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Young People, Alcohol and Suburban Nightscapes

In this chapter, I draw on an ethnographic study exploring the alcohol consumption practices and experiences of young people, aged 15-24. I move beyond the contemporary geographical imaginary of drinking as a city centre issue¹ to unpack marginal/peripheral drinkscales, including bars, pubs, parks, and streets in the suburban areas of Wythenshawe and Chorlton, Manchester, UK. In doing so, I demonstrate that suburban drinking is a diverse and heterogeneous practice, and there are clear classed spaces that young people move between for their drinking experiences. Young people favour the ability to vary the spaces of their alcohol consumption practices; this can be influenced by factors, such as duration of time since payday. More than this, young people use their perception of the ‘classed other’² to justify socio-spatial processes of inclusion and exclusion from nightscales; for instance, proclaiming that consuming alcohol in parks is “chavvy”. Whilst much of the existing literature is concerned with how moral judgments about the working-class are used to justify socio-spatial processes of exclusion³, young people in my study also offer examples of the opposite occurring. That is, some young people discuss avoiding certain commercial suburban nightscales on the basis that they are “pretentious”, “kooky”, or “posh”. In addition to expressing disapproval over certain types of people frequenting commercial premises, young people contend that encounters with material culture and sensual atmospheres have the ability to pull them out of place; for instance, wonky pool tables, and particular smellscales and soundscales. First, I provide an overview on literature concerning spaces of drinking. Subsequently, I detail my methodology, before going on hear from young people regarding their perceptions of suburban commercial and outdoor drinkscales. Finally, this chapter is drawn to a close.

Spaces of Drinking

Young people’s transitions to adulthood are bound up with relationships with drinking spaces. Through reviewing literature, which highlights young people’s use of diverse drinkscales, including parks and streets, I go beyond the contemporary geographical imaginary of drinking as predominantly a city centre issue⁴.

Urban Drinking Spaces

The contemporary geographical imaginary of drinking is predominantly one of a city centre issue, typified by a large body of work on the night-time economy⁵. ‘Night-time economy’ is a term used to describe an expansion in the number of bars and clubs operating with extended licenses into the early hours of the mornings⁶. This work has been useful in addressing

important issues relating to young people's experiences of alcohol, drinking and drunkenness: for instance, safety; security; and policing. Writers on the night-time economy, Chatterton and Hollands⁷, explore "urban playscapes"; that is, young people's activities in pre-formed drinking spaces of bars, pubs, clubs and music venues within the night-time entertainment economy. The focus of Chatterton and Hollands⁸ paper is threefold: production, regulation and consumption. With regard to production, Chatterton and Hollands⁹ argue that large-scale corporate leisure and entertainment operators are providing sanitised, 'branded' experiences. Regarding regulation, the authors argue that the development of urban playscapes can be understood through a night-time entertainment regime based around a modified relationship between state, developers and consumers, including enhanced forms of surveillance and control. Further, Chatterton and Hollands¹⁰ assert that consumption is characterised by segmentation and differentiation based around more "exclusive" and "upmarket" identities. The authors argue that the three aspects of production, regulation and consumption combine to create a dominant mode of 'mainstream' urban nightlife, with 'alternative' and 'residual' nightlife increasingly under threat, or squeezed out. This notion is discussed by Hollands¹¹, who examines the complex relationship between labour market divisions and cultural identities in the night-time economy. According to Hollands¹², although minority elements of 'hybrid' forms of identity and consumption exist, they are overshadowed by the dominance of a 'mainstream' form of nightlife provision that segregates young people into particular spaces and places.

Creating Public Drinking Spaces

According to Townshend and Robert¹³, government measures prohibiting under 18s entering pubs, bars, and clubs have been successful. This means that, whilst underage drinking in licensed premises is not as prevalent as it has been in the past, unsupervised alcohol consumption by young people is now more concealed, occurring either in private homes, or parks. According to Townshend¹⁴, studies focusing on outdoor drinking culture are rare and, consequently, the specificities of open space drinking are poorly understood.

