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Chapter Title: Deviance and risk on holiday: an ethnography with British youth

abroad

Year of publication: 2012

Citation: Briggs, D. (2012) 'Deviance and risk on holiday: an ethnography with British youth abroad' in Winslow, S. and Atkinson, R. (eds.) *New directions in crime*

and deviance. London: Routledge, 2012

Link to published version:

The book will be published by Routledge on 3 December 2012. Hardback ISBN 978-0-415-62648-4. Advertised price £85.00. Paperback ISBN 978-0-415-62649-1. Advertised price £24.99. e-book ISBN 978-0-203-10265-7 not yet available Website www.routledge.com

Publisher statement:

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A phenomenological account of deviance and risk on holiday: British youth and the consumer experience in Ibiza

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Abstract

In the Spanish Balearic Islands, young British tourists have a notorious reputation for engaging in higher levels of alcohol consumption, drug use, and sex. While some research has documented the extent of these behaviours among British youth on these islands, it has tended to rely on survey data and has therefore failed to offer a realistic framework for how and why they occur. Using a phenomenological perspective, the aim of this chapter is to account for the ways in which deviance and risk arise by considering the subjective intentions of British youth, group dynamics, the holiday occasion and the aggressive commodification of the night time economy (NTE). The chapter draws on findings taken from an ethnographic study of British youth in San Antonio, Ibiza, over the summers of 2009, 2010 and 2011. I argue that the fundamental reason why British youth engage in these behaviours because they are judged to be exciting; to escape the constraints of work, routine and family in the UK; and because these behaviours are integral to the construction of their biographies and identities. They are also endorsed and reaffirmed by group dynamics which support an 'anything goes' attitude in generally unregulated environments but are further shaped by various features of the social context of San Antonio which is strategically designed for consumer spending. The social context of San Antonio's drinking strips marries perfectly with issues relating to self and group identities that stress the need for a 'blow out', and this synthesis results in high levels of deviance and risk-taking.

Word count: 8,201 excluding references

Introduction

As the sun starts to set on another day in San Antonio, Ibiza, I get talking to a group of young men (aged 19-20) in a nearby bar. The night is still young as we all take large gulps of beer from our pint glasses. During our focus group, they laugh about beating up 'some random guy' and how they paid for another 'random' to have sex with a prostitute because they couldn't pay for it themselves. Here Charlie who is unemployed, recounts tales of cheating on his girlfriend by sleeping with five girls:

Charlie: 'When the cat is away, the mouse will play' – [some awkward pause]...it's not that I don't love her but I am young and stuff. How can I be in Ibiza and not live it to the full potential? There's girls there walking around in hot pants.

Aaron: *I saw less than that, boy.*

Other boys: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Dan: What your saying is to fully experience Ibiza one has to, or is expected to...

Charlie: Well in my opinion, yeah. I had a girlfriend, it wasn't that I didn't care about her but I just felt like I am in Ibiza, I'm gonna have fun.

Dan: Do you feel bad? Be honest.

Charlie: I little bit if I am honest. It wasn't because I was drunk. I hate people that say 'I was so drunk'.

A short time later, after we have all had a few shots of tequila:

Dan: How do you work out what a 'good' night out is?

Aaron: How fucked I get and who I end up with at the end of the night. That is what I base it on.

Dan: [to Charlie] *How do you feel about that?*

Charlie: Well I just think the more money you spend, the better it is.

Gerald: *Before I went out* [last night], *I had 14 pints during the day.*

Dan: What did you have on top of that?

Gerald: *Don't know because we just stopped off bar by bar.*

Dan: You can't even tell me how much you drank.

Gerald: *No way bruv.*

It's easy to get a sense of what the 'holiday' means for this group of young working-class men from south London. The narratives highlight general hedonistic attitudes to the holiday which include substance use, risk taking, sex, violence and a clear departure from home-life responsibilities. The social occasion, boisterous group dynamics and an emphasis on 'taking advantage' of the opportunities presented to them are also evident. Also apparent is an

undivided dedication to consumption poignantly highlighted in Charlie's words: 'I just think the more money you spend, the better it is'. One could easily assume that these narratives echo the general stereotypical view of young British holidaymakers abroad in places like Spain (Andrews, 2005). However, in this chapter I will argue otherwise. I would like to direct attention to young British holidaymakers and their consumerist attitudes but also frame their behaviours within an aggressively commodifed social context that endorses and amplifies the group's deviance and risk-taking, cashes in on their desire for indulgent hedonism, and leaves them almost penniless by the time they return home. In doing so, I will attempt to identify the manner in which class-based gender identities engage with and contribute to the structure and content of alcohol-based leisure markets.

I am doing this for several reasons. Firstly, because the existing literature that addresses British youth and their deviant actions abroad is devoted to survey research, subcultural analyses or distant participant observation strategies; there seems to be no serious effort to document how these environments are subjectively experienced and interpreted by the people who holiday there. Secondly, I am interested in providing a detailed, firsthand account of the nature of commodified excess among male British tourists in Ibiza. By definition, Geertz's (1973) would suggest that such an approach is 'an elaborate venture *in*' and that's why I also drank alcohol with them and participated in their group activities (see Blackman, 2007). To me it's disappointing that some colleagues thought I was just 'going on holiday' or undertaking a 'dream research trip' just because this fieldwork took place in a leisure zone which celebrates all the socially-constructed 'wonders' of the night time economy (NTE). For me, this fieldwork was not 'fun', and, in fact, opened up raw self reflexive and existential feelings of what it means to *be* in this post-political age. Acting as a researcher and experiencing life with British holidaymakers in San Antonio only confirms to me how debauched, vulgar and dangerous consumer culture can be.

