Still Raving: The social construction of club drug use at raves and EDM festivals in Canadian newspapers

by

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ABSTRACT

STILL RAVING: THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF CLUB DRUG USE AT RAVES AND EDM FESTIVALS IN CANADIAN NEWSPAPERS

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Club drug use in news media is understudied in the Canadian context. Accordingly, the current study explores how the evolving rave scene and club drug use has been constructed in three Canadian newspapers. Through a qualitative thematic analysis, this study examines media coverage in two separate periods of time: 1999 to 2004 and 2011 to 2016. The total sample of 129 articles is used to examine how club drug use is defined, how the problem is typified, and what solutions are offered and evaluated by claimsmakers in media coverage. The results indicate that news media and other information sources described club drug use as a social problem in both eras, denoting a moral panic. Despite the similarities, important differences were noted, with the latter being characterized by more moderate and balanced reporting. More specifically, during the festival era, the findings reveal competing interpretations of and solutions for the 'problem' in coverage, indicating retreat from prohibition and more support for harm reduction interventions.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The news media is a source of information that continues to exert the greatest influence

on public perception of crime and social deviance by focusing on stories that highlight the

sensational and perceived threats to public morality (CRCVC, 2011). The average citizen obtains

nearly all their information regarding crime from the media alone, with little regard for its source

and/or accuracy (Muraskin & Domash, 2007).

The media is also a major source of information about illicit drugs and their effects

(Hathaway & Erickson, 2004). By emphasizing risks and adverse consequences, news media

accounts have exerted a strong influence on the construction of drug use as a social problem.

News media coverage of the use of club drugs has evidentially played a role in creating a moral

panic (Cornwell & Linders, 2002). While initially reported as just the latest dance craze, media

accounts of the rave scene became hostile and ritualized to emphasize the harms of club drug use

(Critcher, 2000). Before long, the use of drugs at raves and their increasing popularity caused

alarm among parents and policy-makers alike (Anderson & Kavanaugh, 2007).

In the early- to mid-2000s, aspects of rave culture began to spread beyond late-night

parties to new settings. What began as an underground movement in the late 1980s started to

cross over into mainstream society. Outdoor EDM festivals became popular and lucrative

manifestations of the 'revived' rave scene and attracted similar media attention.

The preponderance of media in modern society gives it extensive power to shape the

social problem process (Meija, 2015). The media provides a platform for claimsmakers to assert

their claims initiating moral panics (Loseke, 2003). Moreover, news media has long played an

important role in shaping public opinion and social policy responses to illicit drug use (see

Hughes, Lancaster, & Spicer, 2011; Lancaster, Hughes, Spicer, Matthew-Simmons, & Dillon,

2011; Patel, Joshi, Holdford, & Saxena, 2011; and Taylor, 2008). Media reporting has been criticized by scholars for being sensationalized, biased, and narrow. It determines what stories get told and do not get told to sway public opinion and influence policy making. News media has the power in constructing social problems to shape *what* the audience thinks and *how* they think or understand it.

Writing 15 years ago, Brian Wilson (2002) observed that "the lack of research on rave culture […] is surprising considering the notoriety the group has received in popular media, in government-related health reports, and in scholarly work on youth" (p.374). There has been little recent research on *Canadian* news media reporting on rave culture. To help fill this void, my current research uses qualitative thematic analysis to study newspaper coverage on club drug use from 1999 to 2004 and 2011 to 2016. The selected timeframes allowed for a detailed snapshot in change observed in news reporting on the underground rave scene and EDM festivals. Media depictions of club drug use affect if and how it is problematized and perceived by the public and policy makers. Accordingly, this study will contribute to a better understanding of the role of media in shaping public attitudes and policies concerning the use of drugs.

This thesis is informed by a constructionist perspective on the role of the media in the social problems process. In addition to developing the theory, the next chapter reviews the literature on moral panics, with specific emphasis on how Canadian news media dramatized different drugs in different eras, including: alcohol, opiates, marijuana, LSD, crack cocaine, and methamphetamine.

Chapter three outlines my methodological approach to data collection, coding, and analysis of media. Chapters four and five present the findings from each era: the underground rave scene (articles analyzed between 1999 to 2004) and EDM festivals (articles analyzed

between 2011 to 2016). Chapter six compares results, discusses implications, and potential

avenues for future research.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL APPROACH AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The idea that the world is a 'social construction' – a product of human interaction – has

become a central sociological framework (Hjelm, 2014). Social construction perspectives have

been, and continue to be, very popular inside and outside of sociology – especially among

researchers studying social problems and moral panics (Loseke, 2015). Because club drug use in

rave and EDM festivals scenes have attracted media coverage, exaggerated press reports, and

public outcry, they might be characterized as moral panics.

In order to examine these phenomena further, this research will be framed with specific

reference to the construction of club drug use as a social problem. This chapter begins by

outlining the evolving rave phenomenon and ubiquitous club drug use, to provide a background

on the focus of this study. Next, the constructionist approach to social problems is described. The

evolution of this approach is briefly reviewed to situate the current research in older and newer

contributions to constructionist literature. Related concepts, such as social problems, claims

making, and moral panics, are described and applied to the current study. Next relevant literature

on club drug use and the rave scene is synthesized to form the basis of this study. Both the

theoretical approach and literature review have impacted the research design. The final section of

this chapter outlines the current study.

2.2 The Rave Scene: An Evolving Cultural Phenomenon

Defining the Rave Scene

Emerging during the late 1980s, the rave scene began on a modest scale. Raves – or

grassroots organized, antiestablishment, unlicensed all-night dance parties (Anderson, 2009) –

feature electronically produced dance music that targets young adult audiences. The phenomenon

first surfaced in England, America, and on the Spanish island of Ibiza as word-of-mouth 'illegal'

dance parties – or acid house parties – where techno music was associated with LSD

consumption (Critcher, 2000; Heir, 2002). Acid house music is "bass-driven, repetitive,

hypnotic, and psychedelic" (Critcher, 2000, p.146) and amplified to heighten the effects of illicit

drugs.

In examining the rave phenomenon, numerous definitions of 'rave' have been presented. In

its strictest sense, rave can be defined as a dance gathering that takes place outside of legal

parameters that govern such activities (Green, 2005). During the late 1980s, raves were most

commonly staged in illegally accessed warehouses or industrial spaces (Green, 2005). This aura

of guerrilla activity, trespass, and transgression illuminated the element of countercultural force

associated with the scene (Green, 2005). As these early venues quickly attracted unwanted

attention from law enforcement, rural expanses, such as aircraft hangers or barns, offered better

cover for rave goers (Critcher, 2000). By the early 1990s, the rave scene gained immense

popularity, progressing from acid house parties to 'legal' club venues in order to accommodate

the growing number of interested patrons (Heir, 2002; Tepper, 2009).