In line with Townshend¹⁵, whilst engagement with open greenspace tends to be deemed positive for young people's health and well-being, drinking outdoors and unsupervised in parks is often considered to be a risky behaviour indulged in by teenagers. Further, Russell *et al.*¹⁶ highlight the importance of woods and fields for young people's drinking practices, as they are out of sight of police and parents. One participant in Russell *et al.*'s¹⁷ study expressed a preference for these spaces in contrast to play parks, noting that he would not wish young

children to see him drinking in case it inspired them to try alcohol. Townshend¹⁸ argues that whilst drinking in parks is a widespread practice amongst young people, many young people disapprove of this behaviour, labelling it “trampy” or “chavvy”. Elsewhere, Townshend and Roberts¹⁹ remark that many young people deem drinking in parks to be pointless, or a sign of having low esteem, and thus ‘trying to be hard’ in an attempt to camouflage this. Some participants in Townshend and Roberts’²⁰ study comment on the perceived dangers of consuming alcohol in parks, asserting that it may lead to being attacked, injured, or taken advantage of sexually; there were particular concerns about being unable to summon help. The authors show that there is an unwillingness of some young people, particularly women, to go to parks where street drinkers can dominate, or intimidate. More generally, those who admitted drinking in the park claimed it was a relatively harmless activity, and felt they were often harshly judged.

The streets are also important drinking spaces for young people who may not be permitted to consume alcohol in their home (or others’ homes), and are forbidden to consume alcohol in licensed premises (due to being underage, or barred)²¹. Penny and Room²² highlight that licensed premises are restrictive in multiple ways, including: size; smell; noise; permissible behaviour; and type of entertainment provided. Thus, whilst exclusion plays a role in decisions to drink outside, outdoor locations have a distinct appeal as places to consume alcohol²³. Street drinking enables young people to feel socially and physically unrestricted, for instance by playing games, such as football, whilst drinking. Further, drinking in outdoor locations enables young people to have a cigarette, or take drugs, whilst consuming alcohol²⁴.

There may be other reasons young people avoid certain spaces for drinking. Madriaga²⁵ highlights that some students with Asperger Syndrome find that spaces where students tend to congregate, such as student unions and pubs to be difficult spaces - due to their hypersensitivities to sounds, sights and crowds. Pennay and Room²⁶ suggest that some young people may prefer to drink in open public spaces, such as streets, because licensed premises are open to the public, and so young people cannot be selective about who they are drinking with, and may find it difficult to remain together as a group with their chosen companions. Penny and Room²⁷ point out that there have been attempts to prohibit public drinking in certain urban public spaces, via the implementation of street drinking bans. They argue that the enforcement of such bans can lead to displacement, often resulting in drinkers moving to more covert, less safe, spaces in which to drink.

Drinking spaces should not be conceptualised as static backdrops, against which drinking experiences unfold. This is recognised by Demant and Landolt²⁸, who consider young

people's alcohol consumption in Katzenplatz - a square located in Zurich, Switzerland. The authors argue that this space is not a pre-formed drinking space. Rather, it *became* a "comfortable youth drinking space", due to the "throwntogetherness" of disparate factors, including: the square's location; alcohol availability; and the privacy and intimacy afforded by the place²⁹. As the authors point out, "comfortable youth drinking space" is not the only possible event of this place; when police interrupt young people's alcohol consumption practices, the space is transformed³⁰. Further, Demant and Landolt³¹ explore alcohol consumption on the street within the vicinity of nightclubs. The authors recognise that, during a night out, young people often exit and (re)enter clubs to drink the less expensive alcohol they have hidden outside on the streets. Thus, whilst the street is not initially young people's chosen space, it is frequently visited by young people. As Demant and Landolt³² deduce, streets are considered to be more than 'going outside to grab a drink' - they are also a party zone. The authors conclude that young people 'produce space', for instance by intermingling with different young people and different subcultures at different locations, and drinking can also be said to be shaped by the specific space of inner-city drinking zones.

Notwithstanding the above work on the spaces of the park and street as drinksapes, Holloway *et al.*'s³³ contention that scholars have been somewhat fixated with pre-formed drinking spaces, such as bars, pubs and clubs - typically in city centres - still rings true. I now discuss the methodology underpinning my research.

