aims and objectives, the findings and conclusions of the research offer authentic analysis of the drinking practice of young people in the Canterbury night-time economy in relation to the social and cultural contexts on both a local and national level in relation to how alcohol use by young people can be analysed and assessed through research. The research data was organised as a result of this process, and individual theory could be applied to the qualitative data such as drug normalisation theory (Parker, Aldridge and Measham, 1998) which appears in Chapter Seven of the thesis.

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter highlights the academic tradition of the ethnographic research of the Chicago School and into the development of a strategic fieldwork design plan, alongside how this has been implemented within the field. Key ethnographic influences such as Park (1915), Thrasher (1927) and Cressey (1932) are cited in relation to the approach to the fieldwork and some of the immersive techniques which were employed when establishing a sample in the Canterbury night-time economy. The sample was defined within the context of how the research position provided an immediacy within the fieldwork, alongside how the use of

opportunistic and snowballing samples was shown to be effective in establishing a relevant sample with which to perform participant observation and ethnographic interviewing processes based around bar conversation as a method of access and immersion. Further to this, a reflexive approach towards participant observation and ethnographic interviewing is shown to be an effective way to gain research data appropriate to biographical research, particularly within the context of the fieldwork location. Ethics and the blending and blurring of covert/overt research was introduced to demonstrate how the research became a process of negotiation between myself and the research participants, where Andrew as licensee/gatekeeper was central to this research process. He dictated the ethos of the pub, and acted as both a visible and invisible presence which allowed the research process to be undertaken with certainty and security. His expectations upon my actions provided structure to my approach, and the time which I spent in the fieldwork location enabled me to gently shift from covert to overt research where trusting relationships had been built with young people. Consequently, this research became ingrained within the fabric of the Canterbury night-time economy, as outlined by the dual position occupied by myself as the researcher as a bartender within a busy pub within the city centre. A reflexive and flexible approach to the fieldwork was taken, which was in keeping with the immediacy of this fieldwork position, and this was demonstrated by the potential advantages and disadvantages of how this impacts upon the data recording process in a site of active alcohol consumption; there was a noticeable shift within the position of the researcher in the field, as immersion into the fieldwork location naturally occurred due to the time spent within the field which enabled a greater ethnographic focus upon specifically seeking potential fieldwork data.

Chapter Three: Bartender and/or researcher: A duality of roles

3 Introduction

This chapter builds upon the methodological position of this research. It explores how the dual roles of bartender/researcher at *The Mitre* were utilised within the methodological research traditions of the Chicago School to develop an ethnographic research position within the Canterbury night-time economy. Initial reflection will be made upon the process of immersion within *The Mitre*, and its influence upon the research process. Further reflection is made upon how various aspects of my own position as researcher within the field potentially affected the research process; for example, how I utilised my own autobiographical background to manage and navigate certain areas of the research process. This reflection traces the lineage of how the methodological research tradition of the Chicago School was adapted to recognise that the pub environment of *The Mitre* could be treated as an urban "laboratory" (Park, 1915: 612). "The Rock 'n' Roll Builders", members of a hard-drinking/hard-grafting subculture of young men drinking on a Friday after a hard week's graft on the building site, demonstrate that *The Mitre* as a field of ethnographic study was open to being recognised as an urban "laboratory". Here, working-class male drinking subcultures of hard drinking (MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007) could be identified in the night-time economy. The reflexive and flexible approaches enabled by my duality of roles within the field were illustrated to be conducive to the spontaneous situations which arise within sites of alcohol consumption such as *The Mitre* and to building "rapport" (Thrasher, 1928) with young men from working-class drinking subcultures. Spontaneous scenarios were allowed to unfold within the field, whilst the discretion to maintain a reflexive and flexible approach towards these spontaneously occurring opportunities for data collection was utilised. This enabled the potential navigation and 'soft management' of scenarios through the mutual compatibility of both roles within the Canterbury night-time economy. Unexpected outcomes will be shown to be navigated towards successful conclusions which benefitted both the pub and the data collection process, where "The Rock 'n' Roll Builders" showed how they drank hard in their leisure time away from the pressures of work and their home lives, where they could distance themselves from responsibility by participation in the night-time economy, and reflected the

use of alcohol by hard grafting men outside of the workplace (Hoggart, 1957; Thompson, 1963).

3.1 Immersion within the field: Bartender and/or researcher

Goffman (1961: 7) spent time with patients in St. Elizabeth's Hospital Washington D.C. immersed "in the role of an assistant to the athletic director"; this position enabled Goffman to "learn about the world of the hospital inmate" (p. 7). This doctorate research sought to learn about the world of the participant within the Canterbury night-time economy. The role of bartender allowed me the space and time to spend various hours of various days within the social institution of the pub. My immersion as the researcher within the role of bartender at *The Mitre* helped to maintain a reflexive and flexible research position within the field. This was due to the mutually compatible nature of both roles which provided a platform to shift from what might be seen as a "sight-seer" – an outsider looking in [occupying the margins] – to an integral cog within the internal machinery of the pub as an urban "laboratory". This supported my intention to "set-up a scenario" as researcher by occupying a position within the Canterbury night-time economy. The objective was to strategically implement an ethnographic approach to data collection, alongside fulfilling the work criteria of bartender in order to collect data from any potential participants and avenues that were encountered.

As with the key figures including Park, Thrasher and Cressey of the Chicago School who "were not afraid to urge their students to trust their feelings for a situation or an event [and] were not afraid to stress the role of insight" (Wright, 1945: xix), the pursuit of this avenue of research owes a debt of gratitude to my supervisory team who similarly urged me to *"get out there and do it"* when I mentioned the possibility of working within the Canterbury night-time economy at *The Mitre*. Whilst unsure about the possible compatibility of the dual roles within the research process, this guidance and confidence in the ability to navigate the ethnographic process within this environment enabled my initial acceptance of and confidence towards my approach to the dual roles of bartender/researcher. It was now possible for me to engage with a wide range of participants within the Canterbury night-time economy, when the prospect of gaining access to a substantial and relevant sample had previously seemed potentially stymied. Trust within my capabilities to undertake ethnographic research within a

spontaneous site of alcohol consumption enabled the strategic building and maintenance of a flexible approach to both roles. This became constrained by the parameters of the pub and of the research at times, but these parameters delivered the space to utilise the fluidity conferred upon both roles in order to follow "my feelings for a situation or event" (Wright, 1945: xix). Consequently ethnographic "insight" (Wright, 1945: xix) could be obtained. Building upon my previous personal youthful experiences within sites of intoxication and also the varied workplace background within manual labour jobs as well as the world of academia, it became possible to exploit the flexibility conferred upon these dual roles to establish and utilise my autobiographical identity as a key aspect of the research process within the role of ethnographic researcher. Initial importance was focussed upon immersion into the role of bartender and the environment of the pub itself.

3.1.1 Entering the field

The initial process of immersion within the field began upon the indication that it was possible for me to obtain a position of bartender within *The Mitre*, and the support and encouragement I was offered by my supervision team to undertake the fieldwork. This prospect had been gained by spending time with prior acquaintances – Seb and George – from within the Canterbury night-time economy. Seb and George worked at *The Mitre*, where I began to spend time in the evenings socialising with them, whilst drinking casually and becoming familiar with other people who worked at or frequented the pub. This potential avenue of access into the Canterbury night-time economy developed into a friendly relationship with the licensee of *The Mitre*, Andrew, which along with Seb and George's support and recommendation, led to the offer of a job in March 2010: *"Andrew likes you, Rob. I've suggested you as a potential barman, and he's up for it. He likes your manner and the way you conduct yourself"* (Seb).

Having never undertaken bar work of any kind before, I spent three or four occasions at the pub solely observing how bar work was undertaken and the central facets of the role. This included how to pour pints of lager correctly, the process of cleaning and organisation behind the bar, learning pricing and obtaining brand knowledge. Also emerging was an understanding of the nature of the pub environment when spending extended periods within the space:

I arrive at the pub at around 7pm, and order a pint of lager. I chat with Seb when he is not serving customers or undertaking the various functions of cleaning and preparation which are the bartender's duty. The pub is not too busy and at times is empty other than Seb and I. Groups of drinkers arrive from the street at various moments, ordering drinks for their party. Seb is busy in these moments, engaging with customers, preparing their drinks, and asking questions where necessary: "Would you like ice in that?"; "which ale would you like, this ale is dark with more body, this ale is a lighter and more refreshing with a pale colour". These questions make the customers happily engaged with Seb, which forges a solid relationship between bartender and customer. One customer notes with a cordial smile: "many thanks for your help; yes that ale is very good. It's nice in pubs like this, where there's a welcoming attitude." Whilst Seb is not actively engaged in these moments, he spends time interacting with myself and the other drinkers in the pub around other topics of conversation when not under the pressure of serving customers.

These initial observations initiated my reflection that I should place primary importance upon learning the basic minutiae of the role of bartender rather than undertaking a "gung-ho" approach to the data collection setting. Product and brand knowledge would enable a smooth running of the bar and also commence fluent interactions with customers. The competent undertaking of all other duties was central to clearing the pathway towards allowing my role of bartender to stretch and overlap into my role of researcher. When competence was achieved within these roles, the implementation of aspects of my personality and autobiographical background could begin to impact upon the research process.

It was noteworthy to the research that there were no set shift patterns at the pub; rather staggered patterns of work which meant that various days and times of the week would be encountered over the course of a working week: *"The rota gets done at the start of the week, you'll get a phone call from Mario and then you can make your minds up as to what suits who and when. I don't mind who or when, as long as they're [the shifts] all covered"* (Andrew). This meant that three or four shifts a week were available, varying between 5:00-9:00pm; 8:00 or 9:00pm-2:00am between Monday and Friday and 1:00-7:00pm or 7:00pm-2:00am on Saturday. These shifts became more negotiable during the university term-time from September to December and January to May: *"we just work with a skeletal staff over the summer months; student business means so much to us"* (Andrew). The following summer months became central to my adaptation of the role of bartender to the role of researcher; there was a less-pressurised period of time over which I could negotiate the requisite skills of

bar work and to gradually immerse myself into the field as researcher. Andrew's guidance as licensee allowed a broad picture of the Canterbury night-time economy to emerge, and his individual nurture of employees within the pub granted license to interact with customers whilst maintaining as cordial an atmosphere within the pub as was possible within spontaneously occurring alcohol-driven scenarios. Patience could be demonstrated towards the possibilities which the role of bartender offered with regard to shaping a strategic ethnographic process aimed towards gaining access to suitable avenues of data collection and a suitable sample.

3.1.2 Initial adaptation to the role of bartender

The role of the bartender is multi-faceted by its nature. At its core, the main objective is to serve as many drinks as are demanded by the patrons, whilst maintaining the bar area itself – the 'workplace' – in an ordered fashion. This demanded high levels of concentration, attention to detail, and my adherence to the main ethos of the establishment that is being represented as determined by the licensee. My first shift at *The Mitre* was in April 2010; I was given an 8:00pm-2:00am Saturday night shift alongside Mario, the most experienced member of staff at the pub having worked there since 2007. In contrast to the future command of the role of bartender, there was a sense of nervousness at this journey into unknown territory; at home before leaving for work I nervously anticipated the prospect of what the evening might bring. Saturday nights are notoriously busy within city-centre pubs but I was reassured that due to the initial process of immersion that familiarity with Mario and some of the main duties of bartender had been gained. This meant that questions could be confidently asked when necessary, without having to bother Mario over the basic duties of bar work.

Mario told me upon starting: *"Just concentrate upon serving, Rob. Serve drinks, get used to the till, the prices. If there are any problems with the beer [referring to cellar work], tell me and I'll sort it. Focus on the basics"*. The task of pouring pints and producing spirits and mixers went smoothly; drawing upon aspects of previous experience in manual-labour workplaces which demanded emphasis upon intensity and hitting deadlines. The end of the evening was busy, whilst the earlier part of the evening between 8:00pm and 11:00pm was punctuated by

several groups of drinkers who were passing-through. This made for spare moments to locate myself behind the bar, and later to make use of the location of these aspects of bar work:

> *Up until 11pm, there was a slow but steady trade; I managed to serve people without getting flustered, and mastered the workings of the till and where the main alcoholic products were kept. Mario went outside to smoke on three or four occasions asking: "Are you OK with this Rob, I can stay if you want? If you need me, just find me." The pub was less than half-full, so I was happy to tend the bar alone, and gain experience. After 11pm it was harder to satisfy the demands of the customers, and there seemed at one point that there was a never-ending wave of fresh customers coming through the door. Mario said: "You're doing well, just keep going. It's all over in forty minutes." Mario rang the bell for 'last orders' at 12.50am, and again at 1am shouting 'TIME' to inform the customers that the bar was now closed.*

My adaptation to the demands of bar work was assisted by my adaptation into job roles within previous workplaces; a composed demeanour was presented to the customers and Mario, which subsequently developed into an asset to ethnographic research within the pub. Throughout the evening I had remained externally calm; kept a decent pace of work and was able to tentatively interact with the customers whilst undertaking the necessary tasks of the bartender as efficiently as was possible. Difficulty was had with certain types of drink – for example a 'Cuban' which is Spiced Rum and Coke with the addition of lime cordial or fresh lime – which I had not previously encountered.

Throughout the first shift Mario's advice was followed; primarily my attention was placed upon serving drinks whilst maintaining a tidy presence behind the bar. The secondary focus had been to keep a guarded eye upon the outside street area of the pub where cigarette smokers congregated which was unlicensed for alcohol, as requested by Andrew. At the outset of the shift Andrew asserted in a half-joking half-serious tone: *"the worst thing you can do is make a mistake – just try not to do it twice"*. Andrew's emphasis upon being allowed to make "human error" provided a sense of release from any prospect of being under the microscope from either Andrew or Mario, eliciting a release from the nerves and edginess which often accompany the undertaking of a new job role within an unfamiliar environment. Andrew's nurturing attitude became a key facet of the confidence and ability to utilise the role of bartender within the research process. By maintaining a respectful distance from

members of staff when undertaking bar work, Andrew intentionally bred confidence within his staff. Space was allowed to back personal instincts and judgement regarding spontaneously occurring scenarios within the pub as exemplified by Andrew's assertion at the end of the first shift:

"We serve alcohol, so we expect to have to deal with different types of behaviour at different times. But it's your call – if you think someone has had too much, don't serve them. If you want them to leave because you think that they'll upset other people, or are rude to you or anyone else, tell them to leave. I might ask afterwards why, but it's about your own judgement and we'll all back it"

Alongside the flexibility which the role of bartender provided, these clearly-stated parameters consequently assisted in my navigation of potential opportunities of data collection. The responsibility and leadership standards expected by both *The Mitre* and Canterbury Christ Church University were adhered to through the retention of a clear mind and the demonstration of strong leadership skills as and where necessary within the field.

3.1.3 Acquiring specific skills: Adapting the role of bartender to the role of researcher

My research position of the role of bartender within *The Mitre* was to be a constantly recurring feature in the Canterbury night-time economy, where the patrons were a sporadic presence as governed by the transient nature of the licensed alcohol industry. Similarly, Colosi (2010: 5) argues that during the research of Cressey (1932): "the taxi dancers are a constant feature of this setting, unlike the patrons, whose presence is sporadic." Colosi's own research position correlates with the immersive research position of bartender, taking place in a "chain-operated, UK-based lap-dancing club […] while *continuing* to work as a lap dancer and engaging as a member of the culture being observed" (p. 7: original emphasis). Her statement explains this: "prior to this study, I had been an established lap dancer in the chosen setting for almost 2 years" (p. 7). This meant that she "did not have to spend time developing rapport and empathy with the participants, as this was already in place, and I was able to maintain

'emotional' connection by continuing to participate in the 'culture' throughout the research process" (p. 7).

Within my research, Cressey's (1927/1983: 111) approach to a "special study [which] is frequently necessary before entering upon a special study" to gather requisite skills was reflected within my own immersion into the role of bartender, and the acquisition of the skills which are demanded within a busy work environment such as *The Mitre*. For me, the position of researcher and the potential building of "rapport" (Thrasher, 1928) with participants from within the role of bartender was developed from an initial 'blank canvas' of no previous experience of bar work. Prior to my first shift, the minimal aim was to utilise the role of researcher in order to make basic observations regarding the layout of the pub: which people came in and when; which drinks were most popular; which states of intoxication might be encountered; the potential for misbehaviour. These observations were relatively easily identified amongst the maelstrom of a busy workplace, whilst I was still relatively uninitiated within this environment. A sustained focus was kept upon the immediate activities which unfolded during the evening in front of me around *The Mitre*. These aspects were then committed to memory or scribbled on scrap paper in a spare moment and written down upon the return home at the end of the shift. The use of 'scratch' notes (O'Reilly, 2009) consequently placed less unnecessary pressure upon either the role of bartender or researcher. A subsequently vital observation made during the first shift was that later in the evening it quickly became apparent that the extended opening hours of *The Mitre* (until 1:30am) meant that the pub rose from being manageably busy towards a scenario where tides of customers arrived from the other licensed premises around the Canterbury night-time economy which were now closing. It became clear that the pressure of the pub as a work environment was something which was going to require a process of acclimatisation that could only occur through my regular repetition of the role of bartender, and that this had to be achieved quickly. The role of bartender would then became adapted to support the role of ethnographic researcher.

Initially it appeared that any fieldwork observations taken during busier moments would potentially lack detail. However, as the expectations of the bartender role and dealing primarily with serving customers became familiar to me, it became clear that *The Mitre* – managed correctly and taking into account reflexivity and flexibility within the research

process – would become a prolific site of fieldwork data collection. I was now an active participant within the Canterbury night-time economy, occupying dual roles. My reflection that my entire initial focus and concentration had to be placed upon maintaining a momentum within the workplace was reinforced. The seemingly obvious observation from this first evening's work was that the predominant period for data collection would be during the busier periods due to the heavier volume of participants within the Canterbury night-time economy. These encounters would correspond with the harder nature of the drinking practices which also follow later-evening periods within the licensed trade. This was where access to observation of extreme drinking practices by young people could be made effectively by virtue of the outward-facing role of the bartender and the busy nature of the urban "laboratory" of *The Mitre*.

The most apparent trend I observed within the first shift was the distinct time-periods within the pub environment; at times I was busy and purely focussed upon the role of bartender, but there were also unpredictable lulls which allowed for interaction with other staff members and customers where the role of researcher could potentially take primacy for me. Within this context there would be quieter periods where I could make directed attempts at pursuing data collection. There would also be busier periods where reliance would be placed upon my making quick observations which were committed to memory or hastily written down on scraps of paper before being fully written down after the shift. The approach to the research process began to take shape around these initial experiences as a bartender within *The Mitre*.

3.1.4 Adapting *The Mitre* to the ethnographic research process

Initial adaptation to the distinct working environment of *The Mitre* took two to three weeks in terms of understanding and reaching competency with regard to the basic aspects of the job. Acquisition of these skills and knowledge enabled me to begin to begin to approach research scenarios with the confidence that I was performing my specific bar duties well and appeared seamless to customers. These duties included: the serving of drinks to customers; cleaning the bar area; restocking any bottled alcohol in the fridges; lifting and changing beer barrels in the cellar; changing the gases which operated the beer lines and maintaining

interaction with any customers who came into the pub. These central duties of the bartender role, with the exception of serving drinks which persists throughout the entire 5:00pm to 1:00am period of opening [1:00pm Saturdays], were performed during the initial period when the pub opens. They acted to set-up the pub for the busier later periods where bar staff would concentrate solely upon serving customers at a rate generated through the footfall which entered the establishment.

The process of interaction between bar staff and customers was specifically requested by Andrew:

> "Above all else, talk to the customers. Make them feel welcome and wanted. We're here to serve alcohol, but pubs also have a social function for people. If they want to talk to you, make that time. They might have another drink, they might not. But the chances that they'll want to come back are greater. And possibly they'll tell other people the 'The Mitre' is a nice little boozer"

This request from Andrew was of key significance within the research process and an early indicator of the compatibility of the roles of bartender and researcher for me. As interaction was demanded above and beyond cleaning and restocking the bar, this fostered the kind of social environment which might encourage customers to stay for longer and spend more money. Andrew's philosophy towards the value of interaction with customers supported the strategic implementation of an ethnographic research process within *The Mitre*. Rather than potentially appearing distracted from the duties of bartender, it was possible to combine the role of bartender and researcher within the same space behind the bar inside the same interaction. This freedom became a central facet of the success of this research. It was subsequently possible to confidently utilise aspects of the role of bartender to enhance research opportunities within *The Mitre* as an urban "laboratory". Immersion within a pub which focussed upon customer service and interaction as a strategic method of attracting custom made clear that the roles of bartender and researcher were not mutually exclusive when conducted with sensitivity and discretion towards both roles.

My acquired competency at the bartender duties enabled the prompt internalisation of the basic tenets of running the pub, and the establishment of the requisite confidence to command the bar area. This confidence became stronger the more experience that I gained.

As my approach to these processes became more polished, for example knowing instinctively where certain alcohol was kept, its price etc. and how to change beer barrels quickly and effectively during busy periods, it became possible for me to concentrate upon the development of relationships with customers and to familiarise and analyse the daily processes of the pub with more confidence and certainty. During this period of acclimatisation, my nascent command towards the role of bartender became greater and further navigation of thought processes towards the role of researcher as combined with the role of bartender was made. By presenting a confident persona to any customers who entered the pub, the philosophy of Andrew towards interaction was built upon within the research process. Within this context, the utilisation of aspects of interpersonal communication skills alongside aspects of autobiographical background became central to my dual roles of bartender/researcher. The social and professional skills from previous experiences within the work and educational environment now became aspects of my identity as an ethnographic researcher.

The Mitre was run and maintained in keeping with the demands of Andrew. These demands also reflected good research practices as there persisted a sense that anti-social behaviour and extreme drunkenness would be dealt with from a perspective that it is the overall reputation of the pub and comfort of the patrons which was most important. Andrew's indication of trust towards bar staff meant that whilst drinkers were regularly served to varying states of intoxication, the bartender maintained the integrity to exert some 'soft management' over potentially awkward situations where drinkers may be too intoxicated or were likely to cause a level of discomfort to other people within the pub. This natural position of responsibility towards the pub and its patrons correlated the role of researcher with the role of bartender and vice versa within the research process. In keeping with the ethical demands of representing Canterbury Christ Church University as a post-graduate researcher, reflection was made upon how the course of events within a site of alcohol consumption could be navigated towards potentially 'safer waters' by utilising the managerial responsibilities conferred upon the role of bartender. Advantageously, this made the management of potential spontaneous data collection more flexible. It encouraged trust towards my personal instincts and judgement within situations, which could help to manage or navigate potential outcomes if there was any threat of behaviour or events spilling-over

into anti-social behaviour. This also meant that any avenues of research had to uphold certain demands which reflected the ethos and reputation of the pub. Consequently, within the urban "laboratory" of *The Mitre*, it became possible to navigate the research process alongside the duties of bartender whilst trusting my personal instincts towards scenarios as they unfolded.

3.1.5 Initial fieldwork observations and the building of relationships

My occupation of the dual role of bartender/researcher during the fieldwork helped to reveal initial data examples which reflected current trends of drinking amongst young people. These examples supported the gathering of evidence that alcohol consumption covered a wide and varied demographic which could be generalised throughout the Canterbury night-time economy; by being present in the pub at differing times of day and different days of the week due to the persistent and varied nature of bar work, a series of regular encounters occurred for me with various participants within the Canterbury night-time economy who had just finished their working day or week. This theme of hard-drinking after work was not confined to people who worked within hard-grafting manual labour jobs and students within the city who were relaxing from pressures away from studies; professionals and office workers were also present, reflecting the diverse demographics located within the Canterbury night-time economy. Employees from throughout the Canterbury night-time economy – other pubs, restaurants, theatre – were often straight from their place of work into *The Mitre* in order to relax after their shift due to the late licence. This sometimes only entailed a drink or two, sometimes more, dependent on time and mood. Some of these individuals were so well known for their "thirst" that the bar staff would see them come in and produce the alcoholic drink they desired by the time they reached the bar. This always satisfied the craving to relax after working for a sustained spell in a busy environment, and was greeted with a grateful smile which acknowledged the mutual understanding that the patron was ready to relax away from their own workplace.

Within these moments relationships and familiarisation developed between myself as the bartender and customers in the pub, as names and faces were encountered with more regularity. Given nurture and time, these relationships developed for me from an initially

superficial 'bartender–customer' relationship towards a relationship of 'friendly acquaintance'; finally developing into an alternative relationship of mutual trust conducive to the ethnographic research process: 'researcher–participant'. The learning of names and places of employment, the background of individuals – were they students or full-time workers – particular preferences in terms of drinks, helped me to foster relationships which were based upon familiarity. This was where my confidence began to fully establish towards the discussion of the nature of this research with potential participants. Within the urban context of *The Mitre*, the pub could act as a microcosm of the wider social culture of the Canterbury night-time economy as viewed from my dual position of bartender/researcher. This often meant recognition of me in the street by people who had been encountered within the role of bartender, and becoming externally viewed as an internal feature of the Canterbury night-time economy. This familiarity enabled my subsequent pursuit of avenues of research which would previously have been much more difficult to access without the process of immersion. Any approaches made to potential participants were now founded upon a developed relationship which had occurred organically via the role of bartender within the urban "laboratory" of *The Mitre*.

3.2 Adapting the Chicago School approach to the Canterbury night-time economy

The initial aims of the Chicago School approach to urban studies were "to define a point of view and to indicate a program for the study of urban life: its physical organization, its occupations and its culture" (Park, 1927: 3; revised edition). The researcher's occupation of the role of bartender within the Canterbury night-time economy adapted Park's suggestion that the occupation of bartender was one of the most "interesting to study" (1915: 586), and also enabled me to use the position of researcher in the potential building of "rapport" (Thrasher, 1928) with participants from within this role. This adaptation of the urban location to build "rapport" with potential research participants produced a series of spontaneously occurring ethnographic "set-up scenarios"; the first of which involved two builders – known here as "the Rock 'n' Roll builders" – entering *The Mitre* early on a Friday evening in June during a 5:00-9:00pm shift. This ethnographic scenario demanded adherence to a reflexive and flexible approach within the field, and rejected my initial observation that the

predominant period for data collection would be during busier periods. Here the compatibility of the dual roles of bartender and researcher enabled me to navigate the ethnographic research process. This unexpected encounter had a profound effect upon the subsequent ethnographic research process within the field; highlighting the importance of expecting the unexpected, and demonstrated that purpose, versatility and courage – allied to a clear-sighted reflexive and flexible methodological approach – were intrinsic to the pursuit of any potential avenues of research whilst simultaneously undertaking the roles of bartender/researcher. It also demonstrated that aspects of my autobiographical background were useful for me to form and negotiate "rapport" with young people in the Canterbury night-time economy who may have been ordinarily difficult to penetrate without the platform provided by the role of bartender, and also my own previous background as a manual worker. Here, I was able to use language and accent built from prior life experiences which positioned me well to "fit in" with working-class young men who were a part of a drinking subculture outside of the manual workplace with which I myself was not unfamiliar, and also to rely upon my newly-acquired skills as a bartender to enable fluent interactions "the Rock 'n' Roll builders".

3.2.1 Flowing with the dynamics of a situation and casting off moral inhibitions

The spontaneity of the "set-up scenario" of "The Rock 'n' Roll builders" also utilised the "*ethnographic sensitivity*" (Ferrell et al, 2008: 179) underpinning research which "flows with the dynamics of a situation" (Ferrell et al, 2008: 178) of Cultural Criminology. In this particular scenario, I had little choice if I wished to pursue a fruitful research scenario but to allow myself to be guided in this way as any scenario in a public space where alcohol is involved is open to sharp changes in direction or emphasis. I either made "The Rock 'n' Roll builders" feel slightly unwelcome in the pub by ignoring their presence through an intentional lack of interaction where they would then most likely have moved on, or I could choose to allow them to drink how they wanted and to engage in their conversation and allow the situation to run a natural course. This relied upon my personal judgment of the situation and the two young men involved, but also took into account an element of chance as to how the scenario may have unfolded. If I had decided to reject the opportunity to embrace a research opportunity based

on an uncertainty about their behaviour or the consequences of it, I would have missed an exciting research opportunity. Cressey (1927/1983: 112) discusses this potential difficulty in terms of the researcher's own 'moral standards':

> One's own moral inhibitions and pre-judgements [can] cause him involuntarily to erect a wall of social distance between himself and his subject. Apprehension and disgust makes it impossible for the subject to reveal himself, even should he be very much in the mood for it.

These 'moral standards' were in relation to the expectations of how these young men might react to a large volume of alcohol, and how this might also make other customers feel if they were to come into the pub at this time. However, "The Rock 'n' Roll builders" were not threatening or rude in their presence. They were there to drink, and to enjoy themselves away from the workplace and my judgement was supported in the outcomes to be seen later in the chapter. In this way, my navigation of the research scenario of the "Rock 'n' Roll builders" carried an edge of 'risk' and 'chance' as to how the dynamics of any situation can shift quickly within a site of active alcohol consumption. This experience subsequently informed my entire ethnographic research process within *The Mitre*, making clear that personal judgement of situations had to be constantly made throughout the entire course of any scenario and navigated accordingly. It was an important reality that these spontaneous scenarios did not always follow the path which I expected or desired as the bartender/researcher; it was within these moments that the responsibility conferred upon my role of bartender became a central aspect of my researcher's armoury. This spontaneity placed demands upon both the roles bartender and researcher, as my decisions had to be made within a short time-frame – potentially instantaneously – which could affect the research process, the data collection, the researcher, the pub itself, other customers, the bar staff, the licensee and Canterbury Christ Church University.

3.2.2 Hard-drinking/hard-grafting subcultures of young men: The Rock 'n' Roll builders and a set-up scenario

Several subcultural drinking groups prevalent within the Canterbury night-time economy such as street musicians, students, punks and goths frequented *The Mitre*, with the research focusing upon students and workers from around the city. Blackman (2005: 2) states: "The concept of subculture at its base is concerned with agency and action belonging to a subset or social group that is distinct from but related to the dominant culture". Identification was made of a hard-drinking/hard-grafting subculture of young adult men drinking outside of the manual-workplace, who described themselves as the "rock n roll builders". This data example is extended throughout the following sections. It will demonstrate that reflexive and flexible approaches to ethnographic research were employed within *The Mitre* to navigate the research and data collection process, and also highlight the integral position of the bartender within the urban "laboratory". My adaptation to the role of bartender had taken place across seven weeks and nineteen shifts of various patterns up to this point in the fieldwork. Within the spontaneous "set-up scenario" of the "Rock 'n' Roll builders" – Darren (age 28) and Simon (age 18) – my initial fieldwork observations regarding how the later-night shifts would be the most prolific sites of data collection were shown to be misplaced. Given the extended time-frame of quiet business which earlier shifts generally provided within *The Mitre,* this scenario demonstrated the value of being able to directly interact with customers over an extended period of time. Some examples of the data collected in this intentionally "set-up scenario" are cited throughout these sections. Primarily highlighted are the potential strengths and weaknesses of adopting a flexible and reflexive approach to the data collection process, and how this affects the research process and its outcomes.

3.2.3 "The Rock 'n' Roll builders": spontaneous ethnographic opportunities and building "rapport" with research participants

Having spent the previous shifts at *The Mitre* immersing into the role of bartender, it now became possible for me to begin combining this role with actively seeking to implement ethnographic research methods as researcher. To achieve this, the role of bartender was utilised to negotiate relationships with participants within the Canterbury night-time economy designed to access data collection with participants. Of primary importance to the ethnographic research process was the conscious decision taken within the role of researcher

to pursue the spontaneous "set-up scenario" of the "Rock 'n' Roll builders"; access to which presented itself within the role of bartender. This initial decision was then followed by the establishment of a relationship between the hard grafting/hard drinking "Rock 'n' Roll builders" and the bartender/researcher, which placed primacy upon the access granted as bartender and the ability to navigate the research process as researcher. My fieldwork strategy was to establish rapport with participants through use of the bartender role. Thrasher (1928: 244) also describes his approach towards the boys' gang as the establishment of rapport between the researcher and the research participants. He defines rapport as:

> By *rapport* is meant that condition of mutual responsiveness which encourages free interchange of confidences and promotes sympathetic understanding without the interposition of formal explanations and qualifications. It involves a community of experience which provides a common universe of discourse and common sentiments and attitudes.

In my fieldwork strategy, I took the conscious decision within my role as researcher to establish rapport with the two young adult men. Upon their arrival at *The Mitre*, it was apparent that this scenario held both potential ethnographic value to the research, and also economic value to the pub, in correlation with Thrasher's (1928: 245) statement that: "Rapport may be established more quickly … if the investigator is alert to take advantage of opportunities which may arise".

The role of bartender demanded that the business requirements of *The Mitre* were prioritised; acknowledging that making revenue for the pub was also the subject of my attention. At this time, the theatre nearby to the pub – a strong revenue stream particularly throughout the earlier stages of an evening – was being rebuilt. The theatre would not be open until fifteen months later [October 2011] and the business and revenue streams of the pub were suffering due to this prolonged closure. This was something which Andrew had highlighted upon the initial point of employment; his rationale was that every piece of business was economically valuable at this time: *"make them comfortable, keep them here, ask if they fancy another"* (Andrew). Within this supportive context, and building upon initial interactions, I sought a tentative relationship with the "Rock 'n' Roll builders" by using the role of bartender as a method of access and further interaction. Both the pub and the

research would benefit from my strategic attempts to maintain an environment where the men felt comfortable; business for the pub and data collection could simultaneously be made.