'Rave' is commonly defined by its unique characteristics. For instance, Henderson (1993)

identified five elements: "larger than average venues; music with 120 or more beats per minute;

distinctive dress codes; extensive special effects (videos, lighting); and ubiquitous drug use" (as

cited in Critcher, 2000, p.147). Thorton (1996) branded the rave scene as a 'taste culture.' She

noted "rave culture is associated with a specific taste in music, a specific style of dress, and

people with the same interests" (as cited in Glover, 2003, p.311). The inviting cultural

components, raves' distinct ethos defined by 'PLUR' (peace, love, unity, respect), unique style

of life, and club drug use are what attracted Generation X ravers to the scene. Dominated by

bright neon colours, various props, and other fashion statements were some of its defining elements. Young ravers became captivated by this euphoric and deviant lifestyle as the rave scene became a central part of young people's nightlife.

The Rave Scene and Club Drug Use

Raving has grown into one of the most popular forms of leisure for young people around the world. According to Sanders (2006), the general increase in drug use among youth has paralleled the rise of raving within youth culture. Studies on raves show that club drug use commonly occurs within dance club settings, where young individuals use one or a variety of club drugs at intervals throughout the night, along with licit substances, such as tobacco and alcohol (Sanders, 2006). Thus, one cannot properly speak of raves without acknowledging the role of illegal hallucinogenic and stimulant drugs (Green, 2005). Defenders of rave culture often minimize the prominence of drugs and instead emphasize a tribalistic or quasi-spiritual collectivity as the sole meaning of rave (Green, 2005).

Relatively recently, the terms 'club drugs' and 'dance drugs' have emerged to indicate a variety of substances with stimulant and/or hallucinogenic properties that are associated with a particular social context (e.g., the rave scene) (Inciardi & McElrath, 2011; Sanders, 2006). The scene is widely associated with the use of ecstasy (MDMA), ketamine, and LSD (Sanders, 2006). Both the music and rave environment are constructed in a way to accommodate the use of drugs which compliment the style of music, displays of lights, and party atmosphere (Sanders, 2006). The rise in popularity of dance club culture and club drug use has meant that the rave's public image is irrevocably associated with club drug consumption.

MDMA (Ecstasy/Molly)

Many researchers have documented the strong association between the rave scene and specific types of drugs, particularly ecstasy (MDMA or Molly, as it is known in its purest form) (Hunt et al., 2010; Lomazow, 2014). The formula, "Ecstasy plus house music equals mass euphoria" (Critcher, 2000, p.146) was a popular belief upheld by rave subculture. MDMA quickly became the drug of choice for young ravers because of its exhilarating and pleasurable effects (Critcher, 2000). Due to its effect on mood, inducing empathy, openness, peace, and caring, no drug is as closely associated with club drugs and the rave scene as ecstasy (Critcher, 2000; Murguia, Tackett-Gibson, & Willard, 2007).

Created in Germany in 1912, ecstasy, the popular name for 3, 4 methylenedioxy-amphetamine – MDMA – was first used as a chemical preparation (Critcher, 2000). During the late 1970s, psychiatrists began to use MDMA to treat psychological disorders by helping patients open up and engage in self-reflection (Critcher, 2000; Murguia et al., 2007). It was often referred to as 'penicillin for the soul' among therapists (Murguia et al., 2007). Soon after this discovery, MDMA began to find its popularity as a street drug and was quickly passed into the hands of drug dealers (Critcher, 2000; Murguia et al., 2007).

In 1985, following various media scare stories, MDMA was classified as a dangerous drug. Media accounts emphasized the potential problems of using ecstasy and other club drugs (Hunt et al., 2010). Journalistic accounts stressed the potential risks of MDMA in their claims, including depression, insomnia, anxiety, paranoia, significant increase in heart rate, blood pressure, dehydration, hypothermia, and even possible seizures and kidney or heart failure (Hunt et al., 2010). The media also claimed that although MDMA is physically non-addictive, users

still risk becoming psychologically dependent and may subconsciously use the drug as a form of self-medication for underlying disorders (Hunt et al., 2010).

In response to the negative attention given to the harmful effects of MDMA, an emergency ban made the use of ecstasy illegal in Canada (Murguia et al., 2007). MDMA was then classified as a Schedule I drug (which is the most strictly controlled), preventing both popular and medical uses, as well as making it difficult to conduct research on the drug (Murguia et al., 2007).

Despite media scare tactics, MDMA, similar to many other club drugs, continued to appeal to youth because of the perception that it is physically non-addictive and does not have negative side effects (Murguia et al., 2007). When consumed, rave attendees achieve a feeling of being at peace with the world, a sense of closeness with people around them, and an enhancement of senses (Murguia et al., 2007). The experience of reaching alternative levels of consciousness enhances one's overall experience at a rave.

Ketamine

Developed in the United States in 1962, ketamine is a pharmaceutical that is often referred to as 'Special K', 'K', and 'Kat' among recreational users (Lankenau, 2006). Much like ecstasy, ketamine has also been defined as a 'club drug' given its common association with clubs, raves, and dance settings (Lankenau, 2006). Ketamine was first developed within the medical community as an easily administered anaesthetic with minimal side effects (Lankenau, 2006). Soon after its invention in 1967, ketamine was being dispensed by underground 'medicinal chemists' and was sold on the streets by the early 1970s (Lankenau, 2006).

By the late 1970s, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) released a report on the dangers of ketamine abuse (Lankenau, 2006). The publication of both reports coincided with a shift among ketamine users from older

experimentalists towards younger recreational users (Lankenau, 2006). In the early 1980s,

ketamine became increasingly popular within rave culture – it was even sometimes sold in pill

form as counterfeit ecstasy (Lankenau, 2006). Its unique dissociative properties such as out of

body experiences and visual enhancements are attractive elements to those in the rave culture

(Lankenau, 2006).

LSD

During the 1940s, researchers began experimenting with LSD (Lysergic Acid

Diethylamide) under the assumption that it could be used to illuminate the chemical nature of

psychotic conditions. A decade later, LSD became the subject of hundreds of medical and

psychological studies with little negative feedback from the scientific community or the general

public (Cornwell & Linders, 2002). In the 1960s, Harvard psychologist, Timothy Leary began

his own experiments with the psychedelic drug. Leary launched a series of experiments and

recruited Harvard students as subjects. Not surprisingly, students were drawn to his experiments

due to their interest in experiencing the effects of hallucinogenic drugs.

In the 1960s, the FDA began its first investigation of LSD abuse following reports of

misuse of the hallucinogenic drug by researchers (Cornwell & Linders, 2002). Publicity

surrounding experiments led colleagues to express concerns about Leary's study, as did parents

apprehension about the use of LSD. LSD quickly made headline news and media stories began

connecting LSD use with "psychic terror, uncontrollable impulses, delusion, and hallucinations"

(Cornwell & Linders, 2002, p.317). Early news articles on LSD represented the drug as

something to be feared and avoided.