I turn firstly to the literature surrounding young British consumers and NTE because the group's familiarity with 'going out', 'getting wankered' and other aspects of consumption relate closely to the UK leisure landscape. Specifically, the gendered holiday abroad represents a bizarre continuation and exaggeration of concerns, goals and group dynamics regularly seen in Britain's strangely conformist and Bacchanalian youth drinking cultures. I then discuss the importance of the social occasion: the holiday. This temporal period represents a 'time out of time' (Bakhtin, 1984) for these young people, a time that encourages

participants to abandon normative components of their home selves, and regular routines and responsibilities. Against this background, individual moral boundaries appear to become more malleable, a process that appears to be encouraged and reinforced in group interaction, shared culture and forms of talk. The following section provides a contextual narrative on the hyper-real and commodified nature of the social context of San Antonio, paying particular attention to the dedicated NTE space called the West End Drinking strip ('drinking strip' hereafter). I draw all these dimensions together using interview data, field notes and informal conversations with a group of working class young men who I met in San Antonio. I claim that their actions and experiences over the course of their holiday reflect three key elements: firstly, the manner in which the ideology of possessive consumerism shapes their desires for a holiday 'blowout' (see Hall et al, 2008); secondly, how the desire for a 'blowout' finds form in the incessant offers, inducements and possibilities to experience indulgences that exist beyond the boundaries of usual social experience; and thirdly, as a consequence of these elements, the manner in which chances for deviance and risk-taking multiply.

Young British consumers and the NTE

The transition to late-modernity has witnessed massive social changes across the social structure partly produced by the economic transition from 'Fordist' to 'post-Fordist' economies (Amin, 1994). It is argued that this shift lead to the re-invention of major western cities from flagging post-industrial town centres to sites which facilitate engagement in a culture of leisure and excessive consumption (Hannigan, 1998; Hayward, 2004; Jayne, 2006; Hayward and Hobbs, 2007). This, some indicate, has lead to increased social, cultural and spatial segregation (Bell and Jayne, 2004) as well as the exclusion of working class and lower-income populations from participation in the new consumer economies (Hadfield and Measham, 2009).

One aspect of these changes is the shift towards leisure-orientated NTEs that enable the construction of identities and lifestyles (Lash and Urry, 1994; Scott, 2000) characterised by a high incidence of crime and disorder (Bromley and Nelson, 2002; Winlow and Hall, 2006). At the same time, commentators note increased branding of excess in these spaces (Hobbs et al., 2005) and important changes in attitudes to excess such as a 'new culture of intoxication' (Measham and Brain, 2005). Therefore, certain forms of crime and anti-social behaviour are

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¹ This includes weekend poly-drug use and 'binge drinking'.

associated with dynamics intrinsic to the burgeoning NTE, as well as changes in the culture of intoxication among British youth (Winlow and Hall, 2006). It is within these social spheres that youth risk-taking has become more pervasive (Hayward, 2004) and this certainly appears to be appealing for many (Hayward, 2002; Hayward and Hobbs, 2007)

The holiday

Another social arena which seems to provide a playground for risky behaviour and excessive consumption is the holiday (Hughes et al., 2009; Andrews, 2009; Briggs et al., 2011b). Indeed, it is well documented that British youth engage in increased alcohol, drug use, and sex during their 'holidays' at various European nightlife destinations (Bellis et al., 2003; Engineer et al., 2003; Hughes et al., 2009). Among British youth, Spain is a popular overseas holiday destination (Govern de les Illes de Balears, 2008), particularly the Balearic Island of Ibiza. Research points to the popularity of its club music (IREFREA, 2007), 'crazy' party scene and relatively easy access to illegal substances (Bellis et al., 2003; Calafat et al., 1998; Hughes et al., 2004). However, Ibiza's hippy origins, 'club scene' and other distinct features of the 'white island's tourist pull are no longer exclusive to the elite (Hayward, 2004). Visiting Ibiza, and being able to say one has 'done the big clubs', 'gone Ibiza' or 'done Mambo² are now available to a significant portion of working class Britons (Andrews, 2005). This is predominantly because different groups of British youth can now take advantage of cheap international airfares and package holidays (Hughes et al., 2009). However, statistics show the number of British tourists visiting Ibiza have significantly dropped over the last decade: from 700,000 in 1999 (Fomento del Turismo de Ibiza, 1999) to 570,000 in 2007 (IREFREA, 2007). This may be because there is increased competition with 'new cheap beach destinations' and the local government seem to be moving towards the promotion of other areas of tourism such as cycling and golf - perhaps in the hope of altering the image of Ibiza as a place of drugs, alcohol and general transgression (Payeras et al., 2011).

Consumer excess, transgression and phenomenology

A host of social theorists have analysed the role of consumer culture and the burgeoning NTE in facilitating and promoting consumer excess and transgression (Bauman, 1998;

² Café Mambo is well known sunset café/chillout zone where tourists watch the sunset and pay for the privilege in the swanky cafes and bars nearby.

