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Silenced Frequencies:
*Dance Music and the Transformation of
Entertainment Spaces in SoMa, San Francisco*

Kathryn Marshall
April 2016

Senior Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Bachelor of Arts degree in Geography

Adviser, Professor Yu Zhou

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Chapter 1

Locating SoMa, Locating Raves

About a week after I turned 21, I bought tickets to a see DJ collective performance at 1015 Folsom- a nightclub known for attracting up-and-coming electronic musicians. This was one of my first 21+ shows, held at a nightclub in San Francisco, a city I was fairly new to. I moved to Oakland about 2 years previously, and since then I used my breaks from school to experience the Bay Area music scene. Clubs were a fairly new phenomenon to me, but given the show, I took my chances and reserved some (overpriced) tickets. I parked a few blocks away from the club, which allowed me to observe the area on the short trek from my car to the club. A mixture of new high rises, large industrial buildings, and bars lined the streets. As I waited in line for entry, I overheard a group of friends complaining about the location. There was a shared sentiment that this club, along with the others nearby, should have been planned in another part of the city. The friends expressed a tone of surprise that the recent redevelopment of the neighborhood had not reached the immediate area surrounding these hubs of entertainment. Once inside, however, the scene changed. High ceilings, a bar made of glass, and a light/projection system like I have never seen- this was beyond a music venue. Down to the architecture, the club was a physical performance of wealth. The owners, planners, and promoters successfully planned an atmosphere of excess, from the expensive drinks to lux balconies upstairs. Once inside, any doubts about the “lack” of development in SoMa seemed to disappear.

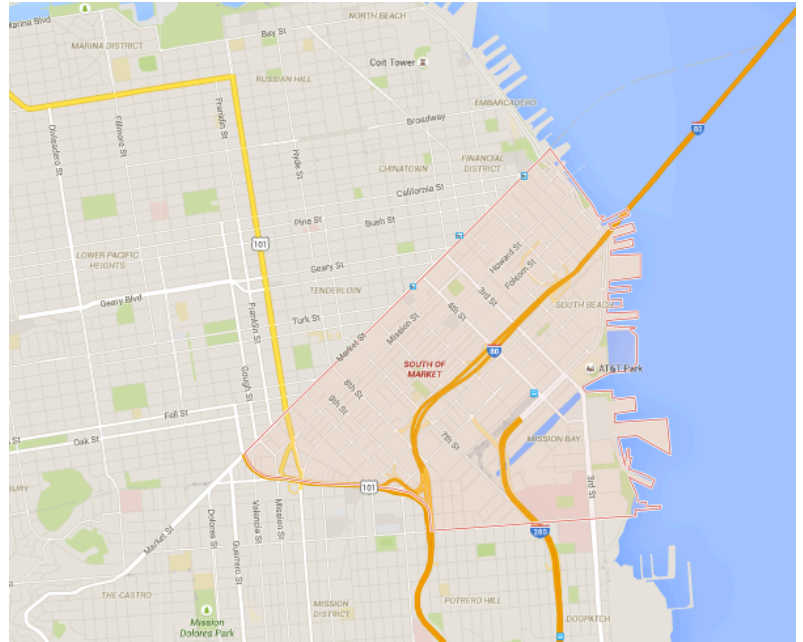
1015 Folsom is not the only club in SoMa by any means. The area has served as the capital of entertainment in San Francisco for decades. Perhaps the most interesting trend in the neighborhood is its maintenance as the dominant location for entertainment, given the changes to San Francisco in recent years. The nature of nightlife in the area has



1015 Folsom, 2015 (provided by 1015 Folsom)

shifted dramatically, however. After house music (originating in the Mid-West United States) arrived in San Francisco, underground rave parties followed suit. Subsequent to the de-industrialization of the 1970's, SoMa's warehouses, empty by the late 80's, served as the perfect location to host raves. Moreover, SoMa already maintained a history of housing a variety of transgressive spaces, particularly sexually transgressive spaces, like bathhouses and gay bars (Mitchell 187). Even though many elements of gay culture had relocated to the Castro by the time house music made its appearance, SoMa's past- both culturally and economically- influenced the production of entertainment spaces (Mitchell 187, Bee 2012). Warehouse raves dominated the scene until around 2000- when a combination of events contributed to their demise (Bee 2012). "The great club crackdown

of 2000” threatened rave scenes across the country, as officials determined that underground raves and their relationship to drug use (specifically ecstasy) necessitated stronger policing (Ibid., 2012). Underground parties were targeted, and clubs like 1015 Folsom were reconceptualized in order to receive and maintain official



SOMA (Outlined); Map of San Francisco; Google Maps, 2015

licenses (Gochenour 2011). At the same time, cheap rent encouraged many technology companies to move to SoMa, repurposing the old and out-of-use industrial buildings as offices and suitable living spaces for their employees. Changes to SoMa nightlife occur alongside spatial transformation of San Francisco at large.

In terms of transformation related to demographics, San Francisco is well versed in the topic of gentrification and displacement related to urban development (or, better said, redevelopment). The Bay Area in particular has and continues to serve as the bedroom community for Silicon Valley in the wake of the tech boom. As noted by a Brookings study, inequality in big cities, such as San Francisco, exceeds the nation’s average. While San Francisco maintains some of the United State’s highest incomes, the rise in housing costs may increasingly “preclude low-income residents from living in the city altogether” (Brookings Institute 2014). The process of urban gentrification does not simply restrict who is able to afford to live in a city, nor is the process of displacement

natural or inevitable. As Neil Smith describes, the frontier imagery that justifies the restructuring of “under-developed” sections of cities rationalizes “social differentiation and exclusion” (Smith 1996, 12). Subsequent investment and privatization made in order to tame the wild city only serves to reaffirm class-specific and race-specific social norms (Ibid.). This physical restructuring of urban space, understood as gentrification, spans beyond a simple phenomenon of displacement and exclusion, reshaping the production of conceptual space. Moreover, as economic transitions shape, create, and destroy spaces, the culture tied to those spaces must internalize these changes. While urban geographers such as Smith tie uneven development to the overarching capitalist market economy, there remain looming issues untouched by such discussions. Yet, despite all the data on economic displacement, I struggle to find literature that engages spatial changes as they relate to spaces of entertainment. The shift in entertainment from warehouse-to-club is not an innocent phenomenon. It occurred as a reaction to variety of struggles happening at that time, in that location.

Inquiry

In this thesis, I explore these underground warehouse raves as spaces for transgression, enabled by certain cultural, economic, and physical forces and histories unique to the SoMa neighborhood. These spaces of and for transgression changed into spaces that fit more comfortably into a productive, capitalist framework. While the situation is in ways unique, the transformation of SoMa nightclubs simultaneously represents larger issues in the discipline of geography. What influenced the rise and fall of SoMa warehouse raves, and the subsequent replacement of these spaces with

commercial nightclubs? Using this specific question as a case study, I explore the larger phenomena that these specific spatial transformations represent- what do these developments illustrate about the relationships between space, culture, and economy, in the urban setting? To engage with this broader question, I must also examine what it means for a space to be transgressive or resistant, and what was lost in the material and conceptual re-imagination of spaces that I categorize as transgressive. Space has been reconfigured, disallowing certain ways of being- so why do these “ways of being” matter? In other words, what was lost? I consider literature on the production of space, specifically related to economic and cultural relationships, to develop a theoretical framework in order to engage with these questions. The production of space serves a crucial function in understand WHO has the right to produce space, as well as the right to impact the physical and conceptual understandings of the city.

The Production Space and its Relationship to Culture and Capital

First and foremost, Lefebvre’s considerations of space serve as useful models in which to understand how and why space is produced. In order to focus on the production of entertainment spaces, I grapple with the production of space more generally.

Lefebvre’s triad of the production of social space connects perceived, conceived, and lived space- fundamental to understanding and differentiating the processes involved in spatial production. Combining perceptions and conceptions of spatiality is a process that embeds socially produced ontologies and epistemologies- at the same time, space is not a passive platform for social interaction (Lefebvre 2002). Edward Soja expands upon Lefebvre’s triad, fleshing out the ability of space to transform and be transformed. As a

construction, socially produced space is “comparable to other social constructions resulting from the transformation of given conditions inherent in life-on-earth, in much the same way that human history represents a social transformation of time and temporality” (Soja 1980, 209). By construction, Soja refers to the way in which space is perhaps “given”, but its uses and organization are products of “social translation, transformation, and experience” (Ibid.). By defining space in this way, Soja directly responds to the conception of the “physical and external” image that spatiality invokes- that space exists outside social context and therefore serves as a “container” for social action (Ibid., 210). As applied to SoMa nightlife spaces- warehouses and the more recent nightclubs are not simply buildings that house social transformations. They do not merely reflect shifting cultural and economic phenomena- they ARE social constructions and transformations in themselves. In other words, it is impossible to extract the conceptual meaning of these spaces from the physical sites. Re-imagination of these entertainment spaces, in relationship to Lefebvre and Soja, directly impacts the lived experiences of its users. Alternatively, changing entertainment experiences similarly impact the organization of these spaces. As I later investigate, the nature of SoMa spaces is constructed by the interaction between the material and imagined space. Throughout this thesis, I emphasize the constructed nature of space, the ways in which space ties to culture both physically and mentally, and the necessity of the who/how in spatial production. Underlying the issue of what social institutions shape space is the idea of who has access to space, and subsequently, who can contribute to the urban spatial processes. In many ways, economic imperatives are what have allowed and disallowed certain entertainment spaces to come into existence. The empty warehouses that provided

space for the underground raves came about due to the deindustrialization of the SoMa neighborhood. The existence of these spaces, as physical sites, in many ways ties to economic cycles- but the uses, meanings, activities and overall cultural purpose depended (and continues to depend) upon a variety of factors. Based on this, I expand upon a Marxist framework to consider the variety of explanations for these spatial experiences.

In order to consider why the transformation of these spaces matters, I understand the ties between the production of space and who has the right to produce space. The right to the city, an idea (or collection of ideas) originally stemming from Henri Lefebvre, directly tie the production of space with to city processes. Purcell uses Lefebvre to directly comment on socio- spatial relations and the right to urban spaces. Purcell recounts that space production necessitates “reproducing the social relations that are bound up in it” (Purcell 2002, 102). Material planning of a city is not necessarily the production of urban space, as “social relations and lived space are inescapably hinged together in everyday life” (Ibid.). Purcell’s claims directly use Lefebvre’s triad of social space. However, Lefebvre’s definition of the right to the city leaves too much to the imagination for Purcell. Purcell notes Lefebvre’s two principal rights for urban inhabitants- participation and appropriation. Participation, broadly understood, maintains that inhabitants should contribute to decisions made in the production of urban space, while appropriation relates to access and occupation. This definition serves as a radical reconceptualization of urban citizenship- as urban rights now have the ability to be more expansive than simply living or voting in a city. Purcell continues to add to this discussion, acknowledging that Lefebvre “argues that urban inhabitants should be empowered, but both the degree of that empowerment (how much control?) and its

character (are all inhabitants empowered equally?) will be struggled over” (Ibid., 103). I use Purcell’s additions to Lefebvre to explore why nightlife spaces are regulated and controlled, and how this control relates to radical sense of urban processes. Purcell’s struggle of “who” in terms of urban rights relates to the economic reconceptualization of space. Regulation and control, as I argue, relate to commodification and subsequent cultural restriction of space. Economic reclaiming of space limits its cultural possibilities, as capital value outweighs cultural value. When the purpose of a space is to make a profit, the types of activities that can occur must relate to economic revenue. Urban rights exist at odds with the capitalist control over urban spaces, as radical urban citizenship is, itself, not commodified. In other words, the right to control, produce, and regulate space relates to how capital is dispersed amongst urban inhabitants. Lefebvre and Purcell’s dimensions on new urban rights must consider how commodification of space directly targets individuals and communities that use space in ways that are not commercially profitable.

Given that my thesis particularly focuses on urban space and nightlife as a category of city spaces, Don Mitchell’s discussions of landscapes and the commodification of space is useful. Mitchell claims, “creating a city – or part of a city... as a landscape is therefore important because it restores to the viewer an essential sense of control with a built environment which is instead ‘controlled’... through the creative, seemingly anarchic destruction of an economy over which they may in fact have very little control”(Mitchell 2000, 136). In this way, the construction of a “landscape” city provides inhabitants with the illusion of control, as the built environment “must be seen as simultaneously dependent and condition, outcome and mechanism of the dynamics of

investment, production and consumption” (Ibid., 137). Specifically regarding entertainment, warehouses were by nature public, transgressing upon commodified space with profit-minded intentions. Nightclubs as they are now known necessitate profits and focus on creating uniform, commodified experiences. The “landscaping” of SoMa entertainment spaces not only transformed the material nature of these spaces (from empty warehouses to well-manicured clubs), it also limited the types of entertainment that could be enjoyed in such spaces. Mitchell describes city landscapes as built and commodified spaces, and as a part of a system of social regulation. The mode of regulation at any time, as Mitchell explains, “is the constellation of state and civil institutions, couples with norms and habits that encourage people to act in the general interest of economic stability” (Ibid., 142). Reconfiguration of city spaces into controllable landscapes is a process embedded in relationships of power, struggle, contestation, and resistance. In such that landscapes are “the spatial surfaces of regulatory regimes”, they must be produced to frame social imaginaries often in definite, system supportive ways, articulated via discursive means among others, but conjoined expressly with regional and national systems of power” (Ibid., 143). Considering the “club crackdown of 2000”, struggles over power contributed to the legitimization of certain venues under specific, normative guidelines.