Methodology

I first provide a brief overview of the case study locations. Wythenshawe, was created in the 1920s as a Garden City in an attempt to resolve Manchester's overpopulation problem and 'depravation' in its inner-city slums. Wythenshawe continued to develop up to the 1970s. However, the 1980s and 1990s saw steady decline, high unemployment, decaying infrastructure, crime and drug abuse problems³⁴. The area is dominated by white working-class drinking cultures. There are distinct neighbourhoods within Wythenshawe, along with a town centre with various shops, supermarkets, hairdressers, pubs and a club. Wythenshawe is a district eight miles south of Manchester city centre, and faced with relatively poor transportation links³⁵. Chorlton is a residential area approximately five miles from Manchester city centre. Chorlton is a cosmopolitan neighbourhood with traditional family areas alongside younger, vibrant communities. The area has good road and bus access to, and from, the city centre, and is situated within easy access to the motorway network. Drawing on Manchester City Council's³⁶ data, Chorlton has a higher proportion of minority ethnic residents in

comparison to Wythenshawe, and compared to the national average (19.1%, compared to the national average of 11.3%). As of November 2011, private residential property in Chorlton accounted for 90.3% of all property in the ward, much higher than the city average of 68.7%. Due to the increasing number of bars and restaurants in Chorlton, a pub watch scheme has been initiated³⁷; that is, a partnership where licensees unify as an independent group to pre-empt crime and anti-social behaviour in licensed premises. Despite the varied demographic make-up of the recruitment locations, young people exercised class-based judgments over drinking spaces *within* their case study location, emphasising the heterogeneity of the suburban drinkscape.

I recruited 40 young people for multistage qualitative research. In some respects, the sampling strategy was purposive, as I aimed to recruit 20 young people from each case study location, and aimed for an equal gender distribution. I recruited the majority of participants through gatekeepers at local schools, community organisations, youth clubs and universities. In order to reach potential participants, I also distributed flyers and business cards to houses and businesses in both case study locations; posted on discussion forums concerning both areas; used Twitter and Facebook to promote my study to locals from each area; and arranged to be interviewed by the host of a local radio station. Some young people were initially cautious about participating in my study, due to worries about others (predominantly their parents or teachers) finding out about their drinking practices. By building trust and friendship with participants³⁸, they could then tell their friends about the study and, from their first-hand experience, reassure friends that confidentiality and anonymity are strongly abided by; this is recognised as a snowballing sampling technique. With regards to my positionality, I speculate that being a young researcher (in my twenties) may have been advantageous in some respects. To explain, my age relative to those participants younger than myself is lower than that of an older researcher, and participants perhaps perceived me as being more ‘like them’, and thus were possibly more willing to divulge their drinking experiences and practices.

I had a palette of methods to utilise, and made clear to the young people that they could ‘opt in’ to whichever method(s) they wished. As Holland *et al.*³⁹ argue: ‘by enabling young people to choose *how* they wish to communicate with us we recognise them as social actors and begin to move our practice away from adult-centric procedures’. The methods I draw on in this paper include: in-depth individual and friendship interviews; drawing elicitation interviews; peer interviews; diaries; mobile phone interviews⁴⁰; and participant observation of young people’s nights in/out involving alcohol. With regard to analysing interviews, peer-interviews, and field notes, I adopted the manual method of coding by pen and paper, perceiving

that computer-assisted qualitative data analysis distances researchers from the data⁴¹. Initially, following Miles and Huberman's⁴² three stage model, a process of data reduction occurred, whereby I organised the mass of data and attempted to meaningfully reduce this. Second, I undertook a continual process of data display in the form of a table. Third, I undertook a process of conclusion drawing and verification. With regard to analysing drawings, emphasis was placed on the recorded narratives of participants accompanying their products, in the form of drawing elicitation interviews. This chimes with Barker and Smith's⁴³ contention that the interpretation of images should be undertaken with participants to ensure that their intended meanings are explored, rather than interpretive meanings given by the researcher. These data were thus also analysed utilising Miles and Huberman's⁴⁴ aforementioned procedure. Participants feature in this paper through pseudonyms, so as to conceal their identities. Yet, in order to contextualise quotations, genuine ages and locations are given.