Featherstone, 1994; Hayward, 2004; Hobbs et al. 2005; Winlow and Hall, 2006; Hobbs and Hayward, 2007). In the context of the holiday, perspectives of the carnivalesque (Bakhtin, 1984) and quest for immediate satisfaction of desires (Bataille, 1957) in the absence of work help us to see the ways in which we subjectively engage with the appealing otherness of the holiday. Identity perspectives are also potentially significant given that young people go abroad on these holidays and engage in these activities to create memories which become significant in processes of identity construction (Briggs et al., 2011a).

In this chapter, I want to supplement these theoretical perspectives with the careful description of the practice and experience of excessive consumption, risk and deviant transgression in the context of British youth in Ibiza. Here I give priority to description over explanation, to the concrete over the abstract, because I want to bring readers close to the lived reality of risky consumption among British youth abroad. In doing so, it is useful to consider the path of the phenomenologist Michael D. Jackson (1996) who endorses detailed descriptions of 'lived reality' to avoid the "estranging effects of conceptual models and systematic explanation which, when pushed too far, disqualify and efface the very life one wants to understand" (Jackson, 1996: 2). This is not to suggest that the theoretical literature on consumer culture and the NTE is superfluous but rather that social theorising should go hand in hand with detailed descriptions of social reality. I turn now to the aims and methods of the study before contextualising the findings and presenting my empirical data.

Aims and methods of the study³

This data is drawn from three short ethnographic studies examining youth risk taking with British youth abroad in Ibiza, Spain in July 2009, July 2010 and June 2011. Observations were conducted in bars, clubs, beaches, and general touristic areas. These areas were public and activity was observed that would have happened without intervention or influence from researchers. We used a combination of overt and covert roles (Adler, 1985; Agar, 1986; Bourgois, 1995; Briggs, 2011), recording low inference descriptors (field notes) (Van Maanen, 1988) as well as thoughts, impressions and summaries of conversations (Geertz, 1973). In 2009, a scoping exercise was undertaken on the island and in 2010, seventeen openended focus groups (Carlson et al., 1994; Clapp et al., 2007; Griffin et al., 2009) were

³ For a detailed discussion of the sampling strategies and ethical procedures see Briggs et al., 2011a.

undertaken in Ibiza (n=97, aged between 17 and 31). In 2011 fifteen⁴ were conducted (n=72, aged between 17 and 35).

When the research team arrived in San Antonio it became obvious that we would have to collect data from individuals who were intoxicated in some way. Indeed, had data collection remained restricted to non-substance using groups, the sample size would have been small and researchers would have developed a skewed picture of the holiday 'experience'. As others have done in the context of researching youth drinking cultures (Blackman, 2007; Briggs et al., 2011a) we drank alcohol with participants to establish credibility, rapport and trust thereby utilizing a critical realist appreciation of knowledge construction of social meanings (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994).

Informal conversations were also undertaken with local businesses, bar owners, strippers, taxi drivers, prostitutes, PR workers, police and tourist representatives about their perceptions and experiences of British youth abroad. All participants were given pseudonyms. Once transcribed, interview and observation data was categorised thematically, with the key areas of investigation providing the overall framework for coding (Ritchie and Spencer, 2004). Analyses were inductive, which meant that themes emerged from the data rather than being hypothesised. The research was funded and granted ethics approval by the University of East London's Ethics Committee.

The social context of San Antonio

Addressing the social context is imperative if we are to understand how risk and deviance arise in holiday resorts like San Antonio. Data indicates that this space actively endorses and promotes alcohol consumption, drug use sex and violence (Bellis et al., 2003; Sellars, 1998). Indeed, in the 'drinking strip', where most of my data collection was undertaken, tourists can take advantage of numerous bars, clubs, take-away outlets, restaurants, strip clubs and all the familiar sites of entertainment in the UK NTE (Hollands and Chatterton, 2003; Measham, 2004; Sonmez et al., 2006; Hadfield and Measham, 2009). This particular space is quite strategically designed and concentrated in one area of San Antonio to maximise consumer spending (Miles, 2010). It is made up only of one main pedestrian road and a few intimate alleyways either side. Such is this concentration that one need not drift too far to find the next

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⁴ We base this number on data collected by Daniel Briggs and Sébastien Tutenges.

site of attraction. At night, young female and nearly naked PRs march up and down the drinking strip advertising various DJs, nightclubs or special events that populate the night-life calendar. There are also young male PRs, but they generally wear more clothes. Like so many other tourist environments around the world, the drinking strip in San Antonio caters for the male, heterosexual gaze (Pritchard and Morgan, 2000). This intoxicating male landscape bombards visitors with tempting offers and opportunities for excess (Andrews, 2009) which

resonates with working-class British youth who often stay in or nearby the resort and are

found in this social space.

In general, there is no regulation of this space; the police only seem to appear to arrest or move on prostitutes. There are private security outside a few clubs and bars, and while they quickly resort to violence to resolve disorder, they often let the same troublemakers in the next night (Briggs et al., 2011a). As the night progresses, this social space swells with young British tourists; in particular, male groups lose their friends, get into fights and/or wander off and are at the mercy of other socio-commercial pressures which occupy the same landscape (Hayward and Hobbs, 2007; Briggs et al., 2011b). My field notes give the reader an idea of how intense this space is and the ways in which potential punters are constantly roped into deals on alcohol, drugs and sex:

[The time drifts past 1am. I walk down past the strip and pass a hen party. I fancy a burger, only because it is there – only because it's the norm and it's what is available. I am stopped again]:

PR woman (PRW): Are you coming in again?

Dan: Again? We haven't been in yet? How did you remember us?

PRW: Yeah, come in for some drinks.

