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Raves, drugs, dealing and driving: qualitative data from a West Australian sample

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Abstract

This qualitative paper from a study of 83 people who attended raves or dance parties in Perth, Western Australia describes what respondents saw as the attractions and less good things about the rave/dance party scene, their views of the place of drug use within the scene, experiences obtaining and providing drugs and addresses the issue of driving while intoxicated. Non-drug factors such as lighting, music, dancing, the non-violent atmosphere, sense of social cohesion and relative lack of predatory male sexual behaviour were the major attractions of the scene, yet it was noted that these were enhanced by the effects of dance drugs, especially ecstasy. There were dual concerns that younger participants were at increased risk of drug-related harm and brought unwanted drug-related media attention and disrepute on the scene. The study supports the view that raves are not 'drug supermarkets', with most respondents obtaining their drugs many days before the event. A substantial minority of respondents described travelling to or from raves with drivers who were drug-affected. Less than half those who discussed the issue said they considered whether the driver was under the influence. This is of concern and has implications for policing practices, peer education and rave-related materials. [Lenton S, Davidson P. Raves, drugs, dealing and driving: qualitative data from a West Australian sample. *Drug Alcohol Rev* 1999; 18: 153–161]

Key words: raves, drug use, driving

Introduction

There is now reasonable research evidence to support the view that the use of a range of drugs including MDMA, amphetamines, LSD, cannabis and others is a part of the rave scene [1–3]. This should not be surprising, as drug use has been a part of most youth cultures [4]. However, it has also been shown that

portrayals by some media and local government of raves as 'drug supermarkets' is false [5]. This paper, based on qualitative data from a study of people who attended raves or dance parties in Perth, Western Australia, describes the attractions of the rave/dance party scene to participants, their perceptions of the

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place of drug use within the scene, explores experiences of obtaining and providing drugs and addresses the issue of driving while intoxicated. Quantitative data from this study has been reported elsewhere [2,6].

One of the shifts which has been observed in the rave/dance party scene in many locations was a move from 'underground' events held in 'secret' venues to dance parties held in more mainstream venues such as licensed clubs [8]. In Western Australia, as disenchantment grew with what many in the scene experienced as commercialization and exploitation, a movement back to underground and unregulated events occurred with those in the scene reclaiming the scene by running their own events. These became known as 'Doofs', onomatopoeic for the heavy bass of music heard while approaching a rave held in a, usually clandestine, outdoor setting. The data collection for this study occurred on the cusp of this latter shift.

Method

Eighty-three people who had been to a 'rave' in Perth within the previous 6 months were interviewed between 1 March and 31 August 1995. The method is described in more detail elsewhere [2,4]. Qualitative analysis was undertaken using OSR NUD*IST + [9]. Variables of interest were described and transcriptions coded with the individual 'question and response' as the smallest unit coded. Data relating to individual variables were then analysed for sub-themes and re-coded, with multiple coding possible. Sub-themes were then analysed and described from the data before being cross-referenced and verified against data from other related sub-themes.

Results

The sample

Just over half (53%) the sample were male. The mean age of respondents was 18.9 years (range 13–48 years). Two in five (42%) of the respondents were under 18 at the time of interview. Sixty (72%) respondents were currently enrolled in some kind of formal education, just over half the sample (57%) were in some form of employment and 23% of these were working full time. The characteristics of the sample are presented in detail elsewhere [2].

Motivations for attending raves

Eighty-one respondents described what they saw as the motivations, attractions or good things about the rave scene. Not surprisingly, many respondents gave more than one response and these were often intertwined. Approximately two-thirds (67%) of those who responded said that the music, lighting or dancing were the main attractions or good things about the scene. About 31% of those who responded said that it was the non-violent atmosphere at raves that was one of the main attractions and most believed that this was because far fewer people were intoxicated on alcohol at raves compared to clubs and other venues.

People who go are all going to have a good time, and very rarely are they drinking, and I think that helps to keep away from people from being really sleazy, being aggressive. So people are generally really friendly to everyone, really social, no one gets aggro, everyone is very accepting of different people, colour, sex, size, age, whatever they're like, because it's such a broad angle of people going to raves (31, male aged 19).

A related attraction was what respondents described as the 'no sleaze' factor, which was identified by about 22% of those who responded. This referred to the belief that at a rave, compared to a hotel or night-club, there were fewer males engaged in sexually predatory behaviour toward females. Not surprisingly, most (69%) of those who identified this as a factor were females.