Along with seeking approval from the University of Manchester Research Ethics Committee, what Guillemin and Gillam refer⁴⁵ to as "procedural ethics"- I also consulted, and adhered to, the ESRC's *Framework for Research Ethics*⁴⁶. My research was undertaken overtly, in which my research intentions were explained to participants prior to, and during, their involvement in the project. I informed all potential participants about the research in an accessible information sheet, and gave them two weeks 'thinking time' before deciding whether, or not, they wished to participate in the research project⁴⁷. For those under 16 years of age, alongside gaining assent from the young person, I also gained consent from parent(s)⁴⁸. Whilst ethical guidelines were useful, they, alone, were insufficient in ensuring I acted in an ethical manner. This is because ethical guidelines are not sufficient for addressing 'ethics in practice' – that is, the day-to-day ethical quandaries arising through the process of *doing* research⁴⁹. Spaces and happenings are perpetually in process, and consequently ethical incidents constantly arise⁵⁰. This necessitated me to be 'ethically reflexive'⁵¹ throughout the research process.

Diversity of Drinking Spaces

In what follows, I move beyond the contemporary imaginary of drinking as a city centre issue⁵² to unpack diverse drinksapes, including bars, pubs, streets, and parks, in the suburban areas of Wythenshawe and Chorlton, and demonstrate that young people use their perception of the 'classed other'⁵³ to justify socio-spatial processes of inclusion and exclusion from drinksapes.

Commercial Drinking Spaces

Many young people from Chorlton, above the legal drinking age, identified distinct appeals to consuming alcohol in the commercial premises in the local area; this can be seen through the following quotations:

[Showing me a video of friends drinking in the outside seating area of a bar in Chorlton]. Bars round here are kind of, normally there's somewhere to sit outside, and it's also like you can, just kind of, I don't think you have to censor what you say when you're outside. It's a nicer feel. I think when you're surrounded by people who only want to get drunk it can be like annoying, but in Chorlton people just wanna sit and have a chat and not cause a fuss. In Chorlton I either go to a bar with music and nice drink or like a proper pub where I can get a pint and its quite quiet and warm, those are my favourites

(Louisa, 22, Chorlton, mobile phone interview)

Obviously in Chorlton, there are some like really cheap places, and some like more expensive places, so sometimes that will play into it if we're kind of a bit skint towards the end of the month, we'll be like "ah, shall we go to The Marine [a pub] for a few", or if money's not a problem then there's a few nicer bars where we choose to go, so maybe like Tipples, or all the bars around Moat Road are quite nice, or kind of the new Calico's [a bar] that has opened...But we also, yeah sometimes quite enjoy going in the more rough kind of pubs, like The Langham is like really rough, don't ever go when football is on, you'll just be like "ah, I'm going to get stabbed" [laughs]. But that's when I go with my housemate because she quite likes old men's pubs, whereas I like kind of like bars and things. We go everywhere really, we don't really stick to one kind of place just like "ah, let's go here today, or let's go there"

(Evie, 24, Chorlton, interview)

Above, Louisa describes the importance of elements, such as outdoor seating, in making commercial drinksapes in Chorlton alluring. For Louisa, the ability to drink outside is liberating; because there is less of an audience when drinking outdoors, compared to indoors, she does not have to "censor" what she wishes to say. Louisa characterises the clientele in Chorlton as people who "want to have a chat". She explains that their aim is not for, what Measham and Brain⁵⁴ term, "determined drunkenness". Both Louisa and Evie highlight that the appeal of consuming alcohol in Chorlton is due to the diversity of commercial drinksapes

available. As Evie claims, Chorlton offers a range of: cheap and expensive spaces; bars and pubs; and rough and un-rough spaces. It is interesting that Evie does not necessarily equate “cheap places” as ‘good’ and “expensive places” as ‘bad’. Rather, she proclaims to favour the ability to vary the spaces of her alcohol consumption practices; this can be influenced by factors, such as duration of time since pay day. Following on from this, Evie likewise does not consider “rough” spaces as somewhere to necessarily avoid. Rather, consuming alcohol in such spaces is something she proclaims to “enjoy”. For both Louisa and Evie then, suburban drinking is a diverse and heterogeneous practice, and there are clear classed spaces that they move between for their drinking experiences.