[As I look down, once again, at the streets, they are strewn with drink bottles, sick, waste, half-eaten burgers, chips and all manner of rubbish. Suddenly, we are dragged over once again]:

Lively PR man (LPRM): Come in here to have a drink. Get two free shots as well, guys. [Physically shepherding me in] What would you like to drink?

Dan: We're coming back, calm down.

LPRM: Come down now, come on, come in.

Dan: No.

LPRM: *Try it now.*

Dan: Er, NO.

LPRM: [As if nothing has happened] *Ok, guys enjoy your night.*

30 seconds later – Chirpy PR man (CPRM) approaches us:

CPRM: Two drinks and a shot for $\in 8$.

As I show in the next section, most British youth in this resort intentionally seek out the 'drinking strip', as this appears to act as a springboard for the night out. However, once they are there, it seems they are completely at its commercial mercy.

Findings: On holiday with the Southside Crew

The Southside Crew are a group of four friends⁵ from coastal town in the UK. They have known each other since school and three of the four now work together. They relay their experience in the clubs back home where they used to be 'proper on it' most weekends; 'pills, coke, the lot'. Since settling down with families and/or partners, they say the opportunity doesn't present itself as much. At home, they confess to getting into fights, mostly with each other. All four have been in trouble with the law; Popeye has served two years in prison for cocaine dealing and C-Dawg three years for GBH. On their return to the UK, Jay and Streetfighter face a court case for fighting outside a nightclub. Last year, two of the four went to Magaluf, another holiday resort on the island of Majorca, together. They say they have come to Ibiza for a 'blowout', and because of the 'name' and the superclubs – which they can't really afford to go to so end up most nights on the 'drinking strip'. They had also come away with 14 other friends who were staying in another hotel.

When I met them at 3pm, they had arrived in Ibiza at 10.30am that day but had been drinking without a break from 6.30am. What I think the fieldnotes and interview data highlight are the 'lived experiences' of the holiday, and the ways in which the Southside Crew seek to consume as much as possible – whatever is on offer to them – drink, drugs, women, food, etc. However, it also shows the way in which the commodifed social context, and the players of this social scenery, actively and continuously shape the potential for and nature of deviance and risk-taking.

Holiday intentions: Meeting the Southside Crew

I walk along the San Antonio bay and look for groups of men to approach for interview. I go straight for a group of four guys sitting in a beach bar. Fortunately, they are quite welcoming

⁵ Jay, Popeye, C-Dawg and Streetfighter make up the Southside Crew.

and allow me to sit with them. The music pumps out as the sun shines down on their half-naked bodies while they cheer and sip cold pints of beer. They struggle to remember how much they drank on the plane, where they stopped since arriving and where they are staying.⁶ They concede to needing vodka red bulls to pick them up during those moments where their drinking has started to flag. As another pint arrives, they argue with the waiter, saying that they are owed a 'free shot', and eventually seem to bully him into bringing them over. They then recount tales of sex from Magaluf, high five and hug me before we move on to talk about girlfriends:

Streetfighter: *It's a holiday mate. I love my girl, I love my baby.*

Popeye: Clearly not.

Streetfighter: But I am away, I need to get fucking something. If I don't have sex on this holiday I am going to go back more frustrated, more angry.

C-Dawg: And he'll end up taking it out on the misses [then laughs].

Dan: [To Popeye] What do you think of this?

Popeye: Terrible.

Streetfighter: *It's best to be honest mate.*

Popeye: Seriously, your girlfriend is pregnant.

Streetfighter: But you don't get a fuck when your missus is pregnant.

Popeye: That's why I think its terrible [A young woman in a thong bikini walks past]

Cor, look at the tits on that.

The irony of Popeye moralising Streetfighter on his confessional desires for sex only to pick his jaw off the floor while watching a girl in a bikini walk past. Despite their home relationships, two concede that there is a little competition to chalk up as 'many shags as possible'. Some young women walk past with makeup and fake tan melting down their faces and legs; they try to sell us club tickets but, perhaps because they don't take the boys' fancy, there is little interest. After C-Dawg recounts a tale of being ambushed by a 'black bird' for a 'blow job' in Magaluf, we get on to the subject of bodies and they all concede to strict diets prior to the holiday. Popeye thinks that girls approach him because of his body⁷ and this seems to be confirmed for him as we are once again approached by PR girls, vying for us to part with our money to attend their bar party. The Southside Crew all downplay drug use,

⁶ They spent less than ten minutes depositing their bags before heading out on their bar crawl up the San Antonio Bay towards the 'drinking strip'.

⁷ Ben takes steroids and rarely eats carbohydrates so he can sustain his figure.

saying they used to do that when they 'was younger'. Despite this, it emerges that Jay just bought weed from an African man; he says 'it don't count.' When the bill finally arrives, they argue and claim they have been ripped off but the anger quickly diffuses as their mouths drop open as half-naked girls walk past in bikinis. Jay says 'fuck it' and throws a bunch of Euros on the table.

Commercial temptations and ideologies of consumption

We stumble out of the bar at around 4.45pm and they permit me to continue recording. We walk slowly in pairs down the road, distracted by different attractive women trying to pry us into bars or sell us tickets to help shape our 'night out'. Jay practises his kickboxing techniques on me and shows me ways to kill people, while Streetfighter whispers in my ear about how he 'pulls women'. He tells one PR woman he will "fuck her senseless in his apartment." "Charming" she says. He tries again only to have little success:

Jay: Nice arse.

