

# Governing Nightlife: Profit, Fun and (Dis)Order in the Contemporary City

PAUL CHATTERTON

*This article develops an understanding of the governance of urban nightlife. The starting point is that a night out in the post-industrial, consumption-oriented city is as much about issues of economic development and creativity as it is about 'law and order' and 'social control'. Further, a number of groups often with conflicting interests, such as the local state, police, licensing magistrates, residents groups, door security firms, nightlife operators, consumers and workers, are involved in governing the night. However, the main aim of the article is to highlight that a 'consensus' has been formed for how the night-time economy should develop, which is largely based around meeting the needs of large and highly acquisitive property developers and entertainment conglomerates, profit generation and selling the city through upmarket, exclusive leisure aimed at highly mobile, cash-rich groups. The article concludes by asking what are the implications for older, historic and alternative, independent forms of nightlife.*

## Introduction

In February 2000, the doors opened to the exclusive Rock Club on London's Victoria Embankment. Owned by Piers Adams, longstanding entrepreneur behind London nightlife chains K Bar and Po Na Na and long-term friend of Guy Ritchie and Madonna, a glut of paparazzi and stars including Kate Moss, Robbie Williams, All Saints, George Clooney and Jude Law graced the venue on its opening night. Advertising itself as a members-only table club 'offering an intimate atmosphere with an emphasis on exemplary standards of service which has helped make Rock a magnet for the UK's smartest people' and 'London's Beautiful It Girls and It Boys', Rock is not for the average reveller. Corporate VIP Privilege Cards start at £1,000 with bottles of spirits served at your table for £140.<sup>1</sup>

In the same year, Fred Broughton, chair of the Police Federation in the UK, commented that there was a 'sense of disorder and anarchy' in many city centres due to the drunken, yobbish and often violent behaviour of

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Paul Chatterton is a Lecturer in Urban and Regional Development at the Centre for Urban and Regional Development, University of Newcastle, UK.

many weekend revellers. Calls were made for new legislation to shut down 'thug pubs' and introduce 'on the spot' fines for drunken behaviour. These laws have been rushed through the UK parliament under the Criminal Justice and Police Act (2001). Further, in May 2001, 160 police in full riot gear raided the Gatecrasher nightclub in Sheffield due to concerns over drug dealing. The club was closed for over a month and is now in negotiations with the police to increase club security.<sup>2</sup> The super-club Home, in London's Leicester Square, was also recently closed and its license revoked by Westminster City Council, using emergency procedures under the Public Entertainment Licence (Misuse of Drugs) Act 1997, after an undercover police operation led to several arrests of alleged drugs suppliers. Owners of the club, the Big Beat Group, went into liquidation.

How are we to make sense of these seemingly contradictory tendencies in which the night-time economy is associated with both the good times of stylish, exclusive activity and the bad times of violence, disorder and criminality? To unravel these contradictions, it is useful to think about how the night-time economy is governed. In a general sense, Miller *et al.* have outlined a shift from 'government', towards a wider process of 'governance' involving a range of actors from the business world, the voluntary sector and citizen groups.<sup>3</sup> However, shifts to a more governance-style approach can also be seen to reflect a wider restructuring of state, capital and consumer practices. In particular, some commentators have suggested there is a decline of public accountability amongst local institutions and an intrusion of a business-led quangocracy into the local-regional economic development process.<sup>4</sup>

Viewed in this context, significant changes have occurred within nightlife over the last few decades. In the industrial era, traditional regulators such as the police and the licensing judiciary largely focused upon rigid ordering, control and restraint so as not to allow entertainment and leisure to interfere with the world of work.<sup>5</sup> Aspects of this classic Fordist<sup>6</sup> mode of regulation continue, albeit in different forms, via various licensing controls and laws, not to mention through surveillance and policing.<sup>7</sup> Yet more recently, governing the night appears to have become a more fluid, differentiated and complex, yet pervasive, process. As many cities seek to rebuild themselves around a post-industrial, service-based economy, nightlife has become an important economic entity in its own right. New coalitions of interest groups – including real estate companies, property developers and entertainment conglomerates keen to profit from the new boom in the cultural economy, in conjunction with increasingly entrepreneurial and cash-strapped city councils and local governments – have formed, and have been effective in building a new consensus for how the night-time economy should develop.<sup>8</sup>

Urban nightlife within this framework is largely based around profit generation and selling the city through developing upmarket, exclusive leisure spaces, while marginalising local, independent and alternative nightlife and sanitising historic residual groups and spaces.<sup>9</sup> Despite the considerable success of this new consensus, problems and contradictions remain, including the stifling of local economic creativity in nightlife, a lack of consultation with the consumers and workers in the industry, and continuing problems of disorder, crime and noise. The night-time economy, then, continues to be framed through a number of often contradictory discourses such as law and order, economic development, creativity and access for all.

This article explores these changes in the night-time economy. The first part discusses the broader historical context for governing the night and outlines the parameters of the central actors involved. Second, the article specifically explores changing governance practices in the night-time economy mainly from case study material from the UK which draws upon interviews undertaken with those involved in the governance of nightlife.<sup>10</sup> In general, it is suggested that governance practices appear largely to favour the development of nightlife spaces aimed at the needs of highly mobile, cash-rich youth groups such as business professionals, tourists, service workers and wealthier sections of the student, gay and female market. Moreover, older, historic forms of nightlife connected to the industrial city, which are largely seen as vulgar, and independent/alternative nightlife, which is seen as unruly and subversive, are both being displaced within the more 'respectable' service-based, corporately driven city.

### **Governing the Night: History and Context**

Regulating nightlife is far from straightforward. As such, it is necessary to appreciate that it has a number of different dimensions – legal (laws and legislation), technical (Closed Circuit TV and radio-nets), economic (drinks and door entry prices) and socio-cultural (musical taste, youth cultural styles and dress codes). In this sense, regulation entails both formal strategies and mechanisms such as policing, CCTV and door prices, alongside more subtle and informal elements like norms, habits, dress, language, style and demeanour. Yet, attempts to control open spaces such as pubs, bars and nightclubs are always partial and contested. Nightlife is an example of an ambivalent space: 'a space in which there is a desire both to accommodate a pluralistic public and to control it through rational strategies of surveillance and discipline'.<sup>11</sup> Nightlife, then, represents a constant renegotiation and subversion of codes, styles and rules.