LSD made its appearance in the rave scene during the late 1980s and became highly

attractive to young ravers because of its hallucinogenic properties. Lasting for 8-12 hours, LSD

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gave users a rush of thoughts; wild free association; and heightened visual effects, such as

intensified colours, distorted shapes and sizes, and movements in stationary objects. In rave

settings, LSD was often used in combination with ecstasy – referred to as 'candy flipping' – to

heighten the desired effects of both drugs (Sanders, 2006).

The Decline of the Rave Scene

From the early 1980s to the late 1990s, dancing all night and into the early morning hours,

consuming favoured club drugs, and immersing oneself in raves' collective identity flourished

into a popular youthful activity. However, in the early- to mid- 2000s, aspects of rave culture

began to shift. What began as an underground movement in the 1980s started to go mainstream.

The decline of the rave scene is typically explained in terms of media exposure and related moral

panics and the mainstreaming of the scene.

Reports of the changing rave scene (see Anderson, 2009; Anderson & Kavanaugh, 2007)

often focus on the role of the media's discovery that led to its decline. What was initially

endorsed as the latest dance craze quickly became an alarming social problem. Due to raves'

increasing popularity, club drug use was represented as "[a] threat posed by young people taking

drugs in uncontrolled environments" (Hathaway, 2015, p.126). This representation attracted

unwanted attention from law enforcement and mass media outlets. The press became hostile and

sensationalized excessive drug use by tapping into societal fears and concerns that emphasize the

vulnerability of youth rave attendees (Hier, 2002). Heightened concerns surrounding raves

ensued – particularly when overdoses were covered in the media. The influence of media on

public perception is thereby partially responsible for rave's decline.

Moreover, since their emergence in the late 1980s and peak in the mid- to late-1990s, raves

have changed in organization, style, and venue to merge with commercial club culture

(Anderson, 2009). By the 2000s, outdoor EDM festivals had largely replaced the underground

rave scene. Instead of raving in abandoned warehouses or indoor nightclubs, popular downtown

cores, such as Toronto, Ontario, are now home to the modern rave scene. Generation Xers (born

between 1965 and 1980), who originated and participated in early raves, have been replaced by

Generation Y (born between 1977 and 2003) (Anderson, 2009). With Gen Xers scaling back

their attendance at raves, Gen Yers connected to new manifestations found at EDM festivals and

revamped club drugs alike. According to Anderson (2009), this generational disinvestment also

helped facilitate raves' decline.

In sum, attributions of deviance, with the help of the media, panic among parents, and legal

controls, constructed raves as a troublesome matter, rather than a meaningful cultural experience

(Anderson, 2009).

Rave Revival: Electronic Dance Music (EDM) Festivals

> Imagine 27 acres of wide-open grass. Now implant a few stages and huge
> speaker systems at several points along the perimeter. Set the scene with bright
> lights and large screens that project psychedelic images. Finally, pour in the
> 100,000 fun fur-clad hoop dancers, shirtless frat boys, wayfarer-wearing
> hipsters, and former club kids, and the festival is ready to take place
> (Lomazow, 2014, p.304).

The above description illuminates the shift in the rave scene from underground, black light

venues to large outdoor festivals. An aspect that has previously characterized subcultures

associated with house music is the connection between music and the place where it is heard:

most commonly in nightclubs (Simao, 2015). This connection is no longer exclusive to club

venues, since the rave scene has been repopularized outdoors. As such, EDM music festivals

have become increasingly appealing to youth. Hundreds of EDM festivals are held around the

globe every year, such as Tomorrowland, Digital Dreams, Ultra Music Festival, and Veld, just to

name a few. Festivals such as these are increasing in popularity, providing a sense of belonging, and allowing attendees to get lost in the music and its environment (Simao, 2015).

The recent surge in EDM festival popularity is inextricably linked with the use of illicit drugs – particularly the consumption of Molly (Lomazow, 2014). According to Lomazow (2014) "house music and festivals… go hand in hand with the use of Molly, so much so that many festivalgoers feel house music could not exist without it" (p.305). Substances such as MDMA or Molly are so inherent to rave culture because of the feelings and euphoria they elicit (Lomazow, 2014). "MDMA has been described as inducing 'ECSTASY,' or a sense of interpersonal closeness, acceptance of self and others, feelings of 'oneness,' and a potent sense of well-being" (Lomazow, 2014, p.310) – a feeling that is deeply rooted in EDM culture.

Much like the rave scene during the late 1990s, EDM festivals have also seen increasing media attention, due to their growing popularity and reported overdoses (Ridpath, Driver, Nolan, Karpati, Kass, Paone, Jakubowski, Hoffman, Nelson, & Kunins, 2014). News reports have focused on the dangers of drug use through troubling headlines, such as: "The problem plaguing music festivals" (Global News, 2015); "Veld Music Festival deaths linked to 'party drugs,' police say" (CBC News, 2014); "Rave drugs a 'very big' health concern for youth" (CBC News, 2014); and "Veld Festival deaths threaten to bring back rave boogeyman" (The Star, 2014). These constructions indicate little differentiation between modern day EDM festivals and raves of the past (Anderson & Kavanaugh, 2007).

2.3 The Social Constructionist Approach to Social Problems

The Beginning and Evolution of the Approach

Social constructionism has a long history as both a theoretical perspective and methodological orientation, dating back to Descartes and the emergence of constructivism in the

philosophy of science (Loseke, 2015). Many sociologists, despite its long history, trace the

constructivist framework to the 1966 publication of Berger and Luckmann's, *The Social*

Construction of Reality or the more recent book by Spector and Kitsuse (1977), *Constructing*

Social Problems. In general, the social constructionist approach is about interpretations of

reality, and how knowledge is attained to construct our reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). The

present research, however, is more narrowly focused on the construction of social problems and

moral panics.

The Sociology of Knowledge

The sociology of knowledge emerged in the nineteenth century by work of German

sociologists Max Scheler and Karl Mannheim. Scheler first coined the term 'sociology of

knowledge' in the 1920s as "a passing episode during his philosophical career" (Berger &

Luckmann, 1966, p.19). Scheler's contribution sought to clear away the difficulties raised by

relativism in studying how human knowledge is ordered by society. Scheler's work set off an

extensive debate and uproar in Germany (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). As a result, Scheler's

work ensued from a much broader philosophical perspective to a narrowly focused sociological

framework.

Following the criticisms of Scheler's work, Mannheim reformulated the sociology of

knowledge. Mannheim's understanding of sociology was "much more far-reaching than

Scheler's… [and] became a positive method for the study of almost any facet of human thought"

(Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p.21). Mannheim was convinced that ideology was a product of

social position (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Turner, 1991). Building on and departing from the

work of Mannheim, Berger and Luckmann argued that there was no circumstance or realm in

which reality was not 'socially constructed' (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Turner, 1991). Thus, they sought to reinvent the sociology of knowledge.