At a rave I've never met a sleazy guy, never once, which is great . . . Normally I go to a club and it's like sleazy guys everywhere, but at a rave, I've never had that happen, it's just like if a guy's talking to you . . . normally it seems like he's being friendly (55, female aged 15).

Although an uncommon response, some female respondents did describe that they believed some of the males who went to a rave were there because they believed that women on ecstasy were more sexually available. Often the female respondents who described this said that 'sleazes' were easily identified and avoided.

I've had guys say to me 'go to a Rave and all the females will have sex with you'. We can spot them a mile away and just avoid them. You can just sense people that are there for the wrong reasons and are just sleazing on to you and if you don't

like that you just go away. You just don't do it (44, female aged 18).

Approximately 27% described a sense of community as one of the main attractions of the rave scene.

Everyone's, it's like a big family sort of thing . . . you get to know everyone from the raves, when you get to see them every single rave and that. You feel like you're somebody, you feel like you belong somewhere (08, female aged 17).

For some, the feeling of belonging to something different from the rest of society highlighted their sense of community:

There was this group of people, who were wicked people, really bright, intelligent people who would wake up when everyone else was going to sleep, and go out and party all night, it was just completely different. It was something I wanted to be a part of (58, female aged 20).

Approximately 17% of those who responded mentioned that drugs were one of the attractive things about the rave scene. Approximately 64% of these were 18 years of age or over, but this was not different to the age distribution for the whole sample and there were no gender differences. In most cases drug use was intertwined with enjoyment of other aspects of the scene.

Probably going with a group of friends, and taking lots of drugs, and enjoying (the) music, it's not the sort of music I listen to normally, but it's pretty good when you're on something, to be stimulated, I find (10, male aged 21).

The dancing, the music, the people, the drugs as well, that's like a big part of it (55, female aged 15).

About 10% of the respondents pointed to the 'underground' nature of raves as attractive. Most (90%) of this group were less experienced in their drug use. As described elsewhere, the sample was split at the median into high and low experienced groups in terms of the number of drugs (other than alcohol and tobacco) that they had ever used [2]. One of the less drug experienced respondents explained why the idea of an underground rave was also attractive.

Yeah. I think I would like it better if it was underground, it would be more fun, that feeling that you're doing something that's not right, that

would be better. Because they're legal now, it would be better if they weren't. Just the fact that you're thinking I'm doing something rebellious, that I shouldn't be doing, just makes it more enjoyable (67, female aged 17).

Another attraction of the rave was that a rave was 'an event'. This was mentioned by about 7% of respondents. One respondent described how the event was more than that which happens while the rave itself is going:

It often, I think it gives an excuse for people to come together, and they spend weeks talking about it before hand, talking about it, planning it, how they're going to do it . . . what they're going to do. I guess it provides, besides the actual activity at the rave, there's a focus for a lot of people. I've often imagined the ringing around that happens before a rave, imagine Telecom's network must go wild with people trying to organise lifts and God knows what else . . . and then people talk about it afterwards as well (77, male aged 20).

Less good things about raves

Fifty-one respondents described what they saw as less good things about raves and approximately 40% of these expressed the belief that ravers were being financially exploited by promoters, who were not part of the rave community themselves but had come in to make money out of the events.

Well, I think now the organisers are just out to make money, and that's all they're in it for, they're abusing their rights I think, and they're just making money out of so many people and I just don't think it's fair. Like they're missing the whole point of what it's about (04, male aged 17).

Criticisms included misleading promotional flyers which promised acts and lighting equipment which did not materialize on the night, poor toilet facilities and high ticket prices. In one notorious case it appeared that well over 1000 tickets were sold at \$40 each for an event ironically titled 'Karma' which never eventuated. The price of bottled water (sometimes \$3.00 for 300 ml) or measures such as turning off taps in the toilets, or stopping patrons from re-filling their bottles, were also experienced as operators taking advantage of patrons.

One-quarter (25%) of those who responded identified 'Techno Bunnies' as one of the bad things about raves. Bunnies were described as young ravers who were characteristically into the more superficial aspects of the scene such as dress codes but were not aware of or interested in the deeper aspects of rave culture. Paradoxically, despite government attempts to clean up the scene by regulating events, a number of respondents believed that the age of ravers declined with the increased publicity given to the scene through the involvement of rave promoters who were not part of the scene and the publicity provided by the media interest in the events.