More commonly, many young people, from both Chorlton and Wythenshawe, articulated a variety of classed reasons why they did not enjoy consuming alcohol in bars and pubs in their local areas. Consider the following comments:

I go out in the Gay Village¹ in town. It’s way cheaper and it’s just like easier. Like in Chorlton it’s like, it’s kind of busier as well, and everyone’s a little bit, not to be offensive, but everyone’s a little bit pretentious, and I’m like “really?”, like - I don’t know. I think everyone just, not everyone - that’s a really big generalisation, but I think like there’s kind of like this air of everyone thinks that they’re like, I don’t know, a little bit kooky and special, but it’s not really my thing that

(Lucie, 24, Chorlton, interview)

SW²: What do you think of the pubs in Wythenshawe?

Collin: They’re not the best, there’s a few in Wythenshawe that are full of 16/17 year olds and you get a few that are your old men pubs, as you call them, others that are people who aren’t working that just sit there all day every day, shouting and swearing at people, so it’s not the nicest place to go for a drink

(Collin, 23, Wythenshawe, interview)

¹ Manchester Gay Village is in Manchester city centre, and is populated with gay bars and restaurants.

² Researcher initials

SW: Where do you usually go to drink?

Olivia: Town, Sale, Altrincham or Stockport

SW: Why wouldn't you drink in Wythenshawe?

Scott: Cos there's pure fag heads in the pub.

SW: There's what?

Scott: Fag heads

SW: What does that mean?

Olivia: They always start fights

(Olivia and Scott, 18, Wythenshawe, friendship group interview)

In the first quotation above, Lucie - who earlier in the interview disclosed that she is a lesbian - hints that Chorlton does not offer commercial gay space, choosing instead to access Manchester's Gay Village. More than this though, Lucie expresses judgment about the kind of people that inhabit bars in Chorlton. Lucie comments on the "pretentious", "kooky" and "special" people that frequent commercial premises in Chorlton, distancing herself away from such traits. The notion that particular people can make commercial drinksapes undesirable was also a theme in young people's accounts of consuming alcohol in Wythenshawe, as exemplified above through comments made by Collin, Scott and Olivia. According to Collin, Wythenshawe predominantly has 'old man pubs', which are often frequented by the unemployed, and are consequently unappealing drinksapes for young people. Collin expresses disapproval over the types of people drinking in such spaces by highlighting their auditory capacity to offend, as they "shout" and "swear". Additionally, in the subsequent exchange, Olivia and Scott contend that they avoid going out in Wythenshawe, their local area, due to the types of people that frequent the commercial premises; that is, "fag heads" who "always start fights".

In addition to expressing disapproval over certain types of people frequenting commercial premises, young people in my study contend that encounters with material culture and sensual atmospheres have the ability to pull them out of place⁵⁵:

Teresa: I'd go to pubs and stuff like that cos I can get in The Otter but I just sit there and I just think, well I can have more fun at home, do you know what I mean?

Joanna: I think The Otter smells like old men, and the pool table's like wonky, so all the balls go to one side

(Teresa and Joanna, 16, Wythenshawe, peer interview)

I went to that Tantra [pub] one once and that was well scary. It's a bit council housey, council house people would go there I think. I just met some friends there once and yeah, it smelt like, you know like proper horrible lager. I can't cope with it. I like pubs that smell like not like they're pubs really, no I wouldn't go somewhere like that

(Coral, 24, Chorlton, interview)

The exchange above, between Teresa and Joanna, highlights the importance of the olfactory elements of drinking spaces in Wythenshawe, along with the significance of material constituents, such as the pool table. Further, Coral describes the sensory atmosphere of a pub in Chorlton that accommodates, what she describes as, "council house people". Coral exercises her "middle-class gaze"⁵⁶ and reveals her anxieties about consuming alcohol in this pub through statements of symbolic distinction (council house people) designed to hold the working-class at a physical and metaphorical distance. Unlike these "council house people", Coral is put off by the smell of the pub, and is thus secure in her boundaries that she is not them⁵⁷. Smell then, "is held to signal a dangerous proximity, which must then be guarded against, since to do otherwise would be to threaten the stability of middle-class claims of respectability"; Here middle-classness relies on the expulsion and exclusion of working-classness⁵⁸. Of course, not all young people are able to consume alcohol in commercial drinksapes, and in what follows I highlight the importance of streets and parks for such young people.