Upon the arrival of the "Rock 'n' Roll builders" at *The Mitre*, it was apparent that this scenario held potential ethnographic value. Both men were visibly ready to drink, and to drink hard. The men were keen to consume alcohol, and they had plainly just finished their week's work as this extract from the field diary revealed:

> *Two men arrive in the pub around 5:30pm on a Friday evening, they are both still in their work clothes smothered in dust and grime. The pub is empty other than the three of us. It is apparent that they are manual workers due to the condition of their clothes. The men position themselves on the barstools at the front of the bar, facing directly towards me. I greet them: "Alright lads, how's it going. Looks like you've had a hard week." The older builder replies: "Yeah, good mate. Glad the week's over, been on the building site all week. Need a drink. Two pints of Stella, and I think we'll have two shots of Jäegermeister to get started". I produce the drinks for them immediately, placing the drinks in front of them at the bar and taking their money which comes from a huge wad of notes that the older man produces from his pocket: "Fuck knows how much of this'll be left by the time I get home to the missus". I smile and say: "Well, you've earned it, aintcha", which is greeted with a nod and a smile from both men. The older man is looking towards me in amusement, and laughing at his much younger colleague, who is already a little drunk. He says: "Comeon Simon, get the shot down you. Let's go. Weekend style". They drink their 'shots' immediately, slamming their shot glasses down forcefully and pulling faces which denote a lack of pleasure at the taste. Simon now speaks to me loudly displaying pleasure at the effect of the 'shot': "Woohoo, two more please barman. Line them up. Let's get them in Darren". Darren looks at me, and says: "Oh to be eighteen again mate, eh? Thinks he can take on the world". I laugh, but produce two more Jäegermeister 'shots' as requested, while they drink their pints more steadily. "Think it's time for a ciggie" says the older builder, standing up. "No harm in a little break [between drinks]". Darren goes outside into the street space and lights up, whilst I direct Simon to the men's toilets: "Just through there mate, first door on your left".*

The initial impression that the presence of the "Rock 'n' Roll builders" was of ethnographic value gained validity as the intentions of the two men had soon been made clear: they were out to get drunk after their working week. The immediacy of their drinking and attitude towards money indicated that they considered this activity to be 'normal service'. On his return, Simon's response to the absence of Darren [who was still outside smoking] at the bar raised the intensity of the scenario:

Simon: "Quick, give me a rum and coke while he's not about. He'll tell me to slow down if he sees me".

Rob: "Are you sure mate, you don't want to piss your mate off. You've already got a pint".

Simon: "Yeah, I know. But my girlfriend is waiting for me tonight and I don't have much time. I'd just rather Darren didn't see that's all".

Rob: "Well, no problem. I just wanted to be sure. Those shots are quite strong aren't they".

With this note of caution, I produce the rum and coke, and Simon pays before consuming the drink in two gulps, and quickly returns the glass to me with a smile and a knowing wink. He begins to sip his pint again, looking round to see Darren finishing his cigarette: "You won't tell him, will you" he asks me. I reply: "Not if you don't want me to mate, it's your choice".

The sense of urgency around the style in which the men were drinking was especially embodied by the manner in which Simon consumed his secretive rum and coke. This was the first genuine evidence of hard-drinking in an empty pub which was encountered in the fieldwork, and there was now the onset of a relationship of trust between Simon and me as we shared his 'secret'. From this point the relationship between myself as the bartender/researcher and the two men evolved, as initial interactions had been successful and the pub was still empty other than us.

Prior experience suggested there was a strong possibility that the pub would not become busy within the next hour at least; this indicated the time and the space to focus attention as bartender/researcher was available. The pursuit of this scenario was justified on two fronts which reflected the mutual compatibility of the bartender/researcher role: firstly, as bartender it was vital for me to make some business for the licensee and sell some alcoholic products: *"ultimately, we're here to sell booze to customers"* (Andrew); secondly as researcher the controlled development of this scenario promised potential data insights could be obtained. The revealed age of Simon (18), and the relative condition of inebriation of both men suggested some insightful observations could be made and data gathered if this scenario was allowed the benefit of time and nurture. This highlighted where the roles of bartender and researcher were not mutually exclusive; the spontaneity of this scenario could be

retained by limiting any immediate involvement in interactions with the "Rock 'n' Roll builders" until the researcher potentially became a natural component of any interactions via my role as bartender.

3.2.4 Empathy and autobiography: establishing a spontaneous ethnographic relationship

Empathy towards the "Rock 'n' Roll builders" was central to the development of this research scenario. Merrill and West (2009: 107) state: "One person who volunteers willingly to tell their life story can be preferable to any number who are reluctant". By demonstrating empathy within the role of bartender as a discreet point of access, the basis of the willing responses from the two young men were received by me within the role of researcher. The most important criteria in this research process was to maintain an environment within the pub which was conducive to any further customers entering the pub, which could happen at any time. This demanded the maintenance of an atmosphere in keeping with the ethos of the pub as previously outlined by Andrew; attainable through the display of empathy towards the aims of Darren and Simon: to drink alcohol towards a state of intoxication after their working week had finished. Any strategically obtained data made as researcher was a direct response to the ethnographic relationship which was negotiated through how well the duties of bartender were performed, and the empathy demonstrated towards Darren and Simon across both roles of bartender/researcher.

The conscious utilisation of the interactive position of bartender and an outward demonstration of empathy towards their lives established a mutual relationship within the scenario. Often the relationship between bar staff and intoxicated customers could become strained, particularly when bar staff looked intimidated or unsure about the status of intoxication and manner of the customers. This I had experienced myself when drinking with colleagues after work during my own work life as a manual labourer. Often bar staff could allow the frenetic nature of such scenarios to overcome them; this could offend customers from a manual labour background – who look scruffy, appear crude and are often rude – into making the situation as difficult for the bar staff as possible. This can result in the customers leaving an establishment and moving to another as they feel unwelcome or judged upon outward appearance: *"my money is as good as anyone else's"* (Darren). To maintain this

spontaneous research opportunity demanded a relationship of mutual understanding based upon a foundation of empathy between myself as bartender/researcher with Darren and Simon. My reciprocation of trust with Darren and Simon was an aspect of my conscious utilisation of the interactive position of bartender, and my outward demonstration of empathy through my autobiographical background towards Darren and Simon's desire to consume alcohol, which established rapport "of a community of experience" (Thrasher, 1928: 244). By allowing the young men to drink in a non-judgemental and empathetic context, I was allowing our ethnographic relationship to establish.

Relations of this embryonic state demanded the further establishment of a tentative relationship of mutual understanding with Darren and Simon. When Darren returned to join Simon at the bar, I strategically utilised knowledge of terminology gathered from my own autobiographical background which I had become familiarised within manual labour workplaces and social circles: *"You lads look up for it today, is it a Poets Day thing?"* (Rob). "Poets day" is a commonly used acronym encountered at various points in my adult work and social life and relates to experience within the manual labour workplace: "Poets day: another name for Friday to be used in a work environment. Based on the acronym for "Piss Off Early, Tomorrow's Saturday" (Urban Dictionary, 2017). "Poets" is a common terminology within many workplaces, featuring particularly in hard-grafting manual labour jobs such as building, road work or tarmac-laying which I had experienced in my previous workplaces. It reflects the attitude of "work hard – play hard" prevalent within hard-grafting manual workplaces, literally reflecting the mood that the beginning of the weekend is extended to very early on a Friday afternoon and is seen as a reward for a long week's labour within physically challenging work conditions. This primarily applies to workplaces which pay cash-in-hand at the end of every week; each worker therefore has the financial capacity to spend their hard-earned cash within the focus of their own leisure: in this instance, the Canterbury night-time economy. This terminology was greeted with a laugh: *"You've got that spot-on mate. We finished at half two, had a couple of cans in the van, and were at the pub for four. Ready for the weekend"* (Darren). By aligning myself with the two men in this way *"no worries, I know that feeling"* (Rob) and using a genuine aspect of my own autobiographical background, the realisation within Darren and Simon grew that I had participated within similar workplaces to themselves and was familiar with the culture of leisure-time intoxication which often surrounds the

manual workplace. Measham and Moore (2006) explored how, for rave and club researchers, the intertwining of personal and professional biographies has been important in the production of 'insider' knowledge, as this interaction also developed upon the theme of researcher positionality, and the statement of C. Wright Mills (1959: 196) that: "you [the researcher] must learn to use your life experience in your intellectual work". By using posture, language and accent with which Darren and Simon were familiar and comfortable, I was establishing rapport by presenting myself as an integral figure who they could 'act themselves' in front of. This contrasts with how Cressey (1932: 34) was viewed 'differently' by a female taxi-hall dancer on first impression:

> The first time I saw you [Cressey] I knew right away that you didn't belong …. You didn't act like the other white fellows who came up to the hall … They wouldn't talk very much, but you did … then you danced differently … you talked differently, used different words.

Rather than reflecting a 'difference' between the two men and myself by reacting negatively to their language or intention to become intoxicated, I made strategic use of aspects of my autobiographical background to present an image of 'belonging' within a subculture of hard-drinking/hard-grafting young men.

The conscious decision that the role of bartender provided the space for me to exert some tentative control as both bartender and researcher upon the situation as and when necessary supported the notion of acquiring naturally occurring data. As Darren and Simon responded towards the empathetic approach and became more at ease, the dynamics of the situation became more clear and a course of research navigation more prevalent. The manual-labour aspect of my own autobiographical experiences enabled Darren and Simon to feel comfortable to drink towards intoxication, and also at ease to be conversational. It was now becoming apparent to me that how the bartender responded to customers often dictated how long that customers would stay in the pub; just as it was possible to encourage people to stay in the pub by offering them hospitality and companionship, it was also possible to fend people away by undertaking various tasks or maintaining brevity in conversation. On occasion this method of 'soft management' was employed by me as the bartender/researcher, as the environment of the pub suffered from the presence of customers who detracted from the

overall ambience of the pub. This approach also served to limit the use of 'hard management' which would require confrontation with customers and having to ask them to leave.

The initial empathetic approach taken by me towards Darren and Simon cemented a mutual relationship of understanding. The conversation began to flow easily, whilst variously acting as both bartender and researcher within the three-hour scenario which followed. This resulted in data which provided insightful narrative into the lives of Darren and Simon, and the experiential dimension of life within an urban "laboratory". Consequently, the occupation of the dual role of bartender/researcher undertaken in the pub revealed data reflecting current trends of drinking, in this case by hard-drinking/hard-grafting subcultures of young men outside of the workplace, which supported the evidence that alcohol consumption was still related to having a manual-labour job which entails hard, sweat-inducing work (Thompson, 1963) and a 'normalization' (Parker et al, 1998) of recreational alcohol use in the UK. The initial empathy demonstrated towards the "Rock 'n' Roll builders" and the use of aspects of autobiographical background were of significant value within the success and outcomes of this spontaneously occurring scenario as described in this passage from the field dairy:

> *I do not feel uncomfortable in their presence as other members of staff often admit that they do, as I have ten years' experience in manual labour workplaces to look back on … I am also empathetic with the feeling of relief that Friday afternoon brings after a hard week's manual graft*

This established a sense of empathy between both parties, as the absence of any outward intimidation or reservations from me towards their presence in the pub established the research process whilst maintaining business for the pub. My demonstration of comfort towards Darren and Simon's presence in the pub was secure enough to tentatively approach the research process and allow the scenario to unfold. At no time in the process was there any desire to control their actions. Alternately, the comfortable relations built early in the scenario provided me with a degree of potential authority to negotiate any uncomfortable moments.

Initially, I undertook the cleaning and organisational duties of restocking the bottles in the fridge, cleaning the shelves and so on, whilst continuing to serve Darren and Simon drinks and responding to their demands and conversation. These were duties which could be undertaken whilst engaging with customers in the pub, as they were not time-demanding and remained within the outward-facing space of the bar itself. Having built an initial relationship with the men through the use of "POETS day", the scenario settled and Darren and Simon continued with the purpose of their presence in the pub – consuming alcohol. No interjection was made by me during this initial period in the pub into the two men's conversation; the role of bartender was occupied whilst my presence behind the bar allowed the establishing scenario to spontaneously flow with the dynamics of the situation. When engaging in conversation with Darren and Simon, a less refined accent than usual was used. This occurrence was less strategic and more of a natural slipping between the social realms which were familiar within my autobiographical background. This enabled communication with Darren and Simon upon a level which was familiar to them. My previous occupation within work and social spaces which are commonly linked with manual labour enabled me to present a flexible persona to the two men. Whilst this had been a natural occurrence, it was clear that this quality could be developed further throughout the subsequent research process. Darren and Simon engaged me in conversation constantly throughout their stay in the pub. Due to the absence of any other parties in the pub, I was able to act as their personal bartender which allowed space for them to engage directly with me.

Within this context, as Darren and Simon spoke freely within their relative state of intoxication, it soon emerged that they had been paid in cash for their labour on the building site throughout the previous week. Darren asked me my own age (32) and then told me he was 28 years old and the building-site Foreman; he had £800 in his pocket which he brandished freely: *"Look at this wad mate, 800 quid"* (Darren). As the senior and more experienced of the two men, Darren occupied the central role in the 'bar conversation'; he was evidently familiar with and comfortable within the social context of the pub environment: *"just a nice bit of time, spend my own money, no one watching me. I love the pub, I can be myself"* (Darren). Conversation flowed freely and easily; the men were candid about their lives, and willing to share their experiences with little prompting other than to maintain the level of conversation throughout.

3.2.5 "We're Rock 'n' Roll builders": bar conversation as an ethnographic research method

The data revealed in the 'bar conversation' which occurred between Darren, Simon and me as bartender/researcher supported the notion that alcohol consumption still relates to, and is used as a response to, having a manual-labour job which entails hard, perspiration inducing work all week (Hoggart, 1957). Interaction between bar staff and customers was an integral aspect of the pub environment, resulting in bar conversation becoming a strong feature within the armoury of the ethnographic researcher inside the pub as an urban "laboratory". By engaging in naturally occurring bar conversation with Darren and Simon within the role of bartender, this interaction was exploited within the research process. Conversation was followed within the role of bartender, and I responded to this conversation in accordance with the context of the conversation occurring at that specific moment. For example, bar conversation elicited data when I jokily referred to the speed and volume of Darren and Simon's alcohol consumption: *"steady on boys, the night is long"* (Rob) to which Darren responded:

> *"It's Friday, I've grafted all week; it's time to live life on my own terms for a few hours. I just like to get out – stay out of the house I mean – for a bit longer after a long weeks work. Let the missus deal with the kids for a while longer while I just get a few drinks and my relaxation in"*

The volume and speed of their consumption continued to demonstrate that Darren and Simon were intent upon drinking to the point of intoxication, as after an hour-and-a-half of being in the pub they had consumed their fourth large 'shot' of Jäegermeister each alongside three pints of lager. This was something which they associated with being away from their girlfriends and the home: *"my girlfriend ... if she knew I was here ... she'd kill me. She hates me drinking after work and spending my money"* (Simon). Spending time in an all-male environment, where the drink flows freely, was akin to a level of freedom which is outside of the confines of the workplace and the home: "*this is **my** free time, **my** leisure*" (Darren).

The overall impression given by Darren and Simon was that hard-earned cash wages were effectively *theirs* and were earned to enhance opportunities to get intoxicated at the weekend. Whilst Darren had £800, and would evidently have plenty of money left over even after spending a considerable amount of it – stating: *"fuck it mate, I can spend what I want. We're rock 'n' roll builders"* when I sounded a note of caution as to how much large measures of spirits cost – Simon was an apprentice builder and earned the lesser amount of £140 a week. However, at this moment he was treating his money with even more abandon than his far better earning colleague; offering to buy rounds of drinks for all of us, offering to buy me snacks and to give me cigarettes. Placing his money on the bar and counting it out – it had diminished somewhat to under £100 by this point – Darren and I began suggesting to him that he should be careful with how much he spent as his cash needed to last him a whole week. His response to this suggestion illustrated the normative idea of drinking alcohol outside the workplace: *"It's only money isn't?! I'll just earn more next week"* (Simon). Within the immediacy of the situation, and under the influence of intoxication, Simon was unable to see further than the thrill of reaching the climax of a working week and having his wages in his pocket. His sole intention was summed up in his non-aggressive dismissal of our friendly suggestions towards a little more self-control: *"I'm out, work's over, I just want to drink ... come on Darren let's have more to drink ... it's the weekend!"* (Simon). Whilst these events were to spiral towards higher levels of intoxication over the next couple of hours, Darren and Simon were hard-grafting men who, it could be seen were also using alcohol consumption in attempting to 'put back the sweat' (Thompson, 1963: 350). Darren and Simon were both still in their work clothes; had both already been drinking previously; both were intent on spending however much of their money it was going to take on their mission to become intoxicated and both were in no hurry to get back to the opposite "normality" of their home lives.

3.2.6 The Rock 'n' roll builders: unexpected outcomes and soft management

The spontaneous "set-up scenario" of the "Rock 'n' Roll builders" had an unexpected outcome which placed demands upon the fluidity and flexibility of my dual roles of bartender/researcher. As Darren and Simon had become more comfortable they had begun

to drink even more intensely, taking regular shots of Jägermeister and backing these up with further pints of lager. Simon quickly became worse-for-wear, which was immediately apparent to me within the sobriety of the roles of bartender/researcher. He had clearly become heavily inebriated and was struggling with the effects of the alcohol he had already consumed. Even so, he was still keen to drink more. When Darren went outside to smoke again, Simon asked for another Rum and Coke which I used the role of bartender to deny him in a friendly way: *"You're alright mate, you've had plenty now. And you've still got another beer already. I'd rather you left it at that"* (Rob). Simon did not argue with this response, leaning forward onto the bar and cushioning his head into his folded arms. By committing to go out drinking with an older, more experienced colleague after work, and with the thirst built up from a long week on the building site, Simon had reached a level of intoxication which was above his levels of tolerance. He had spent most of his money, and was now struggling with co-ordinated movement. Whilst Darren was obviously experienced in the norms of heavy drinking by consuming large amounts but at a more manageable rate, Simon quickly descended into a state of sickness from alcohol consumption.

The immediacy of the situation was now apparent. The time was approaching 9:00pm and it was likely that the pub trade would begin to build healthily; a heavily drunk young man could affect the potential for other customers to come into the pub and Andrew was likely to return to the pub in the near future. Both of these outcomes could have serious consequences to this spontaneous ethnographic scenario, as the management of the pub and the research rested with me as the bartender/researcher. When Darren returned to the bar, I indicated to him the condition of Simon, who was now unable to communicate coherently. Darren took Simon into the toilets in case he was going to be physically sick, which he was, and I got him to drink some water to alleviate the effects of the alcohol in his system. Without raising any element of panic by maintaining a composed external demeanour, it was made clear to Darren that this situation now had to be dealt with quickly and effectively. Darren responded to this, acknowledging that Simon was his responsibility as the older man of the two: *"I'll call his parents from his phone, and ask them to collect him. I brought him here, so we'll get this sorted out. The lad's had way too much to drink."* Whilst Darren called Simon's parents to come and collect him from the pub, I provided him with further water to counteract the alcohol, further guiding Simon away into the street space away from the pub to make the pub

clear for further customers. Darren joined him, whilst his parents made the journey to collect him; Simon was by now sobering enough to allow me to go into the toilets and clear up any remaining mess from his vomiting which cleared the pub back into a fully-ordered state.

Simon's parents arrived shortly; making sure that he got away safely into the care of his family. When Darren told his parents to *"Go easy on him"* as he had got carried away, his father responded by telling him: *"Well, this isn't the first time, and it probably won't be the last. We had the same thing with his brother at his age – he'd go out drinking with friends after work and wouldn't know when to stop".* They were obviously unhappy with Simon's condition, but were understanding that this was not an unexpected turn of events with concern to an eighteen year old man. During this fifteen minute period, the shape of this spontaneous set-up scenario had changed quickly with little warning. Instead of Darren and Simon leaving the pub together as planned by 9:00pm, alcohol consumption had altered the potential outcome of this ethnographic scenario and demanded quick action by me in the roles of bartender/researcher which flowed with the changing dynamics of this immediate situation. The proactive approach demonstrated towards the quick and successful closure of this scenario alongside Darren and Simon, building upon the relationship of empathetic trust which had built throughout this lengthy scenario, had enabled the safe conclusion of this unexpected turn in the scenario. Importantly, the role of bartender was shown to be compatible with the role of researcher; by using the responsibility conferred upon the role of bartender, the pub environment had been maintained whilst Darren and Simon both experienced safe outcomes to their evenings. Darren confirmed this as he went to leave after Simon's parents had departed: *"You did well there, Rob. Thanks mate. Could've got out of control and the pub would've been a right mess. I'm sorry about all that, and I'll come back with Simon sometime and get him to apologise to you".* Simon and Darren were using alcohol in their leisure time outside of the workplace and, specifically, away from women and responsibility. There was a specific 'invisibility' about the way in which they were drinking and the specific context, but the younger of the men, Simon, was also prepared to drink secretly from Darren as he wanted to get extremely intoxicated but not to suffer any judgement or condemnation from either Darren or his girlfriend who would have disapproved of him spending his money unwisely. Both men were excited about reaching the climax of their working week, and were drinking in a celebratory manner, but the conclusion was met when

Simon was unable to carry on as he became too intoxicated. By using a method of 'soft management', I was able to successfully navigate the scenario to make sure that a safe outcome was achieved for both men. This enabled Simon to sober up quickly, and also to be taken home safely. Darren was able to enjoy his absence from the home for a little longer, and also made sure that his younger colleague was OK.

The outcome of the spontaneous "set-up scenario" of the "Rock 'n' roll builders" outlined the importance of being prepared to "flow with the dynamics of the situation" (Ferrell et al, 2008: 178) during research within sites of alcohol consumption. Whilst fieldwork data could be obtained, there was always an element of risk involved in the establishment of spontaneous ethnographic relationships within the field. The flexibility of the role of bartender, as a central social component within the Canterbury night-time economy, allowed spontaneous research opportunities to establish themselves at the will of the researcher. The flexibility that this conferred upon both roles to utilise 'soft management' over spontaneous scenarios was also reflected in how any potential negative effect upon the environment of the pub or the research was averted through a proactive and empathetic approach by me towards the research process. The dual roles of bartender/researcher were demonstrated not to be mutually exclusive from one another by the manner in which influence could be imparted upon scenarios as and when necessary, building upon relationships of trust nurtured within these roles. The "Rock 'n' roll builders" were an example of hard-drinking/hard-grafting subcultures of young men drinking after their week's work; the role of bartender had enabled access to this scenario within the role researcher. The proactive use of my role as bartender had subsequently enabled my role as researcher to navigate a potentially serious shift in the outcome of the scenario towards a calmer outcome where the pub environment and each of the participants was managed towards a successful outcome.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter examined how the fieldwork setting of *The Mitre* as an urban "laboratory" within the Canterbury night-time economy built upon the methodological traditions of the Chicago School of Park (1915), Thrasher (1927; 1928) and Cressey (1927/1983). Reference was made to the duality of roles occupied by myself as the researcher within the fieldwork location, and

as to how the initial process of immersion enabled by the influence of Andrew, the licensee, impacted upon the subsequent fieldwork process. The shaping of a strategic ethnographic research process within this urban "laboratory" was demonstrated through the example of the "Rock 'n' roll builders", and looked at "dominant modes of free-time, leisure activity and socialising engaged in by a person" (MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007: 341). This approach demonstrated that spontaneously occurring data could be gathered within the role of researcher via the access point of the role of bartender within intentionally "set-up scenarios". These scenarios demanded an approach to creating "rapport" (Thrasher, 1928) through utilising common experiences between myself as researcher and the two young men. This relied upon my autobiographical experiences in manual-labour workplaces, where I had been exposed to how young men would often drink alcohol at the end of their working week to 'celebrate' freedom from the workplace or the home. Further emphasis was placed in the chapter upon how spontaneously occurring ethnographic examples within sites of alcohol consumption potentially had uncertain outcomes which the dual roles of bartender/researcher provided with the mutual compatibility for 'soft management', and how this research strategy owed much to personal judgement of situations. This form of navigation around potentially risky situations was shown to be based around a reflexive and flexible approach to the data collection setting of the urban "laboratory"; developed via the space provided by the nurturing attitude of Andrew, the licensee, and the autobiographical background of myself as the researcher and bartender. Simon and Darren's honest accounts of their lives and position within a hard-drinking/hard-grafting subculture of young adult men drinking outside of the workplace supported Hoggart's (1957) view of working-class men and increased weekend alcohol consumption. This evidence of hard-drinking/hard-grafting subculture of young adult men in the Canterbury night-time economy highlighted how alcohol was consumed quickly, and often in quite large volumes; it was viewed by the participants as an antidote to a long working week, and Darren often came to *The Mitre* on a Friday for a few months after on his own and would continue to pursue similar drinking practices at the end of his working week.

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Chapter Four: Mapping the Canterbury Night-Time Economy

4 Introduction

This chapter is focussed upon how the methodological approach of the Chicago School to urban studies was adapted during this research, where the Canterbury night-time economy is defined as an "urban laboratory" as a site of ethnographic research into young people's drinking practices where 'clusters' (Roberts, 2015: 571) of drinking venues saw specific drinking practices enacted. It also adapts the Chicago school tradition of 'mapping' of urban areas of research (Burgess, 1925) by presenting a mapped diagram representing a physical 'mapping' of the Canterbury night-time economy made during the research. This map will be used to help and demonstrate the definition of a distinction between *place* and *space*, developed upon the notion of the city as a duality recognisable from two perspectives: 1) the "*concept of a city*", and 2) the "*urban fact*" (de Certeau, 1984: 94). This duality will be presented by the location of the wider Canterbury night-time economy as both a mapped *place* and theoretical *space*, where drinking practices amongst young people characterised the nature of the *space* represented within the *place*, and illustrated the opposition between physically mapped *place* and a lived experiential *space*. Ethnographic data passages featuring thick description and "stories" (de Certeau, 1984: 118) of the drinking practices of young people will define the experiential dimensions of alcohol consumption inside the city-centre and the "urban laboratory" of the Canterbury night-time economy mapped into a diagram. The chapter also introduces the various drinking practices of young people which were commonly observed during the fieldwork, and latterly discusses the specialised characteristics of *The Mitre* which made it a likely "ending point" for young people's nights out in the night-time economy, and an enduring resource as a site for ethnographic fieldwork with young people engaged in extreme drinking practices.

4.1 Mapping the "urban laboratory": Canterbury city-centre and the night-time economy

This research adapted the suggestion of Park (1915) towards the city as a laboratory where human activity could be profitably studied, and also adapted the mapping of Burgess (1925)

who proposed "the hypothesis that cities naturally become organised into five concentric circular zones" (Quinn, 1940: 210). This chapter outlines how the Canterbury night-time economy was mapped in this research within a specific inner-circle zone which was representative of the city-walls that had historically encircled Canterbury city-centre (See *Figure One*) and where extreme drinking practices by young people were observed during the fieldwork. By positioning geographically the twenty-nine licensed establishments encountered during the fieldwork into a mapped diagram, this mapped inner-circle zone demonstrates the concentration of the Canterbury night-time economy where the majority of instances of extreme drinking practices amongst young people occurred during the fieldwork. *Figure One* will be related to the drinking practices and spatial experiences of the young people in Canterbury night-time economy, where familiar patterns of movements are "constituted in specialist 'clusters' of venues" (Roberts, 2015: 571). Ethnographic data passages featuring young people's experiences of the Canterbury night-time economy are used alongside the maps to introduce the 'experiential dimension' of participation in the Canterbury night-time economy. This correlates with the formulation of the concept of the city as a *duality* recognisable as an understanding of city space from two perspectives: (1) the "*concept* of a city" which understands the *rigid* geometric dimension of the city as viewed by planners, cartographers, developers and the like, and (2) the "urban *fact*" which understands the rich *active* 'experiential dimension' of urban life, the authentic *lived* experience of urban life, which was guided by an anthropological view of the city (de Certeau, 1984: 94). This research features only licensed establishments which were encountered during the fieldwork, and each of the establishments is anonymised. The licensed establishments are marked on *Figure One* as *A-Z* and *1-3*, and the names of these are represented in a *Table One*; some sample movements of young people between specific 'clusters' of drinking spaces where extreme drinking practices were regular occurrences are represented in *Table Two*.

4.1.1 Canterbury city-centre and Canterbury night-time economy

In this research Canterbury city-centre was framed within the parameters of the historic Canterbury city walls, first built by the Romans between 270 and 280 AD, which acted as a specific margin of geographical *place* within the context of Canterbury night-time economy,

and the boundaries of the fieldwork within licensed establishments. Within the parameters of these walls there were twenty-six licensed establishments which were encountered with young people during the fieldwork, where drinking practices including extreme drinking amongst these young people were observed, including *The Mitre*. Of these, fourteen licensed establishments were observed to be a part of a 'cluster' of licensed establishments (Roberts, 2015) which were constantly or regularly observed to be locations where young people would specifically go to undertake extreme drinking practices due to various specific factors which relate to increased availability including: regular drink promotions or late licence. Alternatively, the absence of these specific factors reduced the likelihood of a regular or constant presence of extreme drinking practices. In the other ten mapped licensed establishments extreme drinking practices/styles were observed. These locations became specifically associated with being irregular or rare sites of extreme drinking practices; they were sometimes a part of a mapped procession towards a final destination, but these were usually fleeting visits due to their individual characteristics, which include the serving of food, the absence of drinks promotions, or the general atmosphere and reputation. These characteristics were shown in the fieldwork to relate to how comfortable young people felt to undertake these drinking practices there. There were also three licensed establishments – one pub and two night-clubs – from just outside the perimeter of the city walls which were regularly encountered during the fieldwork; these were of central importance to the research due to their positions as a "starting place" and "ending place" for many nights out with research participants in the Canterbury night-time economy.

4.1.2 A *duality*: Mapping the Canterbury night-time economy

Figure One denotes an adaptation of the traditional physical geography or conceptual cartographic *place* of the city-centre, and how the city walls were a self-contained space where a concentration of human activity would occur. This is represented as a circle, enclosing the concentration of the licensed establishments in the Canterbury night-time economy. In this research, *Figure One* develops upon the notion of the city as a duality; representing both the "*concept* of the city" and the "urban *fact*" (de Certeau, 1984: 94), as through the rich experiential data of young people cited through the rest of this chapter and thesis "stories

thus carry out a labor [*sic*] that constantly transforms places into spaces and spaces into places" (de Certeau, 1984: 118). The map illustrates the concentration of licensed establishments inside the city walls, where drinking practices amongst young people were commonly observed during the fieldwork:
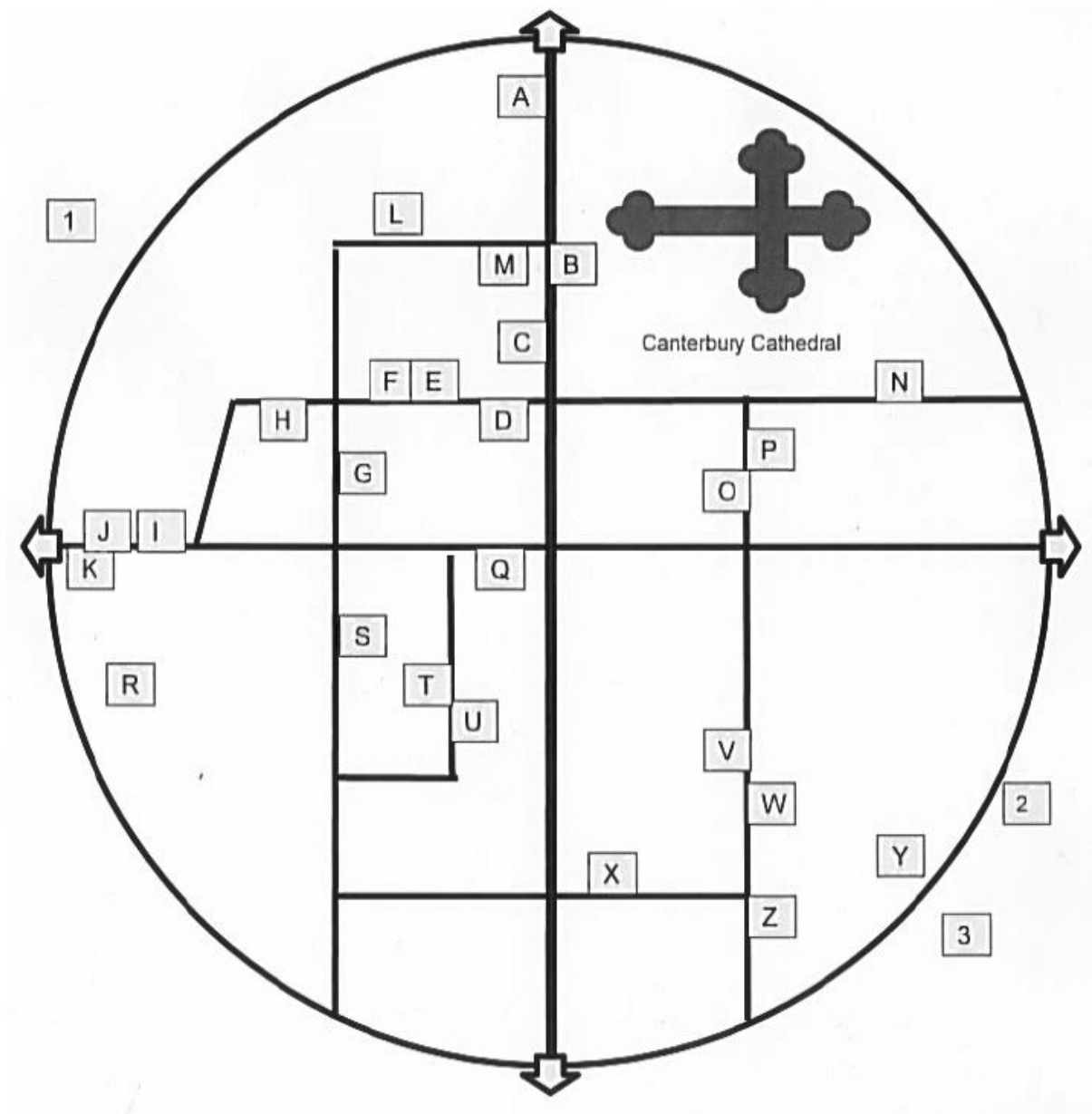
Figure One: Map of the Canterbury night-time economy during the fieldwork

In this ethnographic map of the Canterbury night-time economy (See *Figure One*), the eastwards pointing arrow represents the "top" of the city and the westwards pointing arrow represents the "bottom" of the city, as these two geographical points were linked by the pedestrianized area of the High Street which followed this geographical direction. *Table One* (below) states the anonymised names of each of the licensed establishments featured within *Figure One*, and encountered during the research:

A-J	Name	K-T	Name	U-Z	Name
A	*The Farthing*	K	*The Hobgoblin*	U	*The Iron House*
B	*The Pirate*	L	*The Ocean Arms*	V	*Tunnel Club*
C	*King's Head*	M	*Simple Simon's*	W	*Upstairs Downstairs*
D	*The Moon*	N	*The Bee Hive*	X	*The White Horse*
E	*The Dancehall*	O	*O'Malley's*	Y	*The Anchor Inn*
F	*Oranges and Pears*	P	*The Cathedral Gate*	Z	*The Five Cups*
G	*The Archbishop*	Q	*Fiesta*	**1-3**	**Name**
H	*The Mitre*	R	*The Brick Layers Arms*	1	*The Tower*
I	*The Colin Cowdrey*	S	*The Old Stour*	2	*Aspects*
J	*The Compasses*	T	*The Blossom*	3	*Planets*

Table One: Table of names of licensed establishments as denoted in *Figure One*.