It never used to be like that, you just get a pretty normal age group, now it's just getting younger and younger and younger and . . . It's just become more publicised . . . when I first started going to raves, they weren't as public as they are now, not as many people knew about them, there was just the people who were in that scene were the ones who basically knew, but now it's got more public, more popular, so it appeals to more people (11, male aged 20).

Just over half of those who identified 'bunnies' as one of the negative things about raves did so because they found them irritating, while about a third (30%) were concerned about the effects of drugs on young minds.

For the health sake of kids, I don't really like kids being there. When I say kids, I mean kids under the age of 17 to 18 because it is a drug culture, and . . . kids under that age haven't really got their heads into gear with what they are doing. People over 18 haven't really, but at least they're old enough to make their own decisions (59, male aged 22).

About one in five (19%) of the sample identified the downsides of drug use as one of the less good things about raves:

The drugs can be emotionally painful, and you see that at raves sometimes. F's make a lot of people smile and be happy and run and hug you, that appealed to me at first because everyone was happy and it was great to see. But there's the other side of drugs, girls are crying and being sick in the toilets, I find that's depressing (75, female aged 17).

About 9% of those who responded identified changes in the scene as less good things about raves. In general these revolved around the themes of increased commercialization and a move to a more mainstream scene, themes which have already been described above. However, it was noted that forces were operating which were undermining the commercialized and mainstream rave scene and an underground scene was again emerging.

This current scene was underground once, and it's done its cycle, it's been watered down by the media, and it's dying, and there's a new one starting, there's definitely heaps of underground stuff, like raves put on by ravers basically, which is a big difference between raves done by business people (71, male aged 20).

About 7% of the sample identified negative media stereotyping as one of the less good things about raves and some felt stigmatized by the process:

The only time they have media coverage, the only media coverage that you get that has anything to do with raves will be the drug scene that comes along with it, but there's the drug scene in whatever sub-culture. The media just focuses on that, so it's not good for people who associate themselves with . . . (raves) (74, female aged 18).

Importance of drugs to raves

Respondents were asked what they thought was the relationship between raves and drug use. Fifty-three (65%) respondents answered by commenting on what they saw as the importance of drug use to raves. Seventeen (32%) of these said that the majority of people at raves were taking some kind of drug.

Well, drugs, that's one of the major things. People try and say that raves aren't all about drugs, but as unfortunate as it may seem, let's face it, practically everyone who goes to raves takes drugs (37, female aged 19).

However, only six (7%) respondents said that drugs were a necessary part of the rave experience.

I'd think you'd have to be honest and say you can't have a rave without drugs, because they are inherently joined together (06, male aged 23).

For me, you can't go to a rave without drugs because that's what they're for, there for—the

drug experience. If you want to just go for the music, you can just go clubbing every Saturday. That's what raves are for and that's why they're so spread out and that's why they are what they are, because they're illegal drug things (85, female aged 17).

Nine (11%) respondents disagreed that there were no raves without drugs:

It's always the music, the atmosphere, and drugs just become part of that I suppose, but I don't think there is any necessary connection. I think you can have one without the other (29, male aged 19).

Three respondents made the point that the perception portrayed in the media of raves as places where drugs are pushed on children is inaccurate.

Everyone says it's like everyone's offering you drugs and trying to push you drugs. If you're going to have drugs, no one is forcing you to do it sort of thing . . . You know people have had drugs, but it's not all these people coming offering you, if you want drugs you have to go find them (65, male aged 16).

There were four respondents who said that they would not go to a rave if they did not have any drugs to take. Two explained that the reason was that they believed that they wouldn't have as good a time if they were 'straight', one described an inability to socialise in any setting without taking a drug and the other stated that they would not get their money's worth if they went to a rave without taking any drugs, as they would be unable to stay up all night.

Nature of the connection between drugs and raves

Seventeen (21%) respondents explained why they thought drugs were important to raves. These descriptions covered three themes. Each of these respondents (100%) identified the synergy of the drug effects with the music and the lighting as an explanation.

Techno (is) sort of music to listen to on drugs because it just sort of goes with it. The whole thing, little things just add up, like the lights and the atmosphere, a hypey atmosphere hypes you up and gets you going, and that sort of like relates to the drugs, what the drugs do to you anyway, they sort of hype you up, but that sort of adds to it (11, male, aged 20).