Outdoor Drinksapes

My findings show, consistent with the findings in Galloway *et al.*'s⁵⁹ study, that streets are important drinking spaces for many young people under the legal drinking age. In addition to consuming alcohol in such spaces, the street is commonly used by young people, particularly from Wythenshawe, to take drugs. Consider the following quotations:

Tonight was spent on the streets, mainly wandering around and sitting occasionally on walls. Whilst Vera and Milly were drinking whisky and coke - neatly camouflaged in a Coke bottle, Danny and Carl seemed less interested in drinking, and wanted to get some weed instead. They rang up the “drug dealer”, walked to get the weed, and then came back and joined the rest of the group. Whilst the young people’s consumption preferences differed, all the young people shared a desire to play fight; have running races; and to play loud music from their mobile phones - the street seemed to offer the ideal space for such activities

(Field diary, night out with Vera, Milly, Danny, Carl, 15-17)

Friday was good started off at the ramps [skate park] smoking ganja [cannabis] a couple of hours later we went to my friends house and rang a drug dealer got some pills and got wired³ on the streets and it was sick⁴ went home at 2.30am and got the biggest feast of my life

(Rik, 15, Wythenshawe, diary)

From my participant observation extract above, one can see that the street offers a space where young people with different consumption preferences (alcohol and/or drugs) can mix. Further, I highlight that the spatiality of the street makes it an appealing drinkscape for young people, as it enables them to engage in playful fights, running races, and to ‘claim space’ by playing music loudly from their phones⁶⁰. Additionally, through Rik’s diary entry, he highlights that streets are the “terrain of social encounters”⁶¹, enabling him to get “wired” with his friends. As Gough and Franch⁶² recognise, although in the context of Recife, Brazil, the street cannot be considered in isolation. The authors explain that people regularly move in and between the spaces of the home, the street, the neighbourhood, and the city. In the example from Rik, he describes moving between the space of the skate park; his friend’s house; the streets; and his own home. Nonetheless, it is in the street that he creates his own public realm⁶³, in order to experiment with drugs.

Whilst some young women did admit to drinking in the park, this space was more often recounted as a drinkscape by young men in my study, from both case study locations, as the following quotations from Liam, Jacob and Oliver illustrate:

³ ‘Wired’ is a term used to refer to being ‘high on stimulants’.

⁴ ‘Sick’ is a term used by some young people to refer to something which is ‘crazy’, ‘cool’, or ‘insane’.

Everyone has a park that they go to, so we had a park that we used to drink in, urm some people's parents were quite liberal in terms of letting people drink in their house, but never to the extent where people were getting smashed in their house. Any other time it would just be wherever you wouldn't get caught, and that was really it, just parks. It's just kind of that thing where you know you shouldn't be doing something but you're doing it and everyone is kind of outdoors, and everyone was together, and everybody was sort of having fun, and when you were in the park you didn't feel like you had to keep your voice down or hide things as much, you could quite openly drink, so that was probably the best thing about it really

(Liam, 18, Chorlton, interview)

It's a bit more of a rush int it drinking in the park cos it's like "what if we get caught?" that's good to know in a sense, it makes you more excited. It makes you wanna do it more so I dunno, it feels more out of order than drinking in a house

(Oliver, 16, Wythenshawe, peer interview)