The specific spatial struggle I focus on is the production of dance music. More generally, music production, as a form of cultural expression and entertainment, is itself spatial and has place specific connotations. Holt and Wergin write about music in its local, post-industrial context, explaining, “music is still a foundational communicative process by which we can take the temperature of a place or city” (Holt and Wergin 2013,

10). Music is a pliable form of culture, and there are various economic, social, and political motivations behind creating or shaping spaces of music performance. These spaces of nightlife, as argued by Hae, house “expressive activity” and essences of “subculture vibes” in the city (Hae 2012, 3). Moreover, movement to regulate entertainment means that a city “lost a site of its foundational vitality, a site of creativity, diverse expressive culture and counter-cultural transgression of established societal norms” (Ibid.). Venues allow city residents to develop communities of subculture, and develop their own sense of expression, play and identity (Ibid.). Disappearance of spaces for transgressive and alternative cultures, as Hae describes, implies a decline of people’s rights (Ibid., 6). Music performances spaces allow inhabitants to appropriate urban space and produce it for “the purpose of value, play, diverse social interactions, alternative community-building and radical reimagining of urban society (Ibid.). Removal of historical spaces of subculture under a post-industrialized urban economy attempt to market cities to a new “creative class”, as described in *The Beach Beneath the Streets* by Shepard and Smithsimon. They describe the “struggle within the city between those who seek to enjoy and those who seek to control public spaces” (Shepard and Smithsimon 2011,16). As control and exclusivity define space, play and public performance become source of resistance, as “the ludic, joyful, temporarily uninhibited physical engagement with the space itself is both an opportunity to act out one’s identity and life and a means to declare and expand the boundaries of accepted behavior” (Ibid., 18). Play, as Shepard and Smithsimon claim, requires space. From this, I understand how raves and associated dance music, as a form of politicized play, are resistance, and necessitate a physical site in order to take place. The physical reconceptualization of urban entertainment therefore

replaces vibrant subcultures, which challenges the ability of city inhabitants to produce urban space. The landscapes discussed by Mitchell destroy the possibility of certain spaces to facilitate music and entertainment. The commodification of entertainment culture in SoMa directly challenges the spatial opportunities of the neighborhood to sustain musical communities. Specific cultural and spatial conditions were necessary for the San Francisco rave and electronic dance music scene to flourish. The nature of these spaces, as I explain further in this thesis, directly related to the production of certain music subgenres. The spatial transformation of the neighborhood, physically, culturally, and economically, targeted the very cultural products created in these spaces. Using these fundamental texts, I work to understand the processes that contribute to space as both concrete (physical, material) and abstract (mental). Together, I explore how space is lived, and what types of social institutions form spatial experience, and what factors contribute to spatial transformation.

Why SoMa, San Francisco?

The entertainment shift in SoMa, as a case study, illuminates how the commodification of urban landscapes is a spatial and cultural process. This reason, in particular, is why I chose SoMa as geographical area of study. SoMa itself is an eclectic mixed-use area, residential, commercial, (post) industrial, and more (Brook et al 247). The transformation of the South of Market neighborhood occurs alongside the socio-economic shifts in the city of San Francisco itself. To understand how entertainment has changed, the history of its context is crucial. EDM (electronic dance music) did not simply arrive in this part of San Francisco- its proliferation in SoMa relates to the

development of the neighborhood before the expansion of raves, and the concurrent development of EDM as a musical movement.

In the age of urban renewal after the WWII, one of the largest redevelopment projects in San Francisco occurred in South of Market, approved as early as 1953 by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors (Rubin 1997). Before the strategies for renovation occurred, South of Market consisted of a strong working-class population. The low-rent not only attracted commercial activity, it also served as home to many of the service workers for downtown firms. In 1954, local developer Ben Swig began to oversee the San Francisco Prosperity Plan, an ambiguous but ambitious strategy that directed local development over the next few decades (Ibid.). After the Board of Supervisors approved plans in 1966, removal and relocation of over 4,000 residents and 700 businesses began to be taken seriously (Ibid.). For most of the 60's and 70's, development in SoMa took on an odd form. As housing was destroyed, the area still awaited investment and litigation to build new spaces. However, rent and land prices remained relatively inexpensive. Different residents and businesses began to flow in and out during this interim period- as vacancies opened and had yet to be filled. New residents included "artists looking for affordable studio space, musicians in search of practice venues, squatters who occupied the abandoned factories, and gay men" (Ibid.). Queer life in particular flourished in the metaphorical closet that SoMa provided.

Given the number of vacancies and lack of observable nightlife entertainment, a sense of privacy ensued in the hours after dark. A new "urban nightlife that was stigmatized or considered disreputable could flourish in relative obscurity among the warehouses and deserted streets" (Rubin 1997). The gay community had a distinct impact

on nightlife in the area. The leather community created spaces in SoMa for themselves, and by the 60's, created an "elaborate all-male social world that came to include hundreds of bars, bathhouses, motorcycle runs, fraternal organizations, and other venues and events" (Bourn 2012). In particular, these spaces centered around Folsom Street, below Market. Bars and bathhouses did more than provide places for members to meet, engage, and even find potential sexual partners- these places "were often the only venues where leathermen could showcase their photography, murals, and other art that portrayed their lives and experiences" (Ibid.). As the rather clandestine queer community gained traction in this part of San Francisco, the pause in development came to a close in late 70's (Ibid.). After Mayor George Mascone was assassinated, his replacement, Diane Feinstein prioritized urban restructuring. Additionally, remnants of the interim period- certain gay bars for example, held out during this period of severe re-investment. Major retail stores and leather bars now inhabited the same neighborhood, bringing together a rather diverse community in the following decades.

Entertainment in SoMa was largely shaped by the history of the neighborhood, and its ability to provide spaces for alternative forms of identity and community. As Brook et al explains, before the redevelopment of the 90's, empty warehouses allowed SoMa residents spaces to play and participate in collective creative expression outside the policing of formal bars, clubs, and venues (1998, 266). Upon its arrival in San Francisco, the rave scene reached various locations across the city. While flourishing in outdoor spaces, the scene took advantage of the number of empty warehouses. Given the spaces available in SoMa and its nightlife history, the settling of rave culture in the neighborhood is understandable. In other words- there was room for various forms of

entertainment to take shape. Given the issues with planning in the area, the stalled implementation of urban re-development meant that warehouses remained empty. Further, the dot com invasion of the mid 90's drew massive capital to the area, making "one of the last affordable neighborhoods in the City unaffordable, displacing many low-income residents" (SMHC). Around the turn of the century, however, efforts to secure affordable housing promoted the return of some low-income residents. Whereas the demographics and original population has changed dramatically, the area still houses the major entertainment scene- though this scene is dramatically different than the previous one that allowed subcultures to flourish.

Through its unique history, SoMa and the transformations in the neighborhood provide a clear example of the ways in which alteration of a space directly ties to a shift in the local cultural production. Entertainment is a product of SoMa, and by specifically examining how the music changed, I am to see the revolution of SoMa as an urban landscape.

Thesis Outline

This chapter has worked introduce the theories of spatial production and their relationship to entertainment as a form of cultural production. The right to produce, use, and inhabit urban space directly relate to the right to the cultural production housed in that given space. Further, I explain the place-specific history of SoMa in order to situate the arrival of raves in the 90's. While SoMa may not be the only space for cultural production in San Francisco, its fundamental role as the center for entertainment helps explain why the rave scene took such a strong hold of the neighborhood. As I later

explain, raves, as a particular form of cultural production, directly relate to the spaces that facilitate them- therefore, understanding the particular location of SoMa is crucial to my further investigation. Changes to planning and its relationship to entertainment in the neighborhood help situate my exploration into musical-spatial dynamics.

Chapter two discusses the nature of raves as a form of entertainment, and more importantly, as a type of space. I connect the history of dance music to the Hakim Bey's theory of the Temporary Autonomous Zone and explain the arrival of raves in San Francisco. This chapter works to engage with the types of spatial processes that enabled the "San Francisco sound" in electronic music to come into fruition.

The next chapter investigates the factors of transformation- national drug laws, local entertainment regulation, and demographic changes in the neighborhood. These three dimensions of materiality and mentality inform the transformation of the venues in SoMa. This exploration discusses the relationship between regulation and commodification at national and local scales. Chapter 3 embraces the complexity behind the changes in SoMa- combining the ways in which policies, commodification, and demographic shifts all combine to impact the cultural production of this neighborhood.

Lastly, I use chapter four to reveal and explain the specific changes to dance music in San Francisco. By discussing the particular musical aspects that raves produced, I trace the changes to cultural production. Not only do I take a more generalist approach to the subgenres prevalent in the 90's vs. today, I specifically examine the changes observed at 1015 Folsom, a club prevalent throughout the decades of interest. Tracking subgenre and venue changes emphasizes the tangible relationship between shifts in cultural production and the transformation of the neighborhood itself.

Throughout this thesis, I question and complicate the social institutions that produce space. I argue that gentrification as an economic process is not able to fully explain the transformation of lived space, nor does displacement fully describe why urban inhabitants lose the right to participate in city processes. Additionally, venues, as social spaces, serve an important function. Music, as a form of cultural production, can be used as a form of resistance against the restrictive pressures of commodification.

Chapter 2

The Nature of Raves and their Arrival in SoMa

Previously, I have engaged with topics of spatial production, cultural production, and the commodification of city space. Using SoMa as the neighborhood of application, I have introduced the area in broad manner. Now, I work to specify the development of dance music and raves and their arrival in San Francisco. In order to appreciate raves as a form of entertainment, and further, as a space/environment for cultural production (electronic dance music), I explore the nature of raves using Hakim Bey's Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ) theory. Using Bay Area rave testimonies, I engage the TAZ concepts with raves to understand how and why certain music subgenres stem from these spaces. By theorizing raves as a space, I work to explain San Francisco electronic dance music as specific cultural product tied to the city, its spaces, and SoMa in particular.

The Birth of Electronic Dance Music and the Formation of "PLUR"

The history of dance music and its influences help explain the origin of raves and their connection to PLUR. The birth of contemporary dance music is often related back to house, the successor of soul and disco. The sound of disco and its association as both a genre and location was firmly established in the 70's, stemming from the "discotheque" (Glazer 2014). By the 80's, new forms of dance music began to emerge, often combining elements of disco with a completely new sound. WareHouse, the nightclub that lends its name to "house" music, was where DJs "were experimenting with synthesized percussion tracks and hi-energy Eurobeat sounds of their own creation and fusing them with

carefully mixed soul and disco hits from the early part of the decade. The regulars of this club loved the new sound and the term ‘house’ music was born, named after a place where innovation was laying down the foundations for a new musical revolution” (Fantazia). Inclusion of electronic instruments like synthesizers, drum machines, and samplers eventually gained traction in Chicago (Glazer 2014). Electro, often considered to have stemmed from New York hip hop, used “afro-futurism”- coined by DJ Afrika Baambaata’s “Planet Rock” (Ibid.). Additionally, techno developed its own unique roots in Detroit. As a form of dance music, Detroit techno took on a new approach- often considered to represent musically the “industrial decline in inner cities” (Ibid.). Formation of house music eventually led to the birth of acid house- a movement led by DJ Pierre. Out of these three general forms of dance music, techno began to describe the dance pop of the 80’s and more, and its associated with electronic music led it to be understood as the child of disco and the describer for dance music during this period, despite being a misnomer. As with many music trends, it is important to understand the location-specific creation of subgenres. For example, Detroit electronic music internalized various histories of the city itself, thus developing its own unique sound. I will further explore the specific application that electronic music took in San Francisco, however, it is necessary to appreciate the general influences that contributed to the formation of electronic music a major genre. The birth of raves themselves is associated with a particular subgenre (discussed below), but the arrival of said genre depended upon the rise of electronic music itself. At this point in the genre’s timeline, the use of sequencers, drum machines, and samples, as well as the disco influence, transcended across geographies. Acknowledging the elements that formed the dance music sound(s)

of the 90's is crucial to appreciating the subgenres of this age as a unique cultural product.