Of the licensed establishments encountered during the fieldwork, only four were physically fronted upon the High Street (see *Figure One;* Points I, J, K and Q), whilst the remaining twenty-two licensed establishments within the city walls were on adjacent streets or streets which led onto the High Street (see *Figure One*). Whilst this would appear to cartographically direct participants in the night-time economy away from the High Street, in this research the social practice of alcohol consumption amongst young people in the Canterbury night-time economy is "interpreted through the perspective of urban design" (Roberts, 2015: 571), and

was reflected by the presence of young people migrating throughout the licensed establishments of the night-time economy towards their final "ending place" of an evening out. Hollands (1995: 46 and 48) also offered maps of the Newcastle night-time economy which traced the patterns of young people's drinking movements related to specific pubs and night-spots which represented the preferred route for young people based upon their familiarity with the Newcastle night-time economy. Within my research, this meant that due to its concentration of specific drinking establishments, the High Street became a significant *space* of drinking practices within the Canterbury night-time economy, as indicated by the human activity and young people drinking observed during this research, as this data extract from the field diary reveals:

> *It is 6.30pm on a Saturday evening and I am on the way to work, walking into the city-centre along Wincheap and past the ruins of Canterbury Castle. It is quiet, and the pubs I pass outside of the city walls are inhabited by a few quiet drinkers. There is then a significant build-up of noise which becomes visual human activity as I approach the centre of the city while making my way towards The Mitre. When I greet the High Street, it is filled with people moving between licensed establishments. Young people are shouting and laughing with each other, and there is a charged atmosphere of frenetic human activity in a concentrated area. Several young people of both genders have obviously been drinking, and there is a group of young people outside The Colin Cowdrey drinking pints of lager quickly. "Oi" shouts one young man, "comeon, let's drink these up fast. We need to be getting up the town" pointing towards the East end of Canterbury city-centre and towards the night clubs. People can be seen drinking inside and outside of every pub that I pass, and when I reach The Mitre, it is already full with people drinking.*

This data extract unveils some of the initial characteristics and human activity relating to alcohol consumption within the Canterbury night-time economy, and brought initial focus to de Certeau's notion of the city as a duality through observation of human behaviour within an urban setting: "*space is a practiced place*. Thus, the street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into a space by walkers" (1984: 117; Original emphasis). By introducing accounts of human activity based on ethnographic methodology of young people involved in drinking in the night-time economy, the experiential dimension of urban fact began to be uncovered.

De Certeau's view of the city as a duality which is enlivened by accounts of human activity corresponds with the argument of Park (1915) towards treating the city as an urban laboratory where observation of human behaviour would reveal the real character of the place. His view was that outside the rigid geographical orderliness of the city there persisted a complex system of human life experience based around the economic, cultural and social backdrop of the areas in which varying forms of human life inhabit the city. Park elaborates upon this point:

> The city is, rather, a state of mind, a body of customs and traditions, and of the organized attitudes and sentiments that inhere in these customs and are transmitted with this tradition. The city is not, in other words, merely a physical mechanism and artificial construction. It is involved in the vital processes of the people who compose it; it is a product of nature and particularly human nature (p. 578)

During the fieldwork, there were multiple occasions where I was invited into social events based around drinking by young people who I had encountered through *The Mitre*, and which led me into the wider Canterbury night-time economy and through each of the other licensed establishments displayed in *Figure One* during these various fieldwork occasions. These occasions acted to provide me with insight into human behaviour within the night-time economy which characterised the licensed establishments by the type of behaviour which was enacted within specific spaces. By becoming familiarised with the Canterbury night-time economy through the guidance of participants within it, I was able to observe from within the groups of young drinkers which licensed establishments amongst the twenty-nine embodied the 'cluster' of focal points where specific drinking styles and practices amongst young people were most prominent, and also which drinking spaces were less associated with extreme drinking practices for various reasons such as regular drinks promotions, late licenses, live music and other attractions. This sense of 'clusters' of specialised venues for specific drinking practices was further reinforced when observing the migration patterns of young people drinking on a night out in the Canterbury night-time economy, and how these were planned and executed in relation to where the night was planned to start and end, and how many stops would be made in between these points in time. This was where an ethnographic map of the night-time economy and the licensed establishments encountered during the fieldwork

became central to analysis of where, how and when extreme drinking practices were undertaken, and why these practices were occurring in specific drinking spaces.

Canterbury city-centre had a series of entry points into the night-time economy, which were fed by public transport systems and the relatively close proximity of residential areas to the city walls, and most residential areas for both locals and students were served by public transport or were within comfortable walking distance of the city-centre. The geographical and logistical details of Canterbury as a cartographic space created a specific approach to undertaking prolonged drinking sessions amongst participants, which were structured around how the concentration of licensed establishments could be approached, and where the eventual outcomes of any pedestrian transit would take participants within the night-time economy. For example, the western and eastern ends of the Canterbury night-time economy as represented in *Figure One* were supported in their significance to the night-time economy by the presence of two railway stations which were Canterbury East and Canterbury West, and Canterbury bus station which was also located at the eastern end of the night-time economy, just inside the periphery of the city walls. Local young people often used these public transport terminals to reach Canterbury from the Medway towns of, for example, Sittingbourne, Gillingham, Rochester, Faversham and Dover into Canterbury East, or from Folkestone, Ramsgate and Margate into Canterbury West in order to participate in Canterbury night-time economy. Buses and trains were especially familiar transport into Canterbury on Saturday afternoons, where groups of young drinkers would often begin their drinking activities much earlier than any other day of the week. Young people travelling into Canterbury would often begin their Saturday afternoon drinking sessions at one of the J.D.Wetherspoon's pubs which were located on the perimeter of the city walls: one just inside: *The Bee Hive* (See *Figure One*; Point N) and one just outside: *The Tower* (See *Figure One*; Number 1). These drinking sessions would often continue through various other licensed establishments inside the city walls, towards a late-licenced pub or one of the night-clubs outside of the city walls (See *Figure One*; Numbers 2 and 3). Alternatively, these groups of drinkers from local destinations may have foregone the later-licensed pubs or clubs by using the location of the public transport terminals located at the West and East ends of the city-centre to exit the Canterbury night-time economy closer to the traditional licensing hours of 11pm, whilst this still represented a prolonged drinking session which took place within the

pubs located within the city walls. The ethnographic mapping of the Canterbury night-time economy (See *Figure One*) totalled the twenty-nine licensed establishments (*Denoted as* A-Z *and* 1-3) depicted in the map. This included the twenty-six licensed establishments from within the city walls (*Denoted as* A-Z), and the three from outside this perimeter (*Denoted as* 1-3) which were encountered during the fieldwork. The three from outside the city walls were included due to their significance during the fieldwork as specific points which saw the commencement or closure of prolonged drinking sessions. Two of these were the mainstream night-clubs *'Aspects'* (*See Figure One;* Number 2) and *'Planets'* (*See Figure One;* Number 3) which often represented a planned or unplanned final destination of a night out for young people due to their centrality to the Canterbury night-time economy and exposure to young people, and also their geographical locations close to Canterbury East railway station and Canterbury bus station, whilst one pub *'The Tower'* (*See Figure One;* Number 1) was included due to its close proximity to the city-walls and its frequent position as a "starting point" of nights out drinking in Canterbury as already indicated by its proximity to Canterbury West railway station and the Westgate Tower. In each of these locations, extreme drinking practices amongst young people was encountered during the fieldwork. *'Aspects'* (*See Figure One;* Number 2) and *'Planets'* (*See Figure One;* Number 3) were primarily defined during this research as an "ending place" for young people due to their late licenses of 3am weekdays and 4am weekends, the entry fees which meant that patrons would only go there when they were ready to stay in one particular place for the rest of the evening, and also the late-night attractions of loud music and dancing until the early-morning hours.

4.1.3 A specialised cluster of licenced establishments

In the Canterbury night-time economy, the concentration of licensed establishments was dictated by the relative concentration of Canterbury city-centre as outlined in the maps displayed previously. The location of the Canterbury night-time economy within the city walls meant that young drinkers had a particular density of licensed establishments to drink in as represented in *Figure One*, with which they became familiar through use and experience and were able to understand the characteristics and expectations within that particular place. Jayne et al. (2008) argued that research aimed at understanding drinking cultures should be

based upon factoring in the density and location of venues within urban spaces as to how this would affect how drinking cultures are enacted by participants. Similarly, Roberts (2015: 1) argues that "place-based characteristics form a significant component of its [the night-time economy] production and experience". By representing specialised locations with specialised activities such as extreme drinking practices, Roberts further argued that these place-based characteristics became a feature of "'liminoid' spaces where normal boundaries of behaviour can be crossed" (p. 1). Throughout the fieldwork, there was a definite sense of specific locations within the Canterbury night-time economy which young drinkers favoured for undertaking the extreme drinking practices or engaging in prolonged drinking sessions which became the focus of the ethnography. *Table Two* (below) provides some examples of specific routes taken by young people when engaging in extreme drinking practices, with varied starting and ending points:

Drinking route	*Starting point*				*End point 5*		*End point 3*				*End point 1/2/4*
Route One	A	→	B	→	D	→	T	→	H	→	Q/S/U
Route Two	1	→	K	→	J	→	T	→	H	→	Q/S/U
Route Three	N	→	P	→	D	→	H				
Route Four	A	→	B	→	D	→	H	→	X	→	2/3
Route Five	R	→	I	→	H						

Table Two: Sample routes of young people in 'cluster' of specific licensed establishments

Firstly, I experienced the notion of specific 'drinking routes' inside *The Mitre* as bartender/researcher where I was often exposed to groups of drinkers 'passing through' during the afternoon on a Saturday, or mid-evening on any day from Monday to Saturday. These occasions were distinguished generally by how young people drank a single drink or maybe two quickly as they 'passed through', and also a sense of emergent intoxication in their actions which had developed during the migration to *The Mitre* from either *The Tower*, *The*

Farthing or *The Bee Hive* (see *Figure One;* Number 1 and Points A and N) which were the specific starting points related to the public transport system and also how participants would approach the city-centre. Secondly, I experienced this as a participant observer immersed into groups of young drinkers which I had encountered through my role at *The Mitre*, where I experienced the specific migration patterns between preferred drinking spaces where extreme drinking practices could be openly enacted. When invited to join these social occasions by participants, I would possibly meet at someone's house outside the city-centre, but more regularly would meet at either *The Tower*, *The Farthing* or *The Bee Hive* (see *Figure One;* Number 1 and Points A and N) depending on how the night was planned by the group and where the final destination within the Canterbury night-time economy was intended to be. *The Brick Layers Arms* (see *Figure One;* Point R) was also a regular starting point due to its position on the edge of Canterbury city-centre, although this was also a pub where drinkers were prepared to spend the majority of their evening rather than exit to further establishments as it had a loyal base of local customers as well as more transient groups of drinkers.

As *Figure One* depicts, each of these points was located on the periphery of the city walls, and enabled participants to use selected specific licensed establishments as drinking spaces where extreme drinking practices would occur based upon various factors such as drinks offers, drink prices and the overall ethos of the establishment towards intoxication. However, this was also where a sense of a specialised 'cluster' of venues within the Canterbury night-time economy began to emerge during the fieldwork (see *Table Two* for examples. Whilst *The Tower* and *The Bee Hive* were both J.D. Wetherspoons pubs, which attracted drinkers primarily through their specialised offering of friendly pricing of both food and alcohol products, these were pubs which invited a wide demographic of customers through this specialised focus. Their attraction as a 'starting' and 'ending' point for groups of young drinkers was mainly geographical in terms of how drinkers would use them as an entry or exit from the night-time economy, and also related to the friendly pricing schemes which saw a wide availability of alcoholic products at reasonable prices. However, *The Farthing* was aimed more specifically at a younger demographic of drinkers; in particular students but also popular with local young people, through social media offers of drinks promotions, live sport screens, live music which were also steadily advertised through fliers and posters around the pub, the university

campuses and the Canterbury night-time economy. Geographically, *The Farthing* provided an entry point to commence progress into the Canterbury night-time economy, but this was also related to attraction of various offers and a sense of welcoming towards young drinkers as Sean (21, student) who lived in Canterbury told me:

> *Generally, we just start at The Farthing. Top and bottom Spoons are both good for getting into town, but once you know the place, it's The Farthing that's best to start from as it's got more on offer for young people. Drink offers, there's sport, quizzes aimed at younger people, bands and DJs. It's cheap and cheerful in there, but you can get started very quickly and cheaply in there. They're happy for you to get blasted there, and you don't feel awkward for being pissed in there whereas you may do in a Spoons pub as there's families in there a lot and also people eating.*

Sean's account, and the sample routes observed during the fieldwork featured in *Table Two*, began to reveal the sense of a specialised space or 'liminoid' zone where there were different expectations placed upon young drinkers by the ethos of the establishment and the demographic which was attracted to the pub. For example, Sean referenced drinks offers, live sport and music as specific attractions for young people as reasons outside of geographical location which made *The Farthing* a central starting point for groups of young people, but also made reference to how young people are perceived by other drinkers as a factor in how selection of places to drink occurred. Sean expanded on this theme when he told me:

> *And then we just carry on up towards other pubs in the direction of the city centre where we like to drink and has the right type of offers or vibe. Where we feel welcome, and can make a bit of noise without getting looked at strange, we will go. The Ocean Arms and Simple Simon's are off-limits for that kind of drinking really, but The Pirate is always good for a quick one or two as it's always pretty lively in there, then there's The Moon where we can settle into getting trashed, as they're known as a pub where you go to get blasted. It's all about being able to feel at home with how you're feeling, rather than mixing with different groups of drinkers who might just be relaxing or eating or whatever.*

Significantly, both *The Pirate* and *The Moon* were part of the cluster of establishments which were on the way from *The Farthing* towards the centre of the Canterbury night-time

economy, whilst the *Ocean Arms* and *Simple Simon's* were slightly more suburban in their geographical positions (See *Figure One;* Points B, D, L and M) and so remained more traditional in the drinking practices which occurred and were accepted in there. Another theme which began to emerge was the idea of local knowledge and Sean's idea of getting to know the local pubs in terms of what they offered to specific types of drinkers based upon various demographics but primarily age followed by locality. Sean said:

> *And then we just carry on up into town if we only stop at The Pirate, there's The Colin Cowdrey which is always good for getting a few in as they've always been pretty welcoming of hard drinking followed by The Hobgoblin, The Compasses and The Blossom. These are all places where younger people mainly go to get drunk, so there's no issue with drinking shots in there. The music's loud, the drink is not the most expensive, and they're a little alternative. They offer the kind of place where being drunk is not just accepted, but expected within reason. These are the types of places where we feel welcome, and can make a bit of noise without getting looked at strange; so we go there.*

Each of the pubs Sean mentioned (See *Figure One;* Points K, J, and T) were always on any extended drinking session encountered during the fieldwork, which positioned them within the specialised cluster of venues which Roberts outlines. Sean also expanded upon the remaining licensed establishments which fitted into this cluster:

> *Like I said, Hobgoblin, The Colin Cowdrey, The Farthing, The Pirate and The Moon are all obvious ones. And the Blossom of course, that's always the place to go as its always lively, and a bit lairy, but it's safe really. Other places which attract us are O'Malley's and the White Horse, although that's often pretty quiet in there as it's a bit out of the way. Good for going to on a drinks offer night. The Mitre and The Compasses are the main late licensed pubs, and they're great for drinking after 11 if you don't fancy a club or a bar. Other places to go are mainly the late night bars like The Tunnel Club, The Iron House, The Old Stour, Fiesta. These really are the places to drink late, and dance as they're almost clubs really. But they cost to get in. If we go there, then it's usually planned. Same for Aspects and Planets. Its late night drinking, in places where you can just get on with it. They're safe, and the drunken behaviour is expected.*

Sean's account negotiates how young people became aware of where the cluster of licensed establishments were to enact extreme drinking practices in the night-time economy (See

Figure One; Points K, I, A, B, D, T, O, X, H, J, V, U, S, Q, 2 and 3). The central theme to Sean's account was the idea of late-night drinking which was acceptable and took place within specialised spaces where the drinking would be accommodated, but was also considered to be safe. Each of these pubs and clubs had a central position within the Canterbury night-time economy, and were well known by both locals and students. This account also relates to the notion of the 'divided city' which sees the city occupied by various parties in various relevant spaces:

> Different sections of the population inhabit city space and construct lifestyles which both assert their own identity, and which may dissuade other groups from encroaching on their territory and culture (Hollands, 1995: 27)

In the case of the Canterbury night-time economy, these identities were primarily characterised by the participation by young people in extreme drinking practices, or acceptance of extreme drinking practices by the people running the licensed premises or the other people in there; it was also based around how young people drinking were treated, and how late they were open or the amount of noise which could be made. Throughout the fieldwork, I joined several groups who used each of the licensed establishments which Sean mentioned, and openly observed how young people would drink in each of these places, and associate themselves with these specific places. Conversely, the other licensed establishments, such as *Simple Simon's, The Archbishop* or *the Ocean Arms,* as Sean also stated, were highly unlikely to see any enactment of extreme drinking practices owing to how young people perceived them as not being appropriate for this activity as this would be seen as potentially encroaching upon territory which young people should respect as a distinct type of place away from extreme drinking practices (See *Figure One;* Points M, G, and L). This also further developed the impression that pubs which served food, or which did not have a late licence or offer drinks promotions were a separate type of specialised establishment which provided service to further demographics which remained distinct from young people engaging in extreme drinking practices. Whilst these establishments were encountered during the fieldwork, this would be when meeting with participants in the Canterbury night-time economy who were having a few quiet "social" drinks, where young people would drink more casually than if they were involved in a pre-planned or spontaneous "session". These social drinks would often be in the aftermath of a shift at work for me where I was asked to

join a group socially, or the aftermath of a lengthy session amongst participants where they would use the less noisy pubs in order to engage with the night-time economy without joining into the more extreme drinking which was available in other places. The specific drinking practices encountered across a diverse cross-section of specialised licensed establishments reinforced the view of de Certeau (1984: 117) that "space is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it". By participating in the movements between specialised licensed establishments by young drinkers in the Canterbury night-time economy, the experiential dimension of inhabitation of the urban laboratory and the inhabitation of pubs and clubs unveiled how young people managed their alcohol consumption within the night-time economy, and how they decided where and how to enact these practices.

4.2 *The Mitre*: the pub laboratory

The Mitre was a middle-range pub which was not a starting point of drinking sessions as described by Sean in the previous section, but was certainly a part of the specialised 'cluster' of venues as outlined by its late licence which made it an ending point where extreme drinking practices were a regular feature of any night of the week to various levels of consumption (see *Table Two*). During the research, I was exposed on a consistent basis to participants in the Canterbury night-time economy who drank to varying degrees of intoxication using various drinking practices. These interactions embodied the experiential dimension of inhabitation of the pub and produced "stories [which] thus carry out a labor [*sic*] that constantly transforms places into spaces and spaces into places" (de Certeau, 1984: 118) whereby the character of *The Mitre* at various points in the evening would change in relation to the human life which inhabited it and the drinking practices they were using. As a result of the pub's position away from the High Street and not it's not being on a specific entry route into Canterbury, there was a lack of detectable trends during the early evening in relation to the pub being a starting point for young people drinking. However, this gave way to the late night drinking that commenced between 11:00 and 11:30pm once other pubs had ceased to serve and drinkers needed a new place to drink. This often meant that anything could happen on any given night, where spontaneous groups of drinkers would enter the pub and enact

their preferred drinking practices as a last port of call unless they planned to go onto a night-club or the other late-night drinking spaces available in the Canterbury night-time economy (see *Table Two*). The only specifics of clientele were 'students', who were a constant feature in term times, and were aware of *The Mitre* as a late-night drinking spot through word of mouth and local knowledge as the pub did not have a social media presence or advertise itself through fliers. Conversely, 'locals' would often "pass through", but were less inclined towards staying in the pub as they would often have made specific plans around where to go and certainly where they would end up and how they would get home.

4.2.1 *The Mitre:* a specialised venue

The Mitre was a medium-sized pub with a capacity of around 120 when full to brimming with customers. If viewing the pub from a birds-eye view the shape of the complete public bar area was L-shaped, and was split into four distinguishable areas occupied by customers by virtue of its original architectural lay-out. Harrisson (1943: 96) mapped and defined a 'typical medium sized pub' which *The Mitre* also was in terms of capacity and dimensions. *The Mitre* was one of only two traditional pubs alongside the *The Compasses* within the city walls which carried a late licence and therefore is licensed to serve alcohol until the later time of 1:00am. Consequently, the pub gathered many differing social strata together under one roof by virtue of its hours of trade, and also its presence as an ending-point for young people drinking in the night-time economy. These characteristics led to a very mixed clientele: mainly student-based, but also working-class youngsters, members of the Armed Forces, alongside other employees from within the Canterbury day-time and night-time economies, who utilised the extended drinking hours and comfortable atmosphere which the pub offered to customers. Simultaneously, there was also a demographic associated with the pub's location slightly away from the high street where the heavier day-time alcohol consumption exists, and also close in proximity to a vibrant new theatre which directs more middle-aged and middle-class customers to the pub – people who may have visited the theatre or made a day-trip into the city.

I had first experienced *The Mitre* as a customer on several social occasions between 2007 and 2008 during my undergraduate spell at Canterbury Christ Church University. The pub was a

common feature of any social event which took place, as it retained a distinct position within the Canterbury night-time economy as a "last port of call" after the other traditional pubs within the city-walls had closed. Having spent the previous few hours socialising and drinking throughout the network of licensed establishments within the Canterbury city-walls, the familiar call of those student colleagues who were immersed into the Canterbury night-time economy (unlike myself) would arise: "Off to *The Mitre* then!". The pub was in a perpetually thriving state after the hours of 11pm, where the volume of customers would rise so rapidly and to such numbers that the street space outside the pub was continually milling with customers from the pub who wished to separate themselves from the cramped conditions which would often emerge inside or were using the outside space to smoke cigarettes. At all times the licensee Andrew was present around the pub, not serving drinks, but socialising inside and outside whilst smoking. He acted as a focal point for the pub, its staff and customers with his presence providing a reassuring edge to the pub through his familiarity to the space. On the occasions I joined with my student colleagues on a night out, there were some occasions where individual members of our social group, which often up to fifteen or twenty members of mixed gender, suffered from the effects of the excess of alcohol after carrying on too late into the evening having consumed multiple drinks over a time-frame of around four hours. In this example of David (20, student) had been indulging in 'shots' of spirits which did not mix well with other drinks such as wine and beer, as he recalls here to me:

David: "That time we went down there after lectures, when we used to go out on Mondays, I think we'd been to a couple of other places, I'd had a few pints of ale in one pub, and then a couple of glasses of red wine in another. Then we got to The Mitre and I remember that we started doing some shots and I had a gin and tonic I think. You had to come and find me in the toilet, because I'd gone missing, if you remember?"

Rob: "Yeah, I remember that pretty well because Andrew asked me to go in and make sure you were OK. He'd seen you disappear in there pretty quickly and was worried how you were. You were being sick and I had to wait until you let me in the cubicle".

David: "That's right. I'd mixed things up too much and it had made me ill. I felt terrible the day after, I remember that too. But I had friends around to help, and you all helped me to get home safely. I felt pretty bad, and I know that I came back to apologise to Andrew the following day. He told me he'd rather I didn't do it again, but he didn't make me feel bad about it".

David's account provided initial outline to the presence of extreme drinking practices which were commonly associated with *The Mitre* due to its late licensing hours, and also to the sense of a specialised venue where young people felt able to drink in extreme measures in spite of the over-intoxication on David's behalf. *The Mitre* was described by its licensee Andrew to me as a "wet pub", as it did not serve food and was individually focussed on the serving of alcohol; this meant the pub help a unique position within the Canterbury night-time economy as the only licensed venue which did not serve food. This was due to previous experimentation by Andrew with food, which had been unsuccessful due to the geographical position of the pub in relation to consistently passing trade. Instead, with a sole focus upon drinks, Andrew was prepared to accept that the business of the pub had a specialised focus which meant that drinking and sometimes over-drinking would occur on a constant basis: *"we serve alcohol, we have to be ready to deal with the outcomes. People are welcome to drink how they like, we just have to make sure they're OK and judge whether they should still be served. It's a responsibility for us all"* (Andrew). In this instance, David had undertaken extreme drinking practices, and had suffered the consequences. However, he was aware enough to make sure that Andrew knew that he understood what had happened, and wanted to make sure that this was resolved. Andrew's acceptance of this and his encouragement of me as David's friend to make sure that he was OK, and also in not making David feel guilty the following day confirmed *The Mitre* as one of the specialised venues where young people would go to drink heavily. However, young people also knew that their behaviour was both being understood within its context in the night-time economy, and that there was also the element of safety provided by the venue which Sean had mentioned in his earlier account; this made the pub a specialised venue and a place where drinking practices were present.

4.2.2 *The Mitre*: The main bar; Left-wing bar #1; Left-wing bar #2 and the Right-wing bar

The front-door of *The Mitre* met immediately with the pavement at the side of a narrow road which off-shot from the section of Canterbury High Street which merged with St. Peters Street. Immediately through the front-door of *The Mitre* was the area specified as 'the main bar'. This area acted as the main focal point of the pub, as it contained the 'front bar' and

'back bar' areas from where alcohol was served. Upon the 'front bar', the lager and cider taps were located, with four ale pumps in the middle of these. The 'back bar' was where the spirits and wine were displayed upon the wall, with liqueurs on lower shelves next to the till, and two fridges which contained bottled lagers and ciders, as well as white wine. These areas lay directly ahead of any new entrants into the pub meaning that the customers were exposed to the range of alcoholic products available immediately upon arrival, and that the bar staff were always directly facing these new entrants from the 'behind bar'. This allowed for friendly greetings when the pub was not busy, and also for bar staff to see 'tides' of drinkers arrive after 11pm when the tempo of the pub began to match the tempo of the loud music coming from the juke-box on the wall in the main bar. The main bar had wooden flooring throughout it, which was tired and weary looking through many years of custom. This floor articulated the nature of the pub environment within its worn features and the noticeable stains of spilt drinks which tattooed their identity upon it. Due to the regularity of the pub being filled to bursting on around four days a week especially in university term time, it was often that this led to drinks being spilt or glasses dropped which then had to be recovered by staff in amongst the busy bar space. As this area had no tables or chairs positioned in it, it often became the focus of the most raucous customer behaviour as its size and layout offered space in which to interact and to dance for customers. This was particularly commonplace later on in evenings when the pub would begin to pulse to the beat of the music which now boomed from the two speakers positioned in the top front corners of the room.

At the end of the main bar, closest to the right-wing bar, there was a now defunct fireplace whose shoulder-high mantelpiece was used for no other purpose than a convenient resting-place for people's drinks which became a place for people to stand and undertake vertical drinking which saw alcohol generally consumed quickly. In the winter-time, the logs used for the open-fire in the left-wing bar #1 were sometimes stored there for convenience. Adjacent to the window on the interior wall was a ledge which often acted as a resting place for drinkers who went outside to smoke where customers would rest their drinks whilst surveying the outside area of the pub through the window. Positioned by the end of this ledge and closest to the open access nearest the street into the right-wing bar was the juke-box, a vital source of entertainment and attraction to customers. This machine was fixed to the wall and provided a wide selection of current and previous music tracks. Hanging on the wall to the

left of the door to the ladies toilets was a large clock, whose hands were stopped dead at the hour of one-thirty. Often seen to confuse customers, or elicit a humorous exchange as to how late or early it was, this clock performed the function of advertising the extended licensing hours. This was the only piece of advertising in which Andrew would say he was engaged: *"Don't really worry about advertising, I'm a publican, I know nothing about effective marketing"*. The pub maintained an inviting position to customers within the Canterbury night-time economy by virtue of its extended licensing hours, the visibility of Andrew within the social context of the pub, and the sociable and hard-working staff who actively identified with ethos of the pub as demanded by Andrew.

The space defined as 'left-wing bar #1' was accessed by customers through the open access to the left of the main bar. It had wooden flooring which was again characterised by the drink stains resulting from spillages which blemish the floor of the main bar. This area was smaller in size than the main bar, although it was of the same depth. It had access to a shorter area of the front bar, which was punctuated by a pillar where the front left-hand corner of the front bar turned back on itself towards the rear of the pub. This section of the front bar had two barstools positioned in front of it, which filled the space neatly. The access to the front bar made this area of particular attraction to customers and the second most heavily-populated area of the pub when busy. Left-wing bar #1 had three integral attractions for customers which also contributed to making this area the second most heavily-populated in the pub when it was busy. Two of these, the three circular tables each surrounded by four wooden chairs and the AWP (amusements with prizes) machine, offered all-year-round attractions. The third was an operational open fire which provided attraction to customers during the colder months from October until March. The tables were often occupied by large groups who would find chairs from other areas. Two of the tables occupied the corners closest to the front wall of *The Mitre*, whilst the third occupied a central position nearby to the fire. Whilst ordered by this pre-defined layout, this area was the most conducive to a flexible space within the pub; customers could move and shift tables and chairs together in order to accommodate larger groups, and by virtue this could extend the standing capacity of the area. This meant that dancing and general raucous behaviour was a familiar feature of this area, as with the main bar. There was a large mirror hung upon the chimney-breast which fulfilled the role of accentuating the fireplace as the focal point of the space. During busier times (post-

11:00pm; pre-theatre; theatre interval) the area surrounding the tables was commonly filled-up completely with people standing within close proximity to the attraction of the fire. This often made navigation of the overall space of the pub difficult for staff who may have to deal with putting logs on the fire, clearing glasses from tables, dealing with difficult customers or clearing-up broken glasses or spilt drinks. The space would seemingly narrow and constrict as the number of physical bodies accumulated within the connecting space of left-wing bar #1 between the main bar and left-wing bar #2.

Each table featured an old Jack Daniels bottle used as a candle-holder, bearing red candles. These acted to create an all-year-round ambience within the pub, which took on a particularly festive nature alongside the open-fire during the winter months. The tables, as with the flooring, wore the blemishes of drink spillages and also candle-wax as an indicator of the constant cyclical nature of the pub trade. The AWP machine was positioned in the left-hand corner next to the open access into left-wing bar #2. This was an all-year around attraction, featuring derivatives of well-known game-shows such as *Deal or No Deal* and *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* amongst several others. This acted as a strong lure to customers, especially young male adults, particularly in the latter part of the evening when the pub was reaching maximum physical capacity and the volume and nature of the music from the juke box was building an electric atmosphere within the pub. Exemplifying this, often as staff we would be asked by customers: "can you make sure there's coin in my change for the games machine", as the AWP machine attracted both individuals and groups towards it. This machine was commonly occupied fully from 10pm until closing, and often the caused staff to have to threaten customers with turning the machine off at the wall as we sought to clear the pub at closing-time.