[The girls passing by walk on unimpressed]

Streetfighter: [To me] *Mate, you have to push the birds out here.*

[One PR woman approaches us]

PR woman: Hi guys we just want to let you know what is going on Thursday...

[Hands out leaflets for a pre-party 'booze cruise']

Streetfighter: *Nice face. Pretty.*

Jay: Then to our hotel to party or you could come pre-party?

Streetfighter: We will fucking smash you up, fuck you, all sorts.

PR woman: *Eugh, that's disgusting. That's vile.*

[All the lads laugh while Streetfighter remains serious about the offer]

Streetfighter's technique seems to just be to approach everyone woman with the same blunt offer for sex. The flirting continues and Popeye takes the lead. In fact, whenever attractive women walk past, our conversations cease in favour of gorping at the flesh on offer. However, the fact that we are now semi-mobile seems to make their advances for sex more brash and direct, but also our potential as 'commercial targets' more vulnerable. Thirty seconds later another PR couple approach us with tickets for Eden.⁸ There is almost no interest until the possibility of 'pulling women' is presented:

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⁸ Eden is a nightclub in San Antonio. It is one of the smaller clubs in Ibiza and regulars of Pachá and Amnesia say it is lower down the list of 'clubs to visit' in Ibiza; probably because it is predominantly marketed in San Antonio and most of the people who stay in the town go to this club once or twice on their holiday.

PR woman (PRW) 1: How many of you are there?

[She starts wrapping free entry wrist bands around our wrists]

PRW 2: Come over, Mark Wright from the Only Way is Essex⁹ will be there!

Popeye: [Sarcastically] Oh great. You are just trying to sell me something.

Streetfighter: All they are is a pretty face. They all want to sell something.

Popeye: [As the wrist band is carelessly wrapped on his wrist] *Looks like we're going to Eden tonight*.

[An Irish PR man (IPR) comes along]

IPR: *Plenty of pussy in Eden tonight.*

Jay: Fuck it, I'm gonna pay for everyone.

PRW 1: I'll sort your tickets out then because we also have Professor Green. ¹⁰ Its gonna be really good guys. [IPR imitates having sex with a girl from behind and laughs about how he claims he pulled two young women in a night the other night]

PRW 2: I guarantee you, you will pull in there tonight.

IPR: Oh mate, you gonna find some hot pussy in there [laughs to himself]. Want to see my cock?

Jay: I'm gonna go, I'm paying. I don't give a fuck how much. Tell me. I have unlimited money.

Burgers, beers, sangria and sambuca, everything

We eventually drift towards the town centre¹¹ and eventually settle in a café at the dock area. The waiter comes over and gets upset because we have our t-shirts off; he stands there unimpressed by our brash behaviour:

Jay: [Gesticulating] *I want a jug of San Mojito, what's it called? That drink which the Spanish drink.*¹²

Dan: Sangria.

Jay: Right, I want five shots of Sambuca.

Popeye: Are you going to get fucked up?

Jay: Lets get minging [extremely drunk].

¹¹ We end up eating in a restaurant at the bottom of the 'drinking strip'.

⁹ The Only Way Is Essex is a reality TV programme which exemplifies consumer society, youth relationships and the general pattern of nights out, 'pulling' and recovering from the morning after.

¹⁰ Professor Green is a UK music artist.

¹² Jay is confused between the hotel name 'San Pedro' and a cocktail drink 'Mojito'.

Dan: [Matter of factly] Yes, but lets also remember what the time is.

Jay: [To the waiter] *And I want five pints of beer.*

Dan: I don't think there is room on the table.

Jay: I also want five shots of tequila.

Waiter: Food?

Jay: I want a massive chicken. Just a chicken. Massive chicken [gesticulates as if to

suggest the chicken should be the same size as the plate].

Popeye: I just want a burger no salad.

Dan: This is crazy.

While we wait for the drinks, they wolf whistle at women in bikinis and I admire their designer sunglasses and swimming attire. Jay says my next 'survey' should be on 'looks and image' as men will do 'anyfuckingthing to get cut [look nice].' Popeye concedes to spending £300 on a pair of jeans for his holiday, £62 on a pair of shorts and £300 on a watch. I have little to compare and play down my Primark short-sleeved t-shirt which hangs from my shorts. It is about 6pm. We get on to the topic of religion and politics and Streetfighter tries to avoid the subject, partly because of how he feels about war in Iraq. The discussion seems to make him angrier and he stands up, and shouts for his drinks. All the drinks arrive at the same time and dominate the table. 'Its gonna get messy' says Jay. Even though I don't remember anyone ordering tequilas, we knock them back. As more PR girls come over, glasses are chinked again as we down a cupful of Sangria.

The food arrives and we eat like savages; while I benefitted by having a breakfast, for my new friends this is the first meal of the day. Conversations die away between large mouthfuls, and intermittent gulps of whichever drink is in front of us. Although we finish the food, there still remains a substantial amount of alcohol on the table so I am encouraged to down as much beer as possible with them and slam down the pint glass. We leave the restaurant and the order of the night seems to shift once again as we are stopped by more PR men telling us how much 'pussy' there is in their bar/clubs on the drinking strip. As we get stumble very slowly to the hotel, Jay takes off his swimming shorts and runs naked as fast as he can towards the hotel.