Raves and their conception relate directly to the formation of acid house. With the creation of the Roland TB-303, a bass-line generator, a new sound emerged (Simms 2013). This machine, with its buttons and switches, enabled artists to enter previously uncharted musical territory, and by 1985 its popularity grew. Chicago-based Nathaniel Jones, aka DJ Pierre, acquired a 303 and used it to develop the first acid house music (Ibid.). DJ Pierre quickly joined with Spanky and Herb J to form the group Phuture, and released a demo of "Acid Trax" (Ibid.). Phuture, along with various other DJs and producers worked to establish the original dance music scene, as we know it, in Chicago, Illinois (Ibid.). Eventually, the sound of acid house would soon impact the London, UK electronic scene. Just as the US developed its own electronic roots, Europe had its own subgenres in electronic music at the same time. Early techno maintained a much larger following in Europe, as well as house and trance. Trance music was forged by combining of US techno and more classic, melodic European sounds. Regional styles of drum and bass contributed to the scene as well, capturing the various musical identities of Europe. By 1987, the UK house scene began to attract global attention (Ibid.). Within the London scene specifically, an interesting phenomenon was occurring- DJ migration. DJs would travel to various clubs around Europe, picking up various styles and sounds along the way. After a trip to Ibiza, DJ Danny Rampling threw together the "Shroom" party, held on December 5th, 1987 (Ibid.). Using some of the Chicago acid house tracks he had heard while traveling, the formation of a new electronic scene took hold of the UK. Shroom parties continued and gained momentum. After the clubs began to pick up acid house, the

increase in visibility attracted police attention, given the rise in late night activity. The UK already had anti-club laws, which only become more rigid, making it difficult for the licensed clubs/promoters to hold events (Ibid.). Eventually, groups gathered outside the legitimate spaces of entertainment, often in secret locations. Helen Evans notes that parties held in UK warehouses denoted the emergence of raves (Evans 1992). Production companies began to organize raves, gained press attention, and inspired promotion groups like Sunrise and Revolution in Progress (RIP) to hold bigger dance events (Simms 2013). Eventually, various groups combined to form the Freedom to Party campaign, inspiring a change to the UK's licensing laws. However- given the perceived relationship between acid house and illegal substances, acid house was banned from many media outlets. Raves were discouraged through the creation of new bylaws. This did not stop the creation of new subgenres in the UK- from jungle, happy-hardcore, and drum-and-bass (DnB). These new sounds, and the continuation of raves, and the original Chicago acid house style all inspired the arrival of rave culture back in new places in the United States. I include this reflection on the arrival and dissemination of acid house as it fundamentally reveals trends in electronic music, and explains the complicated manner in which raves came to the United States. Later, I explain that acid house and its close association with raves took a distinct form in San Francisco. The concept of subgenres traveling along with DJs as they migrated will prove most relevant as I later explore the dynamics of the San Francisco sound.

Before the late 80's, however, raves were a relatively new concept in America. While underground parties may have been created to avoid certain local nightlife regulations, their formation as an underground music movement was confined mainly to

the UK. Frankie Bones, a New York-based DJ was a key player in popularizing the term in the US and bringing to movement to the states. After spinning in the UK for years, he decided to bring the scene back home to NYC (Emilie 2011). Upon returning to New York City, Bones opened Groove Records in Brooklyn (Wender 2015). Using the record store as the physical hub for proliferating the music played at raves, Bones use the store as “a place where we could break the scene open” (Ibid.). The movement he hoped to start was less of a new genre and more of a revolution- and in 1990, Bones and collaborator Adam X painted “Peace Love Unity” on a train car. A key aspect of raves in the United States came from the idea of PLUR: peace, love, unity, and respect, the descendant of Bones’ PLU movement. It is believed that DJ Frankie Bones continued to coin the term during a set when a fight broke out, calling for peace, love, and unity (Emilie 2011). Respect was eventually added to the equation. The acronym gained momentum in the early 90’s, as more DJs and ravers began using the term (especially in the New York area). Bones and Adam X started creating small parties in apartments throughout NYC. By attracting other DJs to the parties, Bones’ parties received coverage in a fanzine, eventually reaching the UK. This increased popularity contributed to Bones’ effort to create larger events, eventually creating the first Storm Rave in 1991 (Ibid.). Given the some partygoers would take the drug “molly”, and their use became associated with the parties themselves, Bones and his collaborators conceptualized ways in which to avoid attention from authorities. To prevent the Storm Raves from shutting down, “his crew developed strategies for breaking into illegal spaces for these "outlaw parties," like cutting the locks off gates and putting their own locks on” (Ibid.). The Storm Raves quickly became a success, attracting attendees in the 1000’s. After a year or so of

constant attendance, the parties came to a close around 1992. However, Bones popularized the concept of raves in the US, and coined the PLUM (Peace, Love, Unity Movement), evolving into PLUR, the motto of the international rave movement. I explain Bones' key contribution because raves began to take on a new meaning during his time. The cultural production of parties tied closely with the nature of the parties themselves- in other words, music began inseparable from the mission behind the movement. During Bones' time, it is clear that the association between regulation, policing, and raves only expanded.

PLUR, Raves, and the TAZ

PLUR (Peace, Love, Unity, Respect) is a concept crucial to understanding raves as their own space. As the four pillars of raving suggest, the music is to be experienced in a certain way, through certain spaces. PLUR, as a necessary component of raves, contributes to the understanding that raves exemplify the Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ). To understand raves and their ability to serve as culturally productive spaces, it is necessary to understand the connection between PLUR, the TAZ, and the music created/explored at raves. While PLUR was originally created without intent to characterize the spaces of raves, eventually its adoption by the rave scene began to adequately describe the happenings within the scene.

The TAZ is a concept originally conceived of by Hakim Bey, described as a "liberated area 'of land, time or imagination' where one can be for something, not just against, and where new ways of being human together can be explored and experimented with" (Jordan). In essence, the TAZ is separate and self-governing, limited by both time

and space. Given its nature, the TAZ must occur in the cracks of society, off the grid, in order to avoid control by larger government forces and authorities. As Bey defines it, the TAZ has a historical legacy- typically associated with the marginalized and oppressed, created in order to achieve zones of liberation (Ibid.). Beginning with “a simple act of realization”, the TAZ is constructed by the autonomous and the self-governed, as “the autonomous can plan autonomy, organize for it, create it” (Bey 1985). At the same time as describing and facilitating the legitimate discussion of the TAZ, Hey also refrains from providing a singular definition of the TAZ- this omission enables the TAZ to be understood as both a practice and a process. Since the “TAZ is like an uprising which does not engage directly with the State, a guerilla operation which liberates an area (of land, of time, of imagination) and then dissolves itself to re-form elsewhere/elsewhere, before the State can crush it”, the very nature of the space is hard to define concretely (Ibid.).

The value in the TAZ is typically related to its ability to create free, uninhibited time/spaces that enable people to achieve an almost “truer” sense of self-expression, or, a radical political zone for individual and community exploration. It stems from the idea that most of the world is now policed, taxed, and regulated, and as “the map is closed”, the necessity of autonomous zones becomes ever the more important (Bey 1985). Bey speaks to a more generalized closing of society- from the limitations of the nuclear family, and the TAZ, organized like a “dinner party”, works “synergize their efforts to realize mutual desires” from the deconstruction of authority (Ibid.). Additionally, in terms of understanding where and when the TAZ can happen, Bey explains “the TAZ has a temporary but actual location in time and a temporary but actual location in space”

(Ibid.). He fleshes out the spaces of the TAZ actualization by including the Web, and the networks maintained by virtual space, which serve as “logistical support” (Ibid.). But the relationship between the Web, the Net, and the TAZ is more complicated than that- as “the Web, in order to produce situations conducive to the TAZ, will parasitize the Net”, creating a counter-Net, and along with the TAZ, “can be considered, practically speaking, as ends in themselves--but theoretically they can also be viewed as forms of struggle toward a different reality” (Ibid.). Electronic networks in themselves allowed Bey’s piece to move from the fringe into mainstream anarchist literature (Sellars 2010). Upon the conception and implementation of more public electronic networks, the virtual Web became a space for resistance, a zone uncharted by government authorities and enabled underground communities to connect like never before (Ibid.). The TAZ, in many ways, is not only enabled by the Web and its virtual Net- it is “weapon” (Bey 1985). In summary, the TAZ is a concept with both spatial and temporal connotations- moreover, its applications expand upon normative definitions of space, incorporating the digital world. As I will address later, the rave scene in San Francisco used the Internet to connect communities- though it ultimately contributed to the transformation of the subgenres themselves.

Bey’s description of the TAZ has been used widely to describe various political movements, events, and spaces- and in particular, the rave movement makes substantial references to Bey’s work. Beginning with the UK rave scene, organizers used the TAZ rhetoric to describe their “liberation of sound, space, and consciousness” (Sellars 2010, 91). As explained in the history section, raves have a longstanding history of pitting partygoers against police/state authorities. Parties would break up, only to reimagine

themselves and appear in various ways to avoid state attention/control. James Ingham suggests that the “sensory experience of illegal space”, along with the specific of electronic music and visuals projected at these parties, provides the types of feelings concurrent with Bey’s literature (1999, 112). Given the rave experience and their participatory nature, raves can be understood as the musical manifestation of the TAZ. Moreover, their application reveals that the TAZ is not only political- it can be culturally productive. The TAZ of raves sponsors not only autonomy but also a sense of community, generating various musical subgenres that are only enabled to proliferate through the opening of these spaces.

The TAZ and The Bay Area Rave Scene

Dance music in San Francisco provides a scaled-down example of the relationship between raves and the TAZ . The formation of the rave scene in the Bay Area occurred around the same time that the underground scene in the UK become prominent, again, resisting the harsh anti-club laws enforced by local/national regulations. “Small, underground parties took off”, and eventually formed much larger events (Ruiz 2014). Dance music was enjoyed in a variety of places- many of these in SoMa. Warehouses were self-organized and lacked much regulation, with no curfew (DJ Jen0, pers.comm.). Additionally, a few venues also contributed to the rave scene – such as the EndUp and 1015 Folsom. Open-air parties also gained momentum. Electronic music began to explode in the early 90’s, as the wide variety of spaces available to enjoy music enabled the different sub-genres to be enjoyed both together and separately (Gochenour, pers. comm.). For example, sound-specific nights became very common. Dedicated

communities came together to listen to acid house, jungle, DnB, and ambient. During the late 80's and early 90's, in San Francisco and beyond, "the rave scene helped electronic music emerge, grow, and hit the mainstream market" (Simms 2013). Just as any music scene takes on a unique character given its particular location, dance music in San Francisco took on unique attributes. In the first year or so of the decade, parties were inspired by events like Mr Floppy's Flophouse (in Oakland), Pull my Finger, and Don't Sit on the Furniture (Cyrogenic Husk 2015). However, the solidification of the scene in San Francisco came after the first major rave party in the city- The New Years Eve Toon Town party. The event included shuttles that would transport partygoers to unknown and "illegal locations behind U-haul trucks" (Bee 2012). At the same time, there were "glossy commercial massives [parties]" being held every weekend, but "those in the know sought out the aforementioned events, thrown in filthy, monstrous warehouses, beaches, dirt fields and funky little garage-y clubs" (Cyrogenic Husk 2015). Following the success of Toon Town, events like Stompy, Funky Techno Tribe, and the Sunset parties become to dominate the scene (Ibid.). Another major catalyst for the construction of the scene occurred online, with the creation of SFRaves in 1992. Made by Brian Behlendorf, the website hosted (and continues to host) information regarding raves in the city- from maps, flyers, to radio & TV promotions (Behlendorf). Not only did this space serve as the means to which the rave community could communicate and connect, it allowed members to rely information about upcoming events while avoiding the attention of the authorities. Hosted by berkeley.edu, Behlendorf was able to create a picnic in 92, introducing many SFRavers to each other (Chung 1996, Karina 2005). Later that year, members of SFRaves made plans for their first "bash", produced Alternity in the

basement of 1015 (Folsom), moved to a stanford.edu address, and sponsored events like the Full Moon parties, and the Gathering (Chung 1996, Karina 2005).

The Gathering in particular served as a crucial event that created space for the rave community to come together. The event began when various promoters joined together from smaller parties to create one at a much larger scale (Bieschke 2011). The Gathering also signifies one of the interesting ways in which raves took shape in San Francisco- outside. The crew that catalyzed the Gathering as a major rave scene was the Wicked Crew, consisting of acid house DJs from the UK. Garth, one of the DJs in the crew, explained that immigration was a major contributing factor in the solidification of the rave scene in SF and in the US. He claims that “The U.K. party scene was outlawed by Thatcher's conservative government when it passed the criminal justice bill, which made it illegal for groups of more than 10 people to congregate while listening to repetitive beats”, which is why many of the British DJs left the UK in the 90's (Bieschke 2011). SF appealed to various people because of its milder climate, but more importantly- the “laid back atmosphere” (Ruiz 2014). Given that parties were often thrown outside, or in empty warehouses without heating/cooling, SF was an ideal place for the creation and maintenance of rave parties, given the flexibility in where they could be held. SoMa, within San Francisco, provided excellent physical space for raves to take shape. The physical location of SoMa, within San Francisco, enabled the raves to take their unique, cultural form.

While I have briefly spoken to the physical attributes that enabled the arrival of raves, I now examine the abstract nature of raves. In order to understand the conceptual space that raves provide, and how the illegal party scene (specifically in San Francisco)

relates to the TAZ framework, I rely upon various Bay-Area rave testimonials from the 1990's, sourced from sfraves, a popular rave-community blog. Testimonials on the site are used to explain the rave experience and provide a historical timeline of changes in the local rave scene since the website's conception in 1992. Moreover, it appears that the website includes testimonials to better understand the who and why of raves, justifying the experience in a way that connects ravers to one another. C Crunch, an alias for a partygoer, explains their experience at a WICKED party at 1015 Folsom- a free event back in the mid 1990's. "[DJ Jen0, WICKED member] put me into a most incredible trance state of mind. I felt as I was dancing, that everything was floating and moving in perfect harmony. As one looked around, there were people packed on the stage, up in the balcony, all dancing like there was no tomorrow. Good old 1015 Folsom was simply 'Bouncing' around big time" (Draper). As expressed by C Crunch, the community at 1015 entered a trance-like state, in which there was no clear distinction between audience and participants, as the community experiences the music actively.