The space defined as left-wing bar #2 was accessed by customers through the open access between left-wing bar #1 and left-wing bar #2. This area was the same width as left-wing bar #1, but was around two thirds the depth of this connecting space. Within this space was positioned one circular table with four chairs in the bottom left-hand corner next to the open access, and the attraction of a three-seated sofa which was placed in the top-right corner of left-wing bar #2 facing the front-wall of *The Mitre*. There were three low-level wooden tables positioned together in front of the sofa for placing drinks upon. Whilst this area could become crowded, it did not uphold the same attractions as the main bar or left-wing bar #1. However,

when this area was full, it was clear that the pub was at its very fullest capacity. It would be loud in there, and there was still very good access to the shorter side of the front bar in left-wing bar #1 which made this an attractive place for drinkers to position themselves. The area also had a higher ceiling than the rest of the pub, with a stained glass window providing character to the bar. There was a ledge running along the wall from the hatch on the front bar towards the door at the back to the cellar; this again provided space for drinkers to stand and rest their drinks whilst they socialised with one another.

The space defined as right-wing bar was the area of *The Mitre* with the most seating space and was often the place where quieter drinking might take place. This room was attached to residential a house, so the music was always turned down in there due to these residential issues. There was a large farmhouse-style table, with seven wooden chairs around it which made it an attractive space for groups of drinkers to occupy for large parts of the end of the evening. This was surrounded by two smaller tables with more comfortable armchair-style seats which again made this a more attractive place to sit for reserved drinkers who may not have wished to become involved in the heavy crowding and raucous behaviour of the main bar and two left-wing bars. There was a staircase leading to a closed-down upstairs space leading from the wall next to the residential home, which was used to store logs for the fire underneath. When *The Mitre* was particularly crowded with people, drinkers would also occupy the bottom portion of these stairs as the whole pub would become possessed by drinkers who were seeking any available space, sitting and drinking in any available space to maintain their presence in the Canterbury night-time economy.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has used the methodological underpinnings of the Chicago School of Park (1915) and Burgess (1925) to develop an ethnographic map of the Canterbury night-time economy as an "urban laboratory" which provided insight into the drinking patterns and practices of young people. Ethnographic data was used to explain how young people focused upon a specialised 'cluster' of venues (Roberts, 2015) where they felt comfortable to undertake extreme drinking practices for reasons related to their feeling of being welcome and also feeling safe to drink. The chapter also featured de Certeau (1984: 93), who stated that: "The

ordinary practitioners of the city live "down below", and it was through the presentation of an ethnographic map and the presentation of ethnographic data related to the human experiences within cartographic spaces that extreme drinking practices could be seen to develop within specific 'liminoid' zones where the attraction of extreme drinking was specific to the space. Participants from the fieldwork were introduced to represent the human activity in the Canterbury night-time economy, and these participants narrated how young people navigated the Canterbury night-time economy in specific ways where they used specialized venues to enact specific drinking practices within certain 'zones' where they knew they were comfortable to do so based upon their knowledge of the city. This introduced the notion that young people often 'managed' aspects of their presence, consumption and behaviour in the Canterbury night-time economy in relation to their understandings and experience of it exemplifying that "spatial practices in fact secretly structure the determining conditions of social life" (de Certeau, 1984: 96), as young people could negotiate their presence in certain licensed venues by being aware of the specific expectations of the venue. *The Mitre* became exposed as a potential "ending point" for young people drinking in the Canterbury night-time economy (see *Table Two*), and the latter sections of this chapter discuss the pub in relation to the presence of these practices and the impact upon the fieldwork data collection. The pub is shown to be central to young people's movements through the "urban laboratory" of the Canterbury night-time economy, due to its specialised characteristics such as a late-license and also the entertainments it provided, and is depicted as a site of rich data collection where extreme drinking practices were identified and observed.

Chapter Five: Extreme drinking practices: a 'cultural entrenchment' of the 'new culture of intoxication' in the Canterbury night-time economy

5 Introduction

This chapter identifies upon the presence of and exposure to various extreme drinking practices by young people at *The Mitre* and throughout other drinking spaces in the Canterbury night-time economy, using selections of ethnographic data taken from the fieldwork of instances of alcohol consumption by young men and young women. Research into young people's drinking practices has centred upon urban night-time spaces in relation to the concentration of human activity which occurs in these concentrated areas. Measham and Moore (2009: 438) argue: "The expansion of the British night-time economy has led to a growing body of research focused on drinking, alcohol-related crime and broader cultural and criminological aspects of the alcohol-focused licensed leisure industry". This ethnographic data will support the emergent 'cultural entrenchment' (Fry, 2011: 65) of the notion of a 'new culture of intoxication' (Measham and Brain, 2005) still prevalent within urban drinking spaces in the UK today where extreme drinking practices by young people have reinforced that young people commonly participate in these activities; this is evidenced from the fieldwork where shot drinking and 'vertical drinking' as well as through drinking games and trends observed during the fieldwork including "pub golf" and "fly-bys" were common aspects of young people's drinking practices. These contemporary extensions of the drinking practices available to young people in the night-time economy were also present when Hollands (1995: 72) was undertaking his research in the Newcastle night-time economy: "patterns of drinking in the Bigg Market have changed due to economic transformations in the drink and leisure industry and the spatial organisation of bars in the city centre". Extreme drinking practices will be associated with the concept of drinking in various situations and at varying times and levels of spontaneity or organisation, where young people enact a specific way of consuming alcohol quickly based around the context of the night-time economy.

5.1 A 'cultural entrenchment' of the 'new culture of intoxication': extreme drinking practices in the Canterbury night-time economy

Measham and Brain (2005) developed the key notion of a 'new culture of intoxication' regarding young people's alcohol consumption which reflected upon the sweeping changes made to the alcohol industry across the previous decade through advertising and marketing and the promotion of high-ABV drinks and 'buzz' drinks where "the alcohol industry responded with a calculated strategy" (Blackman, 2004: 80) towards the emergent dance-drug scene of the late 1980s and early 1990s. These developments have led to what Fry (2011: 65) describes as "the cultural entrenchment of young adult's alcohol consumption" within the night-time economy. The following sections will introduce ethnographic data examples of specific extreme drinking practices from the fieldwork. These examples show where young people participate in extreme drinking practices in the Canterbury night-time economy which have resulted in a 'cultural entrenchment' of these activities. The specific data examples are: shot drinking, 'vertical drinking', "Jager runs", "Jager bombs", "fly-bys" and "pub golf". The ethnographic data examples of extreme drinking practices by young people occur in the context of drinking fast; either within a busy late-night pub or night-club environment where standing and consuming alcohol in and around the main bar area of *The Mitre* was the only option, or passing through quickly in drinking sessions where several drinking spaces were visited. This led to rapid consumption of alcohol which can be defined as an extreme drinking practice by its very definition. These data examples are of young people at home drinking before going out into the Canterbury night-time economy, or immersed in a busy and crowded late-night pub or night-club atmosphere, where loud music and intoxicated behaviour was present and which represented a distinction made by young people between the start, the end, and the transient period in between of a prolonged drinking session in the Canterbury night-time economy.

5.1.1 Shot drinking

Shot drinking was one of the central trends of alcohol consumption undertaken by young people in the Canterbury night-time economy observed during the fieldwork. Measham and Brain (2005: 270-271) suggest: "The stated motivations for the consumption of shots were to

get drunk (or more specifically get drunk quicker)". However, Harnett et al. (2000: 61) previously argued that the 'new culture of intoxication' featured only "a shift in types of alcoholic beverage consumed by young people, namely to bottled lagers with high ABV% or the so-called 'designer drinks' like 'K', 'Thunderbird', 'Hooch' and 'Two dogs'", which saw young people exposed to a wider and more accessible array of alcoholic products than previously available through the UK alcohol industry. During the fieldwork it was observed that it was not just what *type* of alcohol products young people were consuming, but the *practices* of how they were consuming them. Consequently shot drinking was recognised during the fieldwork as a continuing integral aspect of the culture of extreme drinking practices amongst young people, where these practices enacted a specific purpose within prolonged drinking sessions by young people in the Canterbury night-time economy. These extreme drinking practices outlined changes which can be identified within the culture of drinking amongst young people within the UK since the middle of the 1990s were not only the *types* of alcohol which were available for young people, but also how the *practices* of how young people consumed alcohol changed and continue to be practiced.

During the fieldwork, shot drinking was recognised as an integral trend of young people's alcoholic consumption patterns in the Canterbury night-time economy; during every late-night (until 2:00am close) shift that I undertook at the pub, shots of high-ABV alcohol were consumed on 100 per cent of the occasions. However, this aspect of the fieldwork does not indicate towards the further shot drinking which was also observed during occasions within other pubs, the local night-clubs and also within the private domain of the home when undertaking the act of 'pre-loading' where young people drank alcohol together before leaving to participate within the Canterbury night-time economy. Further specific observations of the culture of shot drinking and specific examples of the act and performance of shot drinking will be evidenced in this section and the subsequent sections of this chapter from the fieldwork data; these will illustrate the intrinsic role which the extreme drinking practice of shot drinking enacts within the leisure-time pursuits of young people today.

In general terms, shot drinking is the consumption of a "dose" or "small amount" of liqueur; for example vodka or whiskey, but also other more specific examples of alcoholic products such as Tequila, Jagermeister or Sambuca which are usually served in measures of 25 millilitres as a licensed industry standard. However, at *The Mitre* each of these products was

served but in the higher volume of 35 millilitres which was only matched by *The Ocean Arms* (see Chapter Four, *Figure One*; Point L) throughout the rest of the Canterbury night-time economy. This I became aware of through Andrew, who was closely informed as to how other pubs and bars in the Canterbury night-time economy approached their business, and who would share this information with us as his bar staff so that we were also well informed. At *The Mitre*, Tequila was available in both Jose Cuervo Gold and Silver varieties (38% ABV), as well as Luxardo Sambuca being available in white and black varieties (38% ABV). Jagermeister (35% ABV) was slightly less potent than both Tequila and Sambuca, whilst the significantly less potent shot liqueurs available were Apple Sourz and Cherry Sourz (15% ABV). Each of these products was extremely popular with young people in the Canterbury night-time economy as this and the further subsequent examples in this section of young people drinking shots *The Mitre* revealed:

> *It's after midnight, and the pub is getting very busy with people crammed around the main bar to get served. The music is pumping out from the speakers on the wall in the main bar, and the crowd to get to the bar is swelling at an increasing rate. The young man that I am serving asks for "six spiced rum and cokes, and six tequilas please mate". I line the glasses up for the rum and coke, with ice on the back bar and then place six shot glasses on the front bar in front of him. A plate with some salt and slices of lemon to accompany the tequila, and then pour the tequila into the glasses before turning to complete the rum and cokes. When I return, the group of four young men and two young women have already consumed their tequilas, and left their empty glasses on the bar. The young man paid, and each member of the group took away their rum and coke from the bar.* (Rob)

This data extract disclosed the speed which was associated with shot drinking and how it could be defined as an extreme drinking practice due to the speed and the high-ABV of the alcoholic product consumed by the group of young men and women. Tellingly, the data also revealed how extreme drinking practices were positioned mainly alongside the consumption of a longer drink which the young people then took away and drank at a more leisurely rate, as Nathan (20, student) told me: *"I don't just spend the evening drinking shots, I'll have a few beers or some rum and cokes too. They just help to accelerate the feeling of getting drunk"*. Nathan's view outlined a specific purpose to shot drinking in the Canterbury night-time economy, where the *practice* of how alcohol was consumed demonstrated that young people

were using extreme drinking practices which over-rode the specific *type* of alcoholic product as he further revealed during the fieldwork:

> *"I don't really have a preferred shot, you know. Maybe tequila I prefer, but we choose the same or it's whatever comes; Sambuca, Jagermeister. Sometimes we'll just have Sourz at the bar, they're £1.50 at The Mitre, which means we can have a couple more other drinks. At home, it's really always vodka that we shot as it's cheap and clean. Rum and whiskey burn too much to shot. It's more about the effect of the alcohol, and how quickly drinking shots will make you more drunk"*

Similarly, one night at *The Mitre* David (23, supermarket worker) came into the pub, and came straight to the bar and asked me:

> David: *Alright Rob, what's your cheapest shot?*
>
> Rob: *That's the Sourz mate, cherry or apple. Not as strong as the others, 15% that's why they cost less.*
>
> David: *Ah, that's OK. I'll have six of them. My mates are on their way. Not too worried about the strength, just fancy some shots. Easy way to start getting wasted. Give me a pint of Kronenbourg please, too.*

Again, this data example evidenced a 'cultural entrenchment' of the extreme drinking practice of shot drinking which was unrelated to specific products but still associated with the 'new culture of intoxication' where young people buy shots "to treat friends" (Measham and Brain, 2005: 271) as alcohol "does play an important socialising role in our society" (Hollands, 1995: 53). These views both correlate with Nathan's account that Sourz were just as attractive to drink for young people in the Canterbury night-time economy as higher-ABV products; it was the practice of drinking fast and socialising with friends which was desirable above and beyond specific brands of alcohol, and price was also relevant. David bought some shots for himself and his friends by way of accelerating the process of becoming intoxicated, but then purchased a pint of beer which he then drank over a longer period after he and his friends had consumed the shots. Each of the rest of the group of three young men and two young women also purchased an individual longer drink of lager, wine or spirit and mixer, and they

went and sat in left-wing bar#2 chatting and laughing whilst they drank these longer drinks. Sean (22, student) added to this sense that shot drinking was a significant accessory to the consumption of more regular alcoholic products, and towards a negotiated level of intoxication associated with the act of shot drinking:

> *Yeah, I love to do shots, most of us do. Shots to get you up and going, they just add that bit of craziness to the evening. But it's just a couple before going out, maybe one in one of the pubs, then a couple at The Mitre after midnight to end the evening up. Other than that, I stick to lager or maybe a vodka and mixer*

The views of Nathan, David and Sean drew attention to the idea that extreme drinking practices served a specific purpose for both young men and young women in the Canterbury night-time economy, specifically in relation to developing a level of intoxication with which they were satisfied and comfortable, and was also affordable or held the most economic value. Other alcoholic products were still the main source of intoxication, but for young men and young women the practice and consumption of shots was firmly entrenched as a central aspect of young people's drinking which accelerated the process of intoxication and occupied a specific role within young people's prolonged drinking sessions in the Canterbury night-time economy.

Nathan, David and Sean's views were further evidenced by the observation of shot drinking both within *The Mitre* and also within other sites of fieldwork throughout Canterbury such as the pub, the club and as well as the home when pre-drinking. Participants within the fieldwork were observed to consume as many as five or six shots, at the most extreme end of consumption, over the course of an evening of the most potent liqueurs such as vodka, rum, whiskey, Tequila, Jagermeister or Sambuca. This level of consumption generally started within the home and then proceeded throughout the different drinking spaces within the Canterbury night-time economy towards a final destination be that a late-night pub, night-club or a return home, as this extract from the fieldwork diary reveals:

> *I am at Sean's house around 7pm on a Saturday evening, before a planned evening out in Canterbury city-centre. James, Pete, Nathan and Sean are preparing themselves to*

go out by having a couple of cans of lager, but also by pouring themselves some shots of vodka. Gail and Carina are drinking their wine, and watching James, Pete, Nathan and Sean without partaking in the shots. The young men drink the vodkas together at the same time, as Sean says "OK boys … 1, 2, 3 … Down" before they each swallow their drink quickly. They each then take another swig of lager to ease the burning of the vodka, much to the amusement of each other and Gail and Carina.

This description from the field diary of young men participating in shot drinking culture portrays the normality and regularity with which this extreme drinking practice occurred during the fieldwork, even outside of the context of *The Mitre* or the Canterbury night-time economy itself. Shot drinking was a 'culturally entrenched' extreme drinking practice which was a regular aspect of the social lives of James, Pete, Nathan and Sean, who were students and frequented *The Mitre* on a regular basis. These young men reinforced the evidence that shot culture was an integral part of everyday alcohol consumption *practices* amongst young people, as they were willing to speak openly about their individual and collective experiences with shot drinking and extreme drinking practices, and how they viewed the role of shot drinking in a prolonged drinking session. The data in this section also illustrated that young women partook in shot drinking in the Canterbury night-time economy, although young men were primarily the protagonists and there were occasions earlier in the evening where young women did not partake in shot drinking other than in the role of onlooker.

5.1.2 'Vertical drinking'

'Vertical drinking' was a drinking style where young people stood and consumed their drinks 'quick' at or around the bar, whether passing quickly through the establishment or due to a lack of seating space in busier moments. This drinking style was another of the central trends of alcohol consumption undertaken by young people in the Canterbury night-time economy observed during the fieldwork, which supported the notion of a 'cultural entrenchment' of the 'new culture of intoxication'. This term corresponded with a specific drinking style observed within specific "'vertical drinking' venues" (Jayne, Valentine and Holloway, 2008: 95) in the Canterbury night-time economy, or what Hollands (1995: 45) termed: "'stop off' pubs or bars on route to where groups were headed … [which] would be visited for a quick drink". The speed of consumption of 'vertical drinking' related this drinking style to its

definition within this chapter as an extreme drinking practice. This was in relation to a wider range of alcoholic products than just shots, where 'vertical drinking' enacted an impact upon the speed of young people's general alcohol consumption; young people were also observed to be consuming longer drinks such as pints of lager, glasses of wine or spirit and mixers more quickly due to their participation in 'vertical drinking' venues. This section will demonstrate through ethnographic data examples of young people drinking from the fieldwork how two specific venues were associated with 'vertical drinking' as an extreme drinking practice, which was often time specific. These venues were *The Mitre* and *The Farthing*; factors such as the late licence at *The Mitre* saw 'vertical drinking' as a regular occurrence during the fieldwork as an "ending place" for young people drinking in the Canterbury night-time economy, especially during busy periods and commonly after 11:00pm, whilst the position of *The Farthing* as a "starting place" for prolonged drinking sessions by young people saw 'vertical drinking' occurring earlier in the evening from around 6:00pm to 8:00pm.

Drinking spaces throughout urban spaces where extreme drinking practices occurred were described by Jayne, Valentine and Holloway (2008: 89) as: "… youth orientated, vertical drinking establishments" which occupied specific quarters of the night-time economy; these "were designated in order to contrast with, and control, the different type of drinking activities" present within the night-time economy. Similarly, Measham and Brain (2005: 270) state that: "Most of the bars [in the night-time economy] are geared towards pre-club crowds, vertical drinking and speed drinking", which Hollands (1995: 45) had previously considered as 'Neck ins' where groups of young people in the night-time economy would make sure that they had consumed a specific amount of alcohol as their drinking session unfolded. It has already been suggested in Chapter Four that in the Canterbury night-time economy, there was a "specialised 'cluster' of venues" (Roberts, 2015) where extreme drinking practices were regularly observed during the fieldwork. These were drinking spaces where young people felt comfortable to undertake extreme drinking practices, and were in opposition to other drinking spaces which were less attractive to young people which may have served food or did not welcome intoxicated behaviour so readily.

The Mitre was a licensed establishment which was less likely to be geared towards a pre-club crowd due to its late-licence hours, but these hours did still produce an environment where trends of 'vertical drinking' were regularly observed during the fieldwork. Although not

specifically geared towards 'vertical drinking' by young people, *The Mitre* did occupy its own position within the Canterbury night-time economy regarding 'vertical drinking'. This was due to the limited dimensions of the pub in terms of seating with 41 potential seats across each of the bar spaces, and also particularly its late-night licence which saw it as a "final port of call" for participants in the night-time economy who were not planning on joining in with night-clubbing as a part of their pre-planned drinking session as this extract from the field diary reveals:

> *It is 12am on Friday evening, and each of the bar areas is packed with people; there are easily over 100 people in the pub, and there is very little room to move. It is hot and noisy, there is laughter and shouting above the loud music whose tempo seems to soundtrack the swaying of the crowd of people waiting to get to the bar. No-one can any longer use the stools in the main bar as there is such a clamour for the bar. The left-wing bars are full to capacity with each of the chairs taken, and young people are standing around all areas of the pub drinking, or waiting in the crowd to get served at the bar when they can.*

This evidence of 'vertical drinking' in *The Mitre* offered context to how extreme drinking practices in the Canterbury night-time economy could be enforced due to being time and space specific. Within the busy environment of the pub, where there was little room to relax or build conversation between drinkers, there was little else to do other than to consume drinks and absorb the raucous atmosphere of shouting and loud music: *"you just let it all go on around you and drink your drink"* (Pete, 20, student). Young people would also have to leave their drinks inside if they wished to go outside and smoke away from the busy atmosphere due to the street space being unlicensed for the consumption of alcohol, and this would often lead to them drinking fast, as Michelle (23, shop worker) told me:

> *"Oh, I don't leave my drink lying around inside when it's busy in here and there's no room. It might get taken or something even worse like spiked. I'd rather drink up quickly inside then get another when I go back in".*

These data examples from the fieldwork demonstrated that 'vertical drinking' was a culturally entrenched aspect of the Canterbury night-time economy, where the seating restrictions in

The Mitre enforced young people into standing up to drink and/or to consume their drinks fast as a result. Michelle's account recognises that she would rather drink fast than to leave her drink unattended, so she would also participate in enforced 'vertical drinking'. The later night drinking sessions, when *The Mitre* really became busy from 11:30pm onwards also enforced faster drinking by virtue of the nature of the licensed trade as other establishments outside of night-clubs were closing and this enabled *The Mitre* to transform naturally into a 'vertical drinking' space where young people would come and consume alcohol 'quick' due to the crowded conditions in the pub.

'Vertical drinking' in *The Mitre* and throughout the wider Canterbury night-time economy was generally concentrated into week nights into the latter part of the evening, unless there were specific sports events or drinks offers available at, for example, *The Farthing*. Whilst there was evidence of 'vertical drinking' on every occasion during the fieldwork, it was time specific due to the conditions previously mentioned at *The Mitre*. For example, the busiest times for 'vertical drinking' were earlier in the evening at *The Farthing* as the fieldwork diary records:

> *It's just after 7pm on a Saturday evening, and Sean has invited me to meet him and some of his other friends including Nathan at The Farthing after I finish my afternoon shift. I walk down after work, and when I arrive the bar areas and the garden are full with people standing and drinking. There has been a football match on, and other young people are clearly just arriving at The Farthing to commence their evening out. I see Sean, and he and his friends are loudly chatting whilst drinking their drinks quickly. Sean is going to the bar to get some more drinks for everyone. Nathan turns to me and says: "no chance of sitting down in here at the moment Rob, only thing is you just find yourself drinking and drinking because there's not much else you can do".*

This data example from earlier in the evening demonstrated the distinct difference between *The Farthing*, which was a "starting place" for prolonged drinking sessions, and *The Mitre* which was an "ending place" where fast alcohol consumption became the primary focus for young people. These were related to opening and closing hours, the hectic and busy atmosphere in the pubs, and also their geographical location in accordance to other drinking spaces. The majority of the young people who went to *The Farthing* were likely to be starting there, but also ending at one of the night-clubs or *Fiesta* due to their mainstream focus, as Sean told me:

> *"Well, most from here will go through here and The Pirate, but then it will be right up to top Spoons and then onto Planet's or Aspects. They just come here to get started. We do the same, but just stick to the pubs, probably The Moon and then the Hobgoblin, then it's always The Mitre because it closes later than most others and is pretty close to the rest of the pubs at the bottom end of town"*

Sean's view confirms that *The Mitre* became busy as a result of other pubs closing, and also provides evidence as to why it was often transformed into a 'vertical drinking' space where young people would carry on their prolonged drinking session until the early hours of the morning. Pubs such as *The Farthing* were spaces where 'vertical drinking' was most common during earlier passages of the evening as Natalie, 19, student told me:

> *"The Farthing is always like this on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, oh and Mondays too when they have the quiz. Just before everyone makes their way into town. Lots of other pubs too: The Pirate; The Moon; The Hobgoblin and The Compasses. All similar, have really busy spells, where you can only stand and drink. The Farthing is a good place to get started for the night, but it is busy and you do end up drinking fast in here"*

As with Nathan's earlier statement that "you find yourself drinking and drinking", it is clear that Natalie also noticed that drinking in busy environments led on to fast alcohol consumption, which correlates with the definition of 'vertical drinking' as an extreme drinking practice which was often an enforced aspect of alcohol consumption by young people due to the drinking environment in which they were submerged. The resultant intoxication which was built around a cluster of establishments with specific attractions to young people such as geographical location, drinks promotions, sport and a late licences reinforced a 'cultural entrenchment' of the 'new culture of intoxication' where 'vertical drinking' was a recurring trend observed during the fieldwork in the Canterbury night-time economy. In the following sections, 'vertical drinking' will be at the centre of ethnographic examples of young people undertaking various extreme drinking practices in *The Mitre* and throughout the wider Canterbury night-time economy, where young people participate in these practices through the presence of examples such as "Jager runs" which encourage 'vertical drinking' in licensed drinking spaces.

5.1.3 "Jager runs"

This section will describe how "Jager runs" in *The Mitre* were another specific trend encountered during the fieldwork, which were related to alcohol consumption by young people in the Canterbury night-time economy. Jagermeister was a 35% ABV product which was a dark brown liquid with a thick consistency, and a sweet aniseed flavour. It was a regularly consumed liqueur not only at *The Mitre*, but across the wider Canterbury night-time economy, where it was very popular with young people in the form of unmixed shots of alcohol. It was a very well marketed product, which will be shown to be an industry-led product of 'vertical drinking', as their presence actively encouraged and exposed young people to partake in the extreme drinking practice of shot drinking. "Jager runs" were where a member of staff would take filled drinking vessels and change with them, and the drinks were consumed in an immediate fashion by customers who were sold these products at their seat or where they were standing in the bar. These drinking vessels were provided to *The Mitre* by their suppliers; Jagermeister used branded equipment to reinforce and grow their popularity within the night-time economy, where plastic 25 millilitre branded test-tubes were provided to *The Mitre*, with a bright orange branded sponge test-tube holder which held several test-tubes (see *Figure One*). These test-tubes correlated with the notion of 'vertical drinking' through their specific design that was unlike shot glasses which had a flat base on the vessel; they could not be put down unless they were empty, therefore the consumer had no option but to consume their drink quickly or to save having to keep holding onto the test-tube. Data examples from the fieldwork show how "Jager Runs", made use of branding familiar to young people and their exposure to 'vertical drinking' and extreme drinking practices to support a cultural entrenchment of the 'new culture of intoxication' where "a distinctive post-industrial pattern of drinking has emerged, characterized by recurrent episodes in which an individual drinks to intoxication or past intoxication in one session" (Hutton, Wright and Saunders, 2013: 452).

Figure One: Jagermeister branded sponge and test-tubes. These were used for "Jager runs" in *The Mitre,* as they could transport the product easily in a crowded space, and consumers had to drink them immediately due to their convex base.

"Jager runs" were a theme specific to *The Mitre* during the fieldwork which were undertaken by myself or another member of the bar staff during a lull in an evening shift at the bar, but whilst *The Mitre* itself was still well-populated and busy enough to produce a solid amount of custom through this exercise. Andrew would suggest that during periods in the pub where there was a medium-sized custom base that one of the two working members of staff could circulate the pub carrying the Jager sponge filled with pre-prepared shots of the liqueur which were priced at £2 rather than the £2.50 which was the price at the bar. This was to create extra revenue streams, and to maximise the workforce when the bar could be handled by one person:

> *"It gets them a bit more drunk, and they might not realise that we do sell shots. They might buy more booze, and it keeps the pub ticking along nicely rather than two of you doing one person's work behind the bar"* (Andrew).

This would usually be in between 10:00pm and 12:00am, and always across weekend nights rather than earlier in the week. "Jager runs" were a circulation around the pub starting from left-wing bar#2 through the main bar and into the right-wing bar, where young people were offered a 25 millilitre shot of Jagermeister liqueur in a test-tube either where they were standing or seated. This saw the use of the complimentary branded equipment from Jagermeister where the filled test-tubes were contained in a bright orange sponge test-tube holder which bore the specific Jagermeister logo. This was designed to be placed upon the bar with full test-tubes of Jagermeister liqueur to encourage 'vertical drinking'; however,

Andrew had adapted a theme common to night-clubs around the Canterbury night-time economy to *The Mitre* where a member of staff would use this to engage more of the customers with more of the products available: *"They have staff going around in night-clubs, where they sell shots to people away from the bar. I thought, why not try that here"* (Andrew). Selling shots away from the bar was a trend familiar to some other drinking spaces in the Canterbury night-time economy; this was observed at the night-club C*hicago's* outside of the city-walls as the fieldwork diary revealed:

> *We are in Chicago's night-club, Sean, Gail, Carina and Nathan are dancing. James, Pete and I are standing at the side of the dancefloor, just listening to the music and watching the people in front of us. As we stand there, a young woman approaches us and asks: "Shot of Sourz, £3 each". She has a belt around her waist, which acts as a holster. It contains plastic shot glasses, and holds two bottles of Sourz. Pete and James agree to buy two: "why not eh, two cherry ones please". The young woman pours the drinks and takes the money, moving on to the next group of young people. Pete and James raise their shot glasses to each other, and gulp their shots down*.

This data extract underlines not only the presence of shots being sold away from the bar, but also that young people would often buy and consume alcoholic products and undertake extreme drinking practices due to this extension of the access and availability of shots rather than any premeditated intention on their behalves. As Pete (22, student) told me later:

> Pete: *"Sometimes I find myself buying things just because I get asked, or because it's there."*
>
> Rob: *"What, like those Sourz in Chicago's earlier?"*
>
> Pete: *"Yeah, exactly that. I just get asked, and it's like, well … why not, you know. May as well, that's why I'm here"*

Pete was prepared to buy alcohol when he was not even at the bar, and found these products difficult to resist if he was offered them whilst he was out in the Canterbury night-time economy. There was not a sense of obligation to purchase and consume in his response, but a sense that alcohol consumption was a major part of why he was present within the drinking space in the first place. Smith (2014: 138) argues that young people seek group identity

through participation in these group drinking practices, where they make: "identification with certain bars, drinks and behaviours". Pete's experience underlines the familiarity with branding and extreme drinking practices among young people and how this could potentially affect their inclusion in extreme drinking practices such as shot drinking as this justifies their participation in the night-time economy.

Similar motives and responses to Pete's were familiar on the occasions where I undertook a "Jager run" at *The Mitre.* Customers would have them even if they had not planned to as this data extract revealed:

> *I approach a group of young men (2) and young women (3) standing in Left-wing bar#1 standing near the fireplace, and ask them: "Jagermeister. £2.50 from the bar, £2 from the hand". This catches them by surprise as they have not seen me speaking to other groups already. They look a little suspicious, then one of the young men asks me: "Only £2, oh go on then, why not. Anybody else?" The other group members also decide to have one each, looking at each other and nodding: "yeah, why not" says one of the young women. I reply: "Great, that's £10 then, and here's your Jagers" before giving each their test-tube and taking the money. I wait briefly whilst the group consume their drink, and retrieve the empty test-tubes.*

Whilst there was initial surprise upon my approach to the group, once the young people realised that they were familiar with what I was offering and thought it represented good value, they were happy to accept the deal and then consume the drink quick as the data extract details. There was no sense of obligation, but there was still the sense of young people being prepared to indulge in extreme drinking practices through their familiarity and comfort with the concept. Speed and immediacy became the key points in how young people consumed these alcohol products, and how this was perceived. During "Jager runs", the speed related to consumption also reinforced the immediacy of shot drinking within a 'vertical drinking' venue, as I was able to wait for a moment and retrieve the test-tubes as there was simply no way that these drinks could be stood up anywhere: *"That's the thing with those test-tubes, they're even more quick than a usual shot in a glass. You can't stand them anywhere, just have to drink them straight away"* (Sean).

"Jager runs" were very successful at adapting 'vertical drinking' into a successful opportunity to make more business from *The Mitre*, as Andrew had hoped; they were an opportunity for

me to interact with customers in a different way from behind the bar, and also to offer deals which young people perceived as better value for money. This example from the field diary details how I approached a "Jager run":

> *I fill the test-tubes with Jagermeister on the back-bar, and retrieve some various change from the till. Beginning in the 'Left-wing bar#2', I approach customers with a cordial "Hey guys, Jagermeister shots. £2.50 from the bar, £2 from the hand. No queueing either". The first group of people (four males, two females) sitting on and surrounding the sofa are talking amongst themselves, but on being offered the drinks, think for a short time before one male responds: "Well, there's six of us. Do us a deal. Six for a tenner." I am happy to make this deal, and say: "Sure, I can do that. Here you go guys". I take the money, and each of the members of the group takes their test-tube of Jagermeister. One of the females says: "I don't usually drink these, but what the hell, it's here I might as well do it". Each of the group consumes their shots quickly, and returns their test-tube to me.*

Again, this field diary data conveys the familiarity of young people to extreme drinking practices; both within the "deal" that is struck between myself and the young man, as well as the manner of consumption of the group of young people including the young woman who suggested that she did not regularly participate in shots, and also the immediate return of the test-tubes after the quick consumption. The familiarity of young people with extreme drinking practices impacted as I carried on with the "Jager run" into the rest of *The Mitre*:

> *I continue through the 'left-wing bar#1' and into the main bar, repeating the offer to customers. Whilst some customers did not want to participate, the offer of extra value and the ease of availability meant that several customers were happy to participate: "yeah, go on then, why not?" The sponge was empty by the time that I had reached half-way across the main bar.*

The fact that I was unable to complete an entire circuit of *The Mitre* offering to spontaneously sell Jager test-tubes to young people underlined the cultural entrenchment of extreme drinking practices which was present in the Canterbury night-time economy. From the early stages of the development of a strategic approach to the marketing of a wider range alcoholic products (Harnett, et al., 2000) and the establishment of shot drinking in young people's alcohol consumption in the night-time economy (Measham and Brain, 2005), "Jager runs"

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highlight the development of 'vertical drinking' as a central aspect of young people's extreme drinking practices. This has seen young people spontaneously led into fast consumption of alcohol based around familiarity and access related to strategic devices through the marketing strategies of the alcohol industry which has resulted in extreme drinking practices becoming embedded in fabric of the Canterbury night-time economy.