For Berger and Luckmann (1966), the spheres of 'reality' (a quality relating to a phenomena that is independent of our own volition) and 'knowledge' (the certainty that phenomena are real and they possess specific characteristics) are present in all human existence. Sociologically, interest in questions of 'reality' and 'knowledge' is therefore justified by their social relativity. For instance, what is 'real' to one person may not be 'real' to another; similarly, the 'knowledge' of one culture differs from the 'knowledge' of another. Therefore, specific agglomerations of 'reality' and 'knowledge' are exclusive to social context. As such, Berger and Luckmann (1966) contend:

> The sociology of knowledge must concern itself with whatever passes for
> 'knowledge' in a society, regardless of the ultimate validity or invalidity (by
> whatever criteria) of such 'knowledge'. And in so far as all human
> 'knowledge' is developed, transmitted and maintained in social situations, the
> sociology of knowledge must seek to understand the process by which this is
> done in such a way that a taken-for-granted 'reality' congeals (p.15).

Therefore, the constructionist framework is directly influenced by the sociology of knowledge.

The Social Construction of Reality

Influential theorists such as Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber informed Berger and Luckmann's work during the 1960s (Hjelm, 2014). Symbolic interactionism, which began with work of Mead (1934) and Blumer (1969), also provided insights on how people construct their own and others' identities through everyday encounters and interactions (Burr, 2015). The ideas of their mentor, Alfred Schutz and his work on phenomenology, was another strong influence on Berger and Luckmann (Hjelm, 2014).

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As a philosopher and as a sociologist, Schutz focused on the structure of common-sense thinking and its emergence in everyday life. He argued that human beings use language to assign certain meanings to the world and then socially distribute this knowledge among one another (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). In other words, social interactions among individuals create meaning. Berger and Luckmann sought to expand on Schutz's work by asking: "is society a human product or are humans the product of society?" (Hjelm, 2014, p.18). Their answer to this question ultimately led to the development of the social construction of reality.

The social constructionist framework focuses on interpretations of reality and how knowledge is attained to construct our reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Building on the phenomenological writings of Schutz, Berger and Luckmann (1966) sought to understand: (1) the ways in which knowledge is shaped by social processes, and (2) the process whereby reality is constructed in social interactions. Reality therefore, is a product of social construction deriving from three dialectical 'moments': (1) externalization, (2) objectification, and (3) internalization (Hjelm, 2014).

To begin, the process of externalization emphasizes the importance of face-to-face social interaction. For Berger and Luckmann, externalization means "humans assign meanings to the world around them and to their actions in relation to that world" (as cited in Hjelm, 2014, p.19). Society only becomes a human product when these meanings are shared outside the individual and to the world. Thus, for Berger and Luckmann, the face-to-face situation is the starting point for understanding how institutions come to achieve an independent status and become 'social facts' (as cited in Hjelm, 2014).

Secondly, Berger and Luckmann describe the process of objectification as the 'sedimentation' of the social world. The attitude of 'this is how things are done' gives rise to

tradition. As such, "social reality is no longer perceived as a human product but rather as a fact

of nature, a result of cosmic laws, or a manifestation of divine will" (Hjelm, 2014, p.21-22).

Therefore, it is presumed that society cannot be changed by human action alone.

The third and last 'moment', internalization, describes how individuals begin to adopt the

objective world as their own (Hjelm, 2014). Internalization is considered to be a lifelong process

– individuals internalize all objectivized social realities from primary to secondary socializations.

Individuals continuously learn and internalize the norms and roles of society – the difference

from right and wrong, good and evil. Most will adopt stable and continuous self-identification

and will understand his or her role in society (Hjelm, 2014). Those who are unable to do so are

generalized as 'other' (Hjelm, 2014) – often ostracized by society and subjected to marginalizing

labels.

The dialectic of social construction is apparent in Berger and Luckmann's claim, "society

is a human product. Society is an objective reality. Man is a social product" (as cited in Hjelm,

2014, p.22). To understand the process of constructing social problems, Spector and Kitsuse

expand on this constructionist framework in their 1977 publication, *Constructing Social*

Problems.

Understanding Social Problems

A distinctive feature of the constructionist perspective departs from understanding social

problems in terms of objective conditions and causes. Instead, social problems are defined in

terms of the activity by which they are constructed (Woolgar & Pawluch, 1985). Thus, social

problems are what people think they are.

Spector and Kitsuse established the social constructionist approach to social problems in

1977. *Constructing Social Problems* is a response to the structural functionalist approach to

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social problems, which assumes that social conditions exist separately from human interpretation (Tumin, 1965). As such, objective indicators determine what constitutes a social problem. Rather than studying objective conditions when defining social problems, Spector and Kitsuse (1977) instead focused on subjective interpretation. People ultimately decide what is – and what is not – a social problem by the way they react to things (Spector & Kitsuse, 1977). Thus, social problems are social constructions.

Although Spector and Kitsuse paved the way for social problems work, critics accused them of unacknowledged objectivism. Harris (2010) claims for example:

> OSC [objective social constructionism] arguments can be made without necessarily attending so much to what things mean to actors and the intricate process through which those diverse meanings are created; OSC arguments can be made without suspending belief in the existence of the world as the analyst sees it (p.5).

Simply stated, any explanation of social problems is dependent on the author's own construction of reality. The researcher analyzing social problems must decide which claims are the most 'truthful', and therefore inevitably moves toward an objectivist framework (Harris, 2010).

Woolgar and Pawluch (1985) charged Spector and Kitsuse with 'ontological gerrymandering', for adopting a theoretically inconsistent stance as they continued to make assumptions about the nature of social conditions. They argue:

> Spector and Kitsuse (1977) elaborate the imperative to study definitions of social problems rather than the imputed conditions themselves […] they employed the assumption that in many cases definitions of social problems vary while conditions do not (p.216).

Spector and Kitsuse therefore failed to acknowledge that their identification of a condition or behaviour could in fact be construed as a definitional claim (Woolgar & Pawluch, 1985).

In response, Ibarra and Kitsuse (1993) shifted the focus away from how conditions become social problems towards the discursive strategies in which social problems are formulated in public discourse. They argue that a strict and attentive reading of *Constructing Social Problems* would:

> Make clear that explaining "the variability of definitions vis-à-vis the constancy of the conditions to which they relate" is *not* the focus of the theory. Rather the theory directs attention to the claims-making process, *accepting as given and beginning with* the participants' description of the putative conditions and their assertions about their problematic character (i.e., the definitions) (Ibarra & Kitsuse, 1993, p.28, emphasis in original).

In other words, the focus needs to be entirely on claims-making activities and how claims are articulated. Put otherwise:

> The ontological gerrymandering problem can be solved by focusing on language, the rhetoric used by social problems claims-makers… suggest[ing] this will counter social constructionists' tendency to fall back into the trap of commenting or making assumptions about social conditions (as cited in Troyer, 1993, p.122).