Above, Liam reflects on his early drinking experiences, and suggests that the park was an appealing drinkscape; it provided an inclusive space, as everyone could have fun together. Liam contrasts the park with the space of the home. He contends that he would restrict his alcohol consumption levels at home, so as not to get "smashed". In comparison, Liam does not restrict his alcohol consumption practices in the park, and contends that he is free to express his drunkenness, such as through the volume of his speech, in this drinkscape. Rather than keeping the volume down then, in order to avert the gaze of authorities, volume of speech could be perceived as a means by which Liam affirms his presence⁶⁴. The park thus allows for what Lieberg⁶⁵ terms: "*places of retreat and places of interaction*". Such spaces, on the one hand, provide young people with an opportunity to withdraw from the adult world and to one's own friends; yet, on the other hand, provide young people with the space to "to meet and confront the adult world, to put oneself on display, to see and be seen"⁶⁶. Further, Oliver admits to enjoying consuming alcohol in parks, due to the risk of potentially getting caught, which he considers contributes to an atmosphere of excitement. As White⁶⁷ said of urban public space, parks can be seen to provide a space where young people can spend their time amongst friends, in an atmosphere of relative anonymity, in which one can experience an excitement of the senses. As I have illustrated, parks are not solely sought out by young people in the absence of anywhere better to go; rather, they have their own distinct appeals as drinkscaapes, and are thus, to quote Hall *et al.*⁶⁸, "deliberately sought out as places of action and incident".

Not all young people, however, spoke highly of the park as a drinkscape, as Townshend and Roberts⁶⁹ similarly found. Reasons young people provided for not liking consuming alcohol in the park include the perceived lack of safety surrounding consuming alcohol in such an outdoor space. Others, however, expressed disapproval towards the identities of those consuming alcohol in parks. The following comments illustrate these perspectives:

I think there's safer places to get drunk than in the park. Like you hear, in Year 10 we were hearing stories of like people in our year who got drunk at the park and then like the police turned up, so they all ran away and one of them like fell over and wacked their head on a rock or something and got concussion or something, so I think it's not attractive to drink in the park because of that

(Richard, 15, Chorlton, interview)

I'm not one of those people to drink in a park. I've never wanted to. I mean, if friends have I've not joined in. I prefer to drink at a house or a party, it's not as chavvy. You look a bit of an idiot drinking in a park

(Peter, 15, Wythenshawe, interview)

As the above quotations indicate, Richard conceptualises the park as an unsafe drinking space. He discusses the lack of surveillance, which means that if someone hurt themselves it would be problematic to find help. Peter is not so worried about the safety aspects of consuming alcohol in the park; he is more concerned with the negative connotations of doing so. Peter mobilises the figure of the “chav” - a term often used to demean an individual or group, often to express class-based disgust⁷⁰. However, here, the term is used by a participant who is working-class, to express a critical attitude to others of his social status - those who consume alcohol in parks⁷¹. Further to this, both Peter is keen to distinguish himself from the ‘idiotic’ people consuming alcohol in parks, that he positions as inferior. Peter then, can be seen to have expressed his identity through processes of inclusion and exclusion, stereotyping and stigmatisation

Conclusions

Throughout this chapter, I have illustrated that young people's alcohol-related transitions to adulthood are not only bound up with relationships with people, they are bound up with relationships with drinking spaces. I have moved beyond the contemporary geographical imaginary of drinking as a city centre issue, to unpack marginal/alternative drinksapes,

including bars, pubs, parks, and streets in the suburban areas of Wythenshawe and Chorlton. Through so doing, this chapter has exposed the heterogeneity of young people's drinking spaces in their suburban locales. I have highlighted that young people perceive there to be clear classed drinking spaces; drinksapes become 'classed' through a range of practices. For instance: young people analyse the behaviour of drinkers in the spaces; they analyse the behaviour of bar staff in commercial drinksapes; along with analysing the décor and sensory atmospheres of the space. Young people's perception of the 'classed other'⁷², both in human and more-than-human respects, has a fundamental role to play in their desires to either access certain drinking spaces, or purposefully exclude themselves from such spaces. Whilst much of the existing literature has been interested in how moral judgments about the working-class are used to justify socio-spatial processes of exclusion, this study has been interesting in revealing that some young people avoid certain commercial suburban nightscapes on the basis that they are "pretentious", "kooky", or "posh". Throughout this chapter, I have demonstrated that young people are able to construct and express their identities through processes of inclusion and exclusion, and the stereotyping and stigmatisation of certain drinkers and drinksapes.

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