5.1.4 "Jager bombs"

This section will describe the combination product of "Jager bombs" which were sold in *The Mitre* and throughout the wider Canterbury night-time economy; this was where a shot of Jagermeister liqueur was dropped or "bombed" into a bigger glass containing around a quarter-pint of energy drink. "Jager bombs" will be shown to be a product of 'vertical drinking', within the night-time economy during the fieldwork. "Jager bombs" were of particular insight into young people's drinking practices during the fieldwork, as they had a two-pronged effect in relation to intoxication for the individual consumer via the combination of energy drink and high-ABV liqueur; further intoxication was achieved, but there was also a 'revival' related by consumers to the caffeine-based energy drink. "Jager bombs" were another extension upon the notion of 'vertical drinking' where these products were again drunk quickly and immediately during certain time periods of the evening where extreme intoxication was already in evidence in the Canterbury night-time economy. Here I shall use ethnographic data examples as evidence in this section to show how "Jager bombs", were a familiar theme in young people's alcohol consumption during the fieldwork, where their exposure to 'vertical drinking' and extreme drinking practices through their consumption of this product supported a 'cultural entrenchment' of the 'new culture of intoxication'. This saw the use of energy drinks by young people to revive and revitalise participation in the night-time economy.

"Jager bombs" were specific to the entirety of the wider Canterbury night-time economy where their usage was a common theme and attraction for young people. Please see *Figure Two* below:

Figure Two: "Jager bombs" a mixture of energy drink and Jagermeister liqueur where a smaller glass containing the liqueur is dropped separately into a bigger glass containing the energy drink

This meant that they were commonly available in all pubs, and were a primary feature of the night-club circuit due to the stimulation provided by the energy drink as young people stayed out late into the early hours of the morning. Specific nights at night-clubs or in pubs were often advertised with 2-for-1 offers on "Jager bombs" as a central attraction to young people. However, I primarily encountered their usage at *The Mitre* during late-evening shifts where young people would also use them to revive themselves or *"have a big injection of energy which feels like it straightens you out a bit"* (Sean); their usage was less familiar earlier in the evening: *"generally save the Jager bombs for later on at night, not early in the evening or afternoon, but when we need to revive ourselves or get an extra 'buzz' going"* (Pete). The association made by Sean and Pete between the consumption of "Jager bombs" and an injection or revival was also identified during this exchange at the bar during the fieldwork:

> *It's 22:30pm on Friday night, and the pub trade has been steady. Young people are now beginning to filter into The Mitre, as they begin to move towards their final destination of the evening. A group of four young men enters the pub, and approaches me at the main bar. They look a little worse-for-wear, and as if they are close to the end of their drinking session. "Jager bombs all round please mate" the first young man at the bar asks me, and I nod and turn to the back bar. I get four half pint glasses, and four shot glasses from the shelf, and a can of energy drink and the bottle of Jagermeister from the fridge. I pour the can equally between the four half pint glasses, and place them on the bar in front of the group. I then pour four equal measures of Jagermiester, and place these directly in front of the half pint glass. "£3.50 each, so that's £14 thanks" I ask, and the young man pays me. The young men each picks up the shot glass, holds it over the half pint glass for a second, then drops the shot glass into the energy drink. They then consume their drinks fast, in one gulp and slam the glasses down on the bar. "Yes, wooo" they shout at each other, then bounce off towards the juke box to choose some music looking re-energised and re-engaged.*

This data example underlines two key components within the analysis of "Jager bombs". Initially, it provides support for the notion of revival, or an "injection of energy" as Sean and Pete both described the outcome of consuming a "Jager bomb". The young men here have made a strategic collective decision to consume "Jager bombs" at this specific point in the evening, after they have already evidently been involved in the Canterbury night-time economy before reaching *The Mitre*. Their demeanour and energy showed an immediate reversal of the visible tiredness which they had displayed upon entry to the pub, in how they began to interact loudly with one another again as soon as they had consumed the "Jager bomb", and went straight to the juke box as they re-engaged with the night-time economy again. Also, this example reinforces how 'vertical drinking' again encouraged young people into consuming their drinks fast, and how this would have an impact upon the level of intoxication of young people in the night-time economy, as the previous sections have already established.

During the fieldwork it was ascertained that "Jager bombs" enacted an even more specific role in young people's drinking practices, because they heightened intoxication, but they also facilitated a hunger and desire for more intoxication as Michelle told me:

Michelle: *Well, Jager bombs are good for bridging the gap in the evening I suppose.*

Rob: *How do you mean, in terms of how you feel physically?*

Michelle: *Yes … physically yes … it makes you have more energy and you feel more awake. But mentally too, they give you that boost to want some more drinks when earlier you may not have felt that way. They bridge the gap of not wanting to go home early I suppose, and staying out drinking longer.*

Michelle's account provided deeper context of how "Jager bombs" played a specific role which young people strategically undertook in the night-time economy. Whilst the group of young men from the previous example had shown the physical effects of stimulation from the combination of energy drink and Jagermeister, and Sean had described its impact as like and injection of energy, Michelle's response goes deeper in that it not only described the physical re-energisation for young people, but also the purpose of being able to consider or take part in more alcohol consumption. This account demonstrated that young people again were

familiar with specific products and extreme drinking practices, and their specific usages in the night-time economy. The combination of the extreme drinking practice of shot drinking using high-ABV liqueur and energy drink together provided young people with an outlet for revival from earlier extreme drinking practices, by using another extreme drinking practice in a 'vertical drinking' venue to then potentially consider further drinking and maybe extreme drinking practices as the prolonged drinking session wore on into the late evening and early morning. The presence and consumption of "Jager bombs", which built upon shot drinking as an extreme drinking practice by evolving into a specific drink with an even more specific dual purpose of extra intoxication and the possibility of further intoxication via revival where it may not previously have felt possible, underlines how these extreme drinking practices demonstrated the evolution of drinking practices to which young people become exposed in 'vertical drinking' spaces the night-time economy.

5.1.5 "Fly-bys"

"Fly-bys" were a common theme encountered during the fieldwork where groups of young men would pass transiently through *The Mitre* on a Saturday afternoon shift (1:00-7:00pm). These "fly-bys" saw very specific enactments of extreme drinking practices through 'vertical drinking', which were specific to the day (Saturday), the time of day (between 1:00-3:00pm), the groups of people (young working-class men), and to *The Mitre* where I would encounter these from behind the bar. I defined this theme as "Fly-bys" in the fieldwork because of their brevity, the intensity of the extreme drinking practices which occurred during them, and also that they were exclusively populated by groups of young men who had travelled in from local towns by train or bus and who had begun their prolonged drinking session at *The Tower* before proceeding through *The Hobgoblin, The Compasses* and *The Colin Cowdrey*. This meant that the young men were already intoxicated upon arrival at *The Mitre*, and had also "flown" through the other establishments on their way there; they were only going to be a transient presence in *The Mitre* engaging with extreme drinking practices in a 'vertical drinking' space before migrating further onto their next stop where this would also continue. These encounters during the fieldwork gave further support to how intoxication was now culturally entrenched into young people's lives; it was present across diverse groups of young people,

as these young men were not students from around the city but were still engaged in and familiar with 'vertical drinking' in their weekend leisure time away from the workplace.

"Fly-bys" occurred during slower moments during the fieldwork, as *The Mitre* did not receive much footfall due to its position slightly away from the High Street. Saturday afternoons could be notoriously slow: *"we only open really for the sake of appearance, plus we do get the odd good group of people go through"* (Andrew); throughout the fieldwork it was often that there was very little by the way of trade during these hours. However, these slow times were punctuated during the fieldwork by groups of around ten or more young men walking into the quiet pub as this extract from the fieldwork diary reveals:

> *It is 14:30pm, and I have been busy cleaning and setting-up the pub for the early evening and later into the night, as it has not been busy since my shift started at 13:00pm. As usual, there is very little footfall outside the pub, as people are around the busier areas of town. Suddenly, a group of young men appears outside the pub who are travelling from West to East. They look in the window; "looks alright in there" says one young man, "Yeah, there's no one in there apart from the bar staff. Let's go in here". Four of the group noisily enter the pub, whilst the others stand outside smoking cigarettes. The young men come up to the bar already looking intoxicated, and the first young man says: "Alright mate, nine Jack Daniels and Cokes. You got a juke box?" I reply: "Nine Jack and Cokes, yep, I'll get those. There's the juke box over there by the front window". The young men pile over to the juke box, and leave me to make their drinks.*

This initial data extract introduces how the young men approached drinking around Canterbury. There was a spontaneous decision made to come into *The Mitre*, and nine of the same drinks were ordered for the group. It was clear through the question of where the juke box was, and how the group all went over and started looking for familiar songs that there was a sense that this alcohol consumption was going to happen quickly through extreme drinking practices, and that the group of young men were in a rush. This was confirmed as the young men returned from the juke box having selected some club music which lifted the tempo of the music from the previous standard play on the juke box:

> *"You got the volume switch over there mate, turn it up we've only got one tune" asks the young man who ordered the drinks. I say "No worries" and turn the music up*

louder, before the young man pays for the drinks collectively from a 'whip' which he produces from his pocket. "Cheers mate. Come on everyone, get these ones down and then we can be off further up town". The young men from outside have now come in, and they are all joking between each other and drinking their drinks. Two of the group gulp their drinks down in two or three goes, whilst the other young men are also drinking fast as they talk loudly amongst themselves and over the loud music. "Here barman, I've finished. Me and him will have a shot of Sambuca" says one of the two young men. I pour the drinks, and they pay and then down the shots immediately. "I feel fucked" says one of the young men, "yeah, let's go outside for a smoke" says the other one. The rest of the group are finishing their Jack Daniels and cokes and bouncing around to the music from the juke box. (Rob)

This evidence of extreme drinking practices by all of the young men – but two of them in particular – presented a very ephemeral and transient style of drinking which was less familiar in the Canterbury night-time economy other than on Saturday afternoons. It was clear from the fact that the young men had only chosen one song on the juke box that they were never intending on staying in *The Mitre* for anything other than an extremely short spell where they could fit in one drink which would be drunk fast. The over-riding sense was that the young men were placing priority on intoxication over finding a comfortable drinking space, as they *"can be off further up town"* where there were further opportunities to become intoxicated. The two young men who went outside having drunk faster and also had a shot now briefly became the topic of conversation for the remainder of the group before they engaged with me regarding where they might go next:

Trevor: *"Fuck, I hope Deano and Sam are gonna be ok. They've had a shot on top of every drink in all the pubs we've been in now"*

Ethan: *"They'll be good mate, they've gone to get a bit of air and there'll be a walk to the next one. How far is that to the next pub?"*

Trevor: *"Dunno. Barman, where's the next pub, and how long does it take to walk there from here?"*

Rob: *"Depends, but they're all pretty close. One or two minutes really. There's two just up from here, The Archbishop just round the corner, and The Moon on the right-hand side just a little further up."*

Trevor: *"Oh, OK. That's gonna be two quick stops after here then. What are they like, we want some music and to see some ladies."*

> Rob: *"Try The Moon then, The Archbishop is a bit more food-type pub in the afternoon. Moon has drinks offers and loud music. Plenty of people in there on Saturdays, so I should think there'll be some ladies. Have you lads travelled far to get to Canterbury then, you not familiar with the pubs?"*
>
> Ethan: *"Train from Folkestone mate. Don't really know the pubs in Canterbury, so we just bounce around until we find somewhere that we want to stay for a bit. No offence, but it's a bit boring in here, but looked like we'd get served easy. We're off, try that Moon place that he [Rob] said about Trevor"*.

With that, the young men each finished the remainder of their drinks and placed the glasses onto the main bar before exiting the pub back onto the street and heading eastwards towards *The Moon* as I had suggested. The young men had been in the pub for around ten minutes maximum, and had undertaken extreme drinking practices whilst 'vertical drinking' by choice through their collective choice of drink, and how it was consumed quickly and in relation to only putting one song on the juke box. It was evident that the young men had no intention to linger in *The Mitre*. It was also made clear through the extreme drinking practices of Deano and Sam that among the group that there were young men who were even more intent on extreme intoxication than the group overall who were evidently also drinking fast as had been seen through the speed of their consumption in *The Mitre*, and also how Trevor described where they wanted to go as *"quick stops"* whilst Ethan stated that *"we just bounce around for a bit until we find somewhere we want to stay for a bit"*. Deano and Sam were both evidencing extreme drinking practices and the effect of them on young people where they went outside to *"to get a bit of air"*, whilst Trevor and Ethan described how the group of young men approached a prolonged drinking session on a Saturday afternoon, where the group of young men had treated each of the establishments they had been in as a "fly-by" where the sole motive had been to undertake extreme drinking practices. The presence of "fly-bys" in Canterbury during the fieldwork saw an extension of the night-time economy into the day-time economy, during which groups of young men who were outside of their working week would partake in 'vertical drinking' where the emphasis was on extreme alcohol consumption. "Fly-bys" showed how extreme drinking practices were present across diverse groups of young people including young men from outside Canterbury who entered the city via public transport and drank in the ephemeral and transient way described in this section.

<u>5.1.6 "Pub golf"</u>

"Pub Golf" is a popular drinking game among young people, which is set in concentrated urban drinking spaces where participants can use either nine or eighteen pubs or bars to mirror a golf course. Blackman, Doherty and McPherson (205: 52) describe participation in this game: "all participants are fully engaged with the ambition of 'calculated hedonism'". "Pub golf" featured extreme drinking practices commonly encountered in the Canterbury night-time economy during the fieldwork which was primarily partaken in by mixed-gender groups of young men and young women, although sometimes all-male groups were in evidence. This game was popular both with groups of students and also groups of local young people, where the regularity of the presence of and the extreme drinking practices which saw all drinks consumed fast. This was a pub drinking game which treated the Canterbury night-time economy as a metaphorical golf-course and treated licensed establishments as 'holes' upon the golf course. Participants engaged in wearing golf attire for example: sun visors; plus fours; plastic golf clubs; golf gloves; brightly coloured jumpers (see *Figure Three*) and the game involved the undertaking of nine or eighteen 'holes' or drinking establishments as reflecting the actual sport of golf. Within each 'hole' the participants within the game – which sometimes numbered anything from four young people up to around twenty young people or even more – were expected to consume one drink within the 'par' score. For example, if a pint was the particular drink then its 'par' may be three: i.e. the participant must consume the drink in three mouthfuls. If it was a vodka and lemonade, which comes in at just under half a pint, then the 'par' may be two mouthfuls and a single shot would be a 'par' score of one (a "hole in one"). Each member of the party has a 'scorecard' which has the name of each drinking establishment and the chosen drink and 'par' score on it.

Figure Three: A group of young men and young women dressed in golfing attire in the night-time economy

The entire route of an evening of "Pub Golf" was already planned out by one or two people who were the organisers and generally made sure that everyone abided by the previously stated rules. For example, whilst young men had to consume pints (either lager or cider) on specific 'holes', young women were allocated the smaller measure of a half-pint which was to be consumed within the same time-frame (i.e. the 'par' score); the forfeit for not complying with these rules was a shot for the participant who had not consumed the allocated beverage within the allocated time-frame. This was a suitable and understood concession within the boundaries of the game, as this extract from the fieldwork diary reveals:

> *It is a Saturday evening, at around 20:00pm which has been getting steadily busier over the last hour. A large mixed-gender group appear outside the door, then come flooding in all at once. They are dressed in colourful outfits, carrying plastic golf clubs and wearing golf visors. There is much laughter as the group gathers in front of me at the bar. "Just a small round then mate", the young man who is leader of the group laughs to me. "But we're all on the same drink here so shouldn't be too bad". The young man produces a 'scorecard' from his pocket, looks across it and says "OK, The Mitre. 'Pub Golf' hole number five. In here, that's pints of lager. Par three. The girls get halves, only fair, so that's nine pints of lager and seven halves of lager mate". I reply to this: "Fosters OK, cheapest lager?" to which he replies: "All good" so I begin the time-consuming work of producing sixteen drinks for the group.*

This data extract reinforced how a game of "Pub Golf" was executed by individuals amongst the group. The young man who spoke with me at the bar was busy with making sure that everyone was in the right place and that the game was being run in accordance with the

outline on the scorecard. He was also making sure that the correct drinks were served, and that the correct volume was served dependent on gender, but also that extreme drinking practices were employed in the consumption of the drink as outlined by the rules of the game and were applied across the entirety of the group; this was through the consumption of the same alcoholic product as one another, although in this case the volume varied by gender. This data extract further revealed how the extreme drinking practices stayed the same for both genders, even though the volume differed:

I finish pouring the drinks, and they are now on the bar waiting for the members of the group. The young man who is leading the group pays me for the drinks, and begins to organise the group: "Right, lads, grab your pints. And girls, there's your half pints." The other group members collect their drinks, and they all stand and wait as the group leader collects his. "Right, so it's down in three on this one. Make sure you've all got your scorecards everyone. And keep an eye on each other, no cheating. And it's a shot for anyone who cannot manage the full drink in four gulps". All of the group take a long gulp on the drink, and it becomes clear that this is hard as they've already been drinking. "Not sure I've got enough space" says one of the young men to another young man. "Oh, just drink it and worry about it after. We've got a walk to the next pub, so plenty of chance to let it go down a bit". The young people, across the course of the next two or three minutes, drink their drinks within the rules of the game and place their glasses back on the bar; they then use pencils to fill in their scorecards with the details of their 'par' score. "Right" says the young man leading the group, "Off to The Archbishop then". The group follow him out of the door of The Mitre and walk eastwards towards the The Archbishop.

The extension of this data example of the drinking game "Pub Golf" demonstrated how the game could be viewed as having similarities to "fly-bys" through the shared characteristics of speed of consumption and transience, but with more of an outline structure and less spontaneity about the extreme drinking practices, and also where young women were involved. Whilst there was evidence of the urgency of the drinking rate of the participants rising through extreme drinking practices, these were operating within certain established parameters which acted as a structure to the game with which every participant was familiar. There was an allocated co-ordinator, who was also consuming the alcohol at the same rate the rest of the group, who was the score-keeper and person who would impose any penalties upon participants for breaking the rules of the game, which were more likely to occur the

deeper into the night-time economy the group of young people went: *"you never make it through a night without a forfeit shot or two in "Pub Golf""* (Pete). The ultimate outcome of the game was that both male and female participants reached the same level of intoxication by the time that they reached the last 'hole' which was a late-night licensed alcohol establishment which was generally one of the night-clubs in Canterbury outside of the city-walls. "Pub Golf" was a constant feature of the Canterbury night-time economy during the fieldwork, where its presence underlined further how participation in extreme drinking practices by young people were often related to 'vertical drinking' venues and also how young people approached prolonged drinking sessions. Young people were shown to be prepared to go out into the night-time economy with the intention to partake in extreme drinking practices which were in combination with fancy-dress and also pre-defined drinking spaces which required an element of organisation and control by the group. The outline of the game meant that the group never stayed in one particular drinking space for very long, and consumed their drinks fast as young people demostrated how extreme drinking practices were a central feature of their participation in the Canterbury night-time economy.

5.2 Conclusion

This chapter examines the notion of a 'new culture of intoxication' (Measham and Brain, 2005) in relation to young people's drinking practices. This is by identifying the presence of and exposure to various extreme drinking practices during the fieldwork in the Canterbury night-time economy. It looks at ethnographic data examples from the fieldwork by introducing a selection of different drinking practices which saw young people drinking both quick and with immediacy where extreme intoxication often resulted. These drinking practices were: shot drinking; 'vertical drinking'; "Jager runs"; "Jager Bombs"; "Fly-bys" and "Pub Golf", and each was shown to embody not only a 'new culture of intoxication' which young people are immersed in, but also that this has emerged into a 'cultural entrenchment' (Fry, 2011) where these activities enact a specific source of identity for young people due to the ubiquity of extreme drinking practices. This is also shown in the chapter by the contributions made by the alcohol industry who have produced branded drinks and fashioned ways in which young people will be encouraged into 'vertical drinking', and also how *The*

Mitre as a pub used these techniques to support trade by seeking to engage young people in extreme drinking practices away from the bar and where they were positioned in the pub. High-ABV drinks and 'buzz' drinks are argued to be a central source of the cultural entrenchment of extreme drinking practices, where shot drinking was common, and also with the supplement of energy drink which young people used to further stimulate their participation in the night-time economy. Young people were seen to enact 'fleeting' presences upon specific licensed premises through "Fly-bys" and "Pub Golf" as they worked their way through the Canterbury night-time economy, where extreme drinking practices supported this transient approach as the young people drank quickly and moved onto another licensed establishment on a regular basis.

Chapter Six: "Calculated hedonism" – evidence of young people's alcohol consumption management in the Canterbury night-time economy

6 Introduction

This chapter will support the redefinition of "binge" drinking towards the alternative term of "calculated hedonism", as this term refers to "a way of 'managing' alcohol consumption which might be viewed as excessive" (Griffin et al, 2008: 3) rather than the moral marginalisation which has been propagated through media portrayals of young people and alcohol. Cohen (2002: 1) argued that media portrayals demonising young people associated with intoxication has produced moral indignation and marginality in the UK where a: "person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests". The chapter will examine how young people's alcohol consumption is perceived through the media-led terminology "binge" drinking, highlighting ethnographic data from the fieldwork to argue that young people strategically managed their alcohol consumption in the Canterbury night-time economy as a form of "calculated hedonism" (Griffin et al, 2008). In this chapter, the extreme drinking practices identified in the Canterbury night-time economy in Chapter Five will be shown to be managed through various approaches where "young people intentionally manage their levels of desired and actual intoxication by using strategies that incorporate aspects of perceived risk" (Measham, 2006: 261). This will relate to how "calculated hedonism" can be associated with a sense of the management of alcohol consumption by young people, who understand their own alcohol intake in relation to the specific drink and the context of the nature of their prolonged drinking session in the Canterbury night-time economy. "Calculated hedonism" will also be extended into an association with how intoxicated behaviour was managed from within groups of drinkers, where potentially aggressive and/or anti-social behaviour towards other groups of drinkers was stifled. "Binge" drinking will be shown to be, on close examination, a definition which unnecessarily carries too many negative connotations which generalise the behaviour of young people to be a viable definition of how young people participate in the night-time economy.

6.1 From "binge" drinking to "calculated hedonism": reframing an indistinct term

The term "binge" drinking is associated with a carelessness and aggressive connotation which has been supported by a focused media-driven campaign which has seen young people demonized when drinking to various degrees of excess in the night-time economy. This chapter will argue that the term "calculated hedonism" is a less "emotive term" (Griffin et al, 2008: 4) with which to associate young people's alcohol consumption in the night-time economy than "binge" drinking, by focussing upon specific examples of group and individual alcohol consumption from the fieldwork. Measham (2006: 265) highlighted upon the common media usage of the term "binge" drinking and its negative connotations upon young people, arguing that: "the current media, political, and public perception of unbridled British "binge" drinking youths rampaging the city streets after dark needs tempering". The controversy associated with the term "binge" drinking is further evidenced by the difficulty in locating a precise definition of the term in relation to the context of the speed of consumption *vs* the volume of consumption or how this can be related to individuals or groups (Plant and Plant, 2006: viii-ix). Recent evidence also supports this confusion, as White and Hingson (2014: 201) argue that there is no clear or specific definition: "[E]xcessive or 'binge' drinking is defined … as consuming five or more drinks in an evening, although the instruments vary in the specified time frames given". Similarly, McPherson (2017: 242) states that: "'binge' drinking is a complex term to define with any great accuracy due to the multiple connotations its definitions are shown to carry". This chapter will oppose the open use of the term "binge" drinking, and put forward the alternative reframing of the term "binge" drinking towards the more inclusive term of "calculated hedonism" whereby young people strategically planned and managed their decisions regarding alcohol consumption within the context of the night-time economy.

6.2 From "binge" drinking to "calculated hedonism": evidence from the fieldwork

In the following sections, young people's ways of 'managing' alcohol will be highlighted in the three individual ethnographic case studies in the following sections from the fieldwork in the Canterbury night-time economy. These have been selected as they focus on a range of drinking groups from the Canterbury night-time economy, each of which demonstrated

understandings of management of their alcohol consumption which evidenced young people not as engaging in "binge" drinking, but as being engaged in "calculated hedonism", where "drinking is constituted and managed as a potential source of pleasure" (Griffin et al, 2008: 4) both for individuals and groups from within and also outside of their respective groups. Themes related to management of individual and group alcohol consumption related to both speed and volume will relate to examples such as strategic movement between drinking spaces to seek positive outcomes to prolonged drinking sessions, and the management of alcohol consumption both within individuals and in groups which were to negate the threat of violence or anti-social behaviour of individuals within groups, or to prevent negative outcomes upon consequences the following day. These will be emphasised upon by ethnographic accounts of the experiences of young people within the Canterbury night-time economy. By arguing that drinking can be managed by young people to be both excessive and fun, the term "calculated hedonism" will empower young people with the responsibility to understand and tailor their alcohol consumption within the context of their own leisure time without the moral marginalisation aroused by media perceptions or the influence of the term "binge drinking" and consider the "way they [young people] manage their alcohol experiences" (Fry, 2011: 65) in the night-time economy. These developments led to the conclusion that "the reality is that many young people are deliberately engaging in hedonistic drinking where the 'buzz' effect of alcohol has become an important commodity within the contemporary leisure culture" (Fry, 2011: 65), which is outside of the moral marginalisation of 'binge' drinking perpetuated by media images of young people consuming alcohol. By highlighting upon themes from the fieldwork such as pleasure and togetherness where positive outcomes to prolonged drinking sessions were sought through management and control by both young men and young women in the Canterbury night-time economy, this chapter will support the redefinition of "binge" drinking towards the alternative term of 'calculated hedonism'. For example, Plant and Plant (2006: 57) assert: "most people rated their drinking as being 'enjoyable' or 'very enjoyable'. Very few indicated it was not." 'Calculated hedonism' supports this statement, as it refers to "a way of 'managing' alcohol consumption which might be viewed as excessive" (Griffin et al, 2008: 3) rather than the moral marginalisation which has been propagated through media portrayals of young people and alcohol.

6.2.1 Toby: "facilitating a longer session"

Young people from a wide-range of social groups were observed to consume alcohol in various styles, practices and contexts in the Canterbury night-time economy, and each also demonstrated various forms of management of their consumption based upon individual and collective experiences. This section introduces one of the young male drinkers who I became familiar during the fieldwork in *The Mitre*; this young man demonstrated a sense of calculation towards his individual management of his alcohol consumption in how, where and when he consumed alcohol, and how he described his specific approach to this. Toby (24, Carpenter) was a working-class local young man from a council estate in Canterbury who drank in *The Mitre* regularly early on Saturday evenings between 5:00-7:00pm after he had left his regular local pub *The Moon* and made the quick walk westwards to *The Mitre*. He was always intoxicated upon arrival, having spent the whole afternoon drinking at *The Moon* which was known locally as a hard-drinking pub where Saturday afternoons in particular saw young people engaging in extreme drinking practices based around the freedom of the weekend and the sports screens which drew large groups to watch football from midday onwards whilst the afternoon's matches unfolded. This was Toby's regular Saturday routine every weekend: *"same place, same faces, but I like being familiar. I know what to expect"* (Toby). During our interactions across the course of several months, Toby revealed insightful data regarding his own methods and strategy towards management of his alcohol consumption and prolonged drinking sessions which demonstrated that: "young drinkers can be seen to be more calculated in their behaviour than sensational 'binge' drinking media reports suggest" (Hackley et al, 2013: 936).

My initial encounters with Toby saw him entering the either empty or sparsely populated space of *The Mitre* in the late afternoon/early evening of Saturdays, and always order and consume the same specific alcoholic products over a two-hour period. He would have two pints of Fosters and sit on the same stool at the bar, and would often use the juke box to play some music. He always came into the pub on his own and left on his own, both at very similar times throughout the course of the fieldwork which was a theme continuous to his presence. He was happy in his own company, and was a drinker who after a period of weeks became

more open with me as we became more familiar with each other's presence in the pub. Data extracts of conversations between Toby and myself from the bar will show how Toby, although a heavy drinker across every weekend who could be defined as a "binge" drinker in relation to the volume of his alcohol consumption and his state of intoxication, in fact managed his alcohol consumption in a specific way in the Canterbury night-time economy which can be associated with "calculated hedonism". For example, this was achieved by consuming specific alcoholic products, by moving from one pub to another on his own to avoid becoming embroiled in even more prolonged drinking sessions with other people, and going home early in the evening as he always left *The Mitre* at 7:00pm on Saturdays before the pub was likely to become busy.

Toby would often tell me how much he had drunk on a specific afternoon: *"six pints of Fosters Rob, plus a couple of Sambuca's"* which across the hours which he had already been out drinking of 12:00-5:00pm mirrored definitions of "binge" drinking in relation to Toby's speed of consumption, and the volume. However, unlike the complex and indistinct definitions of "binge" drinking, there was a sense of calculation to how Toby approached drinking in the Canterbury night-time economy as he revealed:

> *I'm at The Moon literally bang-on 12:00pm every Saturday, without fail and like clockwork. And then I drink Fosters all afternoon, as it's much less potent than, say Stella. Drinking Fosters is a way of facilitating a longer session; not like some of the others up there who are drinking the strong lager or spirits all afternoon. They're not really a 'sessioner', well, not if you don't want to end up at the police station or the hospital mate. I like to feel like I've still got some control over what I'm doing.*

On this evidence, Toby's individual management of his personal drinking in the Canterbury night-time economy and his reference to consuming lower-ABV lager, as opposed to notoriously stronger lager, showed that there was a structure to his drinking which he associated with navigating potentially negative outcomes which became a source of media demonization and the subsequent stigmatisation of young people in the night-time economy. He would use alcohol which he perceived as being associated with being a *"sessioner"*, which enabled him to drink for longer and more safely where he maintained an element of *"control"* over his actions. By navigating a prolonged drinking session in this more controlled manner,

he would not end up hurt or in trouble due to excess intoxication through this pre-conceived management of his alcohol consumption.

Toby's notion of "control" was not just related to his chosen alcoholic product, but also to his negotiation of space in the Canterbury night-time economy. He told me that he made a strategic decision to leave *The Moon* at a specific time and take the one-minute walk to the much quieter confines of *The Mitre* every week:

I make sure that I leave there after the football scores have come in, bang on 5:00pm. I've been there for long enough by then, had five or six pints and a couple of shots. I'm done. It's often getting a bit rowdy in there, and I know too many people around Canterbury. I just take myself out of there, and come down here. It's always quiet in here, I can have a couple of drinks put some music on, don't upset or annoy anyone and then I go home at 7:00pm.

Toby's account underlined that he understood and managed his own alcohol consumption through maintaining a specific routine in his drinking; when he had consumed enough alcohol, he would leave *The Moon* as it was becoming too likely to end up with a negative experience as people had been consuming alcohol in there all afternoon. This he related to the experience of drinking across one day: *"staying in the same place can be a cause for trouble"* where *"the same faces, everyone properly pissed up, people start to misunderstand each other"*. On one occasion, Toby entered *The Mitre* and told me:

I've just been fucking threatened, that place, it can get mental in there about now. One of the lads, and I know him well, just wants an argument because he's had too much booze. Ah, I just got out of there. None of them know I just drop in down here.

Against the threat of arguments or violence, Toby realised that by moving pubs, even across a very short geographical space into a different drinking space, that being transient reduced this potentially negative outcome for him. *The Mitre* was a quiet drinking space around this time of a Saturday, where the reduced footfall passing the pub and the lack of attraction of sports on the television meant that it often maintained an at-best steady and often a very

quiet trade. Toby further related his short movement between drinking spaces to his own personal levels of intoxication, which he had already shown he guarded through his consumption of lower-ABV lager, and also revealed to me that he was aware of how pub environments could change during his presence there:

No way that I want to be around to see what it gets like up there later tonight. The students and other people from around Canterbury start to roll in, and it can all begin to become a bit tense. And if I stay in there, I'll just keep on drinking more and more, what else is there to do, and then who knows what might happen. Some places just get a bit crazy, I just like to finish off with a couple of calm drinks then I'm off home.