A second theme expressed by 12 (70%) of these respondents was that the stimulant properties of many dance drugs were functional as they provided the stamina for all night partying and dancing:

The rave costs about \$25, and you don't really want to waste that. Normally, you can only dance, with Hard Core, you've got to cut sick, you can't just plod along. You've got to cut sick, you can only really do that for maybe an hour, and that's \$25, then you're knackered, you're muscles feel like they just want to pop out, and drugs just make you go longer and you just go all night with the rave and that (22, male aged 16).

There were nine respondents who identified a sense of social connectedness enhanced by drug use as one of the reasons for the association between raves and drug use.

Ecstasy is the classic, because it enhances that group atmosphere, lots of people I know talk about the 'mass breathe' where everybody's almost breathing as one, it's one of the things with Ecstasy, it makes your respiratory system go mad. You can be in a crowd of 1000 people, feel like you're all taking in the same breath sort of thing (51, male aged 22).

Two respondents described the difference between the experience of a rave when using drugs and when not. Each of these seemed to encapsulate the position of many, that drug use was not a necessary part of the rave experience but rather that the rave experience was enhanced by drug use. It is interesting to note that each identified the loss of orientation as an attractive aspect.

I've been to raves straight and I've been to raves off my face as well. The connection is well, you can have a good time if you're there and you're not under the influence of any drugs, but if you are, you have a better time because the lights are three times more brilliant, and the music is more impressive, you get disorientated and you've got a challenge to try and get your orientation back! I suppose it's . . . an environment conducive to taking drugs. You don't have to, but it is definitely a better time if you do (54, female aged 21).

There was a general consensus that drug-taking was a part of most scenes. While some believed that there were more people drug-affected at raves rather than

other venues, others disagreed believing that there were more 'harder' drugs such as cocaine in the night-club scene. It was also noted that while people will sometimes take drugs when they go to clubs, because raves were infrequent and people expected a rave to be a 'big night', they were more likely to take drugs when they went to a rave than when they went to a night-club. A number of respondents made the point that while there was little difference between the drug use in clubs and at raves, because there was no age restriction at raves and younger people attended, the media focused on drug use in the rave scene. As one respondent put it:

I think that's what a lot of the media have come in on it for ... It wasn't noticed before the younger people started going there, started taking drugs, and because they're younger, they're home with their parents and their parents find out about it. People who go out to night clubs, the rest of society aren't aware about it. In a night club, people aren't worried, you're old enough, and once you're that age, people don't (care) (27, male aged 20).

Scoring and dealing

The term 'scoring' will be used to refer to drug acquisition, which might include buying or obtaining drugs for no financial cost. Sixty-one respondents discussed drug-related preparations in the days before a rave. Almost all respondents who had anything to say on the topic said they far preferred to organize drugs days or weeks before a rave, rather than find themselves either missing out or paying premium prices for drugs just prior to the event. Others noted an increased chance of being arrested if the score was made at the event itself. In 19 (31%) of the 61 cases the respondent purchased drugs through friends who knew a 'dealer', 17 (28%) respondents acquired drugs direct from the 'dealer' and 13 (21%) purchased the drugs from an acquaintance (a person known to the respondent, but predominantly in relation to obtaining drugs) who had contact with the 'dealer'. In 12 (20%) cases the respondent was purchasing drugs for sharing with a small group of friends. Only eight (12%) respondents made some mention of scoring drugs on the day of the rave.

Questions were also asked about any drug-dealing activities carried out by the respondent. Twenty-seven (40%) respondents discussed their own dealing activ-

ities and from these, three types of dealing activity emerged: 'dealing'; 'clearing'; and 'distribution'. Most common was *distribution*, described by 16 (24%) respondents, which involved passing drugs on to less well connected friends and/or facilitating a group purchase. The distributor usually made no cash profit on the transaction (although they may get cheaper or free drugs) and *all* those to whom the distributor passes drugs along to are friends. Some respondents made mention of the social capital gained by acting as source through which their less-connected friends could access drugs. *Clearance*, described by 12 (18%) respondents, involved selling small amounts of drugs, usually as a favour to the person who supplied the drugs, as in: 'hey, I've got 10 trips here, do you reckon you could clear some of them for me?'. Such a deal usually involves a small profit (< \$100) and/or free drugs, and the drugs might be sold on to either friends or more casual acquaintances, but never strangers. Again, some respondents made mention of the social capital that might be gained from this type of dealing: notably, however, on the supply side. As an example:

Well, the day before my sister rang up and said 'I've got some trips to move, and can you get rid of them?' and I was thinking of having some myself ... so I had a trip ... I sold nine that cost me \$20, for \$25 (each), so I made a profit of \$45. Not really much, but it's better than nothing. With the people I sold them to I got a lift to the rave (5, male aged 20).