At a Friends and Family IV party, on October 29 1994, two partygoers describe similar experiences, based on a sense of active participation and community interaction. Vladimir Katz describes- "when Ethan [DJ] came on he just TORE SHIT UP!!! He just played the most INSANE set! I went absolutely mental dancin to those hard poundin beats. I just had to get my friends who were coolin' off outside, and dragged them back in to witness just how good the muzik was! They danced their asses off too. I continued dancing for what seemed like an eternity" (Katz 1994). Vlad's testimony emphasizes the way dance became a crucial component of the rave, but also the ability of dance to connect community members to a single purpose or module of self expression. He

continues to describe the friendliness of the community members around him- conveying the nature of raves as both expressive intra and interpersonally (Ibid.). Vlad's entire experience relates how the ravers form a connection with each other, the music, and the DJ. Dance, as expressive movement, is a reaction to the particular music being played. Music and the forms of free expression therefore tie directly to each other at the raves.

Jim Pierce provides a similar take from a rave on June 4th 1995. He mentions the "currents of people" swirling and dancing. It was "easy to head in the direction of the flow, impossible to head against it", which instills an image of a large, singular crowd, moving in unison (Pierce 1995). He continues by recounting that the DJ and the music "directed us all unconsciously together on a gigantic swirling pattern" (Ibid.). This remark insinuates that the music (curated by the DJ) had an immense role in bringing together the crowd and in facilitating connections between ravers. The flow described contributes to the sense of togetherness. Music, Jim Pierce implies, is what formulates this community event. Not only did the music contribute to the participatory nature of the communal dancing, it also enabled Jim, as a member of the rave, to reflect on an intrapersonal level, as he claims "I now have a better idea of what i'm looking for out of life" (Ibid.).

Another aspect of raves, as a TAZ, is their existence outside both the political and economic structures of the larger society. While it is hard to claim raves as completely de-commodified, Sun Kim's description reveals how rave visuals at the Friends and Family IV event challenged the larger market system:

"As I was watching the time lapse video of people shopping in a grocery store, at a bank, industry... all the inventions of industry and human endeavor I began to see how people were so machine like in this video. It made me think to see that raves were against being machine-like. I can't explain how I felt but the whole video got to me. I saw how people related with each other, and with the earth. It

seemed wrong to see industry.. For some reason, I felt the pain of what seemed wrong and I began to cry. I just cried and cried. The world seemed so wrong” (Kim 1994).

The machine-like industrial complex that Kim describes is directly addressed through the rave visuals. In some ways, this reimagines the idea of the TAZ. The TAZ typically does not directly address the structures of society through explicitly commentary (visually or not). The TAZ resists and critiques political-economic constraints just by its realization and existence. In this circumstance, rave visuals, an aspect of the experience, work with a more explicit political agenda. The TAZ is not political in and of itself, but this example shows the ability of raves, as a form of the TAZ, to make more direct statements. The previous testimonies make remarks more concerned with the liberation spirit of the raves, this counterexample explores that the experience is not entirely “fun”. Instead, there is a reflective component that could possibly challenge both the ability of raves to be an application of the TAZ, and the nature of the TAZ more generally. One of the biggest questions here is if the TAZ can explicitly address the structures they contest through their existence. Theoretically, the TAZ works to build zones that are void of the larger political-economic structures in which they exist, so would directly referencing the larger structures work to undo the entire conception of what the TAZ is about? Perhaps it depends on the point of the TAZ.

Kim’s example, given that it exists alongside these other testimonials, proves that raves can be reflective of the larger context, while still providing a space for free expression. Moreover, these are individual testimonials- and their ability to reflect entire communities of ravers, is, by their very nature, limited. What is extractable in this recollection is that rave experiences are not singular. There are trends within a community and reflective of self-expression, which contributes to the idea that raves are

both personal and communal at the same time. Another overarching theme, concurrent with all of these testimonials, is the idea that raves are participatory, and in this sense, democratic. Further, not only is it useful to understand how raves can be related to the TAZ, but how the concept of the TAZ can benefit from raves. In Bey's original conception of the TAZ, he explains that this zone of unrestricted freedom is beneficial. I argue that raves, as the musical TAZ, enable the formation of certain electronic music subgenres. Raves serve as more than a space for music fans to get together; instead, raves are spaces that facilitate the creative process, celebrate both introspection and collaboration in the music process.

Throughout this chapter, I work to identify how sound and space tie together. By visiting the history of electronic music, I explain how geography and technology work to forge a new genre. Subgenres vary across place, while still retaining certain fundamental elements rooted in the tools of electronic music production. Music not only depends upon the city in which it develops- it relates to the spaces within those urban settings. Acid house and its relationship to raves became phenomena not unique to the UK, which reveals how the subgenre and its relatives needed a specific environment in order to come into fruition. Raves served as this environment. Their temporal and location-specific nature, as well as their effort to reject oversight by authorities, relates to the conception of the TAZ. Music in this space is experienced actively, forging a communal bond between partygoers. As I will continue to discuss later in this thesis, the nature of raves and their necessity in producing culture (electronic dance music) have larger implications on urban processes. The TAZ is a form of resistance, and considering that raves function as the musical application of the TAZ, it follows that the existence of raves works to counteract

the commodification of urban entertainment. In the following chapter, I forge a relationship between the factors of transformation, relating to the commodified nature of entertainment spaces that occurred in the early 20th century. In the final chapter I bring the discussion back to the nature of raves and the specific culture productions they create. I provide a more specific subgenre analysis, comparing the 90's to today, in order to expand upon how the nature of raves and their application in SoMa changed alongside the reconceptualization of the neighborhood and its entertainment spaces.

Chapter 3

Factors of Spatial and Cultural Transformation in the 21st Century

In this chapter, I analyze the complicated factors that worked to reconceptualized raves as spaces and the neighborhood of SoMa more generally. Occurring at different scales, the combination of national and local regulation, city planning, and demographic changes all contributed to the loss of certain types of entertainment spaces.

Crack House Laws and National Regulation of Entertainment Spaces

Some of the largest forces that removed raves were the amendments to the crack house law in the early 2000's. As the rave scene proliferated in the 90's, law enforcement (both at local and national scales) began to search for ways to police the spaces, due to the long-term association between raves and "club drugs". During this period, law enforcement targeted club owners and venue promoters, restricted use and eliminated the possibility of raves by creating policies that targeted the people who control said spaces.

Throughout the history of raves, there has been, and continues to be, links between the music and drug consumption. Issues with regulating entertainment spaces was not a new phenomenon in the 90's, tracing all the way back to the days of Prohibition (Brown 2003). Clubs often were scapegoated as undesirable zones within neighborhoods, contributing to excessive noise and general late-night rowdiness (Moss 2000). Understanding the history of late-night entertainment's struggle with local authorities sets the stage for the conception of raves as nodes for drug use. Raves and their connection to venues and dance clubs served as easy target, given national and local

political movements against the morality the use of drugs (Moss 2000). Raves developed a drug-related stigma both in the UK and the US, often related to how the movement remained fairly underground. Their development as an underground movement, however, was primarily caused by the time constraints placed upon entertainment spaces/venues in both the US and Europe (Simms 2013). Raves were ultimately targeted by the National Drug Intelligence Center under the US Department of Justice. The National Drug Intelligence Center (closed in 2012) claimed “raves were secretive, after-hours, private dance parties and were often held in gay clubs where attendance was restricted to invitees or friends of invitees. The site of the party was often kept confidential, and invitees usually were not told the location of the host club until the night of the party. Because of the restricted access and the secrecy surrounding the locations, the growing rave culture was often described as an ‘underground’ movement” (NDIC 2000). What the flyer fails to recognize, however, is the development of raves as secretive spaces due to the restrictions placed on “legitimate” spaces of nightlife- how and when they could occur, and who could host them. By representing the rave movement as underground and secretive, different levels of government branded raves as hubs for criminal activity. After the coining of the term “club drugs”, the association of raves and drugs became secure. And while drugs might have played a part in the scene (as they were/are with many music scenes), drugs use has and always will extend beyond raves and into mainstream culture. Even the Deputy Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy testified that “[u]se of the drug is often associated with the underground ‘Rave’ youth subculture, but in truth is a problem anywhere young people congregate. Drug marketers don’t target a place; they target kids” (Haas 2005, 526). Though drug use at

raves was not a surprising phenomenon, “dispersion and diversification of the use of club drugs undermines the assumptions behind the notion of treating these substances as a group, as well as the overall efficacy of any enforcement program targeted at drug use only in these settings” (Ibid.). The persecution of raves as the host for the distribution of club drugs contributes to the criminalization of raves as spaces and their ultimate removal from the SF entertainment scene.

Media and law enforcement attention surrounding raves continued to grow in the early 2000’s. In relationship to other “drug crises”, the rave scene took a different form. Because the users and distributors of club drugs were young, enforcement used new tactics to address the new environment. Agencies took action against the people who maintained control of the physical spaces (Haas 2005, 528). By adapting existing drug laws, the US government effectively criminalized raves as spaces of drug proliferation. Originally, the crack house law consisted of two main parts, declaring the following as illegal:

“(1) knowingly open or maintain any place for the purpose of manufacturing, distributing, or using any controlled substance;
(2) manage or control any building, room, or enclosure, either as an owner, lessee, agent, employee, or mortgagee, and knowingly and intentionally rent, lease, or make available for use, with or without compensation, the building, room, or enclosure for the purpose of unlawfully manufacturing, storing, distributing, or using a controlled substance” (21 U.S.C. § 856(a) (2000)).

In the early 21st century, four bills were introduced in Congress that reinterpreted the above amendments in order to target the use of club drugs. Eventually, provisions were made that outlawed raves through explicit policy. However, the publicity of the bills and the media attention they received did more than just criminalize. Raves rose to the forefront of mainstream culture, and the entertainment promoters increasingly avoided facilitating the underground movement for fear of legal penalties (Haas 2005, 530).

While The Ecstasy Prevention Act never passed through Congress, however, the spirit The RAVE Act (or the Illicit Drug Anti-Proliferation Act) lived on through the Illicit Drug Anti-Proliferation Act of 2003 (see below) (Ibid., 532-537). In 2002, the Clean Up of Methamphetamines Act was introduced. Though it did not receive the amount of media attention that following bills did, it was the most “direct” and “overt” bill that targeted owners of venues and entertainment facilities, holding them liable for any drug use among attendees (Ibid., 537). From the bill, it followed that “Whoever, for a commercial purpose, knowingly promotes any rave, dance, music, or other entertainment event, that takes place under circumstances where the promoter knows or reasonably ought to know that a controlled substance will be used or distributed in violation of Federal law or the law of the place where the event is held, shall be fined under title 18, United States Code, or imprisoned for not more than 9 years, or both” (S. 2763, 2002). The vague language, for example, “ought to know”, expanded the ability of government agencies to self-determine when the act is in violation (Ibid.). Given that events typically reaped some sort of financial benefit, whether it was commercial or donation-based to cover general costs of throwing together a party, the “only operative element of this Act is the promoter’s knowledge—or constructive knowledge—that attendees are using drugs at an event” (Haas 2005, 538). In other words, the proposed bill and its language enabled the government to hold promoters responsible at will- there was very little in the amendment that could prevent drug enforcement agencies’ power. While the bill was never passed, it was reconceptualized again in 2003, with the arrival of the Ecstasy Awareness Act. Stated in the bill, “Whoever profits monetarily from a rave or similar electronic dance event, knowing or having reason to know that the unlawful use or

distribution of a controlled substance occurs at the rave or similar event, shall be fined not more than \$500,000 or imprisoned not more than 20 years, or both. If the defendant is an organization, the fine imposable for the offense is not more than \$2,000,000” (H.R. 2962, 2003). The proposed act again focused on dance/rave events, though this time it was able to even further expand liability by including anyone who profits monetarily from the event. The Clean Up + Awareness Acts move away from specific language defining liability. Targeting rave/dance events as the places in which drug use occurs, they make the entire rave culture responsible for individual acts. In terms of the geographical targets of the rave crackdown acts, it is clear that raves, as spaces of entertainment subculture, were targeted. As stated by Haas:

“The other significant way in which these bills differ is in terms of their scope: what kinds of buildings or events come within their reach? The Ecstasy Prevention Act and the Ecstasy Awareness Act are both addressed exclusively to raves. The CLEAN-UP of Methamphetamines Act expands on this slightly to cover any entertainment event. And the IDAPA (and the pre-existing crack house law) are written neutrally, to apply to “any place” in which the prohibited activity happens to occur” (540).

While none of the preceding bills were passed into law, they set the foundation for the Illicit Drug Anti-Proliferation Act of 2003. The act criminalizes the maintenance of drug-involved premises, while using language less specific to the rave scene:

“To prohibit an individual from knowingly opening, maintaining, managing, controlling, renting, leasing, making available for use, or profiting from any place for the purpose of manufacturing, distributing, or using any controlled substance, and for other purposes” (H.R. 2962, 2003).