This distinct theme of calculation by Toby showed how consumption of alcohol by young people was related not only to management of specific alcoholic products of various ABVs, but also to the context of management of the specific drinking space where young people consumed alcohol. In this instance, Toby could detect that negative outcomes, whether the threat of violence or personal over-intoxication, were possible from previous experience and understanding of the context of specific drinking spaces, and knew when to remove himself from this context. Aresi and Pedersen (2016: 205) argue that: "Research has consistently demonstrated the significance of the setting in which drinking takes place and found that certain settings place individuals at increased risk for heavy drinking and resulting consequences". Toby's actions in the Canterbury night-time economy demonstrated not only a sense of calculation in his drinking style, but also in his appreciation that specific drinking spaces for him also threatened upon a loss of control of consumption and behaviour which he recognised through his own previous experiences. By managing his alcohol consumption and his presence in the Canterbury night-time economy, Toby supported the notion of "calculated hedonism". Whilst his alcohol consumption met with various definitions of "binge" drinking related to speed and volume of consumption, the data in this section evidenced this term to be limited as it does not explain how Toby managed his own alcohol consumption or how he made and kept to strategic decisions whilst participating in a prolonged drinking session. These strategic decisions helped him to negotiate a degree of "control" over his behaviour and levels of intoxication and contributed towards Toby

"facilitating a longer session" where positive outcomes were sought through strategic management of the context and nature of individual alcohol consumption.

6.2.2 The squaddies: *"we know when and where to stop"*

Distinct drinking groups were encountered during the fieldwork who partook in drinking which could be defined as "binge" drinking, as they were excessive both in practice and style, but also associated with a sense of "calculation hedonism" through evidence of individual and group management of consumption and behaviour. This section will use a specific spontaneously-occurring ethnographic scenario to unveil how members of the Armed Services or "squaddies" also drank in a structured and calculated style which saw potential misbehaviour managed from within the group of young men; recognising the good times of the squaddies and other groups of drinkers in the Canterbury night-time economy. It will also demonstrated how alcohol consumption was managed around work and family commitments for squaddies. Squaddies only came into *The Mitre* sporadically during the fieldwork due to its position away from the High Street, and always arrived in groups earlier in the evening for one or two drinks if they were passing through during a prolonged drinking session, it was rare for them to be in late. Their presence was always one which featured tension for other groups in the pub, and for bar staff as their reputation as hard drinkers who caused trouble was ingrained through decades of their presence in the city. However, whilst outwardly appearing to be hard drinking, the squaddies were also observed during the fieldwork to demonstrate an acceptance of calculation in their styles and practices of drinking which referred to their specific group identity alongside fun or entertainment away from workplace commitments. This was related to the management of individuals within the group in relation to their levels of intoxication and their behaviour. Evidence of a pre-defined structure to their drinking was illustrated, where individuals within groups were seen to enact leadership and management upon their group which rejected the aggressive and anti-social reputation with which they were associated through their hard drinking.

The squaddies featured in this section were from a broad group of the Armed Services from the Royal Regiment of Scotland (Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders), who inhabited the now-defunct barracks on the north-eastern edge of Canterbury which were active from the 1930s

until 2015. These barracks were around a twenty-minute walk from Canterbury city-centre, and this saw members of the Armed Services or "squaddies" as regular visitors to the Canterbury night-time economy. Previously to the fieldwork, I was aware of the presence of squaddies throughout the night-time economy through their reputation for hard-drinking and due to there being pubs throughout Canterbury where they were not welcome due to previous drunken misbehaviour. Soon after I started work at *The Mitre* Andrew told me about the squaddies: *"They've caused trouble around Canterbury for years, and some can be loose cannons. You need to watch out for them. They're welcome here, but you need to be watchful. And they're young working-class Scots, so they're hard drinkers".* Andrew's philosophy towards the pub and management of drinkers was that: *"you can't just tell people you don't want them here because of reputation or whatever; they have to give you a reason to act upon and enforce it"*, so this meant that exposure to groups of young working-class Scottish squaddies throughout the fieldwork was inevitable and that these scenarios would potentially require specific management by bar staff based upon previous associations between squaddies and alcohol-induced anti-social behaviour*.*

Hughes et al (2007: 90) argue that: "binge drinking culture … is linked to a wide range of health and social problems, especially violence", developing the impression that excessive drinking was often associated with the negative outcomes of violence or aggression to prolonged drinking sessions which Toby alluded to in the previous section and which has fed media demonization of young people drinking in the night-time economy. Andrew's account of the presence of squaddies in the Canterbury night-time economy, whilst open-minded to their presence, also reinforced an impression that their excessive drinking could lead to potential conflict or anti-social behaviour which would be difficult to manage such as violence. However, these views neglected to examine how young people drinking to excess, including working-class squaddies, could manage their drinking where "the importance of collective forms of alcohol consumption in the establishment and reinforcement of key aspects of both subjective and group identities" (Smith, 2013: 1069) was often overlooked. During the fieldwork, a group of three young men entered *The Mitre*:

> *It is 20:00 on a Thursday evening and the pub is reasonably well-populated. There are drinkers sitting around each of the tables in left-wing bar#2, and there is also two*

groups of young men and young women drinking in a leisurely fashion in the main bar. Three young Scottish men enter the pub, and come to the bar. Their accents and demeanour identify them immediately as squaddies from the local barracks. I greet them: "How's it going lads?" "OK, not bad. Three Sailor Jerry's and cokes. And three Coronas" says Francis. I serve the drinks, and he pays for them. "Here you go Jamie" he says, passing one of the squaddies his drinks. "And take it easy, yeah". The group move away from the bar towards the juke box. I look around, and I sense an initial unease amongst the other groups of drinkers now that the squaddies have entered The Mitre as they are looking at each other and the conversation around the bar has diminished.

Immediately, it could be seen that the squaddies were undertaking collective forms of alcohol consumption, through the purchase of the same drinks which they all began to consume. However, there was also a sense that the squaddies' presence had disturbed the previous atmosphere in the bar, as was often the case for this group who were known by reputation. During moments such as these my sense of guarding the overall atmosphere of the pub was heightened, and I was aware that Jamie was already speaking loudly and drinking fast:

Jamie is drinking faster than Francis and Neil and looking at the young women in one of the groups, he says loudly: "Alright ladies, fancy a bit of soldier man eh?" The group stands frozen, with the young men and women unsure how to react. They look like they want to leave immediately. I am thinking fast, and am about to intervene when Francis tells Jamie: "Oi, fucking leave it out Jamie. Leave these people alone. They're just out drinking together, same us. You're fucking out of order mate. Sorry guys, he's just had too much to drink already. Take no notice of him". Jamie stops, and the other squaddie shakes his head at him: "Always the fucking same Jamie" says Neil "cannae go anywhere without upsetting people". The group of drinkers still looks nervous, and I say to them: "Just go around there [into the right-wing bar], there's some seats around there". As they go around there, I say to Francis: "Thanks for that, there'll be no more of that right?". "Aye, sorry mate, he cannae handle his drink, or his mouth".

This quickly occurring scenario in *The Mitre* emphasised how aggressive and anti-social behaviour related to excessive drinking could escalate quickly, especially within groups of young people who had a pre-defined reputation associated with aggression and intoxication in the city. However, the intervention of Francis, who had already shown leadership of the group when he handed Jamie his drink and said: *"Take it easy, yeah"* demonstrated that there was a structure and management of alcohol consumption and drinking behaviour within the

group of squaddies which was outside of their general reputation around the Canterbury night-time economy. Jamie clearly had "previous" where he had acted aggressively or in an anti-social way when he was out consuming alcohol; a part of why Francis and Neil were there with him was to make sure that the group of young people and atmosphere of *The Mitre* or other establishments were respected: "*Leave these people alone. They're just out drinking together, same us*". These young working-class Scottish squaddies were attached with a social stigma which Jamie was upholding by his loud behaviour and being rude to other people in the night-time economy. However, this was not a stigma which the presence of Francis or Neil upheld:

> *Neil is telling Jamie what he thinks: "Seriously man, you're embarrassing yourself and the regiment. Think about what you're doing. We've got work in the morning, and all you want to do is get totally pissed and then start upsetting people". Jamie is just standing there, looking at Francis and Neil, and saying nothing. "You're our pal, but there's no need to act like this everywhere we go. We always have to keep an eye on you or you will cause trouble. We don't need it, we just want to enjoy ourselves like everybody else". As this conversation is happening, there is a clear sense that the atmosphere in the pub is relaxing. I am confident that there is going to be no trouble, and the other group of young drinkers are listening to what Francis and Neil are saying and realise that they have Jamie under control.*

This data revealed how management of 'loose cannons' from within a group supported the less emotive definition of "calculated hedonism" over "binge" drinking with the overwhelmingly negative connotations its multiple definitions were shown to carry. Neil and Francis were there to "keep an eye" on Jamie who clearly had less control of himself when under the influence of alcohol during prolonged drinking sessions; this was so that they and other groups of drinkers could enjoy their own presence in the Canterbury night-time economy without causing aggravation through drinking too fast or acting aggressively. Visser et al (2013: 1461) stated that: "the focus on individual responsibility that characterises many [public health initiative] campaigns means that they tend to ignore the group-based social nature of drinking"; in this instance, Neil and Francis *"just want to enjoy ourselves like everybody else"* with a sense that they were representing their own group with pride and respectability and drinking outside of the workplace and not interfering with other people's

good times by managing their own behaviour and also that of their errant friend and colleague Jamie.

As the situation had now calmed down and Jamie was quietly drinking his drinks whilst using the juke box to put some music on, I followed the squaddies outside to join them for a cigarette as the bar was not busy. This gave me an opportunity to speak to Francis and Neil in a less formal setting than the main bar, where I was now able to respond to the previous situation:

> Rob: *That was good in there, thanks. I didn't want to have to step in but we can't have that in the pub, everyone needs to be able to drink happily.*
>
> Francis: *Aye, no worries. He's a drunken gob shite most of the time, and we just want to get out and spend a bit of time away from work. It's pressure some of it, work's hard and we need to let off steam. Jamie just forgets himself and drinks too quick. You shouldn't have to deal with him, it's much better that we do. He needed telling before he really gets out of line.*
>
> Neil: *Yeah, we want to get a bit drunk and have a laugh with each other, so we make sure that the others are kept in line to be honest. Plus, we've got to be up at 5:00am tomorrow morning for work.*
>
> Rob: *Can't really drink too much then eh?*
>
> Neil: *Well, it wouldn't be sensible. Boss would be all over us. We know when and where to stop. I've not been out for a drink in over six weeks.*
>
> Rob: *You don't drink much then?*
>
> Francis: *No, not really. I fly back to Edinburgh most weekends to the missus and kids, Neil does too. It's a job we do, just like anyone else. Drinking too much isn't really an option, it's a chance to relax with our mates and to get merry and have a laugh together. Jamie's antics just weren't appreciated there and we'll always tell him or anyone else from our group the same.*

The accounts of Neil and Francis reflected a sense of calculation in their awareness of being "sensible", the management of when and where to stop drinking, and their responsibility to their jobs, their families and each other which was outside of the perceptions of squaddies around the Canterbury night-time economy; through their desire to gain enjoyment and *"have a laugh together"* and to get a little bit drunk, they demonstrated that management of alcohol consumption and drinking behaviour was central to their participation in the night-

time economy. Francis and Neil showed a distinct form of "calculated hedonism" which responded to responsibility within family and workplace structures; alcohol use was not a form of "binge" drinking, but a method of relaxation away from these responsibilities which remained controlled through individual and collective management of consumption and behaviour. The behaviour of Jamie, although anti-social and in keeping with the image portrayed of young working-class Scottish squaddies around Canterbury, was shown through this example of the fieldwork not to be fully representative of the presence of squaddies in the city; through forms of calculation which saw alcohol consumption and behaviour managed from within the drinking group responsibility was conferred upon the group and potentially negative outcomes were avoided and negative perceptions were challenged.

6.2.3 Amanda: *"Oh, OK – I'll drink all six of them"*

As outlined in the previous sections where Toby and the squaddies managed their alcohol consumption and drinking behaviour in relation to the context of the night-time economy and their own specific demands within it, young people undertook distinctive styles and practices of alcohol consumption during the fieldwork. These styles and drinking practices often corresponded with the outlined definitions of "binge" drinking through the volume and speed of their consumption or both and related negative outcomes to this such as aggression or violence. However, these were identified as "calculated hedonism" through the management and structure to how prolonged drinking sessions were negotiated by individuals and groups. The following example introduces Amanda (20, student) and a group of five of her student friends (three males, two females) who were regular drinkers in *The Mitre* during the fieldwork, and who I was familiar with across several interactions at the bar in this period. Amanda and her friends underlined the structure within which young people often drank to excess, and how this could be defined within the parameters of "binge" drinking, but which reflected "calculated hedonism" due to the management of consumption which the group of young people portrayed towards intoxication where themes of togetherness and pleasure were present.

Among Amanda and her friends, calculation was aimed at limiting the alcohol intake of an individual in the group (Amanda) who was prepared to drink to excess when other members

of the group were not planning upon this. Amanda's friends, rather than allowing her to drink to excess where negative outcomes upon her may have occurred, instead undertook alcohol consumption which featured "drinking [which] is constituted and managed as a potential source of pleasure" (Griffin et al, 2008: 4) where each of the group contributed and partook in the consumption and enjoyed a feeling of togetherness. This data extract from the field diary describes the initial scenario in *The Mitre*:

It is 20:30 on a Tuesday evening and Amanda comes into the pub to meet up with her friends Lisa, Paul, Lucie, Steven, and Ellen. The group have been waiting for Amanda, sitting at the table in front of the fire in left-wing bar#2. Amanda has got herself a new job at Fiesta, and is keen to celebrate: "Yes, time for a few tequilas tonight people. New job starts next week". She comes over to the bar and orders six tequilas, which I serve to her, but when she goes back to offer her friends the shot, Paul says: "Why didn't you ask us first, not sure that I'm up for this right now". The rest of the group had been waiting for Amanda to arrive before getting their drinks, and Lucie also commented: "Shots straight away? How about we just have a normal drink first and see how we go?"

This data extract shows Lisa, Paul, Lucie, Steven and Ellen demonstrating caution towards Amanda's direct approach to shot drinking at a very early stage of the evening; whilst they were not rejecting shot drinking that evening per se, they did not wish to proceed to shot drinking straight away: *"I think that I'd rather wait and see if I'm in the mood"* (Steven). However, Amanda was excited and as she had bought the drinks and they were lined-up on the bar she decided she wanted to drink them all herself if the rest of the group were not prepared to join her: *"Oh, OK – I'll drink all six of them"* (Amanda). The rest of the group just looked at her and laughed, but Lucie said: *"You are joking aren't you, you shouldn't have just bought them. Wait to see how everyone is feeling"*. Amanda was still insistent that she would drink all six, and at this point, I became involved in a jokey way as I was familiar with the group of young people:

Rob: *"Sorry Amanda, the drinking of six Tequilas is banned in this pub!"*

Amanda: *"Oh, but come on, we had like ten in Barcelona one night"*

Rob: *"What?! In a row?"*

Amanda: *"No, like four in a row, then a rest"*

Rob: *"Oh, OK. Six over the course of the night is not so bad I suppose. Maybe that's what you should think of doing if the others aren't joining in"*

Amanda: *"Well, I wasn't really planning on doing all of them quickly. But I will do all of them if the others don't join in."*

Rob: *"I'll remind myself of that when I carry you out of the pub later then"*

Amanda: *"TRUST ME! I can handle it!"*

Everyone laughed at Amanda's last statement, myself included. She was prepared to be quite belligerent towards her own consumption of the six shots, but also conceded that she was prepared to take this slowly rather than quickly as she showed an initial form of management of alcohol consumption albeit across a potentially heavy intake. However, at this point Paul decided to speak with Amanda saying: *"Look, we all know you never had ten tequilas in a night in your life, don't exaggerate. Give us all a bit of time, I'm sure that we can join in when we're ready"*. Amanda: *"OK, maybe not ten. Alright, I'll wait until you are ready. Maybe I'm getting a little carried away"*. This interaction between Paul and Amanda represented young people in the Canterbury night-time economy negotiating a pathway of alcohol management between themselves which firmly demonstrated a calculation in young people's drinking styles and practices; Paul was prepared to negotiate with Amanda to make her see that she was being over-enthusiastic and also that she was misrepresenting herself as having consumed ten shots of tequila in one night, and Amanda was prepared to accept this when she was confronted with it. Instead, the group began to drink in a more conventional manner, led by Paul and Lisa:

> After Paul had spoken to Amanda, Lisa came to the bar straight away: *"Right, what are we all having?"* she asked the rest of the group. *"How about we get a couple of bottles of wine, and we can share those. Best on price, and that way we can all share"*. The rest of the group seem happy with this, and Paul says: *"Right, we can all put the money in for these apart from Amanda; let's celebrate the new job with her. Two bottles of Pinot please, and six glasses thanks Rob"*. I get the wine and glasses, and take the money as the group put their money together. Paul takes the wine, and Lisa the glasses over to the table. They pour everyone a glass, and the group sit and begin to enjoy the wine and each other's company.

The way in which Paul, Lisa, Lucie, Steven, and Ellen partook equally in the purchase of the wine, and how Amanda now joined in with this drinking style showed that young people often partook in drinking in a group setting where each consumed the same product, and also equally in volume; this was made clear by how Paul had told Amanda to wait with the shots and that the other members of the group would become ready at some point to join in. This approach underlined engagement with "calculated hedonism" where young people were consuming alcohol in a shared manner which provided structure and management to intoxication; in this instance, it was led by Paul and enacted upon by Lisa as the entire group conformed to this style of alcohol management. Amanda had been diverted away from her enthusiasm of celebrating her new job by her friends contributing equally towards them all celebrating with glasses of wine which was both cost and intoxication effective. It was now possible for the group to consciously approach their alcohol consumption together, which would run across the remainder of the time that they were in the pub during the evening.

Visser et al (2013: 1461) highlighted the sense togetherness for young people when drinking: "Drinking and drunkenness are key elements of the social lives of many young people: the embodied individual pleasure of intoxication is often accompanied by enhanced feelings of togetherness". Togetherness was identified as a principal motivation related to the group's notion of supporting Amanda in her celebrations, but also in how the other young people were prepared to conform within the group setting away from their initial doubts about Amanda's immediate desire to drink shots. After they had consumed the bottles of wine between them they were ready to drink the shots which they did in a specific style which each member of the group adhered to:

> *Steven turns around to Ellen: "Well, I'm much more in the mood for a shot now. Where's the tequila?" Amanda laughs: "About time, I thought you were all going to let me down tonight. Sorry, I should have waited until we were all ready". The group take a tequila each, and take the lemon and salt. "How does it go again?" asks Ellen. "Salt, tequila, lemon" says Steven. They all lick their hand, and pour some salt, line the shot up and have the lemon close by. "Right, on three" says Steven. "One, two, three". They lick the salt, down the shot and suck the lemon simultaneously. They all look at each other and laugh, and then Paul says: "Right, more wine everyone".*

The simultaneous consumption by Steven, Paul, Lucie, Lisa, Ellen and Amanda evidenced the togetherness which young people often associated with alcohol consumption during the fieldwork. Not only were they consuming the same drinks in the same volume and time which could be associated with the multiple definitions of "binge" drinking, but they were also doing this at the same time as one another where each experienced the same sensation of pleasure in relation to the alcohol consumption and through simultaneous performance of extreme drinking practices. This showed that young people were used to drinking together in ways which allowed for them be reassured as to one another's level of intoxication and to enjoy the feelings of pleasure which this produced; as the evening went on past 11:00pm, they had consumed their next bottles of wine more conservatively, and then each had another tequila which they consumed in the same style as previously. Unlike her earlier impetuosity towards shot drinking, Amanda was now less keen to have more to drink more: *"I think I might leave it here now guys, I don't know about you but I've got things to do tomorrow. I've had a great evening, thanks for coming and celebrating with me"*. Rather than carrying on drinking further into the evening, and having been navigated away from consuming six shots of tequila by herself, the group decided that it was time to go home, leaving before the pub became further busy at 11:30pm. The management and planning of how alcohol was consumed on this evening showed significant evidence of calculation in the drinking styles of young people; Amanda went home having consumed a far more manageable amount of alcohol, and her friends had joined in but also to manageable levels. Potential negative outcomes through high-levels of intoxication for individuals were managed through Paul, Lisa, Lucie, Steven, Ellen and Amanda undertaking alcohol consumption whose volume and speed could be defined as "binge" drinking, but was managed collectively in a way which saw pleasure and togetherness. This supported the presence of "calculated hedonism" where "consumption of alcohol increases forms of social confidence, while establishing bonds of solidarity, memory and friendship" (Blackman, Doherty and McPherson, 2015: 45) in evidence amongst young people drinking in the Canterbury night-time economy.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter has challenged the term "binge" drinking in relation to young people's alcohol consumption, by arguing that the term "calculated hedonism" (Griffin et al., 2008) is a less emotive term which allows young people to demonstrate a sense of individual and group management of alcohol consumption and its associated behaviour. Cohen (1972; 2002) and Measham (2006) both argued that young people were the subject of misrepresentation in relation to their actions whilst intoxicated, where the media developed a view of young people as out of control and rampant in the streets of the UK whilst "binge" drinking. Similarly, Plant and Plant (2006: 87) argue: "public attention and media interest were becoming increasingly concerned about social disorder, violence, and other problems associated with heavy drinking and intoxication, especially in town and city centres during weekend evenings". However, the examples of Toby, the squaddies, and Amanda and her friends in this chapter have shown that young people from a diverse range of backgrounds, whilst having participated in alcohol consumption which equated to the speed and volume of consumption which met with various definitions of "binge" drinking which may be commonly associated with these negative outcomes, also demonstrated calculated understandings of how to manage their alcohol consumption to seek positive outcomes both for themselves, and for groups of other drinkers who were in the same drinking space as themselves. Toby showed that he understood that consuming lower-ABV alcohol helped him to maintain a better management of his own prolonged drinking session, and also that routine movement between specific drinking spaces from *The Moon* to *The Mitre* enabled him to escape potentially negative outcomes such as over-intoxication, violence or anti-social behaviour. The squaddies, led by Francis and Neil, showed that management of individuals within their own group could deflect away from other groups of drinkers being the subject of anti-social or threatening behaviour from their colleague Jamie, who was more prone to misbehaving when intoxicated. It also transpired that responsibility to work and family often over-rode their desire or ability to engage with the night-time economy, which deflected away from the negative portrayal of the Armed Services which these young men were subject to throughout the Canterbury night-time economy; they demonstrated that pleasure and togetherness were at the core of their participation the night-time economy, where they were keen to enjoy themselves without any anti-social behaviour or over-intoxication through management of their consumption and behaviour. Amanda and her friends were also distinct in their management and calculation of their alcohol consumption. The group was aware of not

necessarily engaging in extreme drinking practices, and Amanda was navigated away from potentially negative outcomes by the soft intervention of Steve and Lisa who provided a strategic management and structure to the drinking practices of the group where they each engaged in the same level of alcohol consumption. Rather than consuming several shots to herself, Amanda enjoyed drinking steadily with her friends, and even eventually decided to leave *The Mitre* at a reasonable time so that she could focus on her responsibilities the following day. Each of these case studies showed that young people individually and collectively, although each engaging in alcohol consumption which could be defined as "binge" drinking through the speed and volume of consumption and the multiple definitions which surround this term, were subject to specific strategies of management and calculation. These strategies saw individuals and groups achieve positive outcomes, and seek pleasure through drinking together as groups which was not representative of how the media represented young people in the night-time economy.

Chapter Seven: The Normalization of Extreme Drinking Practices in the UK

7 Introduction

This chapter analyses data examples from the fieldwork of extreme drinking practices by young people in the Canterbury night-time economy, alongside the development of four key dimensions focussed upon the normalization of extreme drinking practices in contemporary UK society. The aim of the chapter will be to use and develop the normalization theory of Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998) and Parker, Aldridge and Williams (2002) which was applied to recreational drug use by young people. The chapter will examine extreme drinking practices as a form of recreational cultural practice amongst young people, which is distinguished from regular alcohol use through the speed and volume with which these practices are undertaken as well as examples of 'poly-alcohol use'; these relate to cost-effectiveness and also advanced levels of intoxication. Extreme drinking practices will again be explicitly linked to the specific practice of shot drinking, which encapsulated both the speed and volume in consumption of this cultural practice and will be argued to be an activity among young people which should be analysed through the critical lens of normalization theory. Links towards the impact of corporate side of the alcohol industry of shaping the night-time leisure spaces and experiences of young people (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003; Hubbard, 2011; Smith, 2014) will also be made.

7.1 Four key dimensions: towards the normalization of extreme drinking practices

The four key dimensions of the normalization of extreme drinking practices outlined in this chapter are: (1) exposure to/availability of/access to alcohol (2) shot trying, shot usage rates and poly-alcohol use (3) being alcoholwise: accommodating attitudes to "extreme" alcohol use by irregular or non-users (4) cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices. These four dimensions will adapt the work of Parker, Williams and Aldridge (2002) by reducing their five key dimensions of drug normalisation: (1) availability/access (2) drugs trying rates (3) usage rates (4) accommodating attitudes to 'sensible' recreational drug use especially by non-users (5) degree of cultural accommodation of the illegal drug use. This will be achieved by

merging and adapting the original dimensions of drug normalization to accommodate extreme drinking practices. Also adapted is the work of Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998) which introduced six key dimensions of drug normalisation: (1) drug availability (2) drug trying (3) current drug use (4) future intentions (5) being "drugwise" (6) degree of cultural accommodation of illicit drug use in society. To align the extreme drinking practices observed during this research with normalization theory, its presence in society is exposed in this chapter to the same critical assessment to which recreational drug usage was exposed: "we are concerned only with the spread of deviant activity and associated attitudes from the margins *towards* the centre of youth culture where it joins many other accommodated 'deviant' activities" (Parker, Aldridge and Measham, 1998: 152). These four dimensions will be analysed and adapted alongside accounts of extreme drinking practices by young people from the fieldwork; arguing that there is a normalization of extreme drinking practices within the Canterbury night-time economy which also features across the wider contemporary UK society. Each of these dimensions will be dealt with in turn.

7.2 Exposure to/availability of/access to alcohol

The following sections will critically engage with accounts of young people's drinking and observations of the practice made during the fieldwork. These relate to the initial exposure to, the substantial increase in the availability of, and the access to a wide-range of extreme intoxicants amongst young people. There will be a specific focus upon 'extreme' intoxicants (i.e. high-ABV alcohol products) and 'extreme' drinking practices (i.e. the quick consumption of high-ABV alcohol products). These aspects will be used to highlight the potential normalization of extreme drinking practices amongst young people within the Canterbury night-time economy, and will also relate to initial exposure to alcohol within both the family unit and the wider culture of UK traditions. Parker, Williams and Aldridge (2002: 944) argue that their first dimension concerns the accessibility and availability of recreational substances without which normalisation cannot develop, and that there have been substantial increases in the availability of a wider range of recreational substances over the past ten years which are being sustained. Reference will be made in these sections to the exposure of young people to extreme intoxicants gained through media channels, relating to the symmetry between the

alcohol industry and advertising. Also highlighted will be the availability of and access to alcohol of young people within the night-time economy, which develops the argument that young people in Britain today should be argued to be subject to a normalization of extreme drinking practices. This is developed using evidence from a cultural standpoint that features influence from the alcohol industry, the licensing trade and supermarkets related to pricing, sponsorship and advertising, which provided heightened availability of and access to extreme intoxicants to young people which was founded upon their initial exposure to alcoholic products.

7.2.1 Exposure to alcohol

Exposure to alcohol consumption is commonplace across the lives of many young people in the UK. Hoggart (1957: 96), writing about his childhood exposure in the 1920s and 1930s to alcohol consumption within working-class life, states that: "the man who does not drink at all is a bit unusual – most working-class people would not ask for a majority of men like that whatever the perils of drink". This observation develops a picture of how children became exposed to alcohol as 'normal' through their experiences of observing adults consuming alcohol, which can also be observed within contemporary British culture as this response from Steven (24, manual worker) during an informal interview evidences:

> *Rob:* *Can you remember your earliest encounters with alcohol from your childhood years, before you started to drink yourself?*
>
> *Steven: Yeah. The first memories I have of alcohol are from family get-togethers and parties where the adults would be drinking. I always felt that when I was an adult that I'd be able to do what my parents and relatives and their friends were doing. It looked like fun, and they became less serious than usual. My dad and his mates would get drunk, and we [the children] would see them differently from usual. All the adults would be drinking, though it always seemed unusual for an adult not to drink unless they were driving or something.*
>
> *Rob:* *So you were exposed to the presence of alcohol from pretty much as far back as you remember?*
>
> *Steven: Yeah, pretty much. At weekends, we'd meet with my grandparents at a pub for lunch. We [the children] would always have soft drinks of course, but my parents and grandparents always had a glass of wine with their food. By the*

> *time I was fifteen, I was allowed to have a small glass of wine with them. But, yeah, alcohol has always been around. Well, it's always around isn't it? Just a normal part of life.*

Rob: *You became used to seeing the adults around you drunk then?*

Steven: *Well, no, not really. Like I said, my dad and his mates would drink at parties and barbeques, things like that. But I never remember thinking, you know, God, what are they doing? It was fun, and they were more relaxed than usual. The first people who I saw really drunk were around school social occasions, when we were young and didn't really know what we were doing with alcohol.*

Steven's account of his earliest exposure to alcohol within the family unit correlates with responses regarding their earliest exposure to alcohol from other young people in the fieldwork. Jasmine (19, student) stated: *"It was at home, definitely. My dad would have a beer most nights, and I know that my mum enjoyed a glass of wine more often than not"*; Henry (23, student) maintained: *"meal times with my parents, especially if we went out to eat together. Special occasions, but not always. Alcohol was always present in the home. Still is"*; Kirsty (21, manual worker) said: *"Oh, it was always there. Not excessive, but I always knew that my parents enjoyed a drink. It was certainly never hidden from us children"*. These responses indicate that initial exposure to alcohol was made during childhood and through observation of adults partaking in what Hoggart perceived as a regular pastime for adults: "drinking is accepted as part of the normal life, or at least the normal man's life" (1957: 94). When this initial exposure to alcohol was applied to the subsequent availability of and access to alcohol of young people, conclusions were drawn towards the normalization of extreme drinking practices amongst young people in the UK today.

These experiences were similar to my own initial experiences of living in a pub during the earliest years of my life. Whilst my brother and I were not necessarily in the pub bar at all times, we were familiar with people coming in to consume alcohol on a regular basis, and how these people viewed alcohol as an integral part of their everyday lives through their persistent presence in the pub. These were commonly working-class people from the local town, who would use the pub persistently every evening; my initial exposure to alcohol was one which was it always being present, and it was not hidden through our regular exposure to people drinking and also the social aspect of the pub where our parents would join the

patrons in a drink regularly. Subsequently, after leaving the pub, my brother and I were always exposed to our father enjoying a drink, and we were often allowed a diluted glass of wine with a meal on a Friday evening. As we ascended towards adulthood, we were taken by our dad into the pub, where he introduced us to drinking in a liberal fashion where we gained experience of the environment. Alcohol was treated as a normal everyday aspect of life in our family situation, where alcohol accompanied food and times of relaxation, and times of wider family celebration.

7.2.2 Availability of and access to alcohol

Concerns about the availability of and access to alcohol to young people have been linked to many factors in contemporary UK culture related to the promotion of alcohol products in the media. These measures correspond with the "substantial increases in availability" (Parker, Aldridge and Williams, 2002: 944) of recreational substances across the 1990s and early 2000s; outlining how exposure, availability and access to alcohol products also represents a key dimension of the normalization of alcohol consumption and towards the normalization of extreme drinking practices amongst young people. During the 1990s alcohol products became the subject of heavier commodification as a result of the dance music scene where ecstasy use superseded alcohol use in the leisure space of young people. This led to a calculated marketing strategy towards the explicit link of the effects of alcohol to the effects of drugs (Measham and Brain, 2005; Blackman, 2004). From the early 1990s, a wider range of alcoholic products such as alcopops and 'buzz' drinks based on legally available substances such as caffeine (e.g. Red Bull, which carried the advertising slogan "*Red Bull gives you wings*") have appeared which extended the range of alcohol products available in the night-time economy outside of traditional wines, lagers and spirits. More recently, alongside the "shot" drinks available throughout the night-time economy, fruit-based (e.g. Mixed Fruit, Strawberry and Lime) ready-to-drink bottled ciders (e.g. Koppaberg and Rekorderlig) which feature a range of appealing coloured flavourings have also emerged. This was exemplified during the fieldwork, when, upon the suggestion of Louise (21, student) who worked at *The Mitre* stated: *"all my friends drink them, and they're really popular around all the other pubs and clubs which we go to"*, *The Mitre* added to its traditional wine, beer and spirits with the inclusion of

Koppaberg Pear, Mixed Fruit and Strawberry and Lime. These became essential retail products, which were immediately and consistently popular with young people as a result of the availability and access of them within the pub; they represented Louise's knowledge of alcohol products familiar to young people through her exposure to, access and availability to alcohol and the specific drinking practices of young people, and Andrew's willing acceptance of this knowledge to improve the retail range of *The Mitre* for the young people who came to the pub.