Other constructionists, such as Best (1993) and Holstein and Miller (1993) argue for a more contextual approach to social problems work – moving social constructionism back to an analysis of conditions. Best reasoned that sociologists employing a constructionist perspective required a more pragmatic and strategic framework (as cited in Hathaway, 2015). Thus, Best (1993) proposed that a distinction be made between 'contextual constructionism' and 'strict constructionism'. A contextual approach means that the analyst might go beyond discursive claims to understand the claims making process, which still acknowledges assumptions about objective conditions. Best (1993) proposes this contextual approach will ultimately allow for more practical applications and less obsessing about abstract theory.

Despite these different emphases, there is a general agreement about the characteristics of conditions that characterize a social problem (Loseke, 2003). Simply stated, a public definition of a 'social problem' is used to classify conditions that are deemed troublesome, prevalent, can be changed, and should be changed, but not all conditions become social problems. Many social problems may exist at a given time, but only some are given the required level of attention to be recognized as such (Hathaway, 2015).

Spector and Kitsuse's work radically subjectivized the study of social problems (Hjelm, 2014). Departing from traditional conceptualizations of social problems, which focus on objective conditions and causes, they define social problems as "the activities of individuals or groups making assertions or grievances and claims with respect to some putative conditions" (p.75). Therefore, a social problem is an interactive process between claims makers regarding the harm, undesirability, or unjustness of the problem (Spector & Kitsuse, 1977). Constructionists are concerned with the meanings individuals create and assign to the objective condition.

While social problems would not exist without people who make claims, few social problems claims actually convince everyone, because not everyone shares a common set of values. Social problems are constructed in various ways through the use of different claims (Loseke, 2003). Each definition of a condition constructs a different type of problem. Loseke (1999, p.25-26) defines a claim as "any verbal, visual, or behavioural statement that tries to convince audiences to take a condition seriously" (as cited in Hjelm, 2014, p.41). Therefore, the purpose of claims is to persuade audiences of a particular way to think. The process often leads to portraying certain conditions in society as undesirable, immoral, or evil, which in turn, has an impact on how audiences feel about these conditions.

For a social problem claim to be successful – i.e. to effectively convince its audiences – it must provide descriptions of actual conditions and people instead of abstract values (Hjelm, 2014). For instance, successful claims making will address the actors involved – the victims and villains – to narrow down the complexity of a social problem. A social problem relies on its typification, which allows conditions and people to be presented in a particular way to exacerbate the problem. An effective claim of a problematic condition must be represented as widespread, entailing troublesome consequences (Hjelm, 2014). Categorizing conditions as pervasive and problematic captures public attention and intensifies the status of a social problem.

Pointing out threats to values, constructing convincing conditions and people, and personalizing social problems are the heart of social problems claims. The way a problem is defined and constructed influences the putative solutions to the problem. The solution-construction process is comprised of two facets: (1) emphasis on individual change – whereby we, as individuals must change in order to solve the problem; and (2) change through social policy – suggesting government officials can – and should – intervene and offer solutions. The successful construction of solutions has the most direct consequences on social change – an aspect that is central to the claims making competition (Hjelm, 2014; Loseke, 2003).

The Role of Claims-Makers

Social constructionist perspectives on social problems assume that people create meaning because meaning is not inherent in conditions (Loseke, 2003). In the process of constructing meaning, there are people who make the meaning (claims makers) and those who evaluate the importance and credibility of what is presented (audiences) (Loseke, 2003). Effectively constructing a social problem requires that audience members be persuaded that a troublesome condition exists.

According to Spector and Kitsuse (1977):

Claims-making is always a form of interaction: a demand made by one party to

another that something be done about some putative condition. A claim implies

that the claimant has the right at least to be heard, if not receive satisfaction

(p.78).

Claims provide an answer to the question, 'what is the problem?' and every claim needs a claims

maker, or someone who presents the claim (Hjelm, 2014). Typically, claimants with more

power, larger membership, high financial standing, and better organization are among the most

successful in promoting their assertions. Successful constructions are those recognized as

legitimate by an official institution or agency or public endorsement, that come to be accepted as

'reality' (Spector & Kitsuse, 1977).

From a constructionist perspective, all assertions about social problems are claims,

regardless of who makes them (Hjelm, 2014). Thus, it can be argued that in some form or

another, everyone is a claimsmaker. However, everyday claimsmaking should be distinguished

from deliberate efforts to bring about change in conditions we find objectionable (Hjelm, 2014).

For instance, complaints about the increasing price of food in the grocery store differ from

claims made about illicit drug use.

With social problems work, there are two categories of claimsmakers: primary and

secondary. The main goal of a primary claimsmaker is to ensure a particular social problem is

widely recognized (Hjelm, 2014). Similar to social activists, primary claimsmakers search out

information and generate their own claims (Loseke, 2003). Examples include politicians and

political lobbyists, interest groups, and even academic researchers (Hjelm, 2014). In contrast,

secondary claims makers will translate and package claims made by others (Loseke, 2003). The

news media is an example of secondary claimsmaking because it has the power to modify claims

in a variety of ways for a variety of reasons. Moreover, other agencies will often make use of the

media in hopes that people will be moved to join their cause. As Hjelm (2014) argues, "taken at

face value, the purpose of the media is to *mediate* information about conditions and activities

relevant to social problems" (p.45, emphasis in original). Therefore, primary claimsmakers of

ubiquitous club drug use, for example, may have their messages modified by print journalists

and media outlets. Thus, media portrayals of club drug use in the rave scene may combine

various clams or omit certain aspects of the problem.

When discussing the process of constructing social problems, the focus is often on the

claimsmakers. But, as noted by Loseke (2011):

> Audiences are critical because a social problem is created only when audience
> members evaluate claims as believable and important. In the metaphor of the
> social problems game: Who wins and who loses depends on how audience
> members vote (p.40).

It is important to remember though, claims will rarely reach or touch all levels of society in the

same way. For this reason, Hjelm (2014) contends:

> It should be remembered that the context is the key to understanding why
> social problems succeed or fail: Some audiences are not receptive to social
> problems, and some audiences are too busy thinking about other social
> problems. Therefore, no matter how efficient from an organizational point of
> view, claims may only succeed if they are targeted right (p.48).

In order for a social problem to exist in society, it must first be recognized as one by its

audiences. Similarly, audiences have to care about the context of the claims. Thus, the main goal

of claimsmakers is: (1) finding audiences who are interested in the claim and (2) identifying

those who have the power to change the implicated condition (Hjelm, 2014).

2.4 Mediated Moral Panics

According to Cornwell and Linders (2002), moral panic theorists work within a

constructionist framework. The concept of moral panic is said to expand social constructionism

as it integrates similar notions – including deviance, social problems, and the role of the media

(Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009). Because of this parallel connection, both perspectives are useful

when analyzing the construction of social problems (Martel, 2006). Thus, moral panic literature

in the context of the social problems process will be situated in this current study.