Perhaps the largest problem with the bills, and the enacted act, is how they target the nature of entertainment itself- opening property to others, promoting an event, and profiting from an event (Haas 2005). In other words, the act works to limit the entertainment business, constraining the types of events that can occur, given the

harsh punishment for venue owners/promoters if illicit activities occur in the places they manage.

The legislation of the early 2000's worked to address the proliferation of drugs through spatial regulation. As soon as the law vilified raves, raves faced disinvestment by promoters, who had economic and legal incentives to avoid holding events that could be related to raves- a huge blow to the electronic dance music community. I argue that the misguided war on drugs became a war on cultural production. The language I specifically quoted reveals the ways in which the federal government worked to target spaces of entertainment that would act as hosts for raves- employing ambiguous terms in order to over-extend those who could be responsible for the sale/use of drugs. Most importantly, raves and their clear connection with dance music were targeted above any other particular music genre, or type of entertainment activity. As raves gained a new legal, economic, and social status during the discussion surrounding this legislation, the specific subgenres that were necessarily tied to raves (acid house, for example) were significantly affected, and ultimately, silenced.

Local Regulation: The San Francisco Entertainment Commission

Around the same time that the US Government began its crusade on club drugs and raves, local entertainment scenes began to absorb the impact of national laws. San Francisco in particular decided to separate oversight and enforcement by creating the Entertainment Commission. Established in 2002, The Entertainment Commission (EC) is the section of San Francisco government that directly shapes the nightlife scene within

the city. From the Charter of the City and County of San Francisco, the San Francisco Entertainment Commission consists of 7 members, nominated by the joint effort of the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors (Administrative Code sec. 4.117.) Appointments are made to be staggered, meaning that members serve between 2-4 years, and the Mayor and Board of Supervisors rotate placing nominations. (Ibid.). Within The Charter, the Entertainment Commission states that “it is the policy of the City and County of San Francisco to have a system of coordinated planning and permitting for cultural, entertainment, athletic and similar events and establishments throughout the City to promote such establishments and events for the economic and cultural enrichment of San Franciscans and visitors to San Francisco, and to celebrate the diverse communities within San Francisco” (Charter sec 90.1). The focus, as established both in the Charter of San Francisco and with the administrative code for the EC, relates specifically to the types of regulations and policies that would contribute to the economic and cultural enrichment of the city. To do this, the commission follows the following eight general guidelines:

- (1) assist the organizers and operators of cultural, entertainment, athletic and similar events and establishments to apply for, and obtain from the commission and other City departments when the applicant satisfies the requirements therefor, all necessary permits from the City;
- (2) promote the responsible conduct and operation of such events and establishments;
- (3) promote the development of a vibrant entertainment and late-night entertainment industry within the City;
- (4) promote the use of City facilities for cultural, entertainment, athletic and similar events that generate revenue for the City;
- (5) foster harm reduction policies, including but not limited to reduction of risks from substance use, hearing protection, heat exhaustion, and relevant health and safety measures;
- (6) develop and recommend to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors "good neighbor policies" that appropriately balance the cultural, economic, employment and other benefits of a vibrant entertainment and late-night entertainment industry with the needs of residents and businesses in the vicinity of entertainment venues;
- (7) mediate disputes between persons affected by cultural, entertainment, athletic and similar events and establishments, and the organizers of such events and operators of such establishments;
- (8) assume responsibility from the Police Department for issuing entertainment-related permits;
- (9) plan and coordinate City services for

major events or which there is no recognized or adequate organizer or promoter, such as Halloween bacchanalia in the Castro district and New Year's Eve festivities; and (10) provide information regarding venues and services appropriate for conducting events and functions ancillary to conventions held within the City, including conventions at the Moscone Convention Center. (Administrative Code sec 90.1)

To summarize, the EC's main purpose is to regulate the entertainment within the city of San Francisco. This is typically done through the process of approving/denying entertainment-related permits. Essentially, the EC decides if events, the places they are held, and the people that hold/attend them are in line with the law. They act as a Supreme Court for the San Francisco entertainment scene. Making decisions concerning permits is only one of the many jobs the EC takes on, however. Suspending, revoking and researching permits is integral to how the EC maintains control over what events can take place and where they can happen. Working alongside other City departments, such as the Police Department, the EC conducts entertainment-related investigations. Moreover the EC works to "develop and recommend to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors 'good neighbor policies' that balance competing interests and promote the health, safety and welfare of San Franciscans and visitors to San Francisco" (Administrative Code sec. 90). Health and safety, words used heavily in the administrative code and the updated Charter for the City, are never clearly defined. Instead, the EC maintains an incredible amount of control over through ambiguous language.

While the committee works to authorize, it works in conjunction with the police, who serve as the enforcement. Around 2004, various sections of the San Francisco Police Code were amended from the 60's and the 80's when they were first implemented. The amended sections, such as 1022, define "dance" hall as a place, and further, provide instructions on how these places should be regulated (Police Code). 1023 and 1024

necessitate that “dance halls” must obtain a permit to be in operation, and further discuss the process of applying for and obtaining a permit. Issuing a permit relies on a variety of factors, including: “the moral character of the applicant”, “suitability of the premises in relation to the surrounding neighborhood”, and “type of dance to be conducted” (Police Code sec. 1024). The flexibility of these factors enables the Chief of Police, alongside the EC, to somewhat arbitrarily approve/deny permit applications. Additionally, given the association of raves with drug use, club owners have a variety of imperatives to avoid creating places where raves could function. As the national government and media vilified raves as nodes of drug use, local San Francisco nightclubs had a legal push to steer away from places that allowed raves to take place, in order become a legitimate functional place of entertainment. As with the dance hall sections, 1060 further explains and defines places of nightlife, including a section on the application process, which is pages long (Police Code sec. 1060). It continues by adding the involvement of the Entertainment Commission in the involvement of procuring permits and maintaining a security plan. 1070 further expands upon the limitations placed on nightlife- this time limiting the hours in which these places can operate. In order to apply for extended hours of operation, venues face an arduous application process (Police Code sec. 1070). Again, the Entertainment Commission formally expands its own power while creating a difficult application/maintenance process for venue owners. The relationship between permits and “moral character” allow for a gray area in which the EC can effectively silence events and spaces at will.

Theoretically, by separating the Entertainment Commission from the police, different voices are able to join the conversation regarding how entertainment in San

Francisco happens. Entertainment related business owners now work more collaboratively with the local government to ensure the entertainment scene can function to their liking. However, this does not detract from the fact that in order to operate, places of entertainment must obtain a permit, and are still subject to processes defined in the Police Code. While different agents of enforcement may now oversee the process of permitting, it does not change the fact that permits enable local government to approve/deny of places of entertainment to exist. Moreover, allowing business owners a greater say in the entertainment scene of the city does not necessarily create a more vibrant nightlife. As business owners, they have imperatives to continue operation and further their clientele. If events they throw impact their ability to make a profit, it is likely they will suspend or discard those events.

Another important code relates to the general San Francisco Planning Code, as it relates to South of Market in particular. In the early 2000's, SOMA was still defined as an SLR, or Service, Light Industrial, Residential Mixed Use district. As ordained/approved in 1990, "general office, hotels, nighttime entertainment, movie theatres, adult entertainment and heavy industrial uses are not permitted" (Planning Code sec. 816). Given this, the clubs already operating in SoMa can remain, if adhering to the policies of the EC. While old venues continue running, no new places of entertainment were (or, to this day, are) able to get permits. This restrictive planning physically limits the ability of SoMa to expand its entertainment scene. It ensures that the existing spaces are monitored more closely, restricting the possibilities of these spaces. In an effort to attract capital and build friendly public-private relations, the city expanded its control through policing, regulatory measures, and planning restrictions.

Complicating Regulation: Changing Demographics and Gentrification

The contestation over rave spaces is deeper than just regulation, policing, and formal city planning. San Francisco has been the poster child for gentrification over the last couple of decades. The city, previously known for its counter-culture atmosphere, welcomed the technology boom post dot-com bust in the early 2000's (Peter 2004). Major shifts in San Francisco demographics trace back to the second California Gold Rush- the dot-com era of the 90's. Silicon Valley itself has been a technology center since the 70's, "technology firms engaged in semiconductor manufacturing, computer design, and computer programming and services symbiotically clustered in the southern portion of the San Francisco Bay Area" (Mann and Nunes 2009). With the opening of the World Wide Web to private and personal interests, the "information superhighway" took hold of America's telecommunications, cable, and media (Peter 2005). Media attention in the early 90's further contributed to a rush of investment, as the networked phenomena spatially conglomerated in Silicon Valley, California (Ibid.). Mass investments and increased stock values had a physical impact on California life, as the high tech industries took root in Silicon Valley, growing rapidly due to venture capital. With the dot-com crash of 2000, the Internet investment bubble popped and Silicon Valley internalized the devastation. When the crash settled in, "the onset of economic recession in March 2001 resulted in a sudden contraction of the Silicon Valley economy. As the bubble burst, Santa Clara County's unemployment rate jumped to 7.0 percent by the end of 2001, and the region's future as a crucible of innovation appeared in doubt" (Mann and Nunes 2009). The bust was only one phase of dot com story, however crucial. While the industry in Silicon Valley reports loses to net employment, tech resurfaced, expanded,

and most importantly, needed space to grow. The history of the bubble is important as it marks a period of concentration in the tech industry to Silicon Valley. As the industry regained strength, high tech moved into San Francisco, drawing a new, creative class into the city.

After the bust, the 21st century has become a time of transition in Silicon Valley and in San Francisco. San Francisco had previously been a bedroom community for Silicon Valley employers, with young people braving the commute in order to live in the city, as “many of the 20- and 30-something engineers who staff the technology industry prefer to be in San Francisco, which is seen as more fashionable and cosmopolitan than the suburban towns that stretch along Silicon Valley” (Scott 2012). Now, realizing the lure of the city, many tech companies set up campuses further north, appealing to a wider variety of labor. With the proliferation of tech start-ups, young companies do not need the same amount of physical space, and larger companies outsource engineering staff-meaning, office spaces can be smaller and more viable in an urban setting (Scott 2012). Warehouse and loft spaces especially appeal to young companies, types of spaces that typify those in SoMa. It is no surprise, then, that the center of gravity for technology companies has shifted to this neighborhood in San Francisco. In the wake of previous economic phases of the city, SoMa became a relatively empty industrial district. Old warehouses had yet to be refurbished to suit a new type of economy. In the 2000’s, as technology companies relocate and repurpose the open space of SoMa, the neighborhood faces a variety of changes in order to welcome a new labor force.

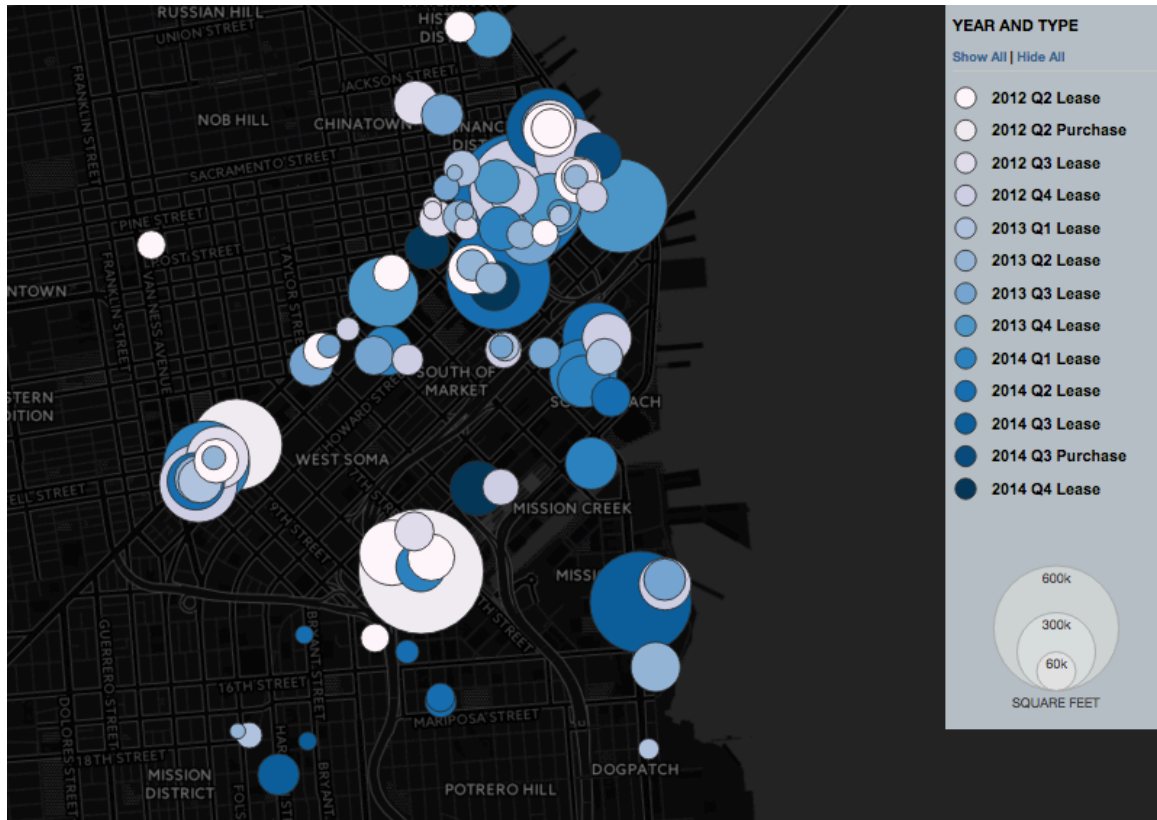


Figure 1 (Stamen Design 2015)