At the Hotel: Respite and regroup

When I arrive at Jay's room to check he is ok, the door is slightly ajar. There he lies naked in a pile on the bed while a small, paint-stained CD player hammers out loud music. He awakes

and tries to get himself together for the night out. He stumbles over to the safe to get the rest of his money but has forgotten the code. Frustrated he reaches to a zip pocket on his shorts where he hopes to find some reserve Euros. Shortly after, Popeye enters and is ready to go and invites me to his room which he shares with C-Dawg. They show me their CDs, put on 'some tunes' and do little funky dances. They both seem quite sober despite the volume of alcohol they have drunk. As we are leaving, Streetfighter comes in dressed in white shorts and vest. We move from the balcony into the apartment where C-Dawg and Streetfighter practice their Spanish on passersby. They shout out the Spanish for 'hello', 'my name is' and 'penis'. As our flip-flop steps echo around the hall, we descend to the all-inclusive bar they have paid for but rarely use. We have a few beers and more PRs descend to try and get us into Eden even though we have the wristbands. They, like the others, boast about 'fucking loads of pussy' in their clubs. C-Dawg returns with six beers and we are forced to down them quickly because the others have decided we are leaving.

To the drinking strip

After petty arguments of whether we should take a taxi or walk, Popeye starts walking and we all follow. As we pass the bars, the music booms out across the small road. The night has begun. On the way down, we are separated several times and tempted by new offers for drinks and entertainment. As we pass a drunk man, passed out on the pavement, Popeye dares C-Dawg to put his 'cock' in the man's hand. We walk past a higher proportion of African men who instead of offering sunglasses and some directly offer drugs: 'hey del boy, pills, weed, coke'.

As we get to the 'drinking strip', we start to walk up the lazy incline. It is 9.30pm. On the promise of 'women' and free shots, we are persuaded to enter a bar/club but the dance floor is empty and it almost kills their mood. Suddenly a beer and shot are thrust into my hand. We send cheers and sink our shots. Outside we meet an annoying PR man who slaps our backs and tells stories how he has 'shagged loads of women.' He offers us €40 tickets for 'Clubland' - a bar crawl where you pay for your own drinks, are led by 'pretty birds' and get access to a water party in Es Paradis and wet t-shirt party in Eden. However, we already have free entry to Es Paradis because of the wristbands so we are really paying €40 for semi-naked women to march us around, lead us to places where we pay for our own drinks and let us into Eden (if we make it). However, C-Dawg and Jay are very keen and move to muster up support from the others.

The PR man directs us further up the strip to his friend who will sell us tickets. As we walk up the hill, we are then offered laughing gas for €5 by two young women wearing next to nothing. Streetfighter wants to go back down the strip but Jay moves in for Clubland tickets. We reach the 'man' who seems completely wired on drugs; his eyes move around like jolty discs. He takes some money from C-Dawg and more from Jay and then hurriedly puts €160 in his pocket, taking little care about folding the money. When Popeye catches up with us and realises they have bought tickets for a bar crawl in which they have to pay for their drinks, he is not happy: 'oh for fuck's sake man, a walk around a few bars'. There are some awkward moments as C-Dawg and Jay try to persuade Popeye that it is worthwhile because they'll be led around by pretty women. The 'man' talks the experience up and immediately tries to usher us into a bar where the bar crawl starts. I join them in the bar without paying. Quite quickly I am welcomed and start dancing:

C-Dawg: Danny boy!!!

Dan: C-dawgy boy!

C-Dawg: [Puts his arm around me] *Lets dance baby*.

[We all get a drink and I end up dancing in puddles of alcohol and sick on the floor.]

C-Dawg: [Shouting] *Danny boy!*

Dan: [Laughing to myself and looking down at my beachwear which I have had on all day] *I smell very bad.* [C-Dawg laughs]

DJ: Are you people ready???

Crowd: YEAH!!!

DJ: Lets get fucking twatted!!!! [Drunk]

The host girls who are to lead us around start to dance with the lads who reciprocate by grinding their bodies up against their skinny bikini figures. I jump around in the puddles and my flip flops fill with the mixture of sick and alcohol. Professor Green takes the stage and shouts 'MAKE SOME FUCKING NOISE!!!!' There are some high fives and hugs which include me. C-Dawg says 'its gonna be a good night' but then realises that his expensive new shoes are already ruined in the alcoholic vomit. We are led out of the bar by the women in bikinis and high heels. They all hold flags as if to symbolically lead the way for the debauchery which is to follow. The lads follow mesmerised as if the pied piper is leading the way. As we move to another bar, we lose Jay but I find him quite happily and aimlessly wandering the streets.

It is now about 11pm. The same female dancers dance on the tables around the bar and seem to completely mesmerize Streetfighter. There is barely time to have a drink before Professor Green says that we should move on. The red-dressed female dancers go to the street in formation with a pair of big banners and a security guard. We follow them and reach the next bar where some young women walk around selling shots and others have a kind of boozesprayer which they try to foist on people. While the others dance, Streetfighter chats with one of the booze-sellers, even getting to hug her and touch her bottom a little. But when she sees that he is not interested in buying anything she quickly moves away. On the dance floor, people crash together, jump around and everything is rather chaotic.

As we are lead away to the next bar by the red-dressed females, our group breaks up along the drinking strip. C-Dawg and Popeye continue in pursuit of the red-dressed females while Jay and Streetfighter walk into KFC. They quietly eat from their bags of food, which is not a pretty sight. Gnawed chicken legs fall to the ground and their faces and fingers glisten with the fat. After eating, they sit on some benches. Jay is so drunk that he almost falls off several times. Then three Brits in their late twenties sit nearby and scowl; one of them says something insulting in our direction and walks over in a threatening manner. There are some angry exchanges but Jay gets up and walks towards the clubs. 'Take a piss' Jay says and stumbles across the street, taking several minutes to unzip his trousers before staggering over to a rubbish bin and urinating in it.