The Concept of Moral Panics

According to Stanley Cohen, who first introduced the concept of moral panic:

Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic.
A condition, episode, or person or group of persons emerges to become defined
as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized
and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned
by editors, bishops, politicians and other right thinking people; socially
accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are
evolved or (more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges
or deteriorates and becomes more visible (1972, p.9).

Cohen coined the term *moral panic* to characterize the reactions of the media, law enforcement,

the general public, politicians, and action groups to youthful disturbances (as cited in Goode &

Ben-Yehuda, 1994). These reactions are disproportionate to the real and present danger the threat

poses to society (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994). According to Cohen (1973), the harm,

wrongfulness, or deviance attributed to the behaviour, condition, or phenomenon is

sensationalized.

Much like social problems, moral panics vary in intensity, duration, and social impact

(Garland, 2008). Panics may be transient episodes or qualify as major outbreaks, but they tend to

be of short duration. Cohen identified four agents crucial to a moral panic – the mass media,

moral entrepreneurs, the control culture, and the public (Critcher, 2008).

The mass media plays the most important role in the early stages by producing stories

that exaggerate and present distorted images of deviance and/or the deviant group (Critcher,

2008). The deviant group is what Cohen refers to as the suitable enemy – the 'scapegoat' or 'folk

devil' – whose behaviour is presented as a threat to social and moral values (Martel, 2006). With

the media's persistent involvement, moral panics are therefore constructed frequently. However,

it is important to emphasize the changing role of the media in shaping moral panics. As

McRobbie & Thorton (1995) put it, the degree to which media has become something with

which the social problem is continuously being defined is constitutively new. For example, the

ownership of home video cameras and the availability of cellular devices; the new space for

broadcasting home video material on national television; and even the possession of degrees in

media studies all have created a new space for social construction (McRobbie & Thorton, 1995).

Similarly, youth today are turning to social media to share and create various forms of 'news'

more than ever. With this shift in media, audiences can now be credited with possessing a

greater degree of 'media literacy' than they did in the past (McRobbie & Thorton, 1995), thus,

inciting a greater degree of social anxiety on a more frequent basis.

Moral entrepreneurs are individuals and groups who campaign to eradicate immoral or

threatening behaviour (Critcher, 2008). Agents with institutional power, such as law

enforcement, the courts, and politicians are what Cohen refers to as the 'societal control culture'

(Critcher, 2008). In moral panics, Cohen suggests these agents are 'sensitized' to 'evidence' of

widespread deviance, which justifies increasing control measures with references to shaping

public opinion (Critcher, 2008). Cohen noted that the general public both accepts and rejects

media representations. As critical consumers of media, the public is a component of the complex

interplay between agents that define the problem and its remedies (Critcher, 2008).

Moral panic is also conceptualized with reference to five elements: concern, hostility,

consensus, disproportionality, and volatility (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994). First, there must be a

heightened level of *concern* over the behaviour of a certain group, which is often manifested

through mass media attention. Second, *hostility* increases towards the group engaging in the

behaviour in question. Here, members of this category are often constructed as the enemy

because their behaviour is seen as harmful or threatening to the values of society. Third, moral

panics require widespread *consensus* that the threat is real and serious. Fourth, the prevalence

and nature of the putative threat, danger, or damage to society is exaggerated. As noted by

Garland (2008), "the revealed extent of the problem usually bears little relation to the reaction it

produces" (p.13). Thus, the term moral panic conveys the implication that public concern is in

excess of what is appropriate (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994). As well as being *disproportionate*,

moral panics are *volatile;* in other words, they erupt suddenly. Some moral panics even become

routinized in the sense that the moral concern about the targeted behaviour remains in place

through legislation, social movements, and enforcement practices.

Moral Panics and the Media

To understand the reaction to deviance – by the general public and agents of social

control – requires consideration of information that is invariably received second hand (Cohen,

1973). A great deal of space is devoted to deviance, sensationalizing crime and dramatizing

certain acts. Such 'news' is a crucial source of information about the normative contours of

society that is publicized to a large audience. It informs us of right versus wrong, moral versus

immoral, and heroes versus villains. The media often prompts concern that 'something should be

done about it', 'where will it end?' or 'this sort of thing can't go on forever' – suggesting that if

swift action is not taken, the problematic behaviour will continue (Cohen, 1973; Denham, 2008).

The 'social problem' is constructed as something to be feared.

Entertainment-oriented news formats and open editorials often facilitate emerging moral

panics (Altheide, 2009). Despite some allowance for different perspectives in published

editorials and op-eds, for example, media outlets rely on certain frames and familiar narratives

that resonate with audiences (Altheide, 2009). Social problems and deviance are framed in such

a way as to instill fear in the audience leading to calls for regulation and control. Altheide (2009)

points out that "mass media accounts of crime, violence, and victimization are simplistic and

often decontextualize rather complex events in order to reflect narratives that demonize and offer

simplistic explanation that often involve state intervention" (p.81-82). Illicit drug use among

youth is frequently cited as responsible for a range of 'social problems'.

Moral Panics and Drug Use

Anti-drug crusades, drug wars, and other periods of marked public concern about drugs

have been a reoccurring feature throughout history. Several researchers have argued that the

media has long been in the business of fuelling drug scares. For instance, Reinarman & Levine

(1997) noted that drugs scares are a "phenomena in their own right" (p.1) and have long been a

popular media creation.

As the media has dramatized different drugs in different eras, almost inevitably

legislators follow suit by enacting laws criminalizing the possession and sale of these substances

(Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009). This took place with the temperance movement against alcohol in

the late eighteenth century and later progressed to other drug scares involving opium, marijuana,

LSD, crack cocaine, and methamphetamine. Drug scares of the past – and more recent

constructions within the rave scene – all have one thing in common: they are a form of moral

panic ideologically constructed to construe a public problem and threat to society (Reinarman,

1994). This section will review several drug scares and media campaigns in Canada from the late

eighteenth century to the present in order to contextualize the 'club drug scare'.

Alcohol in the Eighteenth Century

The first – and most influential – drug scare was the temperance movement during the

late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century (Reinarman, 1994; Reinarman & Levine,

1997). Alcohol was the 'first drug' to be widely regarded as inherently and inevitably addicting

(Reinarman & Levine, 1997). It was also the first drug to be the focus of a mass movement that

sought to eliminate its use and prohibit both its production and sale. Threatened by habits of the

working class, Temperance crusaders tended to be native born, middle-class, Protestants who

illuminated the social and economic problems of alcohol use (Reinarman & Levine, 1997).

Alongside corporate supporters, the Temperance movement claimed that traditional working

class drinking practices interfered with productivity and profits (Reinarman & Levine, 1997).