Dealing proper, described by four (6%) respondents, was characterized by cash profit as a significant motivation for the activity. Those who said they were (or had been) involved in this level of activity also frequently indicated that their entire lifestyle and that of their immediate friends revolved around the flow of drugs through their hands. 'Dealing' also seemed to often involve the selling on of drugs to other intermediaries rather than just end-users, and friendship links were not necessarily relevant.

Driving and drug use associated with raves

As part their account of a recent rave, 66 respondents drove or were driven in a private vehicle, 17 used either public transport or taxis and five had used buses organized by either youth groups or by rave organizers. The vast majority of respondents using these 'alternative' modes of transport were too young to drive. Of the 66 who discussed driving to the recent

rave, 30 (45%) said the driver going to the rave had been 'totally straight', another 20 (30%) said the driver had used drugs but was 'OK', meaning either that the driver had only just taken the drugs and they had not had time to take effect, or that they felt that the driver was capable of driving safely under the influence of whatever drugs that they had taken. Eight (12%) respondents said the driver was definitely under the influence. Of the same 66 respondents, 29 (44%) said they cared about whether or not the driver had taken drugs, although this 'care' ranged from vague misgivings about a totally deranged driver through to an absolute refusal to get in a car with any driver who had taken any drug. It also includes those who said they deliberately waited until just before driving to take their drugs in the belief that the drugs would not take effect until after the destination was reached. Eighteen (27%) respondents said they were not concerned about the issue of whether the driver had taken drugs or not. Eight (12%) respondents mentioned taking drugs in the car on the way to their last rave, often in order to reduce the perceived risk of being arrested at, or outside, the rave. The remaining 20 respondents made no comment on the topic.

Two respondents expressed the belief that driving under the influence of drugs was less likely to result in being apprehended by police because of the difficulty of roadside detection and four believed that driving under the influence of drugs was safer than driving drunk. Amphetamines and cannabis in particular were believed to be associated with relatively safe driving. Some of the same respondents also mentioned the ease of getting away with driving under the influence of drugs even if pulled over by police. The view was that as long as the driver could maintain a rational conversation and was not weaving all over the road, the police had no way of testing for the presence of non-alcoholic intoxicants at the roadside.

People are less responsible when it comes to driving under the influence of drugs than under the influence of alcohol because ... it's more difficult to detect. Most people consider that when they're [on] drugs, that they're quite straight, quite normal and are able to maintain a ... conversation with a policeman if ... he decides he wants to breathalise you, you haven't been drinking and he can't test it. It's only if he takes a blood test that he can prove that you've been driving under the influence. So, from that point of view, less often than not, people don't

have designated drivers and so will drive under the influence (6, male aged 23).

Respondents used similar modes of transport to get home as those they used to get to the rave. Public transport and taxis were mentioned frequently, many respondents noting that raves finished late the following morning when public transport had usually recommenced for the day. Only 30 respondents discussed driving or being driven home. Of these, only four (13%) said the driver had not used any intoxicants that night. In these cases, the driver was either a family member or an organized bus driver. Seventeen (57%) of the 30 said the driver had used drugs or alcohol, but believed enough time had passed for the effects to wear off:

What we would normally do is, we take our drugs earlier, and so that we'll stay at the rave the whole 12 hours, so at the end of the rave we might just chill out, but by the end of the rave, we're already coming down, or have some sense of reality, they're not still peaking. I've been in situations where the driver was still peaking, so we just stayed, because none of us could drive, so there was not point, you just stay there, or getting a lift with someone else (40, female aged 19).

The final nine (30%) said the driver was either still under the influence or was so tired that they were falling asleep at the wheel:

The girl I used to live with was driving home, and she was just falling asleep driving home, (and) I was (also) falling asleep ... it was along the Freeway, 'Whoa! (?)' so you say in your mind, keep the driver awake, 'Doosh Doosh, Wake Up! Doosh Doosh! Wake up!' all the way home. Because the rave was (in a northern suburb), and we live (in a southern suburb), and that's quite a long drive to try and stay awake the whole way. Because we didn't have Whiz that night, we just have Ekkies and once you come down and you don't have Whiz, you're really tired (37, female aged 19).