Meanwhile, Streetfighter continues and is now 100 meters ahead of us. Jay collapses again, this time on a bench. It is only 500 meters to Es Paradis but it takes us about 40 minutes to arrive. They then stand staggering in front of the entrance of the club. One of the doormen gives a skeptical look and shakes his head, but they are permitted to enter. Ten minutes later, the two of them waddle out and head towards Eden, which is situated on the other side of the street. They explain that Es Paradis is 'crap and empty'. We stand in front of the entrance and again the doormen look skeptically at my two companions.

We walk inside and there are only around 50-60 guests in the giant club. They each pay €12 for a vodka red bull but as Streetfighter takes a sip of the drink, he tips it over. Then a female photographer comes around, perhaps working for the club. Streetfighter tries to reach out for her bottom and gives a grunt but she jumps away. Suddenly Jay gets up to leave, having barely sipped his drink. However, Streetfighter leaves his visa card lying on the bar and I pick

it up and hand it to him. He nods gratefully. When we get outside we can't see Jay, and Streetfighter seems perplexed without his friends. I take a seat to take stock, and Streetfighter disappears. I walk back to the drinking strip but can't find him or any of the others. It is about 1am.

The next day...

I find them the next day, late in the afternoon lying on the beach, playing with the sand. They reiterate how it was a 'great night'. So what happened after I lost them? It seems Jay could not remember where he went or how he got back to the hotel. He thinks he got in at 2am but C-Dawg says he 'got lost'. Popeye stayed with C-Dawg but found some of his 14 mates and got in about 6.30am. C-Dawg left for the hotel but was approached by a prostitute, had no money, 'ran back to the hotel'. ¹³ to get some money but then couldn't find her. He finished the night slamming tequilla shots on his own until about 4am. He too couldn't remember how he got back to the hotel. Streetfighter? Well...

Streetfighter: *Got sucked off by two black birds.*

Dan: Oh yeah? What down the West End?

Streetfighter: Yeah.

C-Dawg: *Yeah, I almost paid for a hooker on the way home.*

Streetfighter: Well it was going to be for €40 because it was two of them but I didn't

have money.

Dan: You didn't have money?! So what did you give them?

C-Dawg: *Give them dick!!!*

Streetfighter: They sucked me off a bit, I shit myself then I just told them to piss off afterwards.

Dan: [Disbelieving] *You shit yourself?*

C-Dawg: [Laughing] *Too much drink mate.*

Streetfighter: *I don't know how it happened mate but as I was cumming* [ejaculating] *I shit myself* [starts to smile]. *I had shit everywhere, all on my white shorts.*

Dan: I wouldn't put that on Facebook.

Streetfighter: *Stuff like that stays on holiday, mate.*

¹³ A thirty minute walk.

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Discussion

In this chapter, I have tried to complement the literature surrounding British youth on holiday and the deviant and risky activities in which they participate. I wanted to go beyond surveys (Bellis et al., 2003; Hughes et al., 2004), subcultural considerations (Malbon, 1999) and distant forms of participant observation (Andrews, 2005; 2009) to bring the reader closer to the 'lived experience' (Geertz, 1973) of this particular culture (Van Maanen, 1988). I tried to do this by taking a phenomenological angle and by spending time with these young people, drinking, dancing and parading myself half naked through the drinking strip of San Antonio in an effort to glean subjective meaning (Jackson, 1996). The way in which I did this is akin to others working in the sphere of substance using youth cultures (Blackman, 2007; Briggs et al., 2011a). For me, this was no 'holiday', no opportunity to either indulge or take advantage of the social occasion as an excuse to get drunk. I went into this fieldwork with the intention of revealing just how raw the holiday experience is and what it means to this group of working-class men whose post-industrial habitus shapes their attitudes toward leisure and the hopes for the holiday.

The chapter shows that holiday deviance and risk-taking should be seen as a commodified and strangely postmodern extension of Britain's liminal night-time drinking cultures. I have also tried to draw out the crucial importance of the culturo-economic context of in which these excessive consumer behaviours take place, and the ways in which the desire for extreme experiences collides with the logic of the market. The Southside Crew are regular players in the UK NTE, restricting sessional substance use to weekends (Measham, 2004), and often getting into fights (Winlow and Hall, 2006). Their class-based habitus and culturally framed expectation of orderly disorder and irregular social comportment in Britain's NTE shapes their attitudes towards the drinking strips of San Antonio as a social field (Bourdieu, 1993). Their experiences in Britain's NTE also helps to pattern their desires as they formulate a dream-like image of what the perfect holiday experience may hold for them (see Hall et al, 2008).

Their attachment to expensive branded consumer goods suggests a democratisation of excessive consumerism, but this should not be read as a form of liberation and instead appears to reflect both the post-industrial economic requirements of neo-capitalism and the postmodern ideological injunction to enjoy (Zizek, 1999). The Southside Crew can still say they 'did the clubs' even though they didn't quite have the holiday capital to, as they say, 'do

Ibiza properly'. It may not necessarily matter though. This is because there is an inclusive, carnivalistic spirit (Bahktin, 1984) on the San Antonio drinking strip (Briggs et al., 2011b) and therefore there is little spatial (Bell and Jayne, 2004) or cultural (Hadfield and Measham, 2009) exclusion. So if they can't be the celebrity in the club, swanking it up in the VIP lounge and throwing money at expensive cocktails, they can be the 'crazy person' on the drinking strip where many forms of misbehaviour are not simply permitted but subtly encouraged. Either way, it will be a tale to tell (Briggs et al., 2011a).