The convergence of claims and interests rendered alcohol as a scapegoat – a demon drug

responsible for most of society's problems, including poverty, crime, violence, mental illness,

moral degeneracy, broken families, and individual and business failure (Reinarman & Levine,

1997). As many grew increasingly uneasy about alcohol, the Canadian Temperance Act of 1878

allowed any county or municipality to prohibit the retail sale of alcohol (Carstairs, 2004). By

1929, the ban on alcohol in Canada was discontinued and replaced by a system of provincial

regulations (Erickson & Cheung, 1992).

Opiates

Other demon drugs, such as opiates and cocaine have also been the targets of outrageous

claims (Reinarman & Levine, 1997). In the early- to mid-1870s opium smoking was widespread

in China, and immigrants brought the habit with them to Canada (Carstairs, 2004). At the turn of

the century, seven Chinese-run opium factories began operating in Canada, serving both white

and Chinese smokers (Carstairs, 2004). However, racism against the Chinese was fierce, and

Canadians were quick to criticize their opium smoking and blame them for drug use among

whites (Carstairs, 2004). As such, Canada's first narcotic laws were directed at suppressing

opium smoking among Chinese labourers (Erickson & Cheung, 1992).

In 1911, legislators began addressing societal demands that more drastic measures were

needed to stop opium smoking. The possession of opium became an offence, carrying a

maximum penalty of one year's imprisonment and a $500 fine (Carstairs, 2004). However, in the

early twentieth century, the penalties became much more severe when a massive drug panic –

closely tied to a renewed campaign for Chinese exclusion – swept the nation (Carstairs, 2004).

The nationwide drug scare began when the addict population began to shift from white,

middle-aged women to young, working-class males and other 'disreputable' groups (Reinarman,

1994; Reinarman & Levine, 1997). Sensationalistic media reports linked drug use with blacks,

prostitutes, criminals, and transient workers (Reinarman & Levine, 1997). An article published in

Maclean's magazine described the physical and moral deterioration of addicts and explained that

drug use led white women to sleep with blacks and Asians, posing a serious threat to the white

race (Carstairs, 2004). Articles were also accompanied with explicit photos and drawings that

depict the Chinese menace. By the mid-1920s opium smoking had been criminalized in law and

within the public mind (Carstairs, 2004).

Reefer Madness: The Marijuana Panic in the 1930s

As a result of the 'reefer madness' drug scare, marijuana was added to the Schedule of

Restricted Drugs in 1923, without parliamentary debate (Carstairs, 2004; Hathaway & Erickson,

2003). Popular magazines and newspapers published articles that stoked white fears about a

rising tide of immigration to Canada (Hathaway & Erickson, 2003). This period marked

Canada's first major drug scare fuelled by media reports that proposed solutions to the problems

associated with drugs (Boyd & Carter, 2010).

At the time, marijuana use was unheard of in Canada and there was no evidence that the

drug even caused harm. Arguably, its inclusion in the schedule was largely a result of

sensationalistic reporting (Boyd & Carter, 2010). Most scholars and activists will argue that it

was Emily Murphy's 1922 book, *The Black Candle* that incited legal control. The Canadian

magistrate and moral reformer published a series of sensationalized articles about drugs and

trafficking in Canada's national *Maclean's* magazine (Boyd & Carter, 2010). Articles published

in her book contained warnings that marijuana addicts were prone to uncontrollable fits of

violence and murder (Carstairs, 2004). Similarly, other sources instilled that under the influence

of marijuana, users were said to "become raving maniacs and are liable to kill or indulge in any

form of violence to other persons" (as cited in Hathaway & Erickson, 2003, p.467). From 1908

to 1923, the recreational use of marijuana was transformed from a matter of private indulgence to

a daunting social problem, its use deserving of severe penalty.

In the 1960s and 1970s, a new generation of drug warriors reconceptualized the 'killer

weed' as 'the drop out drug' (Reinarman, 1994; Reinarman & Levine, 1997). Rather than

making users aggressive and violent, marijuana was claimed to be responsible for causing youth

to lose the achievement ethic and triggering rebellion. Drug crusaders began to regard marijuana

as a threat, not because it was used by a 'dangerous class'; rather it was turning youth in a direction defined as 'dangerous'. None of these claims were supported by evidence. Much like drug scares of the past, the so-called harms were less important than the fact that marijuana use was a "useful symbol in an essentially political conflict between cultures and generations" (Reinarman & Levine, 1997, p.8).

LSD in the 1960s

Increased and sensationalist media reporting occurred in the 1960s, at a time when white middle-class youth began experimenting with the demon drug, LSD (Boyd & Carter, 2010). Stories about LSD increased markedly in the media – the effects of LSD were described as "nightmarish", "terror and indescribable fear" (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009, p.202). Sensational media stories connected LSD use with psychic terror, uncontrollable impulses, unconcern for one's own safety, psychotic episodes, delusions, hallucinations, and impulses leading to self-destruction (Cornwell & Linders, 2002; Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009). By linking LSD usage with insanity, this drug was shaped in the media as something to be feared and avoided.

Without much analysis, newspapers glorified injuries, deaths, and suicides attributed to the ingestion of LSD (Martel, 2006). Accounts of 'bad trips', vulnerable youth, and disquieting media information were widely circulated (Cornwell & Linders, 2002). Rumors and sensationalistic stories were fuelling the growing public concern over the use of LSD. Popular magazines sensationalized articles, and the crazed drug stories published in newspapers were even more lurid and one-sided (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009). Local newspapers, such as the *Toronto Telegram, Toronto Daily Star,* and the *Globe and Mail* featured disturbing headlines such as, "Mystery of Nude Coed's Fatal Plunge," "Thrill Drug Can Warp Minds and Kill,"

"Strip-Teasing Hippie Goes Wild on LSD," "LSD: For the Kick That Can Kill," and "Musician

Gouges Own Eyes During LSD Trip" (Martel, 2006, p.15; Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009, p.202).

Just like other drug scares, LSD's reported threat to youth and health were overblown –

particularly when reporting on suspected deaths from LSD, headlines leaned toward sensation

rather than analysis (Martel, 2006). The number of newspaper articles about drug use increased

significantly between 1966 and 1970 in which the media 'amplified' the negative impact of LSD

(Boyd & Carter, 2010). Because LSD use was associated with white middle-class youth, rather

than working-class and racialized people, more attention was given to the perceived dangers of

the drug, rather than its criminogenic effects (Boyd & Carter, 2010). In the U.S., Goode (2008)

noted that concerns and media reporting surrounding LSD use in the 1960s were

"disproportionate to its physical threat" (p.539); a similar claim can be made for news reporting

in Canada. Vivid photographs depicting the worst effects of drug use often accompanied this

reporting. Therefore, the media directed disproportionate attention to rare cases of psychotic

episodes while overlooking positive experiences users had with the drug. According to Goode &

Ben-Yehuda (2009):

> Evidence available today – and even in that which existed at the time –
> suggests that in the sixties, the media were guilty of sensationalistic coverage
> of the effects of LSD […] LSD 'freak outs' were news; stories that LSD does
> not cause psychotic outbreaks were *not* news (p.203).