In spite of this fluidity, nightlife, especially in large cities, has been subject to much legal, political and indeed moral regulation due to its long-

standing associations with crime and disorder.<sup>12</sup> While the control of licensed premises such as ale houses, saloons and taverns dates back several centuries, the industrial city, through its connotations of immorality, vice and over-crowding represented the heyday for the formalised control of entertainment and nightlife.<sup>13</sup> In particular, there were strong, often contradictory, beliefs from the bourgeois classes that recreation time both demoralised and radicalised the working classes.<sup>14</sup> While orchestras, theatre companies, professional associations and opera emerged for high-brow tastes, and variety halls, pleasure gardens, picture palaces, popular theatres and vaudeville catered for the increasingly educated, more middle-brow consumers,<sup>15</sup> the bawdy dance and music halls, burlesque houses, variety theatres, saloons and gin palaces of the industrial working classes were looked down upon, policed and heavily surveyed.<sup>16</sup>

Over the course of the twentieth century, leisure and entertainment was subject to pervasive regulation and has been increasingly rationalised and planned through greater state involvement, censorship, licensing, planning guidelines and more formalised policing. The modern police force, which emerged out of the crisis of urban administration in the industrial city,<sup>17</sup> played a key role in this regulation, especially in city centres where social classes, elsewhere residentially segregated, congregated in large numbers.<sup>18</sup> The last hundred years has witnessed the criminalisation of numerous traditional street pastimes and working-class pursuits.<sup>19</sup> Regulation, then, was often most targeted at working-class entertainments, as they were seen to be the main source of social vice and moral decline.<sup>20</sup>

The heyday of organised industrial society, epitomised through the system of Fordist production, formalised and extended the rational social control of leisure.<sup>21</sup> The times and places of work were closely regulated, especially through management techniques such as 'scientific Taylorism', in which factories were managed through a routinisation and standardisation of tools and work methods. Such work practices were mirrored in the non-work sphere through the emergence of a distinct leisure time.<sup>22</sup> The notion of instrumental rationality and the creation of the rational person is central in understanding the creation and regulation of mass consumption patterns.<sup>23</sup> For instance, under Fordist work patterns, the night-time drinking economy was carefully regulated through the curtailment of entertainment and opening hours to ensure that workers' leisure did not interfere with their productivity.<sup>24</sup>

Neat links between consumption and production were never so clear cut, even under a Fordist regime, especially in the rather messy and unstructured times and places of a night out. However, in the contemporary period, the connection here has become more blurred, complex and multifaceted.<sup>25</sup> With the decline of the predominantly industrial/productionist society and the rise

of a more service-based, consumption-oriented society,<sup>26</sup> many urban areas have sought new avenues for wealth creation in the entertainment, night-time and pleasure industries. In this context, the ideal of the '24-hour cultural economy' is part of a move away from the older industrial city, with its emphasis on manufacturing production and its visible temporal and spatial ordering. Pleasure-seeking and a broad range of nightlife activities now have a legitimate stage within the urban economy, which has created the need for more complicated and differential forms of governance.

Urban nightlife, then, contains a number of contradictory tendencies towards both deregulation and (re)regulation, and fun and disorder.<sup>27</sup> On the one hand, during weekend evenings, city streets host tens of thousands of young revellers intent on fun, spending, drug-taking, dancing, encountering and subversion. It is now well accepted that this 'economy of pleasure'<sup>28</sup> and the '24 hour city'<sup>29</sup> are vehicles for economic growth, profit generation and entrepreneurialism. The financial success of this after-dark economy has stimulated demand for its further deregulation. The other side of the coin is that, as Lovatt observes, regulation of the night-time economy has been slow to change, due to its perceived peripheral status to the daytime economy and a historical suspicion of it as a site of excess, vice and crime.<sup>30</sup> In many ways, then, the night continues to be heavily influenced by Fordist concerns for tighter regulation, social control and zoning, due to lingering moral panics about lawlessness and disorder.

Young people, in particular, have a long history for being the focus for night-time moral panics and social control,<sup>31</sup> and the image of 'youth as trouble' continues to the present day.<sup>32</sup> They continue to provide various 'folk devils'<sup>33</sup> for respectable society, be it in the guise of street hooligans, mods, rockers, teds, football fans, lager-louts, ravers or joyriders.<sup>34</sup> More recently, in the UK there is growing concern over drink-fuelled violence and vandalism amongst young adults.<sup>35</sup> Similar moral panics have arisen in the United States in relation to street gangs and hip hop culture,<sup>36</sup> and there is also concern in Australia about excessive drinking cultures, often based around youth, tourist and surf cultures.<sup>37</sup> Such representations of youth continue to fuel a whole raft of restrictive regulations ranging from CCTV surveillance,<sup>38</sup> curfews<sup>39</sup> and attempts to curb underage drinking. So, in spite of efforts to create a profit-making 24-hour night-time culture, substantial obstacles remain, especially in relation to what is seen as an 'exclusionary' youth-dominated pub and club culture.<sup>40</sup> Curiously, calls to speed up economic development and deregulate the night-time economy in the UK, are made alongside new legislation to crack down on violence and crime on nights out.

As a result of these contradictions and various conflicts of interest, urban nightlife has become an arena for a more complex set of negotiations

between a range of groups. As Table 1 highlights, there are a number of groups involved in the governance of nightlife, each of which has a different set of concerns and parameters. The rest of this article explores some of these tensions within and between these groups, and in particular charts the clear shift in power from traditional bodies (the judiciary and police) primarily concerned with social order and public safety, towards groups such as business interests and the local state with their imperatives of capital accumulation and desire to expand the cultural and night-time economy. At the same time, managers of door security teams and door security staff are caught between issues of social control and profit-making. While some citizens' groups (largely middle-class residents) are also part of this equation, consumers and workers in the night-time economy are largely silent here. Such regulatory transformations are also applied differentially, aiding corporate investment and profits, while ignoring and often criminalising alternative/oppositional and residual nightlife groups and spaces.