The development of these heavily-commodified alcohol products and the calculated marketing strategies developed a widening of availability and access for young people towards extreme intoxicants, which associated with the initial exposure of young people to alcohol products. This specifically included connections between the alcohol industry and advertising, which featured links to popular culture and cheap pricing measures (i.e. wider exposure, availability and access of alcohol products to young people): *'Alcohol industry news: UK drinks companies worst for complying with advertising standards'* (*Alcohol Policy UK*: April 11th 2007); the alcohol industry and popular culture: *'NUT [National Union of Teachers] calls for ban on sports sponsorship'* (*Alcohol Policy UK*: April 11th 2007); *'Alcohol and football: Alcohol Concern warning ahead of 2014 World Cup'* (*Alcohol Policy UK*: June 9th 2014) and *'Heineken to sponsor London 2012 Olympics'* (*Marketing Week*: February 3rd 2012); the alcohol industry and supermarkets: *'Pricing and policy around the UK: Brits love of cheap wine & end of aisle displays as Wales eyes up minimum pricing'* (*Alcohol Policy UK*: April 11th 2014) and *'Chief Medical Officer speaks out at "deplorable" tactics by supermarkets'* (*Alcohol Policy UK*: April 1st 2014). Charlie (20, student) qualified these associations between the alcohol industry, advertising and exposure to alcohol products which evidence the growth of availability of and access to alcohol: *"Alcohol products are everywhere, aren't they? Advertised at the football, advertised through music festivals and cheap, too. You can't go to the supermarket without being offered this deal or that deal on booze. I always knew that I'd start to drink these products, they looked exciting and seemed available to everyone as soon as they were old enough"*.

Within the fieldwork these liqueurs were regularly observed as being available and accessible in pubs, clubs and supermarkets. These were often initially consumed at home when 'pre-loading' before entering the Canterbury night-time economy; as Peter (19, student) said:

"Always have a few shots before we leave the house, livens us up to hit the town". Shot drinking corresponded directly with the concept of an extreme drinking practice, because although the volume consumed was relatively small, the individual ABV intake was very high in comparison. Combined with the multiplicity of shots and products used, this represented 'poly-alcohol use' as a familiar trend throughout the night-time economy as young people often consumed a range of products; this was a commonplace activity amongst young people which established quickly and became a familiar aspect of the Canterbury night-time economy. The development of extreme drinking *styles* (i.e. the fast consumption of high-ABV alcohol products) also coincided with an increase in the strength of traditional products such as wine and beers, and the increased availability of cheaper alcohol in promotional deals aimed at young people in licensed establishments and supermarkets. Licensed establishments throughout the Canterbury night-time economy used access to alcohol as a primary attraction to young people through placing emphasis on their availability and value; offering attractive financial deals to potential customers. For example: at *Chicago's [club]*: "Free entry all night and £1 shots"; *The Farthing [pub]*: "Double Cubans £2.50 every Monday"; *The Tunnel Club [club]*: "Special drinks offer 2 (x) Jäger Bombs £5"; *The Mitre [pub]*: "Deal on Jäger, Skittle and Glitter Bombs! Exclusively for tonight only - buy 5 bombs and get the 6th freeSPECIAL DRINKS OFFERS!!!2 x jägerbombs for £5 SPECIAL DRINKS OFFERS!!!2 x jägerbombs for £5." Within *The Mitre*, ABV strength of shot liqueurs varied from 15 percent in *Apple Sourz* or *Cherry Sourz*, up to the mid- to high-30 percentages of Jägermeister, Tequila or Sambucca, which were the most popularly consumed of the shot liqueurs.

As stated in Chapter Five, high-ABV spirits were commonly mixed together in the night-time economy leading to greater instances of extreme intoxication during the fieldwork; 'Jäger Bombs', were the most readily-available and easily-accessed drinks which combined the impact of the alcoholic beverage with the caffeine content of the soft drink, causing the consumer to become more intoxicated but also further stimulated by the caffeine 'rush'. This extract from the field diary evidences their usage by young people:

> *It is 11.30pm and David has been drinking heavily at the pub since 7pm. He comes to the bar again, but rather than asking for his usual pint of Kronenbourg asks wearily: "Do us a Jäger Bomb, will you Rob. Don't fancy any more beer for the minute, I'm bloated and it's making me tired. I need to last the night out, need a pick-me-up". I*

smile and say: "And this'll do the trick eh?" David: "Yeah mate, if I need to get some energy dropping a 'bomb' is what I always do. Me and the rest of them", he says pointing towards the group of people [young men and young women] he is with who are congregated around two of the tables. I go to the back bar, and pour the measure into the shot glass, before getting a half pint glass and measuring out enough Red Bull to submerge the shot glass. I return to David with the two separate glasses and ask him "In or out, David?", "Oh drop it in mate, I just need to get it down me and get my energy up". I drop the shot into the bigger glass, and take David's money to the till. When I turn around, there's an empty glass and David has already returned to his group. He is shouting "I'm back, I'm back. You can't stop me now" and his friends are cheering and laughing. Whilst still heavily intoxicated, David is clearly far more animated in his interactions with his friends than before.

This example outlined the normality associated with availability of and access to extreme intoxication by young people in the Canterbury night-time economy. David used the immediacy of the small measure of a shot which contained the combined 'hit' of high ABV liqueur and caffeine-based drinks to extend his stimulation deeper into the evening and as an antidote to the tiredness which can accompany an extended drinking session. The availability of a wide-range of alcohol was supported by the evidence that David infers that all of his friends were familiarised with the practice of shot drinking, and were supportive of his use of extreme intoxicants and stimulant drinks to reenergise his participation within the night-time economy. Shot drinking was an available and accessible point of extreme intoxication which was commonly used to extend drinking sessions within the night-time economy, alongside the consumption of lagers, wines and spirits and mixers (e.g. Vodka and lemonade; Jack Daniels and Coke). Jägermeister also exposed their product towards young people through various calculated marketing strategies which further demonstrated their availability such as the "Jäger Runs" which were a feature of *The Mitre* and were also similarly seen in *Chicago's* and *Aspects* where high-ABV spirits were often retailed to young people in a similar fashion; this would increase productivity and consumption within the pub or club based around increased availability and access of extreme intoxicants. Jägermeister's free plastic test-tube drinking vessels at *The Mitre* were drinking vessels that encouraged 'vertical drinking' (*BBC News Online*: August 2nd 2006), which caused the consumer to have very little choice but to drink the product very quickly and were very popular with young people during the fieldwork. These products, designed for immediacy and speed, compelled the consumer to consume the alcohol quickly and in one 'hit', as Alan (25, office worker) said: *"Give us two in those test-*

tube thingys, I like those. Look pretty cool don't they and we have to drink them quick or we'll end up holding onto them".

Further data taken from an informal interview with university student Becky (19) suggests that young people had availability of and access to extreme drinking practices through shot and spirit drinking outside of the traditional parameters of the night-time economy and at pre-university age:

Rob: *Shots are popular aren't they? I guess they are something which gets encountered once you get to university*

Becky: *yeah, pretty much everyone uses shots on a night out. They're well popular, and they really help you get drunk you know? Yeah, they're really common now I'm at university, we drink them at home before we go out, and you can get some really good deals in pubs and clubs.*

Rob: *So you first encountered shots at university then?*

Becky: *No, I first used shots really at parties during sixth form at school; either at someone's house party or in the park. We'd buy the cheapest spirits we could get hold of, and just shot it all as that way everyone would get well pissed and all for the same amount of money. We'd just take a lug on the bottle each and pass it on. It's all about how drunk you can get for the cheapest amount of money really.*

Rob: *So shots have been a normal part of your drinking since, well, since you really started to drink alcohol? Even before you went to pubs and clubs?*

Becky: *Yeah, of course. Drinking shots are the main part of drinking when you're on a real party vibe, when you want to get really wasted you know? They're easy to sort out, and one bottle of spirits will get five or six of us totally drunk together. Now we can go to pubs and clubs, we just all line them up together; it's a communal thing I suppose, we're all in it together.*

Rob: *Did you not have trouble accessing the alcohol at that age then? You know, before you were legally allowed to buy alcohol?*

Becky: *Well, we never drank in pubs or clubs then, we couldn't get in and it wasn't worth the bother. I mean, we'd just get an older brother or sister to get us some … or a friend who was older. You know, we'd find a way. Just get someone to pop down to the supermarket for us. Alcohol is easy to access from around the age of sixteen onwards, because people begin to treat you like an adult.*

This example illustrates two important points of analysis. It highlights that the availability of and access to alcohol and subsequent extreme drinking practices to young people was not confined to the night-time economy, but was also related to the home and other outdoor spaces which occurred even before the legal drinking age of eighteen. However, it was clear that by the time young people had reached university age and the age of legal consent for alcohol consumption that most had left informal spaces of alcohol consumption: "[young people] began to participate in the more commercialised, alcohol-based leisure activities aimed at young adults" (MacDonald and Marsh, 2005: 73) where the "pubs and clubs of the town centre" (p. 74) became the centre of young people's leisure activities.

Young people were clearly subject to the attraction of extreme drinking practices which were based around ideas of communality between friends and value-for-money alongside the attraction of alcohol and drunkenness towards having a good time or "getting wasted" (Griffin et al, 2008). Availability of and access to alcohol products was made possible by connections to older siblings or friends who made the acquisition of alcohol easy for young people, by using supermarkets where alcohol could be freely accessed and then passed on to the young people. The increased availability of and access to extreme intoxicants (i.e. high-ABV spirits) and extreme drinking styles (i.e. shot drinking) featured influence from an older friend or relative, whilst the subsequent availability of and access to shot drinking at university had also become a central aspect of Becky's leisure time now she was at university where availability of and access to alcohol was made easier by legal participation in the leisure space of the night-time economy. Becky and her friends' association of shot drinking, even the practice of sharing a bottle of spirits equally, with getting intoxicated in a time and cost effective fashion, develops the notion that shot drinking was a central practice amongst extreme drinking practices based upon access and availability. This symmetry between extreme drinking practices and shot drinking, which originated from the earliest exposure of young people to extreme drinking practices through school friends, highlights shot drinking as an exemplar of extreme drinking practices, and the normalization of the practice.

7.3 Shot trying, usage rates and poly-alcohol use

This section builds upon 'Exposure to/availability of/access to alcohol'; merging two of the key dimensions of normalisation thesis: 'trying rates' and 'usage rates' (Parker, Williams and Aldridge, 2002). This distinction is made as alcohol use is historically a normalised and socially accepted cultural activity amongst young people, as supported by the previously outlined intrinsic position of alcohol use within British culture. The respondents within this study, and literally dozens of others observed in pubs and clubs throughout the fieldwork, reflected that the trying and further usage of shots and subsequently extreme drinking practices were commonplace amongst young people in the Canterbury night-time economy. Even if the participants did not like the taste, the act or the resultant intoxication of consuming one of these shots, each of the respondents admitted to having tried or to being a regular participant within the culture of shot drinking. Shots were an extension of extreme drinking practices, and as has been outlined previously, enacted a specific purpose for young people in seeking intoxication. However, these were often positioned alongside the consumption of other alcoholic products such as beer, wine and other spirits, which saw young people engage in 'poly-alcohol use' which saw them use specific alcohol on specific occasions to elevate their level of intoxication. Measham and Moore (2009: 438) argued that the use of recreational drugs alongside alcohol had been neglected in research: "The role of illicit drug use within the 21st Century NTE and its relationship with alcohol fuelled leisure has yet to be considered in detail". This research will look at how 'poly-alcohol use' saw young people mix alcohol in order to maintain a more controlled and cost-effective approach to their evening's alcohol consumption, and offer detail as to how this was a regular feature of young people's drinking practices during the fieldwork.

7.3.1 Shot trying and further usage

Shot trying and further usage is a part of young people's access to extreme drinking practices and extreme intoxication. The common usage of shots by young people had developed to the level where they were an every day presence in *The Mitre* across every week, and were central to 'poly-alcohol use' as they became an accessory to further and more extreme levels of intoxication. Trends of shot trying amongst young people in the Canterbury night-time

economy was exemplified during the fieldwork by Emily (19, student) during an informal interview:

> Rob: Lots of people use shots these days as part of their drinking. Have you tried them?
>
> Emily: Yeah, lots of people do. More do than don't actually, I'd say. I have tried them, and do use them. You're kind of obliged to have a go, everyone's aware of them.
>
> Rob: So you use shots now, when did you actually try them first?
>
> Emily: Well, I drank spirits first during the Sixth Form at school. I suppose I was seventeen at the time. We used to drink from a bottle and pass it around. That's like a shot of spirits. But actual shots, like, at a pub or club from a shot glass that was when I got to university. We used to sit around in halls in the first year with a bottle of vodka and play silly games which you had to forfeit by doing a shot. After that, they're so easily available and cheap with the drinks offers that you get, that if we were going out to get really drunk for the evening, we'd all drink shots alongside beers, wines and spirits which obviously last a bit longer. The shots just get you even more hammered, more quickly.

Emily's response supports the idea that young people in the Canterbury night-time economy were familiar with, and had tried and continued to use shot drinking as a method of extreme intoxication as they were easily available and also cost-effective. Consequently, her response does correspond with the concept of 'poly-alcohol use'. Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998: 154) argued that young people participated in 'poly-drug use' which they state was superseded by cannabis consumption as "recognisable cost-benefit assessments" where cannabis supplemented more expensive drug use and allowed young people to control their expenditure and intake by understanding their own levels of intoxication. On Emily's evidence, shot drinking was used to ensure that participants can engage as far as they desire into extreme intoxication, as it is recognised amongst young people as time and cost effective. Shot drinking was used to facilitate a drinking session which always involved the inclusion of the wide-range of alcohol available in the night-time economy, as Dean (22, student) told me:

> Dean: Shots are a big part of a night out where everyone is up for it, you know, getting really pissed. Maybe a couple before we go out to liven things up, but we'll

always have a good few lagers before going out, and the girls will have wine or whatever. It's never just shots on their own, they're hardly pleasant are they? They're cheap, and very effective.

Rob: *So, it's just that they're cheap that you use them? And you always drink something else when you're out, you know, alongside the shots?*

Dean: *Not just because they're cheap, no. They're really effective for getting pissed like I said. And they add a little twist to how you feel, they just make you feel more up for the evening. I'll drink lager or cider generally and then have a few shots alongside them to keep things buzzing along.*

Similarly to Emily and Dean's trying and usage of shot drinking, which reflected the trend of 'poly-alcohol use' based around factors of financial economy and intoxication effectiveness where the "buzz" and the end-effect of the alcohol consumption was the primary objective of this specific drinking style, it was a familiar sight to see young women indulging in 'poly-alcohol use' shot culture and extreme drinking within pubs and clubs throughout the fieldwork. This supports the historical context of the development of social and cultural acceptance of women and alcohol consumption outlined by Hoggart (1957: 95): "Women seem to be drinking more easily now [the 1950s] than they did a generation ago; even as late as my adolescence [the 1930s] the 'gin-and-It' woman was regarded as a near-tart". Each of the female respondents from the fieldwork admitted to having tried shots to varying degrees, for example Deborah (22, shop worker) who said: *"Yeah, I've done shots of all sorts of things, but only when I fancy it and never too much"*; Anna (22, student) who responded: *"I've tried them a few times, but I only have a couple. They make me feel really drunk especially as they're always mixed with something else"*; Maria (23, student) who stated: *"I do them every week, but not every time I go out; only when I'm on a real mission to get drunk"*. Each of these participants also responded that they were open to further shot usage to varying degrees of intoxication; Deborah said: *"I'll do more shots, yeah. They're always there, and I just make use of them when I fancy. They do help me feel up for a party, but I try not to get so drunk on them that I regret it in the morning"*; Anna stated: *"I'd do them again, yeah. But only when I feel like it; I've never had a bad time on them. But I do take it easy"*; Maria replied: *"Like I said before I do them pretty regularly, so yeah, I'll be doing them more times. They help me to get drunk quickly which is what I want them to do, but I prefer to drink other drinks in the main"*. These data extracts demonstrate the trend of shot trying progressing into shot usage within

the Canterbury night-time economy, and also 'poly-alcohol use' in seeking further levels of intoxication. Whilst these examples from the fieldwork reveal young women participating in extreme drinking practices, Blackman, Doherty and McPherson (2017: 45) recognise: "similarities between the drinking *patterns* of each gender, [but also] we identify key gender distinctions between the drinking *styles* of young men and young women". Deborah, Anna and Maria are involved in extreme drinking practices, but they also explain that this is only to the extent with which they each feel individually comfortable; whilst each of the participants outlined different attitudes towards their own consumption of shots relating to invigoration, intoxication or participation, they were unequivocal upon having tried them and towards being open to making use of them again. These accounts of young women drinking support the rejection of a 'convergence culture' between young men and young women drinking argued by Measham and Ostergaard (2009: 416) who criticise the argument that young women are drinking like men. The depth of shot trying and further usage which developed into 'poly-alcohol use' when shot drinking became an accessory to other forms of alcohol, and consumption represented by this data, supports the argument towards a normalization of extreme drinking practices. Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998: 154) qualified their research as a "robust measure of normalisation" as around a quarter of their respondents went on to become regular users of recreational substances, and each of the participants here from the Canterbury night-time economy were willing to use or try shots which developed into 'poly-alcohol use' in the future.

7.3.2 Sustained shot usage

Sustained shot usage by young people, built on the foundation of shot trying and further usage, was exemplified during the fieldwork by a night-out with a group of young people which ultimately ended up at the night-cluc *Chicago's* outside the city walls to which Emily and Dean invited me along with their friends. In *The White Horse*, the last port-of-call before *Chicago's* at around 10:30pm after the group had already partaken in a wide-range of alcohol products from beer, wine, cider and spirits with mixers, there was an offer which saw a 'tray' of Sourz shots – i.e. six 25 millilitre shots of liqueur – available for five pounds. Whilst these were advertised and sold with the intention of being shared amongst six people, four (two

males, two females) of the group of nine young people (three males, six females), including Emily and Dean, purchased their own 'tray' and consumed all six shots at extreme pace within two or three minutes. Emily explained to me why had chosen to do this:

> *Well, they're cheap and easier to get drunk on than wine or beer. Cheaper than the club ... and quickly they get me where I want to be ... you know, drunk! I won't bother drinking much in the club, I'm ready to go and dance now, and chat to people.*

The actions of Emily and her friends can be analysed in a two-fold fashion. They reflected the trend of shot usage in the Canterbury night-time economy by their immediate purchase and consumption of the shots when they were offered access to them. Although Emily's drinking *style* in this instance was extreme, each of the members of the group of nine also consumed at least one or two of the shots themselves as some participants shared a tray in a more reserved drinking style than demonstrated by Emily and also Dean. The expression on their faces upon consumption was one which bordered between discomfort and pleasure at the toxicity of the liquid which was being consumed which stemmed from the taste and potency of the liqueur. This did not deter participants from going back to drink more. Dean told me:

> *Well, it's certainly not the taste that makes me go back for more ... it's the effect. You go from being slightly merry to pissed in the space of one or two shots. It's a value for money thing, and time too. You just get to where you want to be more quickly. We all join in together.*

Emily and Dean were students in Canterbury and from middle-class demographics, which correlated the argument of Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998: 153) regarding a closure in class and gender differences in recreational substance use amongst young people. Also, the gender demographics of the group of nine young people, which was weighted in favour of female presence by six participants to three, reinforced the change in perceptions towards female alcohol consumption (Hoggart, 1957). This trend was clearly identifiable within the student-based demographic of the respondents and their subsequent shot usage, as both male and female students – who reflected a majority of middle-class demographics, although working-class origins were not unusual – were often attracted to particular bars and clubs by

publicity surrounding financial offers on shots and liqueurs; as Emily said: *"we'll just go where the best drinks offers are"*. However, the earlier example of the "Rock 'n' roll builders" presented an image of working-class young men drinking to extremes away from women.

Of all of the respondents from both a manual-labour background and an academic background, at least a three-quarters admitted to regular shot usage (i.e. once a week), whilst half admitted to shot usage on one or more occasion throughout the week. Students accepted that they drank to extremes more often by virtue of their weekly timetable, as Dean said: *"I've got days where I don't have to be anywhere or do anything, so I can afford a hangover"*. However, manual-labour workers would also involve themselves in extreme drinking practices, even the night before a shift at work (a night which some participants would ironically refer to as a "school night"); as Nathan said: *"sometimes I just do it [indulge in extreme drinking practices], even if I'm working the next day. I need to make the most of my time away from the workplace"*. Whilst poly-drug use reflects "recognisable cost-benefit assessments" (Parker, Aldridge and Measham, 1998: 154) with regard to drug use, the poly-alcohol use observed in the fieldwork reflected similar economy in terms of finance and time for participants; it was also possible to recognise that there were young people who were drinkers that did not regularly over-drink, if at all. Katie (23, manual worker) was one such example. She was a regular attendee of social occasions with her work friends, but was less attracted to the alcohol-driven aspect of these social occasions. She told me:

> *Would I drink shots? No way. I wouldn't be able to get up in the morning. And even if I could, I'd be no good to anyone! I will have the occasional shot, and sometimes I'll set out to get drunk – but I prefer to drink and enjoy my friends' company. And then feel OK in the morning.*

Other more regular drinkers such as Robbie (22, student) enjoyed drinking shots more than once a week. He states:

> *Yeah, I enjoy them. Often I don't set out with that in mind, but it just occurs because I develop a taste for getting drunk once I've had a couple of lagers. However, I'd never indulge if I have places to be in the morning, or assignments to do. They come first. Getting wasted is the reward for getting my priorities right.*

This evidence amongst young people from the Canterbury night-time economy supports the notion of shot trying being closely related to subsequent and sustained shot usage. Katie and Robbie both reflected a common-sense approach to alcohol which demonstrates an understanding of shot usage which was defined from the origins of shot trying. Whilst Katie was more reserved than Robbie towards the idea of extreme intoxication, both were prepared to use shot drinking as a familiar aspect of their participation in the leisure pursuits of the night-time economy. Work and assignments were prioritised over intoxication, whilst extreme intoxication was seen as a reward by Robbie for maintaining his academic work, and Katie was aware that she would underperform in the workplace were she to participate in this extreme drinking practice in combination with having to work the following day. This fieldwork data suggests that young people did not necessarily consume alcohol in a reckless fashion as indicated by media coverage of "binge" drinking, but were capable of making calculated decisions which correspond with their responsibilities away from the night-time economy.

The quantity of respondents of Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998: 154) can be argued to represent "a robust measure of normalisation". It can also be argued that the numbers of young people within the Canterbury night-time economy who participated in extreme drinking practices, evidenced a normalization of this practice in the UK today. This practice had varied outcomes based upon the individual participant's experience of shot trying and their subsequent usage. Each of the young women and men observed in these fieldwork examples were aware of their motivation towards using shots within the night-time economy, but also showed awareness of the potential outcomes of extreme intoxicants which were bound around personal preference and perceived consequences which limited their alcohol consumption. This pattern of behaviour also supports the notion that the availability of and access to extreme intoxicants within the night-time economy contributed towards the potential normalisation of extreme drinking practices amongst young people.

7.4 'Being alcoholwise: Accommodating attitudes to 'extreme' alcohol use especially by irregular or non-users'

This section explores some of the young people from the fieldwork who were less inclined towards extreme intoxication, and used their prior experiences of their own or other people's alcohol use in order to form their own social awareness towards, and accommodation of, extreme drinking practices within the night-time economy. It draws together two dimensions of normalization theory: 'Being drugwise' and 'Accommodating attitudes to 'sensible' recreational drug use especially by non-users'. Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998: 155) argue that 'Being drugwise' refers to where abstainers demonstrated a considerable knowledge of recreational substance use due to regular encounters with these practices. Parker, Williams and Aldridge (2002: 947) argue that 'Accommodating attitudes to 'sensible' recreational drug use especially by non-users' corresponds with the extent to which recreational substance use was personally and socially accommodated by abstainers and 'ex' triers". The combination of these dimensions develops a singular dimension of alcohol awareness which supports the notion of a normalization of extreme drinking practices amongst young people in the UK that is socially accepted outside of the area of current users of extreme intoxicants (i.e. high ABV alcoholic products). The extension of the definition of normalization of extreme drinking practices to include young people who do not necessarily engage in these practices or poly-alcohol use serves to broaden the scope of how culturally embedded understandings of extreme drinking practices are amongst young people. This also reflected the impact upon the wider perceptions of young people towards extreme intoxication through the normalization of extreme drinking practices.

7.4.1 Accommodating attitudes to 'sensible' use of extreme drinking practices

Throughout the fieldwork, it was apparent that young people did make a distinction between drinking *styles* of alcohol consumption which reflected the different *types* of drug use that featured as a central part of normalisation theory (Parker, Aldridge and Measham, 1998). Jason (21, student) who did not participate in extreme drinking practices, offered insight into social occasions amongst young people where alcohol was consumed and a differentiation between *types* of drinking. He states:

Well, there's your out for a couple of pints and a quick chat or a game of pool, which might just take place in the afternoon or the evening. Heavy drinking – shots or spirits – is also common. This isn't really for me, I see people hammering back the shots, but I've never really liked the idea of it myself. My housemates are always up for getting smashed that way and good luck to them. It's fun to watch them and see how they react to being so drunk.

This data extract supports the argument in normalization theory that there was a moral accommodation of others' substance use, associated with freedom of choice and no harm to other parties (Parker, Aldridge and Measham, 1998: 155). Jason's account made it clear that he was aware of extreme drinking practices and extreme intoxicants, and was exposed to it on a regular basis by his housemates in his student accommodation. Whilst not an abstainer from alcohol per se, he was disinclined to involve himself in extreme drinking practices. However, at the same time he was not opposed to it, accepting it as a part of the freedom of choice made within his friends' social lives and even enjoying watching them partake in these practices as Jason further stated: *"it doesn't really affect me what they choose to do"*. In defending the rights of his friends to undertake extreme drinking practices, and the potential entertainment which it provided, Jason demonstrated acquired knowledge of the culture of extreme drinking practices which was informed by close proximity to this activity. He was able to view both the practice and the aftermath of it, and by virtue of this was able to make informed decisions as to his own participation in and perception of extreme drinking whilst acknowledging that what other young people do was of little impact upon his own life.

Tara (27, office worker) an irregular participant in extreme drinking practices, also provided insight into the culture of extreme drinking practices where distinct *types* of drinking were displayed:

I was out the other week with work colleagues on a Friday night in Canterbury, and was being pestered to do this shot, or a shot of that. It's not that I have a problem with people drinking like that, I have done shots before, but I really don't enjoy feeling that drunk or how it makes you feel afterwards. If I was really up for a heavy night out, I might have one or two, but definitely no more. I had to keep saying: "But I'm OK drinking my wine" or "Not this time" as different colleagues kept asking me to join them. They weren't pushy, just drunk really, and wanting everyone to join in. I stayed firm, and just enjoyed my evening at my own pace. I mean, I did get a bit drunk, but I can remember it all. It was quite funny really, watching how usually reserved

characters were suddenly speaking to anyone and everyone in the pub and then were struggling to walk down the street at the end of the evening they were that bladdered. Really quite entertaining, and then myself and my other colleague who wasn't interested in shots had the chance to wind them up the following week at work as they couldn't exactly remember what they had been doing".

Tara's account correlates with that of Jason in two ways; through the revealing of a distinction between *styles* of drinking which are specific to the conscious decisions of individuals within the night-time economy, whilst also demonstrating acceptance (accommodation) towards extreme drinking practices which is based in the previously acquired knowledge of this practice (being alcoholwise). Tara admitted that she had experienced shots for herself before, but did not enjoy the feeling of intoxication which it entailed, whilst Jason was familiar with the activities of his housemates, but was not attracted to participating within this practice. They both accepted that this was a familiar aspect of participation within the night-time economy. Both Tara and Jason demonstrated an acceptance of these styles of alcohol consumption which referred to the fun or entertainment which could be gained from the role of onlooker towards extreme drinking practices. This example demonstrates an accommodating attitude towards extreme drinking, which reflects that irregular users (Tara) or non-users (Jason) made conscious and informed individual choices with regard to participation and their own perception of other young people's participation. These choices were informed by previous personal experience either of the practice of extreme drinking, or the direct observation of other participants.

Data from participants within the Canterbury night-time economy also correlated with the accommodating attitudes towards extreme drinking practices which centred upon the notion of fun, enjoyment and laughter as presented by Jason and Tara. Steven said: *"my friends are so funny when they're that drunk, it's so much fun to watch them"*; Tracey (22, manual worker) stated: *"I don't really need to get very drunk to have a good time, I just watch my friends get more and more drunk then enjoy watching them and the way that they act. They never do anyone any harm"*; whilst Keith (22, student) stated: *"we [other irregular/non-users] just laugh all night, watching our friends go from their usual selves to this exaggerated version. Chatting rubbish to everyone they meet, but never upsetting anyone"*. These correlating responses from non or irregular participants in extreme drinking practices support the

argument of Parker, Aldridge and Williams (2002: 948) that whilst there is much evidence supporting normalisation through patterns of availability, trying and usage, that the attitudes and social behaviour of non-using young people are most culturally significant to normalisation theory. Fun and laughter which was not gained at the expense of other people's good times and enjoyment characterised the accommodation of extreme drinking practices within the Canterbury night-time economy, with the foundation of cultural knowledge gained from exposure, availability of , access to, trying and usage of alcohol.

7.5 Cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices

Here I will examine two ethnographic data examples from the fieldwork, which relate to the cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices as a recreational practice participated in by young people within the Canterbury night-time economy. Extreme drinking practices are positioned in this section as an example of what Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998: 156) define as a 'deviant' activity which has become accommodated into mainstream cultural arrangements. This again responds to the negative label of "binge" drinking. Further, the ethnographic examples will focus upon how far extreme drinking practices have been "accommodated in the cultural understandings of normality" (Parker, Williams and Aldridge, 2002: 948) within contemporary UK society. Two particular examples from the fieldwork of how recreational extreme drinking practices amongst young people are culturally accommodated within mainstream cultural arrangements and cultural understandings of normality ("Pub Golf" and "Fresher's week") will be shown to correspond with these merged dimensions:

> The drug use we have been describing in this study is quite different. It is largely recreational and is centred on less physically addictive drugs. It can be accommodated because adolescents and young adult users merely fit their leisure into busy lives and then in turn fit their drug use into their leisure and 'time out' (Parker, Aldridge and Measham, 1998: 156).

The impression that distinct *types* of drug use – i.e. recreational and unrelated with physical harm to the user – could be accommodated within normalization theory, will be applied to

the different *styles* of alcohol consumption apparent within extreme drinking practices. The previous sections have demonstrated how this *style* of drinking has distinct characteristics which have become accepted within the mainstream cultural arrangements of alcohol consumption within the Canterbury night-time economy and cultural understandings of normality. Increased availability of and access to alcohol, shot trying and usage rates and the accommodating attitudes towards other people's extreme alcohol consumption have developed the position of extreme drinking practices as existing within mainstream cultural acceptance amongst young people. This merges extreme drinking practices as a recreational pastime within the busy lives of the young people encountered during the fieldwork supported by the roles played by the corporate side of the alcohol industry (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003; Smith, 2014), the media and the licensed trade itself within the Canterbury night-time economy. The two data examples from the fieldwork which will be used to demonstrate how cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices has become a familiar aspect of the Canterbury night-time economy are "Pub Golf" and "Fresher's week".

7.5.1 Cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices: "Pub Golf"

'Cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices' corresponds with the first data example from the fieldwork: "Pub Golf". The notion that young people accommodated their leisure pursuits (i.e. extreme drinking practices) into pre-determined compartments of their busy lives was supported during the fieldwork by the regularly observed mainstream cultural practice of "Pub Golf"; the drinking game which included male and female participation and featured a fully planned and structured outline to the evening's drinking for participants. This game demanded taking 'time out' from everyday life due to its extreme nature: nine or eighteen licensed establishments, which involved the fast consumption of a specific alcoholic product within a fast time-frame before leaving for the next 'hole'. The overall aim of the evening was an equal measure of extreme intoxication for each participant within the game. Each member of a "Pub Golf" party would possess a homemade 'scorecard' which had the name of each drinking establishment and the chosen drink and 'par' score on it. The entire route of the evening was already planned out by one or two young people who were the primary organisers of the evening and generally made sure that everyone abided by the pre-

determined parameters of the game. All the participants were dressed in golfing attire, in keeping with its mimicking of the actual sport of golf. The field diary records that a group of fourteen young people – men (8) and women (6) – arrived at *The Mitre* dressed in colourful outfits:

It's 7:30 p.m. on Saturday evening. A mixed-gender group enters the pub together. Alex (the group leader) immediately approaches the bar, producing a homemade scorecard: "alright mate, we're on pub golf 'hole' number eight. It's Gins and Tonics in here for us all". The young men and women purchase a drink, each marking their scorecards. The group remain mixed, but the young men and women then splinter into gendered groups to consume their drinks. The men urge each other to consume their drinks quick. Alex to Garry: "Comeon you pussy, you struggled in the last place. Man up, get it down you". Alex tells Kevin: "Get it down you, comeon, get it down you". The men already look drink-weary at this early stage of the evening. The women go about their business with more reservation. They order their drinks with the men, but then survey the scene as the young men drink and cajole each other. The young women also consume their drinks quickly, but do not abide by the 'par' score. Alex sees that the young women are not abiding by the rules: "Oi, comeon, there's rules to this game, girls. We've [the men] all done it; you're [the women] letting the side down. Man up". Gillian to Alex: "Oh shut up, we've done them haven't we? It's not so easy for us, we're smaller than you." Jade: "Yeah, and who'll be making sure that we all get home in one piece, sorts the taxis and everything else later – yeah, that's right, us. You do your thing, and we'll do ours". This deters Alex from encouraging the women to drink at the same rate as the men. He recognises that the likely outcome is that the young women will provide greater structure to the potential outcomes of the evening: "Yeah, well, I suppose you're right. Anyway, off to the next hole. Comeon everyone." He shows the group out of the door, directing them to their next 'hole'. As he leaves himself, he leans back inside the door, and says [to Rob]: "I'm fucked mate, shitfaced", before following the group.