In the decade and a half since the arrival of the 21st century arrived, SoMa welcomes a large portion of the technology companies opening up campuses in San Francisco. Figure (1) shows how 60% of SoMa office space is controlled by technology companies (Stamen Design, Lybarger 2015). As stated above, the warehouses left over from the city’s previous industry provide an excellent frontier for the new industry’s expansion, in terms of cheap rent, available space, and aesthetic appeal (Scott 2012). Since 2008, the increased demand for space is catching up with amount of spaces actually available, as “prices in the SoMa district have risen to meet, and even briefly exceed, those of the more traditional business district on the other side of Market Street” (Scott 2012). The situation in SoMa is more nuanced than the arrival of a new high-tech industry. Tech companies demand office space, but they also demand a new labor force. While it may be

easier to look at a map like Figure (1) and be startled by the sheer space the tech-related campuses take up, it is necessary to consider the impacts of an entire cultural, economic, and social shift that occurs alongside a change to a city's major industry. While many cities face an influx in immigration, the particular case of San Francisco is rather unique. The technology industry of the United States is quite literally concentrated in the city and the surrounding area- meaning, the influx of urban dwellers in the recent years typically relate to this growing industry. While there are no shortages of jobs, there are strict constraints on housing and space for incoming residents. Long standing issues with city-wide housing planning and construction mean that the "lag in housing construction to meet increased demand for apartments means that several years will pass before that housing meets the market. The scarcity of new units on the market means that the buildings opening now can charge much higher rents than have been seen in existing stock" (Walker 2014). The migration of the technology industry to San Francisco, relates to the expansion of the industry itself, and its desire to attract a younger, cosmopolitan labor force. SoMa, given decades of lagged planning and empty industrial spaces, served as a key frontier for tech expansion. High demand for space in SoMa now translates to an explosion in rent, and further, a hike in the overall cost of living.

The situation in SoMa is more nuanced than technology companies invading and spiking up the rent. Tech money and the shift in the major economic structure/labor force of San Francisco is a contributing factor, and not necessary the root cause to the extreme rent crisis and discussion on gentrification in the neighborhood. In the last decade, "75,000 people moved to San Francisco, but only 17,000 units of housing were created" (Walker 2014). The issue of housing shortages, demand for both office and residential

space, and the staggering rent prices is not just a cause and effect relationship with the technology “invasion”. For many years, as described in the previous chapter, there have been incomplete means to build in the city. As Scott Wiener, a San Francisco supervisor says, “our approach to housing in San Francisco is very dysfunctional...the system is intentionally designed to make it as difficult as possible to build new housing” (Bilton 2014). Rules and regulations prevent the construction of many new buildings, as well as the renovation of old ones (Ibid.). Though plenty of real estate data supports the movement to build vertically, the current planning ordinances in place prevent much of this from happening. The issue is more complicated by the shift in the major city industry and labor force- lack of housing options means that the well-paid demographic is able to afford space, while long-term, lower-middle class residents are being phased out.

The arrival of these companies in SoMa means several things- rise in rent, a new type of labor, and further, and a new type of community. The high-technology industry and the global demand for technology means that the highly-trained labor force is a very particular one. Given that the industry is attracting an incredible amount of capital, this labor force tends to be supported with high(er) wages, able to compete in a city running out space. The arrival and proliferation of the tech industry in particular, their highly paid, highly educated, young workforce spurs a conversation about gentrification. As explained by Robert Bort:

“Working to the tech companies’ advantage, even more than lobbying power, is that, by nature, their business models exist outside of what government is accustomed to regulating. This means, to borrow a word from the tech world, legislators need to “pivot” and figure out a way to keep companies like Uber, Airbnb and countless others from disenfranchising the entire middle class, whose livelihoods are often dependent on industries the sharing economy is slowly rendering obsolete” (Bort 2015).

Essentially, the way that the technology industry moved in, accumulated office and residential space, combined with a lack of local government measures to facilitate new housing facilities all contribute to the localized issues of gentrification and displacement. As reported by the UC Berkeley Urban Displacement, the relationship between gentrification and displacement is a complicated one. The study explains how “these processes are neither linear nor mutually exclusive, and it therefore takes a reframing to be able to capture the full scale of the processes” (Maclay 2015). However, by relating the neighborhood to the regional scale, the study found that “more than 53 percent of low-income households lived in neighborhoods at risk of or already experiencing displacement and gentrification pressures, comprising 48 percent of the Bay Area’s census tracts” (Ibid.). While certain neighborhoods are more threatened than others, the process is both extremely local and regional at the same time. The economic and regulatory atmosphere of San Francisco at large influences the pressures that occur at the neighborhood level. For example, the combination of well-paid high tech workers immigrating and the “loop-hole in the zoning code allowed light industrial buildings to be converted to ‘live-work’ units without having to change zoning classifications, allowing conversions to proceed at a much faster clip” combine to promote gentrification and displacement (Ibid.). The overall takeaway is that the city at large faces the pressure of a new workforce. Since the local government has not taken measures to ensure housing adequate to keep up with the high-tech job boom, this technology labor force is able to afford the competition for space. The previous low-middle classes now internalize the increased rent/cost of living. Thus, issues of gentrification and displacement force many individuals out of their neighborhoods.

Displacement of previous residents is now a citywide phenomenon in San Francisco, but it materializes in a very particular way in SoMa. As stated in Chapter 1, 80% of the population living in SoMa in the 1990's has relocated (SMHC). A new demographic has moved into both office and residential spaces. At the same time, only some of the entertainment spaces of the 90's continue to serve the neighborhood and the city at large. Given that the demographics of the neighborhood have changed, let alone the demographics of the entire city, it is inevitable that the type of entertainment provided by these spaces has changed, as "the city's once-vibrant culture has been paved over to cater to the sleek, homogenized tastes (and budgets) of a single demographic" (Bort 2015). The push for a more homogenized nightlife culture relates to factors beyond legal and planning measures. New residents and their cultural preferences impact the types of events that were economically viable to a new clientele. To understand why nightlife/music has changed, in terms of the spaces and the products of these spaces, it is necessary to understand the changing demographics of the city at large. While the tech industry has a long history in the Bay Area, it was not until the 21st century, post dot com bust that the high-tech industry began migrating into the city and into SoMa in particular. Recognizing how and why the creation of the World Wide Web contributes to an economic and social shift in San Francisco is crucial to tying issues of displacement to entertainment spaces. Given the shift in the demographics in the city, the entertainment spaces of the 90's have had to learn to cater to the desires and incomes of a very new clientele. Moreover, the physical allocation of spaces available for entertainment or related purposes has been severely diminished. Poor planning and a shift in the city economy contributes to a severe shortage of space. Low rent and availability of space

explain their movement into SoMa. The ultimate result is a mass repurposing of space and new demographic influencing the production of space.

To bring these three dimensions of transformation together, it is necessary to understand that none of them exist in a vacuum. In other words, they work together to reshape the area of SoMa and its spaces of entertainment. The Entertainment Commission, for example, was instituted to connect business owners to city processes. The coalition between public and private that the EC represents ties to the same push for revenue that facilitated the migration of technology companies into the SoMa neighborhood. To draw in capital, the city commodified its entertainment spaces in SoMa. I synthesis these three dimensions of spatial transformation as they represent the complicated ways in which space is constructed, produced, and ultimately reproduced. Moreover, the combination of all three suggests that the production of space is a material and mental process. In my final chapter, I work to explain the ultimate effect that the spatial transformation had upon the cultural production housed in SoMa.

Chapter 4

New Spaces and the Loss of Subgenres

In the previous chapters, I work to draw ties between physical space and conceptual space. Further, I explain how cultural production needs space, and when space is altered, commodified, and reconceptualized, the spatial and cultural possibilities become restricted. I continue by examining a particular phenomenon, raves, as a particular type of space that relates to the production of unique electronic music subgenres. Raves and their relationship to the entertainment scene in SoMa was a place-specific occurrence, given the history and the setting that the neighborhood provided. Various pressures at multiple scales worked to reconceptualized raves and SoMa itself. In this last chapter, I reflect on recent changes to the subgenres and “San Francisco sound” previously produced and facilitated by SoMa. Ultimately, I reveal the tie between the production of space and the production of culture.

The 1990's: Subgenres and Spaces

I acknowledge it is difficult to categorize the subgenres of the 90's since the music was underground, which enabled it to spawn to fit the various interests of a diverse rave community. That being said, by examining only some of the prominent promoters, DJs, and events at the time, I am able to get a brief glimpse into the plethora of subgenres at the time. Raves were closely tied to the creation of acid house, as his subgenre was played prominently in the scene. More specifically, the dance music scene in San Francisco relates to the exodus of UK producers from Europe to the Bay Area, and many

raves were characterized by a sound similar to “The Future Sound of London” or FSOL. A British electronic music band, FSOL pioneered the then relatively new genre, combining elements of techno, classical, jazz, and acid house (Cooper). The influence of these subgenres spanned across continents, ultimately influencing the creation of the Wicked Crew in San Francisco. Formed by UK DJs that migrated to California, this collective in particular held some of the most prominent parties. DJ Jenö was a both a co-founder of the collective and highly influential DJ in the scene. As described in an interview with Okay Future, DJ Jenö claims the arrival of FSOL in San Francisco and the subsequent explosion of the city’s specific scene and development of a unique sound relate to specific elements of the city itself:

“SF’s history of unconventional politics, as well as the musical influences of past eras – jazz, psychedelic rock, art-punk & the gay disco scene of Patrick Cowley & Sylvester. It was also affordable back then, in those pre-Internet days, so the city had become a gathering place for artists & freaks who didn’t fit in or belong elsewhere, who wanted to work on their art instead of working for the man” (Ruiz 2014).

This explanation reveals the characteristics of the city as a whole, the elements of culture already present, contributed to the unique development of psy-trance, disco, and acid house. The DJ migration to San Francisco brought forth a mixture of new, UK sounds that combined with elements already in the entertainment scene:

“We brought new & obscure Brit & European dance music with us, Chicago, Detroit & NY house/techno, instrumental hip hop & breaks plus obscure disco & funk. We loved to mix it up, rather than get rigidly locked into a single genre or sub-genre. We'd already honed a quite unique & psychedelic "sound" back in the UK at our Whoosh parties amongst other things, and happily served it up to folks here, the way we liked it - in raw dark lit basements or outside on the beaches under the full moon. We'd start late and go through 'til daylight, and the music we played between the 4 of us complimented our approach & our environment very well. We also began picking up large amounts of quite amazing US house, disco & other dance music, much of it unwanted, collecting dust in the used record stores in SF” (Jenö Void, pers. comm.).

The combined efforts of local music, local DJs, foreign music, and foreign DJs worked to develop San Francisco's own electronic music scene. While associated scenes came and went, DJ Jenö describes how the Wicked & Full Moon parties served to foster the unique sounds of time period. With the increased participation in electronic music, the sounds played at these parties formed a unique genre. This new genre "defied easy description due to the wide variety of other influences that fed it - from jazz, funk & disco to psychedelic rock"(Jenö Void, pers. comm.). The malleability of the sound, along with the impact that the participatory nature of the scene had, worked to influence the parties and development of the subgenres. DJ Jenö describes that it "felt like a living music, & add to that the importance given to 'set & setting' & the intentions of those present when dancing/listening to it and you start to a closer understanding of what fueled & shaped the 'sound' that dominated here all through the 90s" (pers. comm.). In the prime of the rave scene, the sound developed and proliferated- with various influences, but yet still unique to the city of San Francisco and the spaces that fostered the SoMa parties. DJ Jenö emphasizes that the setting of San Francisco, its musical and entertainment history, and even the way of life on this part of the Golden Coast, all contributed to a special musical concoction. Previously, I have emphasized how raves themselves are spaces, but these conceptual spaces are directly tied to physical locations with unique cultural and musical histories. Raves unfolded in a unique way in San Francisco, producing subgenres based on very place-specific influences. I argue that the sound of San Francisco, enabled by the SoMa entertainment spaces, came together based on UK techno, US house and hip-hop, and Northern California psychedelic rock, ultimately influencing the sound that DJ Jenö refers to. While similar subgenres arose in

other cities, the local rave scene was integral to the San Franciscan interpretations of these subgenres and their integration into a larger electronic dance music sound.