TABLE 1  
PARAMETERS AMONGST NIGHTLIFE GROUPS

Group	Parameters
Licensing Judiciary	Implement national laws Respond to need for growth
Police	Restrict activity and maintain law and order Accept and manage growth of nightlife
Local state	Manage nightlife problems and promote equality and access Promote inward investment and economic development
Door security	Control access and stop disorder, often through use of violence Legitimate, professionalise and upgrade door security provision
Nightlife operators	Small scale operators – creative motive Large scale operators – profit motive backed by trade associations
Residents	Reduce nightlife to protect quality of life Seek fun in nightlife activities
Consumers	Distinction, creativity, difference Fun, hedonism, escapism
Workers	Low pay, long hours, poor conditions (bar staff) Financial and creative opportunities in night-time economy (managers, DJs, promoters etc)

### Legislating the Night

Traditions, cultural norms and habits within nightlife vary considerably between and within national contexts. The UK, for example still remains an island apart with respect to an 11pm watershed for the closing of bars and pubs, in contrast to other parts of the Western world where nightlife patterns are later and staged between a variety of activities such as eating, drinking and going to a club. Drinking habits also vary. Sharing pitchers of beer is

more widespread across North America, pints of lager are the preferred option in northern Europe, while small glasses of beer and wine are drunk in Mediterranean Europe. However, designer beers, strong 'psychoactive' alcopops, spirits and wines are becoming universally popular, and there is evidence of a convergence of drinking trends amongst young people.<sup>41</sup>

Approaches to governing the night, especially alcohol consumption, are framed within a variety of moral, social and political approaches which vary between countries. The United States, for example, has a long history of strict regulation of alcohol, most visibly represented through Prohibition, which became law in January 1920 and lasted for 13 years under the Volstead Act. Although the intention was to reduce crime, the reality was an increase in illegal smuggling, sales and organised crime. 'Speakeasies' (illegal saloons), for example, proliferated and by 1929 there were 32,000 in New York alone, twice the number of official bar saloons which existed before 1920.<sup>42</sup> Strong anti-drinking sentiments have a long history in the United States, especially through right-wing political discourses on morality, the family and personal control. Efforts to curb, if not eliminate, alcohol sales historically rested with the religious-based Temperance Societies, for whom collective enrolment reached more than 1 million by 1840. The saloon and the dance-hall, centrepieces for working-class life in industrial cities such as Chicago, Milwaukee and Buffalo, were singled out as dens of vice and moral decline in nineteenth-century America, and the anti-saloon movement went to great lengths to raise taxes to price them out of existence.<sup>43</sup>

Remarkably similar moral concerns about alcohol have emerged again in contemporary American society.<sup>44</sup> However, current attitudes towards alcohol are difficult to discern, reflecting both hedonism and puritanism, and contemporary influences of a more globalised consumer society. Nightlife in the United States is also more decentralised, car- and home-based, and alcohol consumption is framed through strong moralistic undertones and a higher legal drinking age of 21 than in most other Western countries. Drink-driving is a particular concern, and groups such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) have played a key role in pushing for nation-wide legislation in terms of raising drinking ages and increasing penalties for drunk drivers. However, many young people have found creative ways around higher drinking ages. In Tijuana on the north Mexican border, lower legal drinking age limits and inexpensive drinks have given rise to a nightclub district frequented by thousands of young southern Californians, and on weekend nights more than 6,500 people cross back into the United States between midnight and 4am.<sup>45</sup> Alcohol control remains a high priority for both state and federal governments. Each state exercises strong measures over the night-time economy through dedicated departments such as

Alcoholic Beverage Control Departments and the State Liquor Authorities, which regulate the sale and consumption of alcohol and the issue, suspension and revocation of liquor licenses, while the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) regulates alcohol at the federal level.

Attitudes and regulations towards nightlife and alcohol vary widely across Europe. Northern European countries, especially the UK are plagued by images of 'lager-fuelled yobs'. Here, drinking cultures are distinctive. Heavy, binge drinking occurs on weekends and special occasions rather than with meals; many people drink for the purposes of getting drunk and public drunkenness is more or less accepted. Age limitations are often established for legal alcohol consumption and alcohol is generally prohibited for children.<sup>46</sup> Nordic countries exhibit strict laws over personal consumption through state monopolies which control the production and distribution of alcohol through state-run stores. In contrast, southern European countries have more relaxed drinking cultures often based around wines, generally consumed with meals. Drunkenness is less accepted, even at celebrations, and children are often given diluted wine with meals, as part of a rite of passage into adult drinking cultures. In these cultures there are fewer perceived psycho-social problems and few strict control policies regarding alcohol use.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, regulations are hardening. In Spain in 2002, for example, the government introduced a law, backed by heavy fines, banning drinking in the streets and the sale of alcohol to people less than 18 years old. Such laws reflect a growing moral panic towards rowdy youth street-drinking, known as the Botellón, and concern over recent figures which showed that 76 per cent of people between the age of 14 and 18 consume alcohol. This country, which has pursued a rather liberal approach to social control in the post-Franco era where children have been allowed freedom to drink, is now showing evidence of turning towards the United States model of banning alcohol to those under 21 years of age.<sup>48</sup>

In the UK, the government has been involved with the regulation of the sale and distribution of alcoholic drinks since the thirteenth century due to concerns about beer purity, price and public order. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, licensing magistrates were granted absolute powers to refuse or grant new licenses for pubs, taverns and hostleries where there was deemed to be sufficient 'need' in order to control what was seen as the 'odious and loathsome sin of drunkenness'.<sup>49</sup> These archaic laws have remained with very few amendments for almost two centuries, and licensing magistrates still wield power in the control and development of the night-time economy despite their non-elected and non-representative status. They are often highly dependent on police information and intelligence about particular persons, places and premises and are criticised for being out of touch with current trends in youth, popular cultures and urban development.



Many magistrates rely on stereotypes of young people and nightlife and have little direct experience of the activities for which they are legislating.

However, this seems set to change in the near future. By the 1990s, there was a growing awareness that licensing magistrates were interpreting 'need' in a way which was protecting the interests of existing license holders, and restricting competition.<sup>50</sup> In this context, the judiciary were encouraged to balance the needs of the free market and the demand for urban regeneration, with those of controlling potential disorder and disruption. More fundamentally, the whole licensing system has been reviewed through the White Paper 'A Time for Reform', much of which is aimed at simplifying procedures for the sale of alcohol and entertainment, encouraging more and later nightlife activity, while at the same time granting tough new powers for police, and transferring more responsibility to the local state.<sup>51</sup> While the judiciary has often upheld the status quo and controlled competition, many groups have voiced concerns over this shift in power. There is a recognition that magistrates at least provide independent judgement, anchored within a legal framework, while conflicts of interest may arise within the local state as it tries to balance economic development with public need.<sup>52</sup>

Legislating the night, then, is an arena of conflict between established and emerging styles of governance. In many cities with tough working-class, industrial images, the authorities have kept a tight control over the development of nightlife due to concerns over violence, guns, drugs and underage drinking. Such fears seemed partially founded in the case of Manchester in the UK. Experiencing a rapid growth of nightlife in the 1990s, it was also widely dubbed 'Gunchester' due to gang violence in its clubland.<sup>53</sup> However, most large urban areas have actively transformed themselves from their industrial pasts through a business-led quangocracy, and in such places established groups have succumbed to a more deregulated and pro-growth approach to the night-time economy. In cities such as Leeds, Glasgow and Manchester, for example, which have actively transformed themselves from their industrial pasts, especially through the development of business-led and entrepreneurial partnerships, the licensing judiciary have accepted more liberal licensing arrangements. The following quote reflects the views of one independent bar owner from Leeds in terms of the effects of a more liberal attitude to nightlife licensing: 'In Leeds ... the diversity of bars is incredible. You can go out till 6.30 in the morning and it doesn't mean that anyone goes crazy, it just means you can have a more buoyant culture'.