Participation in "Pub Golf" meets the criteria of an extreme drinking practice, through poly-alcohol use where mixed types of alcohol were consumed across the evening, and the speed at which the alcohol was consumed. All participants were fully engaged with the ambition of "calculated hedonism" (Griffin et al, 2008), although, as Jade stated, the young men and young women enacted alcohol consumption within the game in different ways by consuming alcohol at different speeds whilst maintaining the basic parameters of the game by consuming the same alcoholic product (Blackman, Doherty and McPherson, 2015: 53). Young men and women were also shown to fulfil different roles within the game, as Alex can be seen to be an

'enforcer' of the drinking rules which the other young men adhere to his exhortations, whilst the young women show greater reservation and forethought towards the potential outcomes of the evening and the task of co-ordinating every participant to get home safely. This also rejected the notion of a 'convergence' of young men's and young women's drinking in the night-time economy (Measham and Ostergaard, 2009). The group moved through each establishment or 'hole' quickly, as Alex directed the group to move promptly to the next licensed establishment on their planned route immediately after consumption as again dictated by the parameters of the game. Alex's final words to me before leaving *The Mitre* suggested that he was already in a state of extreme intoxication, developing these pre-planned parameters as being specifically aimed at each participant arriving at their final destination in a state of extreme intoxication as a result of group participation in the extreme drinking practices of "Pub Golf". The demonstration of meticulous organisation by participants in the structure of the game, guided by a definite plan of where to go and what to consume, alongside the participation of several young people of mixed genders, acted as a primary example of extreme drinking practices being accommodated within the busy lives of young people within the Canterbury night-time economy, as Donna, (22, student) explained: *"Pub Golf is about us all [the group of friends] getting really drunk together, and sharing good times at the same time. That's the idea".*

The organisation of "Pub Golf" where the aim and outcome is extreme intoxication, meant that participants were able to prepare themselves for the evening and set aside the time to embroil themselves in the proceedings, as Wayne (21, student) stated:

> *It makes it a lot easier to know that you can plan not only your night, but the following day for recovery. Going out and just getting drunk off your face is not often spontaneous. Not when you've got other things to do with your life. We get together and work out the best times for all of us. That way, it doesn't get in the way of studies or work*.

Wayne's account suggests that whilst "Pub Golf" acted as evidence of young people drinking to extreme levels of intoxication (i.e. 'binge' drinking), it was also an example of young people participating in activities together where there was a focus upon their lives outside of the

night-time economy. His allusion to the notion that extreme drinking practices were not often spontaneous, and were fitted around other responsibilities such as work or studies, develops the impression that young people were aware of the potential negative effects of participation in extreme drinking practices. Whilst extreme intoxication was viewed as fun and sharing good times by Donna, it was also pragmatically viewed as a practice which required 'time out' for recovery from its exertions which could not overlap with the daily rigours of work and study by Wayne. Jade's view of retaining a sense of focus towards the potential outcomes of the evening equate to a sense of reassurance of having many people around you involved in the decision-making processes relating again to the notion of agency amongst young people which reinforced a sense of "calculated hedonism" in these normalized extreme drinking practices. On the many occasions that "Pub Golf" was observed during the fieldwork, whilst the participants were obviously drunk and going to subsequently become more drunk, there always persisted a 'feel good factor' and prevailing idea of "having a laugh with friends" (Parker, Aldridge and Measham, 1998: 157). The enactment of "Pub Golf" within the night-time economy corresponded with the notion of 'cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices' because it was an example of extreme drinking practices as being accommodated within the leisure time of lives of young people by the young people themselves, and outside of the pressures of everyday working or studying. This accommodation was also supported by the relative brevity of "Pub Golf" within any particular licensed establishment, as Wayne said, by shortening the time spent within individual establishments, young people were: *"never really going to outstay our welcome anywhere. Go in, make a bit of noise, drink the drink, then leave. No harm done"*.

7.5.2 Cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices: Fresher's week

'Cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices' further corresponded with the second data example from the fieldwork: "Fresher's week". The drinking practices of young people were often influenced by external branding and commercial objectives such as "Fresher's week", as the licensed establishments within the Canterbury night-time economy fought competitively for their custom where corporate sponsorship by the drinks industry of drinking events by young people was in evidence. Chatterton and Hollands (2003: 1-2) explain

the influence of the expansion of the night-time economy upon the products available to young people:

> Social and economic restructuring over the last three decades has resulted in the development of a new urban 'brand' which has reshaped many parts of city landscapes into corporate and entertainment hubs.

"Fresher's week" was subject to the new urban 'branding', and took place in September of each year at the beginning of the new academic year; it was related to the immediate introduction of new university students ("Freshers") in Canterbury to local licensed establishments and their available drinks offers during "Fresher's week". Smith (2014: 1) describes such events in the night-time economy as: "consumerised leisure markets for youth identities, cultures and networks" where "the practice of marketing has long been held within the contemporary setting as being (along with consumption) intrinsically linked to the formation of identity" (p. 61). In this case within the city and specific licensed establishments. During the fieldwork, local licensed establishments from throughout the Canterbury night-time economy would indeed make initial financial outlays in order to be included on the guided tours organised for "Freshers" or those students who were new to the city and to academic life: "themed evenings for higher education students which involve them visiting multiple venues before the evening climaxes in a 'superclub' that can accommodate the whole group" (Hubbard, 2011: 267). Joanna (20, student) describes this event in Canterbury:

> *When I first arrived in Canterbury as an eighteen year-old, I found that there were loads of chances to go out and to meet new people, find out where the best places to go out were, and where the best offers were. We were literally handed a bag full of flyers with drinks offers and were introduced to the main student haunts within the first couple of weeks of being here where we were toured around the pubs in the city and ended up at Chicagos.*

Joanna's account of her introduction to university life and her concurrent introduction to the Canterbury night-time economy, was presented through a "Fresher's pack". One of these packs became a valuable data extract gathered during the fieldwork. The packs were filled with flyers aimed towards young people advertising specific venues with specific financial

deals upon alcoholic products and combinations of alcoholic products, and appealing branding of specific items which created an environment conducive to extreme drinking practices. Extreme intoxicants mixed with stimulant drinks (i.e. Red Bull) featured heavily, with offers at (for example) *The Farthing*: FRESHERS BREAK THE ICE WITH A **FREE** DOUBLE VODKA AND RED BULL; whilst *The Tunnel Club* offered: BEERS £2 JAGERBOMBS £2.50 ABSOLUT VODKA AND MIXER £2.50; *The Brewer's Tap* offered a themed night of extreme intoxication called *JAGER ROCKS* which offered: JAGER BOMBS £2 SAMBUCA £2 TEQUILA £2 VODKA MIXER £2 RUM & MIXER £2 WHISKEY MIXER £2. These packs also contained Loyalty cards towards these specific establishments; flyers for fancy dress shops which corresponded with the theme of "Pub Golf" and the persistent nature of fancy dress as a theme which was often symmetric with observation of extreme drinking practices amongst young people during the fieldwork.

The cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices outlined in this section, and reinforced by the flyers and drinks offers found in the "Fresher's pack" available to new students within Canterbury, was bound within one particular product found within the pack. Inside was a 'Term One Planner'; a calendar with all the previously stated advertised evenings available marked specifically on it, so that students were aware of when these specific occasions were, and how they could fit participation within extreme drinking practices around their studies and work. This planner also had coupons attached which offered free entry to students to the events. Joanna further describes their impact upon young people:

> *Well, they [locations for extreme drinking] were always there from the start of studies. You just turned up, and were really shown where to go for drinking, drinks deals, which clubs were more student-friendly and that kind of thing. We even had maps and wall charts so we could plan our social lives around going out to these places. It's funny, because by the end of the first year, these are the last places most people want to go. You become more familiar with the city and other places, and, really, you tire of the same thing all the time. In the second year, you actually go to places which you like, not just the places you sort of get taken to when you first get there. There is pressure to go to these places at first, you want to be involved, it's cheap, and it's a really good way of getting to know people. I'm glad of it, sometimes I'd get a little too drunk, but there were always other people around who you knew. It's a big part of your life in the first year, and studies do fit alongside having a good time. You have to make it work for yourself.*

Joanna's account supported the context of the current dimension of 'cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices' into the lives of young people. It also showed how the previous three dimensions outlined in this chapter overlap with 'cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices' as each also features influence in particular from the alcohol industry and the licensed trade which derived from exposure, access, availability and usage, whilst impacting upon cultural understandings amongst non-users by its sheer prevalence within the night-time economy. This form of cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices saw an advance in how students were exposed to extreme drinking practices from the outset of their university experience, and provided a strong indication that extreme drinking practices (i.e. drinking *styles*) reached a level of normalization which was reflected by the profile of extreme drinking within the night-time economy. This was also evidenced within the pre-determined ways in which young people approached the idea of extreme drinking practices with regard to safety and their own personal understandings of the practice whether they participated within the practice or not. Extreme drinking practices were accommodated within the initial 'student experience' upon arrival at university by the alcohol industry and licensed trade and within group practices (e.g. "Pub Golf") by young people themselves. The main involvement of the local licensed trade was in creating an attractive environment for extreme drinking practices to take place, and the alcohol industry was through its strategic marketing and branding strategies (e.g. Jäegermeister) associated with extreme drinking practices during the fieldwork. This section outlined how young people accommodated extreme drinking practices into their busy working or studying lives in order to enjoy the benefits of having a good time, whilst retaining responsibility towards the demands of their lives outside of the recreation of the Canterbury night-time economy, as Joanna said: "*studies do fit alongside having a good time. You have to make it work for yourself*".

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter argues that a normalization of extreme drinking practices by young people exists in contemporary UK society by analysing data examples from the fieldwork of extreme drinking practices by young people in the Canterbury night-time economy. However, it also

supported Measham and Ostergaard's (2009) rejection of a 'convergence' where young women were drinking like young men, as distinctions between young men's and young women's participation in the night-time economy could be made (Blackman, Doherty and McPherson, 2015: 50). This was alongside the development of four key dimensions focussed upon the normalization of extreme drinking practices by young people. It develops the normalization theory of Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998) and Parker, Aldridge and Williams (2002) from recreational drug use by young people by examining extreme drinking practices as a form of recreational cultural practice amongst young people, which was distinguished from regular alcohol use through the speed and volume with which these practices are undertaken such as shot drinking. Shot drinking is situated in this analysis as emblematic of extreme drinking practices by young people, as well as examples of 'poly-alcohol use' which related to cost-effectiveness and also advanced levels of intoxication that arose during the fieldwork. Consequently, extreme drinking practices were linked to the specific practice of shot drinking, which encapsulated both the speed and volume in consumption of this cultural practice as a specific aspect of the normalization of extreme drinking practices by young people. The four key dimensions of the normalization of extreme drinking practices outlined in this chapter were: (1) exposure to/availability of/access to alcohol (2) shot trying, shot usage rates and poly-alcohol use (3) being alcoholwise: accommodating attitudes to "extreme" alcohol use by irregular or non-users (4) cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices. These four dimensions adapted the work of Parker, Williams and Aldridge (2002) by reducing their five key dimensions of drug normalisation: (1) availability/access (2) drugs trying rates (3) usage rates (4) accommodating attitudes to 'sensible' recreational drug use especially by non-users (5) degree of cultural accommodation of the illegal drug use. These were merged and adapted to accommodate extreme drinking practices. Also adapted was the work of Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998) which introduced six key dimensions of drug normalisation: (1) drug availability (2) drug trying (3) current drug use (4) future intentions (5) being "drugwise" (6) degree of cultural accommodation of illicit drug use in society. This aligned the extreme drinking practices in the Canterbury night-time economy with normalization theory, as its presence in society was exposed in this chapter to the same critical assessment to which recreational drug usage was exposed: "we are concerned only with the spread of deviant activity and associated attitudes from the margins *towards* the centre of youth culture where it joins many other

accommodated 'deviant' activities" (Parker, Aldridge and Measham, 1998: 152). These four dimensions were analysed and adapted alongside accounts of extreme drinking practices by young people from the fieldwork. It was argued that there is a normalization of extreme drinking practices within the Canterbury night-time economy which also features across the wider contemporary UK society. Here, the four dimensions of normalisation of extreme drinking practices would provide an analytical structure around which to assess the impact of extreme drinking practice on young people across the night-time economies of the UK.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

8 Introduction

This PhD was an ethnographic research project which focused upon alcohol consumption by young people within the city of Canterbury (Kent, United Kingdom). It engaged with and adapted the research traditions of the Chicago School of sociology to ethnographic research within the contemporary setting of an urban British pub and night-time economy (Hollands, 1995). There were two main findings of the research: 1) the adaptation and application of the Chicago School approach to research in urban areas, which featured across Chapters One, Two, Three and Four of the thesis and 2) the adaptation and application of normalization theory to alcohol and to extreme drinking practices by young people which is featured in Chapter Seven. Chapters Five and Six act to develop upon how young people were drinking in the Canterbury night-time economy, and to establish their presence alongside the extreme drinking practices in which they partook. Consequently, the this field of study of this thesis has two main foci: firstly, my methodological position in the Canterbury night-time economy, where I became an 'insider' immersed within the culture at study by adapting the traditions of the Chicago school to research in an urban location; the research was primarily situated within a city-centre pub named here *The Mitre*, alongside a series of other locations within the night-time economy such as further pubs and bars, clubs, houses and the street. Here, I used aspects of my autobiographical background to support and develop the research process in a strategic and reflexive fashion, where the research position was a blend of covert/overt due to the spontaneous research context. The second focus of the thesis was the original contribution to the field of study where an adaptation and application of drug normalization theory (Parker, Aldridge and Measham, 1998) to alcohol use by young people was made. This approach aimed to remove the moral marginality of young people guided by the mainstream media (Cohen, 1972; 2002) surrounding this activity, and to analyse it subjectively through the experiences and voices of young people in relation to their actions in the night-time economy. In support of this, it was also argued that media terms such as "binge" drinking have created negative connotations which act to marginalise young people in the UK today,

and that prioritising the experiences of young people and alcohol consumption can lead to a reframing of the term to: "calculated hedonism" (Griffin et al, 2008).

8.1 Findings: Methodology

The fieldwork methodology and position was integral to the success of the research in locating and immersing myself into groups of young people engaged in extreme drinking practices in the Canterbury night-time economy. The research was designed from within the traditions of the Chicago School of sociology, who undertook research in urban areas of Chicago focused upon their "naturistic" setting, where *The Mitre* and the and the Canterbury night-time economy were utilised as sites of research which mirrored this natural characteristic to urban areas of research. The theoretical and practice-based work of academics at the Chicago school – Park (1915), Thrasher (1927; 1928), Cressey (1927/1983; 1932) and Whyte (1943) – enacted a fundamental influence upon my research practice, where I adapted their methods of immersion into urban areas, and treated the night-time economy as an "urban laboratory". Blackman (2010: 212) argues that the Chicago School:

> Remain live examples of ethnographic struggle through theory and fieldwork, and in their methodological accounts we experience dialogue with them to locate, assess, reflect and resolve their and our own fieldwork issues, problems and successes.

On reflection throughout my research, and now that it has closed, it is clear that the Chicago School approach retains an integral influence over ethnographic research in an urban location. By immersing myself into their work, I was able to respond to and interact with their own reflections upon their immersive techniques in their research and to find myself becoming at ease with undertaking research from within the position of bartender through their guidance. The framework which Blackman describes with such ethnographic sensitivity positions ethnographic research theoretically, and even more importantly, in practice; it represents a structure of research reflexivity where as a researcher I was able to respond to situations as they arose, and also confident enough to establish my autobiographical background as a central characteristic to my approach to research. Cressey (1927/1983; 1932), Thrasher (1928) and Whyte (1943) each provided aspects of practical support through

their work, but also offered guidance towards how I could approach specific aspects of the research whilst retaining validity and discretion as a researcher. This was mainly achieved through my negotiated position as bartender at *The Mitre* pub in the Canterbury night-time economy, as this was from where I became positioned to undertake ethnographic research when previously I had felt unable to find an appropriate research position. For instance, Cressey (1927; 1983: 111) argued that a special study was often necessary before undertaking a special study, and before I adapted *The Mitre* to the research process, I realised that I had to acquire a specific skill set where I became proficient and fluent in my bar work, and learned about how the pub worked, what products were available, the prices and so on before I adapted the pub into a productive research setting. This proficiency then enabled me to develop my research position with confidence through patience and across time within the urban context of *The Mitre* and the Canterbury night-time economy. Whereas I was initially cautious about the merits of undertaking research from the position of bartender, I was able to become reflexive and flexible in my approach to the research setting and research participants by implementing aspects of my autobiographical background (Measham and Moore, 2006) alongside the acquisition of the skills required to perform the role of bartender fluently.

Within this context, social class, age and gender were significant aspects of the thesis and the research, as these characteristics did exert some impact upon the research findings and subsequent conclusions. As discussed in Chapter Two, I found that my age during the research (32-34), and my gender, impacted upon my accessibility to groups during the fieldwork. Whilst was able to access groups of young men quite easily through shared interests or experiences, and also my still being relatively youthful, it was more complex to access groups of young women outside of direct interactions across the bar as bartender. Access was eased, however, by having an extended period of time in the fieldwork location, and working with young female colleagues who could help to ease this issue for me. By being able to spend time interacting across shifts, trust was built with the young female colleagues I worked with, and this snowballed into meeting further young women through this point of access. My own social class and autobiographical background became an asset in the fieldwork, where I was able to utilise previous experiences to form rapport with research participants. This meant that my research participants – which could well have reflected the overwhelming majority

of students in Canterbury – broadened in range as I was able to create cohesive social relationships with young people from a working-class background as we shared similar origins. As a consequence of this social class background, during the fieldwork my position as bartender within *The Mitre* was exposed to the dual functions of bartender–researcher. These functions utilised ethnographic research methods within the research such as participant observation and gained organic engagement with young people within the leisure spaces of the Canterbury night-time economy such as "the Rock n Roll builders" who represented a hard-drinking/hard-grafting subculture of young working-class men. Whilst the initial aims of the research had not been distinct in terms of identifying specific social positions or social class, these aspects did arise due to the nature of the pub habitat, where young men such as "the Rock n Roll builders" were encountered from a specific social class. This saw other groups of drinkers from various backgrounds, and contributed to greater depth of the sample as I was also able to immerse myself into a naturally occurring sample of a wide range of young people. I was exposed to working-class Scottish squaddies, the vast array of students around the city, to hard drinkers from other pubs such as Toby who would use *The Mitre* as a safe-haven away from the heavy late-afternoon intoxication found at *The Moon* on Saturday afternoons which was just a two-minute walk away, as well as abstainers from extreme drinking practices such as Jason who was a middle-class student. Each of these distinct groups and individuals was identified through the methodological position I gained in *The Mitre*, and developed through the ethnographic resilience which engagement with the research methods of the Chicago School researchers had instilled within me in the field. I was able to access a range of participants from a range of social backgrounds as my manual-labour background and recent experience of academia provided me with a rich autobiographical context from which to immerse myself into conversations and scenarios in *The Mitre*. This positioned me effectively to examine which groups of young people enacted different drinking styles and practices in the Canterbury night-time economy. It is important to note that there were elements of serendipity which led me to my position behind the bar at *The Mitre*, and in particular how Andrew's demeanour and approach to business enabled me to shift fluently between the dual positions of bartender/researcher. However, it was the influence of the researchers from the Chicago School which *positioned* me there as a researcher who was equipped to act reflexively and to use my autobiographical background

to establish ethnographic methodology in the *The Mitre* and the wider Canterbury night-time economy.

Chapters Two, Three and Four of this thesis saw an extended discussion of the various methodological approaches which I took during the fieldwork, including immersive techniques; insider research; fieldwork management; participant observation; note taking; mapping the city and the night-time economy. The central feature of this methodological approach was to adapt the research of the Chicago School of urban sociology, and there was also a further adaptation of their process of 'mapping' the city and their intention to engage with a "naturalistic" view of the normality of people's social and cultural lives. It was found that using this naturalistic approach, that an opportunistic and spontaneous approach to sampling (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002) could be employed during the research practice, where informal interviews were undertaken alongside participant observation to elicit data. The spontaneity and immediacy of the dual positions of bartender/researcher enabled me to immerse myself within ethnographic scenarios as they unfolded, especially in the identification of a hard-drinking/hard-grafting subculture of young adult men drinking outside the manual workplace. Through my immersive techniques, I was able to build "rapport" (Thrasher, 1928) with "the Rock n Roll builders" through empathy and trust built around shared experiences from my own autobiography. This derived from my initial immersion into the role of bartender at *The Mitre*, where I had sought to adapt to the job before using the acquired skills of bartender to adapt the "pub laboratory" to the research setting. During this process the presence of Andrew, the licensee of *The Mitre*, was key; his agenda-setting to staff, and willingness to place interaction with customers above other bar duties enabled me as bartender to act as a natural component of the habitat. In this social environment, I was able to use interaction as a method of building relationships with research participants and to establish familiarisation where I was able to immerse myself into groups of young people not only within the setting of *The Mitre*, but also the wider Canterbury night-time economy where I visited other pubs and clubs, and was also invited into student houses where young people would drink both before and after entry and exit into the Canterbury night-time economy. Furthermore, the research methodology also used the Chicago school approach to 'mapping' the city, where a mapped diagram of the Canterbury night-time economy was produced which helped to shape the movements of young people within it and to focus upon

the concentration of licensed establishments within the city walls. This also featured influence from the work of Michel de Certeau (1984), who encouraged researchers to view the city from dual perspectives: the "*concept*" and the "urban *fact*" (de Certeau, 1984: 94). By looking at the city from these two perspectives, where the urban fact understands the rich 'experiential dimension' of urban life, it was possible for me during this research to focus upon the human activity in the Canterbury night-time economy as a key indicator of how cartographic mapped *place* becomes a rich experiential *space* as human activity enacts an inevitable influence upon its surroundings. By subjecting the sense of *place* to this ethnographic lens, it was possible to view Canterbury as a 'living city'. Specific spaces of interaction for young people were detected, and a specialised 'cluster' of licensed establishments (Roberts, 2015) was unveiled where young people felt comfortable to enact extreme drinking practices. By mapping the city, and seeking the experiential dimension of young people's lives in how they enacted their positon within the Canterbury night-time economy, this research was able to observe: "what young adults [people] actually do on their nights out and seeks to provide them with a voice to interpret their own activities" (Hollands, 1995: 7). The mapping and the naturalistic approach to building relationships with research participants resulted in becoming the major findings of this research into the night-time economy; these techniques opened up the Canterbury night-time economy to be examined in relation to the drinking practices undertaken by young people, whilst I remained an immersed but impartial presence. This position led to the other major findings of the research: how the night-time economy could be re-examined away from the glare of media stereotypes and moral marginalisation, and the identification of a normalization of extreme drinking practices by young people in the Canterbury night-time economy.

8.2 Findings: Night-time economy

This PhD research also made findings which served to remove the moral marginality of young people surrounding the activity of extreme drinking practices, and to analyse them subjectively through the experiences and voices of young people. Thesis Chapters Five and Six examined the contemporary alcohol consumption practice known as "binge" drinking through extreme drinking practices, and how negative media representations of young

people and this practice has produced moral indignation and marginality in the UK (Cohen, 2002). This examination of specific drinking styles and also approaches to management by young people of prolonged drinking sessions served to emphasise that young people were: firstly, subject to a cultural entrenchment of extreme drinking practices (Fry, 2011) which derived from 'the new culture of intoxication' (Measham and Brain, 2005). It was argued in Chapter Five that there has been a growth of shot drinking in the night-time economy, which has become embedded to such an extent that pubs and clubs can become 'vertical drinking' establishments based around specific times of the day or night where they experience different streams of custom based upon their geographical location. The theme of 'vertical drinking' was evidenced within such extreme drinking practices by young people as "Jager Bombs", or how "Jager Runs" took place in *The Mitre* where I and other staff members sold Jagermeister products in test-tubes which young people had to drink 'quick' and with 'immediacy' as this was the demand of the product. These were the key themes of entrenchment of extreme drinking practices, where young people were directed towards specific themes and practices of drinking by the alcohol industry. Drinking 'quick' was also recognised by "fly-bys" and "Pub Golf", where young people were on a specific trail of licensed establishments in the Canterbury night-time economy, and used the *The Mitre* to enact 'quick' extreme drinking practices where they would not spend a long period of time in a particular establishment before the would reach an end goal ("Pub Golf") or find somewhere that catered for their specific leisure desires ("Fly-bys").

In Chapter Six, the complex to define term "binge" drinking (McPherson, 2017: 242) was examined from within the context of research undertaken in the Canterbury night-time economy, where young people were argued to be managing their drinking practices through various strategies common to the night-time economy. This led to the less emotive term of "calculated hedonism" (Griffin et al, 2008: 4) being used to describe how young people were engaging with alcohol in the night-time economy where they sought positive outcomes to their drinking sessions, which may well have featured heavy alcohol consumption. Three separate case studies were described and analysed which showed an individual, Toby, making sure that he avoided problematic drinkers and situations at *The Moon*, by following a set routine of leaving on a Saturday afternoon at a specific time. The three squaddies, Francis, Neil and Jamie, demonstrated that groups of young people often had a distinct structure

where there was a notional leader who would quell the anti-social behaviour of young people in their group by prioritising upon the good times and togetherness which were often a feature of the night-time economy. Amanda set out to consume alcohol quick and in volume, but was managed by her friendship group around to a far steadier alcohol intake before opting to go home early and prioritise upon her work commitments the following day. Each of these examples highlighted young people drinking towards intoxication in the Canterbury night-time economy, and in ways which could be defined as "binge" drinking. However, the clear examples of management and strategy around their actions saw a prioritisation on positive outcomes for young people by the young people themselves. These saw a rejection of the often aggressive and uncontrolled connotations of "binge" drinking, towards the more inclusive term of "calculated hedonism" where young people were active in their own decision making during participation in the night-time economy in relation to intoxication.

8.3 Findings: Normalization of extreme drinking practices

The normalization of extreme drinking practices by young people in the night-time economy was the main finding of the research, particularly as it applied and adapted the research of Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998) and Parker, Williams and Aldridge (2002) to inform this argument. This was linked to corporate branding of the night-time economy and leisure spaces of the night-time economy (Chatterton and Holland, 2003; Hubbard, 2011; Smith, 2014) where young people were subject to multiple attractions of availability and pleasure. In Chapter One of this thesis it was argued that alcohol consumption was in fact such a normalized feature of UK social and cultural life, that it had been overlooked in terms of an analysis in relation to normalization theory. Hoggart (1957) and Thompson (1963) were cited to reinforce the centrality of alcohol use in working-class leisure time outside of the workplace, and to locate the absence of this consumption in analysis of normalization. Subsequently, the development of normalization theory in relation to 'deviant' (Matza, 1969) behaviour by young people was traced (Lindesmith, 1938; Blackman, 2004).

In Chapter Seven of the thesis, extreme drinking practices were exposed to four key dimensions of alcohol use which developed upon the research of Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998) and Parker, Williams and Aldridge (2002): 1) Exposure to/availability

of/access to alcohol 2) Alcohol trying and usage rates 3) 'Being alcoholwise': accommodating attitudes to 'extreme' alcohol use especially by irregular or non-users 4) Cultural accommodation of extreme drinking practices. Each of these dimensions featured evidence from the fieldwork of young people drinking or talking about their experiences with alcohol which supported the emergence of the normalization of extreme drinking practices by young people. Whilst extreme drinking practices were identified in both young men and young women, a distinction was made between how young men and young women participated in these practices (Blackman, Doherty and McPherson, 2015). This rejected the notion of a 'convergence' of young men's and young women's drinking in the night-time economy (Measham and Ostergaard, 2009). The essential point of analysis was to reinforce upon how drug normalization theory was centred upon recreational drug use by young people, and not upon the problematic. Similarly, this research and the emergence of extreme drinking practices by young people was centred upon the positive outcomes which were sought by young people in both Chapter Five and Chapter Six. The research treated extreme drinking practices as a theme which existed within the night-time economy where urban branding has reshaped the landscapes of urban centres to attract young people into consumption Chatterton and Hollands (2003: 1-2), and as a recreational pastime. The focus was not on problematic drinkers, but "primarily on a prioritisation of the pleasurable accounts that young people associate with drinking" (Blackman, Doherty and McPherson, 2015: 58). Emphasis was placed on how young people enjoyed the spectacle of extreme drinking practices either by participating or as an observer where other young people's good times were accepted and appreciated.

The research identified upon distinct themes within the lives of young people, where they were exposed to alcohol use and alcohol products through various avenues from their earliest memories through to young adulthood. It also developed upon the notion from Chapter Five that shot drinking was emblematic of extreme drinking practices, and represented an introduction to a new style of drinking which was different from initial contact with alcohol for young people. 'Poly-alcohol use' by young people was highlighted as a key theme in the fieldwork, where young people would consume different forms of alcohol to achieve higher levels of intoxication or sometimes to stay more controlled. Even more significantly, caffeine-based drinks were shown to act as a strong stimulant which reinforced intoxication and re-

energised young people's participation in the night-time economy. Young people demonstrated that alcohol consumption was a central part of their leisure time experiences, and that extreme drinking practices enacted a specific role within them. The evidence supported a normalization of extreme drinking practices, which developed within the night-time economy and leisure spaces where intoxication was sought by young people. Whilst extreme drinking practices were a central theme of participation by young people in the Canterbury night-time economy, these activities were often managed and seen as a potential source of pleasure by young people. The generally held mainstream view is that young people were reckless in their approach to drinking:

> Binge drinking isn't some fringe issue, it accounts for half of all alcohol consumed in this country. The crime and violence it causes drains resources in our hospitals, generates mayhem on our streets and spreads fear in our communities. (Government Alcohol Strategy, 2012: 2).

However, by placing its focus on young people seeking pleasure and managing their drinking practices, this research developed the argument that a normalization of young people's drinking practices was present in the Canterbury night-time economy. Drug normalization theory was adapted to inform the approach, where the four key dimensions of extreme drinking practices developed a structure and framework from within which analysis of young people's extreme drinking practices was made. However, a key distinction was made in how young men and young women were drinking in the night-time economy (Blackman, Doherty and McPherson, 2015) which supported the rejection of a convergence of young men's and young women's drinking (Measham and Ostergaard, 2009).

8.4 Further research

In further research, I would like to continue to examine the normalization of extreme drinking practices by young people in the night-time economy, but especially in relation to 'poly-alcohol use' and the use of caffeine-based drinks within the night-time economy which extends young people's participation and levels of intoxication in the night-time economy. Measham and Moore (2009: 438) have argued that the use of recreational drugs alongside

alcohol has been neglected in research, and it is also now being considered as to the role which energy drinks are playing in the combinations of 'poly-substance use' in which young people participate in the night-time economy (e.g. Pennay et al, 2015). The re-energising of young people's participation in the night-time economy and how this is potentially part of a strategic approach from the alcohol industry and the licensed trade to maintain young people's participation for longer would be an insightful point of academic research to consider. I would also like to develop upon my exit strategy from the fieldwork, where I found myself committed to the pub and Andrew beyond the duration of the fieldwork, whilst the participants generally drifted away due to the transient nature of the pub setting and also university life for young people. Morrison, Gregory and Thibodeau (2012: 418) argue that: "equal emphasis regarding the closure of the relationship is warranted, as well as the ethical considerations therein" of how to exit the fieldwork location, whilst it has been argued that exit can cause harm to the participants (p. 422). However, in this instance I would like to focus upon how my protracted exit harmed the completion of the research process. Certainly, it was difficult for me in this sense to find an appropriate ending point to the research as the position of bartender became a familiar one and there was always the opportunity for "just one more" bit of data collection. My position on this was made more difficult by how I had become integral to the running of the pub; I was more reliable than the other members of staff due to my age, and I felt a sense of loyalty towards Andrew based upon his generosity towards me generally and influence upon my research. I did not leave my position as bartender until two years after I formally stopped treating *The Mitre* as a location of research; this made it harder for me to write objectively about the pub, and to distance myself from it as a business. This is an area that I would like to reflect further upon and develop, as it is central to the successful completion of ethnographic fieldwork and to completing the written process. Most significantly, I would like to continue the development of the adaptation of drug normalisation theory to the application of extreme drinking practices in the night-time economy. These practices have become a commonplace aspect of the night-time economy, due mainly to the various impacts from the alcohol industry, and young people's exposure to alcohol and the cultural accommodation which these practices can now be argued to have, as particularly evidenced by the attitudes of abstainers from extreme drinking practices encountered during the fieldwork. The area of cultural accommodation would become the main emphasis of the research, where the alcohol industry, with advertising and marketing

at the heart of the sites of pleasure which the night-time economy accommodate, has produced attractions to young people which are a normalised aspect of urban night-time economies across the UK today.

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