To reiterate, while raves adapt to the places in which they occur, they are also themselves spaces. Working to understand the unique conceptual manifestation that raves took in San Francisco and SoMa, I spoke with Phil, a prominent Psychedelic-trance (psy-trance) raver, who experienced/contributed to the tail end of the rave scene about a decade ago. He describes the period of the late 90's as ideal, since no one in the Bay Area scene really knew what a rave was. Post 2001, the crack house law amendment produced a sense of hysteria with local law enforcement. At the same time, the Internet began to serve as a crucial way for the rave to communicate and form a "shadow geography" that was used to map out rave spaces. Primitive online bulletin boards directed community members to a map point to receive a map where the parties were being held. Phil describes the maps as a necessary component of the rave scene, as they familiarized community members with the scene was taking place, and notified them which spaces fostered the actual events. During the hysteria of the early 2000's Phil describes how cops began to use the bulletin boards find out where the spaces were. Authorities would "monitor bulletin boards to see what was going on, then they would send undercover people to the map points" (Phil Gochenour, pers. comm.). This process was how the shadow urban geography was originally discovered by the authorities, and from that point on, "it was common to go to events and just have them get shut down"(Phil Gochenour, pers. comm.). Specifically, within Phil's psy-trance camp, there was a time when there were a few warehouses in SoMa specifically used by raves geared towards this subgenre.

During this period, there were enough spaces in the neighborhood to support the subgenre collectives individually, as well as the overarching dance music scene.

An interesting spatial transition that DJ Jen0 mentions is the way 1015 Folsom fostered the Come-Unity events, an indoor version of the Wicked and Full Moon parties. Held in 1015, the event would attract a couple of thousand attendees. Back then, 1015's open-floor plan enabled the venue to support such a large number of people in one singular room. At the party, organizers would "distribute handouts encouraging folks to connect & come together as a community to dance & help heal the planet" (Jeno Void, pers. comm.). Borrowing text and graphics from 60's/70's hippie-rave magazines, the motivations of this party in particular reveal how "dance music seemed to have great deal of social & cultural potential back then" (Jeno Void, pers. comm.) In general, DJ Jen0 claims, most clubs in the early 90's were supportive- bringing in various crowds to the spaces, importing a wide variety of partygoers with various musical interests. In the next section, after introducing general changes to the SoMa scene, I focus on the particular re-conception of 1015. This brief account sets the stage for my examination of this entertainment node as a representational space of change in SoMa.

Decline in the 21st Century

The transformation to the sound occurred alongside various and complicated factors of change. As Wicked co-founder O'Brien describes the end of the rave era,

"Putting on parties back in the day was a lot harder. Remember, we were trying to stay one step ahead of Johnny Law, breaking into warehouses, doing mad parties all night long with no permits in all kinds of strange locations. Plus today's rave promoters are very limited in where they can hold their events, especially the bigger ones. Rave is still a four letter word to a lot of the general public, and to the powers that be" (Bieschke 2011, 35).

In order to avoid the attention of the authorities, O'Brien navigated through various obstacles- making the party scene relatively difficult to maintain. The question of "where" looms over any promoter looking to throw a party. And while authorities may have taken notice of raves pre-2001 legislature, the formal targeting of rave spaces exacerbated issues to the point of removal and overall elimination of economic viability.

The regulatory powers that shaped the removal or reconceptualization of these spaces is not the only push towards a homogenized musical scene. The Internet, as described by DJ Jenö, was a huge influence for the re-development and ultimate loss of the San Francisco sound. The ability to tune into music across the globe diversified the sound in the city, but "what finally undermined the long running 90s SF "sound" was IMHO the folks showing up seeking to exploit it" (Jenö Void, pers. comm.). The economic incentivized push for the San Francisco to become more homogenized, appealing to a wider audience related to profit-minded people and labels trying to capitalize off the booming SF sound. These "well-funded SF affiliated labels pushing an increasingly more palatable & accessible house music sound, cashing in on the now global interest in SF's reputation as a dance music mecca" (Jenö Void, pers. comm.). By "smoothing off it's rough edges, subdued it's psychedelic flavor", the local scene was able to appeal to a newer global community (Jenö Void, pers. comm.). I believe it is not a coincidence that the San Francisco-related labels made the push for more accessible sounds during this period in particular, given the influx of residents to the entertainment scene. Not only could the new San Francisco sound appeal to a wider audience outside the scene, it could also push the internal scene towards a more homogenized, accessible sound. With this influx in subgenres now available online, DJ Jenö describes that it

actually led to a consolidation of taste despite over-abundance of influences. While “we didn't have those options for most of the 90s, so we had to dig deeper for less”, and in many ways, DJ Jeno agrees, “it was perhaps more rewarding” (pers. comm.).

The crackdown, however, “pretty much killed the after hours scene in SF” (Jeno Void, pers. comm.). While there was organization and resistance, after-hour events only continued in the permitted, regulated spaces. 1015, as DJ Jeno admits, is still around and thriving- though in a much different way. Though it lacks the “free-form” and “free-spirited” feel of the 90’s, it tends to be a lot more commercial (Jeno Void, pers. comm.).

The biggest change witnessed in the scene at large, however, is the loss of sub-genres and the counter-culture scene. DJ Jeno says, instead, “it's become more a part of the mainstream, it's become primarily entertainment” (pers. comm.). While entertainment was always an aspect of the music, “the other aspects - the revolutionary intent, the spontaneous experimentation, the strong bonds and intimacy we shared with each other that aren't there in nearly the same way” (Jeno Void, pers. comm.). In fact, “even the festivals which have become the new gathering place for dance music lovers, are increasingly corporate” (Jeno Void, pers. comm.). The various spaces are much more limited, given the necessity of regulating indoor and outdoor spaces alike. The music and the spaces, DJ Jeno implies, are changing, and the factors for such change are complicated.

As a raver, Phil similarly experienced the transition from the previous entertainment scene to the commodified landscape that SoMa houses today. When I asked about the changed he specifically witnessed, Phil reiterated many of the perspectives that I have come across. Much more advanced commercialized spaces came

back into SoMa and the city at large, marking a big transition. The Entertainment Commission, discussed in Chapter 3, formed because “it was felt that the police were getting out of hand” (Phil Gochenour, pers. comm.). Before 2000, police controlled permitting and ACB (alcohol control board) and police threatening entertainment scene through close monitoring. The “ACB instrumental in enacting crackdown”, and in response, business owners went to Board of Supervisors. The City formed the EC- drawn from police, entertainment business, other interested community members to control permitting. “Once the EC had permitting over spaces, at that point, you can imagine how those spaces evolved... It was the people who had a direct business interest in seeing this happen who shaped how things did happen”, Phil recounts (pers. comm.). There was a division between the people who owned the spaces and those who participated in the entertainment scene. Especially as the scene became more formally regulated, entertainment participants felt increasingly disassociated from those who profited from the spaces.

This economic-minded restructuring of nightlife in SoMa occurred alongside changes in zoning in the neighborhood. The Eastern Neighborhoods Study- commissioned around this time by progressives, was used to study what was going to happen to SoMa (given issues with land use). There was then a dichotomy between the old spaces of entertainment and the new high-rise condos and repurposed warehouses. New business/home owners were not happy with things going on at clubs like The Eagle, a traditional gay bar. As noise complaints were made, the EC had the ability to reconsider and ultimately reject permits. Eastern Neighborhoods Study- a land use study for SoMa, was then used to study the situation there, considering the changing in building purposes,

in order make future decisions on planning. In theory, it was supposed to take two years. In actuality, it took longer than two years to do study, and nothing could be built during this time. The lag in planning contributed to the exacerbation of an area that was already conflicted.

At this point, Phil claims that “I know of only one place that does parties on a very occasional basis”- but in a very marginal territory that requires a car to get to (pers. comm.). SoMa’s central location previously made it easy for it to be the hub of nightlife. Since the early 2000’s, Phil claims that the vitality of the scene has dropped dramatically, and is much less active compared to what it usually was. The nature of the clubs was changed, directly related to rise of the EC. This was based on the people are on the commission, resembling how San Francisco is like a “Mafia town” (Phil Gochenour, pers. comm.). As small groups of people gain control, they attempted to maintain control. That is how the club scene shifted- from DIY efforts by the participants, to the formal and legitimate control by the few and the powerful. While it is easy to blame outsiders (those affiliated with the technology migration) for internal issues (poor city planning/regulation), Phil says, internal power structures contributed to entertainment regulation and the loss of spaces related to tech-gentrification. Arguably- Phil claims- the housing crisis is result of 30 years of poor urban planning. This comment agrees with much of the demographics section in the previous chapter- the influx of new residents and the combined lack of living/office spaces contributed to both gentrification and displacement in the city at large. San Francisco ignored idea of growth for 30 years by not investing in new housing, and the tech boom exacerbated such issues. At the same time, tech brought in a variety of new residents, many young, and some who participated

in the rave scene in SoMa, like Phil. “The people I worked with, I partied with”, Phil claims (pers. comm.). Tech infiltrating spaces in many ways, but it also attracted a variety of young people residents who contributed to the different cultural climate. This then forms a complex issue, as new residents may contribute to the scene, but put pressure on the limited amount of space that could house rave events. Ultimately, it was the removal of urban space that was important for independent promoters and participants. It then became difficult for groups to come together to throw parties because there were no spaces, and by 2008-2009, it was impossible. As Phil describes, the scene changed dramatically in the period following the early 2000 crackdowns and the influx in technology company movements. As urban spaces shut down, Phil mentions that more people went out into the countryside. Old-school camps (communities dedicated to specific electronic subgenres) began to throw events outside. “Everything went rural,” Phil claims, “as SoMa got shut down, first by the police and then by the rise of the condos, a lot of the scene pushed out into the countryside” (pers. comm.). Given Northern California weather, outdoor events were/are typically easy to pull off. The scene then became about finding out-of-the-way rural spaces that communities could colonize for the weekend in solitude. Phil mentions how crucial the TAZ was to both the urban and the rural spaces as “TAZ- anarchist manifesto, also the rave manifesto for the people I knew” (pers. comm.). No matter the location- inside or outside SoMa- raves were about colonizing space for brief time, suspending the exterior world, and creating something new within that. As Phil says, “it got to the point where there were certain groups who could always nail down certain spaces,” and those groups or people became the controllers of that particular cultural framework. In particular for Phil, it used to be easy

as an independent promoter to do gay party nights (pers. comm.). As those little spaces disappear, what remained were larger commercial spaces, and what they are (large-scale promoters) looking to bring in is a lot different than what the individual promoter might want. This ultimately had a definite effect on the entire entertainment scene, and consolidated a cultural-musical environment.

Additionally, Phil has a conflicted relationship with gay underground party scene after watching scene go through a metamorphosis to become more commercial. The transition from ravers to massive party promoters was witnessed in Phil's previous camp Comfort and Joy. Originally only 40 people, the camp set up the after hours party "afterglow". When the camp decided it wanted to get bigger, it had to do more fundraising. After doing underground parties in the city (called touch parties), the events grew so large that they needed club space. The camp originally evolved from a "thing" in the desert, to throwing raves in private spaces, to utilizing massive spaces and partnering with major promoters. Phil notes, "as we have lost the ability to do these things in private spaces, and as people have had to move into more commercialized spaces, it's changed the nature of the events" (pers. comm.). The loss of spaces for underground raves removed spaces for certain musical camps, and opened up spaces for subgenres that fit into the commercial, capitalist entertainment logic now regulated by the city. Many interesting and complicated factors explain the consequences of the transformation of SoMa from the 90's to the 2000's. The biggest change, as Phil recounts, is the loss of community. Community meant that "you knew the group of people in the room, and you'd meet new people... and being part of a community that accepted you and you wanted to be a part of" (Phil Gochenour, pers. comm.). When that was lost, those

communities fell apart. To Phil, that was the whole part of being a raver- the maintenance of the musical communities. To foster these groups of people- space was necessary. “A lot of the people I used to rave with, I never see anymore”, Phil describes, and the nostalgic tones of campouts outside the city instill the idea of community loss (pers. comm.). This comment emphasizes that many individuals, from diverse backgrounds, would come together on the basis of contributing to this music scene. Without the old, inclusive music scene to bring people together, I argue that the new entertainment dynamics promote social division, especially based on class, given the cost- restrictive nature of clubs like 1015. While those profiting from the regulation and reconceptualization of these new spaces are glad to see the removal of underground spaces, the rave participants and those active within these electronic music scenes have lost a sense of artistic expression, and further, spaces in which their communities can exist.

The community that Phil begins to describe, the ravers of the 90’s, are a diverse set of people. It is therefore difficult to compare the community that was to the community that is- but, I argue, the nature of raves, and their somewhat de-commodified nature, enabled more people to contribute to the musical process. Raves in the 90’s were not class specific. Their low-to-no cost ticket pricing meant that these spaces had little financial barriers to entry. The performers themselves were members of the community, living in San Francisco and actively contributing to the scene. Embodying the “starving artist” trope, DJs like Jenö Void prioritized the music and the diverse music community over economic profit. While the rave scene tended to attract a fairly young audience, the welcoming atmosphere described by both DJ Jenö and Phil reveal that people of various

social backgrounds formed the subgenre communities. They were connected by their deep interest in music not represented in the mainstream. In comparison, those who now attend 1015 do not participate in the space. The price of attendance, usually at the very least, \$20, severely restricts the classes that can regularly attend events in the reconceptualized clubs. 1015 as it works now, in ways, facilitates a type of community. But this community is very different, elite, and economically more homogenous than the community enabled by entertainments spaces of the 1990's (including the pre-regulated 1015).