### **Policing the Night**

Any discussion of the role the police play in nightlife needs to be situated

historically. Harring suggests that the police largely emerged from the class struggle of industrial capitalism and are part of the broader development of capitalist social institutions.<sup>54</sup> In particular, from the point of view of commercial employers, middle-class residents and religious and temperance groups, the police were seen as essential in upholding morality in the emerging industrial city, including nightlife. While policing only became formalised in the nineteenth century, in countries such as the UK their role in regulating the night dates back to the fourteenth century, when parish constables were given duties to regulate alehouses and taverns.<sup>55</sup> In the United States, historically, police attitudes to nightlife activity were mixed, as constables could often be found in saloons having a beer, and simultaneously monitoring the behaviour of locals.<sup>56</sup>

Within the contemporary night-time economy, the police have adopted a more systematic, sober and professionalised approach, and largely fulfil a dual role: advising on the development of licensed premises and directly policing nightlife. In effect, they simultaneously pursue a moral and coercive role.<sup>57</sup> This latter role has come under stark relief due to concerns over public disorder from increases in nightlife activity. In the UK, for example, the image of 'lager-fuelled youth' has become commonplace in the media, which has led to legislation aimed at shutting down 'thug pubs' and curtailing drink-fuelled violence and vandalism.<sup>58</sup> Framing the night through such discourses of disorder has led the police to embark upon a crusade to crack down on perpetrators and 'clean up' the night.

However, these impending law and order crises and concern with moral decline, overlook a long history of street violence and crime.<sup>59</sup> Additionally, the extent to which the police can claim absolute control over the night is always open to contestation.<sup>60</sup> Night-time spaces are inherently difficult to police, monitor and control as they are subject to flux, instability and constant renegotiation by the fluid movement of consumers. Police investigations here often have to unravel encounters which are framed through a cocktail of drugs (both legal and illegal) and emotionally charged behaviour. Nightlife is evasive, fleeting and fast paced, which repels the order that modern day policing relies upon. Many nightlife spaces are indeed 'no go' areas for police.

Police attitudes to nightlife vary and, in many cases, views on liberalisation and de-regulation often reflect the nature of their relationship with other groups such as the local state, the business sector and religious groups. Young describes how police in Newcastle in the north of England have historically dealt with drunkenness in highly gender-specific ways, much of which relates to time-honoured institutionally imbued cultures of drinking amongst male police officers themselves.<sup>61</sup> In localities which have embraced a more pro-business approach to development and the 24-hour

city, the police have moved away from narrow law and order discourses and have taken on board more liberal interpretations. A central part of such moves has been the acceptance of staggered closing hours as a method for dissipating late night flashpoints and violence. The police are also cognisant of the influence of design on nightlife violence. One police officer told us 'you can influence people's behaviour, because you can design out the problems'. Hence, the police are keen to back café bars and stylish, themed venues, where people are seated and alcohol is mixed with food. Nightlife cultures in continental Europe are often used as a preferred model here. In contrast, large 'super pubs' described as supporting MVVD (Male Volume Vertical Drinking), and so-called 'vertical drinking, bar-discos' based around cheap alcohol promotions, overcrowding, poor light, loud music, dry ice and lack of female toilets, are identified by the police as the source of most problems and have been subject to tight control and surveillance.

However, problems including anti-social behaviour, outbursts of violence, excessive and underage alcohol consumption, urinating and vomiting in the streets remain, whatever the type of nightlife. Many police forces have been unprepared for the scale of growth in nightlife, and compared to other large sports and music events, street nightlife receives comparatively few resources. This has led them to seek complementary methods to police the city at night. In particular there has been the emergence of what Newburn has called 'new security networks' which involve hybrid, and increasingly privatised, policing networks.<sup>62</sup> Private door security firms and doormen (or bouncers) play a key role in such networks, who in general outnumber police by a ratio of 10:1 in many downtown areas at peak times. There has been a departure from the old style tactics of containment and confinement, towards focused use of officers in conjunction with wider urban surveillance networks.

CCTV plays a crucial role here yet its role as an effective tool for policing the city is hotly contested.<sup>63</sup> The effects of CCTV are beyond that of mere crime prevention and there is little doubt that it has changed the individual's experience of the street. While this so-called 'silver bullet' of crime prevention has brought cost savings and reductions in crime, it has wider implications as a '1984' style Big Brother tool which induces conformity and abolishes the potential for deviance.<sup>64</sup> In this sense, it assumes deviance is a taken for granted part of urban life, and seeks to manage it and appoint blame rather than looking at its causes. Although reported support for CCTV is debatable and is often based upon dubious surveys,<sup>65</sup> as Bannister, Fyfe and Kearns point out CCTV is popular as it feeds off a 'fear of difference' and the unpredictability of collective behaviour.<sup>66</sup> Hence, it is used to further the privatisation and purification of public space. Those opposed to CCTV outline a number of alternative

strategies involving self-policing by repopulating streets, coupled with a greater diversity of downtown activities and sense of civic responsibility.

Police are also increasingly channelling their work through multi-agency teams and partnerships comprising local councils, licensees and door security, which aim to tackle some of the root causes of late night disorder. One of the remaining issues for the police is reconciling their agenda, of maintaining law and order, with those of larger nightlife operators, who have a legally binding and fiduciary obligation to maintain commercial profits for shareholders. Here, there is a growing recognition that nightlife companies, especially the larger branded venues who sell alcohol in significant amounts, must take some responsibility for late night disorder, for example through financial contributions to policing. As one police officer commented: 'I think the breweries have a major role to play [in nightlife disorder] ... at the end of the day they're creating the problem by selling drink to people in excess, so they get drunk. So there's a problem there and they [brewers and pub operators] should be dealing with it not the Police.'