Another respondent mentioned the problems connected with police closing raves early:

I won't drive personally if I'm completely (wasted). I've had to drive on two Trips and an E when I've been peaking, and that's not good. I did not want to drive. Because the ... police shut it down about 5 o'clock and they wouldn't let us

stay around. I just wanted to sit in the car park and go out after a while, I would have been all right, but they said 'Na, get in your car or else we're going to do you.' so I went 'Ohh', and like all my mates were bad, and they wouldn't drive, and the other guy who was straight didn't have a licence, so I had to drive and it was really bad, because my vision was going double. I basically, I don't know how we got ... there. It was the longest drive of my life, that was (15, male aged 24).

Discussion

Non-drug-specific aspects of the rave scene were the major attractions given by the majority of respondents. Yet it must be acknowledged that the experience of the most frequently mentioned of these: lighting, music, dancing, the non-violence, sense of social cohesion and relative lack of predatory male sexual behaviour may in part be enhanced, or perhaps produced, by the effects of dance drugs, especially ecstasy. This was brought into sharp relief when respondents compared their rave/dance party experience with that in venues such as hotels and night-clubs where alcohol was the predominant drug. The comparative lack of unwanted sexual attention, the 'no sleaze' factor, noted by more women than men, had been identified in earlier research which also made the comparison with venues where consumption of alcohol was the norm [10]. In addition the proportion of male respondents (62%) who discussed the attractiveness of the non-violent atmosphere at raves was greater than what would be expected on the basis of the proportion (53%) of the sample who were males, suggesting that this experience was more relevant for them than for females.

The fact that the underground aspects of the scene were only identified as an attraction by one in 10 respondents is of interest. One of the arguments against prohibiting activities or drug use is that they become more attractive because of their illegality. Elsewhere we have expressed concerns that banning raves may compromise good working relationships between stakeholders co-operating to institute workable harm reduction strategies [2]. However, the observation that there appeared to be more 'bunnies' or under-age participants at raves since they had become more mainstream and in the media focus deserves consideration. There were dual concerns that

these youngsters were at increased risk of drug-related harm and also brought unwanted drug-related media attention and disrepute on the scene. Given this, it needs to be asked whether bringing raves to the attention of large numbers of under-age people by media attention, advertising or apparent endorsement by government agencies is a good thing.

The study supports the view that while drug use is a part of the rave scene, raves are not 'drug supermarkets' [5]. The descriptions of drug-related preparations show that most arranged their drugs many days before the event and there were practical reasons for this. The accounts of drug scoring and dealing in this study were characterized by most people scoring from friends or acquaintances rather than 'dealers' as such. The transactions described were characterized by their co-operative nature where, at different points in the supply chain, the same person might take on roles of both purchaser and supplier, to the mutual benefit of both the individual and those to whom they had scored from or dealt to. These descriptions were similar to some other accounts of drug market activity among convicted drug dealers [11] and accounts of drug purchase by explicitly 'recreational' users, defined by Moore [12] as 'those persons for whom drug use is primarily an expressive and leisure-oriented activity but who may, on occasions, experience difficulties of various kinds resulting from, or exacerbated by, their drug use' (p. 414). However, many of the accounts of drug dealing and scoring in this sample were different to accounts in more commercial settings such as street-level drug markets characterized by a large number of brief and anonymous transactions [13,14]. Furthermore, the experience of the respondents in the present study was very different to the simplistic and moralistic constructs of 'innocent' drug consumers and 'evil drug pushers' often portrayed in the media.

Although the precise effects of many substances on driving ability are unclear, a prudent harm reduction strategy would be to have as few people as possible in charge of a vehicle who were under the influence of one of the dance drugs or cannabis. A substantial minority of respondents described travelling with drivers who were drug affected. Less than half those who discussed driving with someone who had taken drugs said they considered whether the driver was drug-affected. This is of concern, and ought to be addressed in peer education and rave-related materials. Additionally, the practice of people driving after consuming drugs and assuming the destination would

be reached before the drugs 'come on' is a potentially hazardous one. Individual differences, the unknown composition and potency of illicit substances, the possibility of the journey being longer than expected (due to getting lost or police roadblocks near the venue) are just some of the factors which could lead to the driver having to drive while drug-affected. Police practices such as road blocks and car searches, which are likely to result in people consuming their drugs to avoid detection and forcing people to drive when events have been shut down early, ought to be discouraged.

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