This is because the holiday occasion is a special time in which the absence of responsibilities and routine are celebrated (Briggs et al., 2011a) and this helps to loosen the boundaries of the home 'self'. This is further encouraged by the group dynamics in which many travel to Ibiza and mutually reaffirm the centrality of sex, drunkenness and hedonistic abandon (Briggs et al., 2011b). The Southside Crew, like many British youth holidaying in San Antonio, drastically increase the use of illegal substances and engage in a rather different and broader range of risky behaviours (Bellis et al., 2003; Hughes et al., 2004). The holiday thus functions as an almost cathartic 'time out of time' (Bahktin, 1984), and, in the absence of work, a quest for immediate desires prevails and some degree of taking pleasure in being 'wasteful' (Bataille, 1957) particularly evident in the way Jay and Streetfighter continued to party even though they could barely walk. This is because the everyday home life of these young people is subjected to the demands of necessity: some get up early in the morning on weekdays in order to study, work or look for a job while others have, what they say are stressful family commitments and other associated obligations that form part of their normative non-holiday identity. Indeed, as Ferrell et al. (2008: 41) observe:

Late modernity with its trajectories towards uncertain work, immediacy, short term hedonism, NTEs and mediated aggression pushes the subterranean lust for kicks ever more to the surface.

This is especially the case for this cohort of working-class British youth. They don't have the resources to 'party' like the elite regularly, but while on holiday they focus on the consumption and destruction of resources - most notably money, time and health – in ways that copy the expressive waste of the leisure class (Veblen, 1994) and suggest a desire to recreate the self in the image of the boundless celebrity consumer that is so central to popular culture (see also Bataille 1957; Hall et al, 2008). The chapter therefore complements the existing literature on contemporary alcohol-based leisure culture as a driver and facilitator of excess and transgression (Bauman, 1998; Featherstone, 1994; Hayward, 2004; Hobbs et al.

2005; Winlow and Hall, 2006; Hayward and Hobbs, 2007). This culture results in situation specific risk-taking and forms of deviance that, as we have seen, is immediately appealing to those involved (Hayward, 2002; Hayward and Hobbs, 2007).

For example, it is noticeable that Jay's initial rejection of drug use loses its connection to his normative identity and moral being in the strange cultural atmosphere of the holiday and results in him taking two Es on one night. Similarly, Popeye's narrative in our focus group was one of a committed partner and father, averse to drug use and who, over the course of his holiday, took an E while on a bungee jump ride and had sex with a girl on the last night. The pliability of moral accounts of themselves shouldn't surprise us. The Southside Crew were bombarded with offers of drugs almost everywhere they went. As the fieldnotes of the Southside crew show, sex was being sold as a commodity in San Antonio – as a promise for capital exchange if one attends the clubs or goes into the bars. Leading this market assault were the PRs who made continuous sales references to the lure of 'pussy' which validates the view that women exist to be 'fucked': this logic lives in their point of sale, their branding, and the way they commodify it, thereby transforming women from a subject into object.

Therefore while San Antonio seems to represent a gendered landscape (Andrews, 2005) designed for male gaze (Pritchard and Morgan, 2000) where both young British men and women play out their gender roles (Andrews, 2009), payments are made with the expectancy that sex will be the end result. The direct and blunt sexual advances of the Southside crew often resulted in instant rejection from other female tourists and this appears to redirect their thirst for sexual conquest towards those working in the sex entertainment sphere. If it is not the bar crawls led by half-naked women, there are open markets for strippers, lap-dancers and prostitutes.

So much deviance and risk-taking in this context should be understood in relation to the poorly regulated nature of the aggressive hedonistic consumption that sustains the island's legitimate and quasi-legitimate economic spheres. As Miles (2010: 58) notes:

The individual consumer may negotiate his or her place within the boundaries defined by his or her by consumption, but he or she is ultimately subject to the structures determined for him or her by the consumer society.

San Antonio, and the drinking strip in particular, offer unbridled consumption and excess (Hayward, 2004). The blame for the perceived cultural ills that are associated with British

youth tourism on the island should not be laid at the door of tourists themselves (Winlow and Hall, 2006), especially given the economic benefits this tourist sector bring to Ibiza (Armstrong, 2004; Garratt, 1999). Local government may be concerned about the image of the island, but it has yet to turn down the business opportunities provided by the annual influx of young British hedonists (Payeras et al., 2011). So by combining a familiar NTE of ultimate paradise (Miles, 2010) with aggressive marketing (Sellars, 1998), culturally framed individual intentions for holiday a 'blowout', group dynamics which promote continuous flow of pressured spending for collective 'enjoyment' (Mewhinney et al., 1995) and a social context which is designed to drain money from those who grace its shores (Armstrong, 2004; Garratt, 1999) makes for haphazard spending, deviance and risk taking (Hobbs et al., 2005; Winlow and Hall, 2006). The holiday 'experiences' therefore not only leave 'good memories' but also become the receipt of the holiday transaction; something which is extracted regardless.

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