Many smaller, alternative, independently owned venues, rather than using formal policing methods and relying on door security, draw upon self-regulation through customer identification with the ethos of the premises, which include a more liberal approach to dress codes and a blurring of the consumer-producer divide. Yet, the police often view alternative venues as 'deviant', particularly in terms of illegal drug use, despite their better record in terms of a lack of violence. Nightlife wedded more to the working-class industrial city, such as market taverns, ale houses and saloons, are perceived by the police to be inhabited by what has been described as the urban 'underclass',<sup>67</sup> and hence are often regarded as sites of criminality, violence and debauchery, worthy only of containment or surveillance.

Policing styles in the contemporary nightlife economy, then, reflect different nightlife contexts. While alternative and oppositional nightlife such as squats and free parties are often policed out of existence for being 'illegal', rough working-class places are treated with suspicion and interventionist policing. However, in other contexts, especially the world of downtown, corporate-led, branded nightlife, the police no longer treat nightlife just as a source of vice and crime, but have acknowledged its role in profit, growth and employment in the post-industrial city. Policing roles here are not so much about controlling the morality of the industrial working classes, but supervising the pleasure-seeking of the young and the wealthy. However, in general the police find it difficult to grasp the wider social significances of drinking and drunkenness for young people beyond those of disorder and moral decline.<sup>68</sup> Policing urban nightlife, then, is caught between competing discourses of law and order and the imperatives of growth.

And while there is some evidence that the police at a local level show some willingness to understand socio-cultural phenomena such as drug and dance culture, new legislation is also emerging which is constraining the parameters for acceptable nightlife activity across the board. In the UK for example, the 1997 Public Entertainments Licences (Misuse of Drugs) Act was introduced to tackle drug use at dance events and allows local authorities to revoke the licenses of clubs that have a 'drug problem', while the Criminal Justice and Police Act (2001) gives police powers to shut down problem venues and issue on-the-spot penalties for disorderly behaviour as well as ushering in powers to clamp down on public and underage drinking. Moreover, legislation such as the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994) and the Terrorism Act (2000) has severely restricted certain forms of activity, especially the right to assemble, protest and party. Similarly in Australia, the New South Wales Ministry of Police issued a Code of Practice for Dance Parties (1998), which, although not as restrictive as anti-rave legislation in UK, has sought to contain dance culture within legitimate sites, and hence curtail smaller-scale, illegal rave spaces.<sup>69</sup>

### **Changing Times on the Door? Bashers, Bouncers and Style Selectors**

Bouncer is a very old fashioned term for somebody who used to be a big gorilla. Originally that's all the job was in the 1960s. You just had to be able to bash people. And now obviously it's changed an awful lot and it's a highly skilled job. (Door Staff Manager).

Door supervisors, otherwise known as 'bouncers', play a key role in regulating night-time activity. As Hobbs *et al.* have outlined, the 'culture of the door' has long been pervaded by violence, physical force and intimidation and this culture is still very much alive.<sup>70</sup> However, the actual operation of door staff has begun to change over the last few decades, supplementing the still pervasive 'hardman', with 'door pickers' and 'style selectors'. Door supervision in general has become more professionalised. In the UK, this trend is being encouraged through local authority Door Registration Schemes, and also the National Security Industry Authority, which has established a register of approved providers of security industry services. Similarly, in the United States, more than one million people have undertaken Training for Intervention Procedures (TIPS), a nationally certified programme organised by Health Communications Inc. which is designed to teach bartenders, managers, security personnel and consumers of alcohol how to prevent intoxication, drink driving, underage drinking and alcohol abuse. TIPS certification lowers the premium bars and restaurants pay on liquor liability insurance, and hence in most licensed venues it is a

requirement for employment. Due to the high number of alcohol-related deaths on college campuses, a particular focus of TIPS has been educating university students about responsible drinking.

The basic job of door staff however remains deciding upon the suitability of customers to maintain order and the commercial viability of licensed venues, using both violent and non-violent tactics.<sup>71</sup> They are the definitive gatekeepers of the night-time economy who ensure a connection between venue ambience and clientele. As one door security member interviewed commented:

It's the constant problem of trying to ram square pegs in round holes isn't it? We know that there are certain people that are comfortable and right for a dance-based venue and there are certain people where you put them in a café-based place. So yeah we don't just slam people in at all, it's got to be thought about.

Door cultures still vary significantly. Many old industrial cities which have a lingering tradition of tough, male dominated working-class nightlife are often regarded as behind the times.<sup>72</sup> As one member of a door security team operator explained: 'we seem to be a little bit more closeted, we live in our own little world here. You will probably find that the door staff they have got working on the doors have been working there for 10/15/20 years'. The link between door cultures and criminal cultures is still clear enough, especially in localities flavoured by a hard, working-class history. In Newcastle in the UK, for example, 38 door staff had police files, while Morris outlined that in both Tyne and Wear and Merseyside criminal groups forced 'existing door supervisors, through intimidation and extreme violence, to "pay" them a "tax" for running a door, whilst also requiring them to allow "approved" drug dealers to operate in the premises under their supervision'.<sup>73</sup> Lister *et al.* outline how many door staff operate with an ambivalent relationship towards the formal law.<sup>74</sup> When complaint cases of assault arise, very rarely are bouncers successfully prosecuted owing to collusion amongst door staff, police empathy, the victim's perceived risk of intimidation, and problems of drunkenness which leads to poor quality evidence.<sup>75</sup>

Clearly, different types of nightlife venues have their own set of entry requirements, expectations and subtle forms of discrimination at the door based on age, appearance, social class, gender, ethnicity and sexuality.<sup>76</sup> One of the most visible differences in door cultures is between more mainstream, branded and alternative, independent venues. While many busy downtown, mainstream venues view strong-arm tactics as necessary, due to problems such as underage drinking, excessive alcohol consumption and violence, many alternative venues do not use door supervisors at all, relying more on self-regulation. Images associated with alternative or fringe venues based

around particular musical styles, sexual preferences or ethnicities act as effective forms of self-policing and many venues form an 'extended family' or 'community' which literally helps the venue to police itself and detract unwelcome clientele. Such forms of self-regulation create subtle forms of 'autosurveillance' in which consumers internalise a set of codes, assumptions and expected behaviours.<sup>77</sup> The peripheral location of many alternative venues also creates a sort of self-policing and reduces the chances of infiltration and disruption by unexpected groups of consumers.

With the rapid growth and diversification in nightlife, door staff have had to respond to the introduction of new venue concepts and wider shifts in music and youth cultural styles. In particular, as young people express a more eclectic 'mix and match' approach to style and appearance, it is more difficult for bouncers to make simple judgements about clientele based on just their initial appearance. However, in some localities and types of venues, many door staff still adhere to established nightlife style conventions such as 'no jeans, no trainers', 'no skinheads', 'no visible tattoos' policies, which in such eclectic times, where links between style and social structure are more complex, raises a whole host of problems for identifying the 'right sort of people'.