As I return to 1015 as a space that demarks the transformation of the area at large, Phil provides a personal account of the changes he witnessed. Phil explains, "1015 used to be the locus for everything. It was one of the clubs that raised the attention of the police, because of what when on there and the crowds that would show up" (pers. comm.). The EndUp and 1015 became major targets for authority attention- often related to the type of permits the spaces maintained. For example, The Endup has 24 hour permit. Permits, as recalled by Phil, are a complicated entity. They can be open 24 hours, yet cannot serve alcohol the entire time. Ultimately, it was because of their hours that were why they became so supervised by police. Intense supervision meant, "police would come in, see drug use, threaten to shut down 1015 unless they did that police told them to do" (Phil Gochenour, pers. comm.). During this transformative-regulatory period, 1015 "implemented the most draconian security you have ever experienced", with cameras everywhere and people cruising on the floor in the dance area (Phil Gochenour, pers. comm.). What followed was a period of resistance and evacuation, as "nobody who called themselves a raver would set foot inside...1015 became the off-limits space, and

it's only been in the past few years that people rarely come back". As one can imagine, however, it has become a very different scene. It is through 1015 that I examine the significant changes to sub-genres by relating the music prominent in the 1990's to the music prominent today.

Today, the consolidation of spaces for entertainment, their regulation, and the new demographics of clientele work together to produce a change in the available music genres performed in these spaces. In particular, I examine 1015 Folsom, given its history as a space for the 90's parties and its major influence in the SoMa entertainment scene today. First of all, the space itself has been reconceptualized for a different purpose. Unlike the large, open dance spaces of the 90's, the layout of 1015 has changed dramatically. Now, the venue is divided into multiple rooms. The largest performance space holds a large stage for the performer, a dance floor, and luxurious seating on the sides and in balconies overlooking the dance floor. With the addition of Pura, an upscale nightclub held in one of the five rooms, private events at the venue continue to increase. The division of the spaces allows 1015 to section out customers and cater to private demands. Since full bars and DJ booths are located in every room, there are more opportunities to increase revenue and further commodify the club experience. An extravagant lighting and sound system allow various DJ/performer sets to occur simultaneously. And while the space itself now fits in with the demographic of young, well-off clientele, it is the music that truly expresses the changes experienced in the space.

Within 2016, 1015 has booked acts like TWRK, Autograph, Ekali, Mr. Little Jeans, Pomo, Andrew Luce, Oshi, FKJ, KRNE, Sam Gellaitry, Sophie, and Louis the

Child (1015 Folsom, Calendar). The vast majority of these acts are all based in other cities- in other words, besides Andrew Luce, the artists performing at 1015 are not locals, they are touring professionals. Most of the acts booked at 1015 are still considered electronic, with some electronic-related hip-hop. Trap music influences electronic music, and together, they combine to form “trap house” (Raymer 2012). It has similar roots as acid house, using technology like sequencers and synth hardware, however, mainstream trap house has removed many of the harder, “squelching” noises in order to appeal to a mainstream. While trap sounds have particularly influences Southern hip-hop, trap house in particular fuses the popular elements of house with the popular elements of hip-hop. Mainstream EDM’s (electronic dance music) adoption of trap influences marks a new phase in electronic music, as the “electro-house scene is on fire with trap remixes and original production” and many “are saying trap is the ‘new dubstep’ or the ‘new moombahton’ in reference to its extreme level of hype” (Bein 2012). Trap house and electro house now form the basis of the mainstream EDM genres, though they incorporate elements similar to subgenres of disco and acid house. Even though the roots are similar, the mainstream genres typically exclude more experimental, psychedelic, and “harsh” squelchy sounds than the marginalized subgenres. For house music to become a mainstream genre, and for it to incorporate itself into formal club culture, it needed to adapt to mainstream taste. It was not until EDM, including electro-house and trap house, used “conventional pop song structure and vocals” that electronic music reinvented itself to become financially and culturally viable (Reynolds 2012).

I mention the subgenres of electro-house and trap-house in particular because they are two of the most common subgenres promoted at 1015 Folsom in the last few years

(1015 Calendar). More importantly- they are popular subgenres within electronic dance music itself. Mainstream EDM in itself uses more accessible sounds and structures, similar to today's pop music, than EDM predecessors (Reynolds 2012). The removal of certain harsh/unappealing sounds and the shift in musical influence marks a major transition in EDM at large- as the electronic dance scene needed to "shed the word 'rave' and all its associations", not only in terms of the events and spaces, but also in the actual music structure. Again, this was done through the adoption of more accessible music styles. 1015's bookings- which include a large number of artists from around the world, play, produce, or incorporate elements of mainstream trap house and electro house. Disco, psy-house, and acid house, previous subgenres that contributed to a San Francisco sound, are no longer played by musicians. 1015 has become a locus of both national and international mainstream sound- attracting clientele from the Bay Area and beyond. In many ways, the club works to foster a music community. However, the music community fostered at 1015 is increasingly regulated, and increasingly a different than the demographic it welcomed 20 years ago. The club promotes electronic music, but the sound is no longer distinctly San Franciscan. The changes to 1015 are important, as the venue serves as a landmark of the past, a space that has endured during the 90's into 2016. As other spaces were removed and repurposed outside musical use, 1015 is an example of a space that still functions for the sake of music and entertainment. Therefore, changes at the venue are symbolic of the changes to the scene in SoMa at large. The loss of the San Francisco sound directly relates to how informal spaces were lost, and how formal spaces, like 1015, aim to serve a different crowd and a different purpose.

Synthesis and Conclusion

In order to digest why raves matter, I return to the idea of PLUS and the TAZ. Raves, as a music network, work as a form of resistance. Cultural production is an active process, and to further understand how rave communities undermined the larger capitalist system, I use theory about the Direct Action Politics of punk rock music. Dawson Barrett describes how punk music, as a genre, did more than allow musical/creative autonomy for artists. Beyond expression, punk rock served as a form of direct action, “instead of petitioning the powerful for inclusion” the movement “built its own elaborate network” (Barrett 2013, 23). Acting as anti-capitalist alternatives both economically and socially-punk structures “could also be understood as sites of resistant to the privatizing agenda of neoliberalism” (Barrett 2013, 23-24). By assuming a grass-roots perspective for analysis of how this genre, Barrett is able to see the movement as a complete system of political protest. Moreover, a section of the piece is dedicated to a discussion on the roles that certain clubs like ABC No Rio and 924 Gilman played in facilitating the movement. Just like the raves in San Francisco, events at these clubs exemplified how important DIY bookings and event programming was to facilitating the music scene. The entire practice of booking was eventually developed to mimic the democratic values of the punk genre. An important attribute of these clubs relates to how “they encouraged active participation” which ultimately meant that “the clubs attracted and involved new members and developed through a process of trial and error” (Barrett 2013, 32). Indeed, the clubs and the communities they harbored responded to issues of police brutality, evictions, and rezoning/planning in their respective locations. The musical genre ultimately “played a

prominent though not exclusive role in the global fight to maintain autonomous cultural spaces” (Barrett 2013, 38). To summarize- a music genre serves as more than a cultural product. The music produced and the ways in which the music was experience was a direct resistance to the privatization occurring both within the music industry and in the more generalized economy.

In terms of this direct action/resistance framework, punk illuminates the ability of a musical genre to contend with forces of neoliberal privatization. Further, the maintenance of autonomous cultural spaces was necessary for the genre to complete its mission. Raves and electronic music use a very similar paradigm. First of all, electronic music, with its roots in discotheques and Mid-West clubs, is site-specific. Just like punk required performance spaces for the genre to be heard and to be proliferated, electronic music needs the same. A few key aspects separate the electronic music spaces from the punk venues- and while they may share certain attributes of democracy and public participation, many of the raves in the 90’s- especially those in San Francisco, took on the “PLUR” mentality described in Chapter 2. Moreover, raves are more than events- they are spaces in which the TAZ framework is applied to music. Whereas punk music aimed to democratically book music and provide space for free expression within the genre, raves use the principles of the TAZ and anarchy to provide spaces for the music to be experienced. The methods of booking, and of promoting events thus varied. To some extent, the focus was geared more towards the performer than the attendees at punk shows. More importantly, these tended to be settled, established, and recognized venues. While they may have struggled with city planning regulations- they still existed as formal music sites. San Francisco raves, on the other hand, used the principles of TAZ to

establish events in a variety of sites in the city, from empty warehouses to the early establishment of 1015 Folsom. This true DIY nature, and the fleeting nature of these event spaces more generally, used different principles to address the same structures of neoliberal privatization. As an alternative form of entertainment, raves did not work to reshape established, regulated, or commercial nightlife. Like the punk scene described by Barrett, SoMa raves in particular used their own methods, outside of traditional entertainment/musical life, to resist structures of capitalism. In many ways, raves and dance music could be understood as a less direct resistance than punk music. Due to the underground nature of raves, in many ways, I argue that raves had to address issues of privatization by creating their own autonomous zones. Through this logic, it is understandable that raves, by necessity, could only challenge capitalist music structures and privatized entertainment through indirect means. In other words- the existence of raves, as a clear opposition to mainstream entertainment culture, is a form of resistance in itself. Unlike the punk venues, which directly engaged with mainstream society, raves resisted the mainstream by creating such temporary spaces that meaningfully disengaged from the outside world. As I argued in Chapter 2, it was the nature of these spaces and the communities that were fostered that enabled particular types of sub-genres to exist.

In many ways, SoMa raves were not public spaces. However, they worked to challenge ways in which one understands the distinctions between public and private. In “The Beach Beneath the Streets”, Shepard and Smithsimon discuss the various ways in which public space and its various definitions and degrees are negotiated. Instead of focusing on public space as the site for rational talk about issues of common concern, Shepard and Smithsimon understand this space as a site for various activities and

interactions. The authors argue against defining normative activities that should occur in public space, and reject control and exclusivity in terms of dictating who can control space, and how that space can be used. Play and public performance serve as crucial forms of resistance, and I reiterate a quote from Chapter 1 of my thesis- “the ludic, joyful, temporarily uninhibited physical engagement with the space itself is both an opportunity to act out one’s identity and life and a means to declare and expand the boundaries of accepted behavior” (Shepard and Smithsimon 2011, 18). While raves do not necessarily work to serve the entire public, they are a subjection of the public, and instead serve as a meeting space for marginalized musical communities. Again, using the TAZ framework, SoMa raves (and raves more generally) took an underground approach in order to exist outside mainstream music culture and avoid authority detection. However, they were public spaces in terms of the communities they served- as described by (source), they were opened to individuals within the scene in a non-exclusionary way. That being said- just as Shepard and Smithsimon explain- public performance is a crucial way to reevaluate what can and should happen in public spaces. Emphasis on self-expression, where practically anything goes, contends with limiting and oppressive norms. As an alternative realm of entertainment for a marginalized music public, raves allowed individuals to reconsider public/private acts.

To summarize, the San Francisco electronic dance music sound was lost over the course of the last 20 years. It arose given specific circumstances, like migration of UK DJs, incorporation of the city’s previous musical history, and electronic music movements more nationally. Spaces functioned as the crucial incubator for the development of unique music in San Francisco- more specifically, unregulated spaces in

SoMa that served as musical application of the TAZ. I argue that the TAZ provided the specific type of spaces in which electronic music flourished. A myriad of factors contributed to the demise of these spaces: regulation, commercialization, demographic changes, even the Internet- and with the removal of these spaces, SoMa and San Francisco at large has lost electronic dance music subgenres and their communities. While certain parts of the scene have moved outdoors- it defeats the purpose of promoting a unique, historical, urban musical identity.

As I conclude, I would like to explain the “why” behind this thesis. As someone who is personally invested in music, and who works to understand the ties between music and society, I chose this project to make connections between space and cultural production in a new way. I introduce the fundamental process of space production because it quite literally informs the ways in which people navigate through their everyday lives. Further, in order to even discuss the conceptual attributes of space, it is necessary to ground the abstract to the material. The relationship, however, goes both ways, as the physical world contributes to the social meaning of space. Raves, I believe, explore this nuanced but important relationship. By relating them to the TAZ, I aim to prove how the nature of spaces foster (or inhibit) the activities held in those spaces. These activities are fundamental to communities, as they produce and reflect culture. When space is lost, repurposed, or commodified, the nature of the space is changed, as well as its acceptable uses. The cultural products embedded in the space must adapt to the limits of the capitalist framework. Raves and their relationship to the transformation of SoMa entertainment spaces exemplify the very real impact that changes to space have upon the production of culture. Over the last year, I have come to appreciate that the creation,

distribution, and enjoyment of music is not an innocent process- it is a cultural struggle. When Skyping with Don Mitchell, whose ideas inform many of my own personal understandings, he claimed that very little exists outside of commodity production. I remember thinking this was a very limiting, frustrating, and frankly scary comment to make. It does, however, describe the situation in SoMa's entertainment scene. At the same time, I would like to emphasize that there are still ravers and communities that come together for the sake of music and music alone. While many speak of the 90's with a nostalgic tone, others continue to find ways in which to oppose the pressures of capital encroachment upon entertainment. While this thesis illuminates a rather bleak trend, it also sheds some light on the avenues for resistance. Music, as a site for struggle, can still work to bring together communities in ways that avoid commodification and limitation. The silencing of subgenres is an ongoing process, but it is not an end.

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