Many door policies in central areas are encouraging an 'upgrading' of styles and appearances.<sup>78</sup> Much of this upward drift is due to a number of perceived, yet extremely problematic, links between style and behaviour. As one city centre bar owner interviewed, commented: 'We do really push for reasonably smart dress purely because if people have made the effort to get dressed up they're not going to be causing trouble. They don't want to wreck their clothes'. Here, more exclusive venues use 'door pickers' in conjunction with bouncers to implement 'hyper-selective' style barriers. Such upgrading of door policies are generally attempts to sanitise consumer markets and price-out 'trouble' from the market. This has a number of implications for diversity and access, not least in relation to provision for poorer groups. At the same time, basic criteria for non-entry, such as the 'wrong' style or excessive drunkenness, are often disregarded by managers of large, busy corporate nightlife venues who are under tremendous pressure to fill the venue and maximise beer sales.

Door cultures, then, have to reflect a complex interplay of styles and aspirations of consumer cultures, a need for order and the dictates of corporate owners. As a result, 'informal' door cultures, where access is maintained through community and networks of trust, 'rational' door cultures based around strict delineations between types of consumers and types of venues, and 'hyper-selective' door cultures which are more subtle, yet equally coercive, all co-exist within contemporary urban nightlife. As housing, labour and leisure markets continue to be upgraded in central areas, the 'door' will increasingly become a mechanism for distinction and exclusion.

### **The Makers and Rakers of Urban Nightlife**

A number of institutional players, who come together through a complex set of inter-relationships, profit from urban nightlife developments and thus have a keen interest in how nightlife is governed. First, a small number of leisure merchants have emerged to dominate the ownership, distribution and consumption of nightlife.<sup>79</sup> Second, an equally small number of land, property and real estate developers and managers back such large entertainment conglomerates, especially through complexes drawing together a number of corporate tenants. In some cases, these companies are one and the same, with entertainment giants such as Sony, Disney and Warner becoming shrewd real estate developers. In the UK, property developers Urban Splash were among the first to recognise that redundant buildings could be adapted for new residential and entertainment uses, and have spearheaded a new wave of developments which have brought wealthy professionals back downtown looking for the buzz of city living.

Further, Scottish and Newcastle PLC have taken a leading role in developing sizeable urban entertainment destinations. It has been closely involved in Birmingham's £75m, 25-acre *Star City* Leisure complex, which features four of its branded bar outlets amongst an assortment of multiplexes, bowling alleys and restaurants, and is planning other *Star City* developments in Spain. Similarly, the Heron Corporation is developing a new generation of urban entertainment centres across Europe, called *Heron City*, in Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Stockholm. Also spearheading this spate of new leisure-retail-nightlife complexes are companies such as Land Securities, redevelopers of Birmingham's notorious Bullring, who with fixed assets in excess of £8.3bn is one of Britain's leading real estate companies. Third, a whole set of corporate financiers, venture-capitalist and pension fund operators, have recognised the potential gains to be made from lifestyle nightlife destinations, especially those which are branded and hence risk-averse. Finally, the local state has come to profit from this area, mainly through selling land and raising tax revenue from these middle-class consumption ghettos.

National regulations entail different opportunities for those who profit from urban nightlife. In the UK re-monopolisation and reconcentration has occurred with a small number of large, often multinational, companies dominating ownership, with independent operators and local brewers increasingly squeezed.<sup>80</sup> However, regulatory laws in countries such as Germany and Belgium are more supportive to local producers, and in North America the established system of brew pubs promotes a slightly more deconcentrated nightlife market to a certain degree.

Well-organised and vocal trade associations and lobbying groups have emerged to influence the current development of nightlife. One of the most



powerful of these is the Portman Group in the UK, an independent company established in 1989 comprising the world's largest alcohol producers such as Bacardi, Scottish and Newcastle and Interbrew. While the company's stated aim is to 'reduce the misuse of alcohol', the Portman Group has been an effective vehicle for ensuring that large alcohol providers are portrayed as responsible corporate citizens and that their needs are taken on board by government. Further, the Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers (ALMR) was set up in 1994 in the UK to promote the growing number of independent multiple retailers. ALMR now exists as a strong lobby group for licensed retail companies (tenanted and leased pub estates, the retail divisions of brewers) and key suppliers of goods and service (brewers, distributors and support services). A similar group exists in the nightclub sector through the British Entertainment and Discotheque Association (BEDA). The net effect of such groups has been more effective lobbying for large, established capital interests in terms of influencing the national regulatory terrain for nightlife.

Small-scale, independent operators have been less successful in mobilising and creating a sectoral voice in such a regulatory landscape, and as a result their views are not as readily heard. Nevertheless, the independent sector has created its own organisations. In the UK, longstanding lobby and advocacy groups such as Licensed Victuallers' Associations, the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA) and the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) campaign to maintain the traditional nature of British pub and beer culture. Many clusters of small operators have also joined forces to lobby for their rights. In Leeds, for example, the growing number of independent bars formed the Leeds Café Bar Association while a number of cutting edge nightclubs formed the Leeds Nightclub Association, both of which felt a need to voice their needs and their concerns about encroaching corporate influence in the city's nightlife.

Finally, there are those who actually work in the nightlife industry, including managers, bar staff, cleaners, promoters, DJs and so on. In the UK it has been estimated that the nightlife sector (including brewing, bars and clubs) directly and indirectly employs 830,000 people.<sup>81</sup> The growth of nightlife has opened up financial opportunities for many people, especially young people looking to 'double-job' or supplement income. This is not just in terms of bar work, but also in terms of more creative jobs such as interior design and music. However, the Low Pay Commission in the UK outlined that 40 per cent of people employed in the hospitality sector are paid below the minimum wage, the highest of any sector in the economy.<sup>82</sup> On a more personal level, work here is often mundane and disempowering, and very rarely are the voices of many people working within the industry heard at all in the debate about nightlife. The disconnection which is evident

between the head offices of large nightlife conglomerates and their individual venues is often reflected in customer relations. As a young reveller commented to us: 'Go to most bars and staff will be on £3.50 an hour. Their bosses are somewhere in the Shetland Islands that don't know their name and they're just on a payroll and you can see that in somebody's face'. The realities of working in the nightlife sector, then, for all but a few successful entrepreneurs equates to long hours, few entitlements, low pay and little or no say in how the industry is run.

### **The Local State and the Entrepreneurial Nightlife City**

It is now common parlance to suggest that the local state has added a more entrepreneurial, promotional and partnership role to its more mundane task of 'managing' social welfare.<sup>83</sup> Such shifts are part of a wider restructuring of institutional arrangements across the West, and in conjunction with the transformation from mass production to one of 'flexible accumulation',<sup>84</sup> there has been a rolling back of the 'welfarist' state in terms of its powers of economic intervention, and in its style of governance. In both the UK and the US, cash-strapped city councils has increasingly been supplanted by various quangos (quasi autonomous non-governmental organisations),<sup>85</sup> public-private partnership schemes and corporations to stimulate economic development, or have become increasingly dependent on attracting mobile corporate capital investment.<sup>86</sup>

This shift towards a more active, business-led, entrepreneurial local state is now a common feature not just of mainstream economic development but also of the cultural and night-time economies. Many cities have sought to reinvent themselves as places of consumption dependent on a diverse and vibrant 'after dark' economy, partly as a response to a rapidly changing post-industrial populous<sup>87</sup> and shifting patterns of investments towards the 'symbolic' economy<sup>88</sup> and lifestyle brands.<sup>89</sup> Localities which have been at the forefront of the emergence of 'cool' economies have been those which have promoted a liberal, business-led partnership, and market-driven approach. In places such as Glasgow, Melbourne and Barcelona, nightlife activity is now heralded as an integral part of the new post-industrial urban economy as much as the business or retail park. However, many older, industrial localities have neither the infrastructure nor the clientele to fuel a 24-hour cultural economy and have found it difficult to create a more cosmopolitan image due to a lack of a critical mass of professional classes and a strong tradition of highly gendered and masculine nightlife cultures.<sup>90</sup>

This 'entrepreneurial turn' signifies a shifting balance of power between the local state and capital interests. The erosion of national or local government's ability to control and regulate the activity of capital interests

is well-documented.<sup>91</sup> In the UK, for example, the government used to have powers to dismantle any commercial enterprise ‘tending to the common grievance, prejudice and inconvenience of His Majesty’s subjects’; however the state has largely renounced this historic role and refuses to interfere with the operation of the free market.<sup>92</sup> In particular, the emergence of public-private partnerships encourages the local state to come into line with the needs of business and creates platforms from which business elites can exercise political influence.<sup>93</sup> Fundamentally, then, the deregulation of nightlife is part of the reassertion of capital and the renewal of new forms of capital accumulation.<sup>94</sup>

Urban nightlife has become a visible example of this process in which capitalist enterprises, aided by a new business-friendly state, can seek out new profit arenas. Many large property developers, land owners and nightlife operators receive public subsidies for renovating and expanding buildings for entertainment and nightlife use. As one city council employee in the UK stated:

The role of the local authority is to create the conditions in which developers can invest so as to stack up fairly major sites ... inevitably PLCs [Public Limited Companies] are going to be the ones who come forward ... So I think the effort of the city at the moment is behind large scale development proposals.

The fact is, many urban governments have little room for manoeuvre because of their own declining financial position in relation to central government funding, restrictions on raising local revenue, and various protocols ensuring they get value for money whenever development opportunities involve the sale of public land. The local state is increasingly using the rhetoric of access, creativity and diversity associated with the idea of the 24- (or 18-) hour economy, to ‘court’ big national corporate operators, getting the best deal on public land-sites and, understandably, happy to fill up what were once derelict and empty buildings.

While it is not the remit of local authorities to inhibit or encourage certain types of activity, this is not to suggest that city councils are somehow entirely powerless to influence the nature of nightlife development. Local planning policies and guidelines are critical in deciding types of uses and the local state is responsible for granting a variety of entertainment and liquor permits. Yet, planning powers are extremely blunt instruments and in many cases can be easily overturned. The local state does, however, have to balance their entrepreneurial role with the more mundane management of the side-effects of the night-time economy, such as noise and litter. Many councils have established legislation to restrict the growth of late night venues in so called ‘stress areas’ and have introduced bylaws to curb

drinking alcohol in the streets. Westminster City Council in London, with the unenviable job of managing Soho, for example, has a tough reputation for restricting night venues to reduce noise and disturbances. However, such restrictions are difficult to implement and several large leisure groups have challenged and overturned decisions in High Court appeals. For example, Westminster Council introduced a policy of no new 'Public Entertainment Licences' or variations to existing licences after 1am. However, Chorion Lesiure appealed against such restrictions for its bar The Loop in the West End and was granted a 3am license by the Licensing Magistrates. Westminster City Council appealed to the Crown Court and subsequently the bar's hours were reduced back to 1am. However, the High Court found the Crown Court's decision wrong and ordered a 3am licence to be issued. Chorion was later awarded costs against the Council.<sup>95</sup>

Many small-scale, local entrepreneurs find it difficult to find a place within this new night-time economy geared towards meeting the needs of large-scale, corporate capital. Such operators face further problems as they are regarded as unknown or 'risky' entities, while national/international operators are seen as a 'safe bet' in terms of credibility, financial situation and policing methods such as mandatory use of door staff. Moreover, alehouses, taverns and saloons which provide leisure options for working-class groups do not feature in the priorities of large corporate operators or the entrepreneurial local state, which are both eager to change the image of downtown areas away from their industrial past and instead court the wealthier post-industrial service classes.

### **Waking up the Neighbourhood**

Ultimately, one stumbling block for the de-regulation of the night-time economy comes with the clashes which emerge between night-time revellers and local residents. Where nightlife activity has grown in central and suburban areas, residents have become more vocal participants within the governance debate. In particular, as suburbanisation and the growth of decentred, polycentric areas continue apace, places far from downtown areas are becoming nightlife destinations in their own right. These areas are often more attractive to developers due to the saturation of city centre markets, cheaper property and less restrictive licensing, and a side-stepping of the disadvantages of central areas such as over crowding, violence and lack of late night travel.

Many traditional residential and suburban areas are becoming saturated with late-night bars, pubs, restaurants and multiplexes. This is partly associated with the clustered growth of nightlife active groups such as university students, young professionals and couples in more cosmopolitan

and transitional parts of large cities.<sup>96</sup> Growth usually occurs along established arterial routes, many of which are near university campuses or halls of residence, and examples in the UK include Clifton in Bristol, Jesmond in Newcastle, Headingley in Leeds, Selly Oak in Birmingham and Chorlton in Manchester. In many places, growth of this nature has provoked a strong response from established, older and wealthy residents. One paper in Newcastle ran the headline 'Drinkers Turn Upmarket Suburb into "a Hell Hole"'.<sup>97</sup> Meanwhile, in Bristol, vocal residents associations successfully opposed several nightlife developments at public inquiries, drawing upon letter-writing campaigns, testimonies and covert video footage, winning a landmark decision from the local authority to restrict the granting of new licenses to places which also serve substantial meals along with alcohol.

Many old industrial cities across the UK, North America and continental Europe have also encouraged a rapid, if selective, repopulation of downtown areas which has created tensions between partying and living. Initially this trend is often spearheaded by gentrifying pioneers such as artists, writers and students. As such groups increase the bohemian feel and amenity value of an area, higher-income groups quickly move in. This continued growth of wealthy professional classes in central areas displaces many of the traditional lower-income residents, and stimulates demand for a variety of central amenities, including exclusive, stylish nightlife activity.<sup>98</sup> Ironically, although these new gentrifiers are often extensive users of city centre nightlife, they are also the most articulate and vocal in asserting their objections to its negative aspects, such as noise, disorder and vandalism.

In spite of small victories which residents might gain, their perception is that licensing procedures are heavily weighted in favour of the trade, its legal advisors, statutory agencies and the court who all use the system regularly. The public in whose name the whole process is said to be necessary is seldom mentioned and is uncertain how to participate effectively. Nor are the laws framed to take into account the cumulative effect of granting a large number of licences in one area on the rest of that environment.

### **Consumers, Self Regulation and Consumer Democracy**

Finally, consumers of nightlife are rarely, if ever, included in the governance equation. This is not surprising considering the complex array of motivations for a night out, which range from quiet socialising to hedonism, escapism and creative engagement, through for example performing, dancing or playing music. Nevertheless, one of the problems is that groups such as the police, local authorities and licensing magistrates have little understanding of the range of social groups, styles, identities and divisions

within the night-time economy. Such an understanding is useful so that, for example, real sources of crime and violence can be separated from mere high spirits. It also seems fair to suggest that those subject to regulations should have some input into their formation. Yet, how this is to be achieved is unclear, and there are few examples of regulators consulting consumers as to what their views are on solving problems, let alone defining them. Moreover, the mainstream press is also susceptible to villainising young people for some of the excesses within nightlife.<sup>99</sup>

One concern is that the police and the local state often restrict nightlife options as they adopt a paternalistic, and often patronising, approach towards certain consumers. As one consumer commented: 'I don't know what the council think, "we can't risk it"?' But that is on the assumption that everyone is going to get pissed, that they're going to start trouble. It's a bit insulting really like.' In particular, there are few opportunities for young people in city centres outside of the narrowly defined 'consumption experiences'.<sup>100</sup> Specific groups of young people such as goths, punks and skaters are generally stereotyped and subject to police harassment, mainly due to their outwardly different appearance and perceptions that their presence will have a negative effect on retail.<sup>101</sup> Younger people have fewer and fewer reasons to be in cities if they are not 'consumers'. Many parts of city centres at night, then, are largely alcohol-fuelled consumption ghettos with few public, flexible, mixed-age places.

## Conclusions

What this article has highlighted are the substantial changes over the last few decades in the governance of nightlife. While the organisation and control of urban nightlife has shifted from a rather straightforward, control-oriented set of mechanisms towards a seemingly more complex, 'governance' approach, the interests of capital accumulation and the more well-off are clearly dominant. In particular, the needs of acquisitive nightlife corporations and developers have increasingly come first, aided by a more compliant and entrepreneurial local state. Attempts by the local state to restrict the growth of late-opening nightlife to protect the interests of local residents and other forms of nightlife are increasingly overturned by large companies backed with significant legal capacities. Similarly, although central government remains a key actor in regulating nightlife through the development of national legislation on planning, land use, liquor and entertainment licensing, a small number of well-organised global entertainment and nightlife conglomerates and their brands are able effectively to mobilise and shape such national legislative frameworks. Similarly, while there have been voices of dissent, including more vocal

residents groups and over-stretched police forces, most groups have begun to embrace the 'new consensus' of profit-making first, and dealing with social problems second. In this sense, there is evidence of a legacy of more historical modes co-existing with newer sets of priorities, and hence impulses towards both re-regulation (to maintain law and order, especially in terms of certain groups regarded as more troublesome) and de-regulation (to stimulate economic development).

These more entrepreneurial and pro-business forms of governance have a number of consequences for the existence of other types of nightlife. First, there is little input from nightlife consumers, and many small-scale, local entrepreneurs find it difficult to find a place within the nightlife economy geared towards meeting the needs of large-scale, non-local capital. Small scale, independent operators face further problems as they are regarded as unknown or 'risky' entities by the judiciary, police and local state, while corporate operators are seen as a 'safe bet' in terms of credibility, financial situation and policing methods such as mandatory use of door staff.

However, alternative venues often have a different set of parameters which include a more liberal approach to dress codes, a blurring of the consumer-producer divide and, rather than the use of formal door security, self-regulation through customer identification with the ethos of the premises. Further, oppositional/resistant forms of nightlife (squats, free parties, raves and so on) open up avenues of enquiry concerning more democratic and participatory forms of regulation.<sup>102</sup> However, such alternative nightlife places also face several challenges. For example, many long-standing alternative venues are under threat because of the changing priorities of nightlife operators eager to switch their venues to branded operations. Many alternative spaces also attract suspicion and suffer from criminalisation from the local state, police and judiciary. Free parties and raves also contain their own problems, contradictions and hierarchies, not least their incorporation into commercial culture. Second, residual nightlife largely connected to the industrial city, such as market taverns or alehouses are often regarded as 'dens of inequity', or sites of criminality, violence and debauchery, worthy only of containment or surveillance. Such places provide a leisure outlet for people increasingly not provided for in the corporate city centre, but they will largely be swept away by the entrepreneurial nightlife city.

In sum, then, there seems to be an air of inevitability, or macro-necessity, in terms of how urban nightlife should, or could, be developed.<sup>103</sup> Adherence to certain criteria, such as officially defined law and order, economic development and inward investment, have become essential for official acceptance by the judiciary, the local state and developers, which has marginalised more radical nightlife possibilities. The general orientation of

nightlife remains geared towards profit rather than creative expression, equality and access. Regulatory laws and practices still largely fail to address the core of the problem – the lack of a diverse range of nightlife activities, the increasing influence of profit-oriented corporate nightlife operators, and a predominance of commercially driven alcohol drinking cultures.

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