The Crack Cocaine Scare in the 1980s

In 1986, when freebase cocaine was renamed crack (or 'rocks'), politicians and the media

orchestrated a new drug scare. Crack attracted the attention of claims makers due to its visibility

in the inner cities (Reinarman & Levine, 1997). Crack attracted poorer, younger buyers who

were already seen as a threat to society. The same 'tough on drugs' ideology and policy

proposals used in previous anti-drug crusades re-surfaced during the crack scare (Reinarman, 1994). Much like other demon drugs, crack cocaine became a scapegoat – it was blamed for a range of lasting and intensified urban problems that its use sometimes exacerbated, however, did not cause (Reinarman & Levine, 1997).

The news media and politicians were largely responsible for establishing the crack scare of the 1980s. 1984 marked the earliest mass media reference to the new form of cocaine, and by 1985 crack news stories frequently made national headlines (Reinarman & Levine, 1997). Just as previous media constructions of drugs focused around a core theme, crack stories concentrated on the drug's addictive nature (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009). One drug expert in 1986 claimed, "Crack is the most addictive drug known to man […] smoking the drug produces instantaneous addiction" (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009, p.207). Similar claims such as, "Try it once and you're hooked!" and "Once you start, you can't stop!" also made media headlines (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009, p.207). It was also suggested that crack cocaine produced delusions that rendered the user "insane and dangerous to be at large" (as cited in Hathaway & Erickson, 2003, p.467).

Following the claims of crack's highly addictive properties, a new theme emerged in purporting that the use of crack was an 'epidemic'. Crack was 'infesting' every community and quickly became regarded as a 'plague'. Despite sensationalistic claims of the destructiveness of the drug, research suggested that crack addiction was never really the 'epidemic' that politicians and the media implied (Reinarman & Levine, 1997). Early research on the emerging phenomenon of crack cocaine use in Toronto, Canada show that its addictive powers had been highly overstated (Cheung, Erickson, & Landau, 1991). Furthermore, according to Erickson & Cheung (1992), American media is to blame for the construction of such an invasive social problem. They argue that Canadian concerns and fears about crack cocaine were fueled by

American media depictions of a 'crisis', rather than evidence of the relatively minor nature of the problem in Canada (Erickson & Cheung, 1992).

Methamphetamine in the late 1990s to the 2000s

In the late 1990s, Canadian newspapers, police, RCMP, community organizations, city and provincial task forces, and a number of politicians identified another epidemic, this time a new form of an old drug: methamphetamine (Boyd & Carter, 2010). According to the media, methamphetamine was the drug of choice for a 'new generation'. This drug quickly replaced heroin, cocaine, and even marijuana as the nation's new 'problematic' drug (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009; Boyd & Carter, 2010). Law enforcement was notified that this was the drug to watch, or so the media claimed. From the late 1980s to early 2000s, the media reported numerous horror stories about the epidemic. As a means to make the public acutely aware of the dangers of methamphetamine, the press often quoted officials who compared the drug with crack cocaine. Law enforcement suggested, "if you use it once, you'll become an addict," which emphasized its supposed instantly addicting properties (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009, p.212).

Although methamphetamine can be a harmful drug if abused, much of the media's hysteria-driven claims – including its instantly addicting properties, its widespread and increasing use, its invasion to all communities, and increase in overdose deaths – turned out to be false. Instead of factual claims, the media was responsible for exaggerating the prevalence of methamphetamine use by drawing on statistics in a selective manner (Boyd & Carter, 2010). As with other media-based drug scares, the effects of methamphetamine use were described using exemplary or particularly dramatic personal stories selectively chosen to demonstrate the evils of the drug (Boyd & Carter, 2010). As a result of media exaggerations, a 'boomerang' effect took place as dozens of stories began refuting original claims (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009).

Club Drug Use: A Similar Drug Scare

In sum, the literature on drug panics indicates that every new drug is handled much the same way by the media: the same anxieties about the threats of drug use appear in new drug scares with startling regularity. As Goode & Ben-Yehuda (2009) note:

> Emphasis is placed on individual tales of dangerous, criminal or self-destructive behaviour by the drug crazed. The myth is newly erected and slightly embellished with each new drug, and the stories come to resemble the myths, ballads and folk tales previously generated and transformed by oral transmission (p.206).

The threat of each drug was blown out of proportion, much like contemporary club drugs, through a drug scare fuelled by a range of social actors. It is important to note, however, the presented threat of the drug in question is often constructed as disproportionate to the 'physical threat' posted by the actual levels of the drug use (Boyd & Carter, 2010). Instead, it is simply a form of moral panic ideologically constructed to construe a public problem and threat to society. In a similar vein, this is apparent in the rave phenomenon. I will argue that contemporary concerns about popular club drugs, such as ecstasy or MDMA, in Canada constitutes a similar a 'drug scare' fuelled by a range of social actors, including the media, law enforcement, politicians, and citizen groups.

2.5 Literature Review

There has been considerable academic interest about the representation of illegal drug use in the media (Taylor, 2008). Becker (1963) was among the first to examine how marijuana users were labeled as 'outsiders' and drew attention to the media's role in this process (as cited in Taylor, 2008). Young (1971) proposed that mass media outlets created 'fantasy notions' around drug takers, leading to deviancy amplification. Downes (1977) also observed that the media

often portrayed the drug addict as a 'folk devil' or 'scapegoat', whose behaviour was often

presented as a threat to social and moral values (as cited in Taylor, 2008; Martel 2006).

Moreover, there has also been academic interest in the social construction of club drug

use and moral panics. Comparable to drug scares and hysterical media reports of the past,

scholars contend rave culture and popular club drugs, most notably ecstasy (MDMA, 'Molly')

are also constructed as a moral panic in the media (see Cornwell & Linders, 2002; Critcher,

2000; Goode, 2008, Omori, 2013). Storylines, which reinforced stereotypical representations of

club drug users, also reinforced support for putative control strategies, rather than the

introduction of harm reduction measures. More recently, the EDM festival scene has also been

subjected to media constructions, presenting negative images and troubling headlines of club

drug users as a societal concern that needs to be addressed immediately.

Media stories on club drug use contain sensationalistic coverage, all of which relay a

single message: "Be afraid – be *very* afraid" (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009, p.217). Although

club drugs are a relatively small threat to society, they are often blown out of proportion and

sensationalized to generate a greater level of concern (Cornwell & Linders, 2002). Media stories

exaggerate not only the harmful effects of the drug, but also the number of its users, and the

social circles or geographical areas in which its use is common (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009).

These factors serve to prompt and maintain moral panics by spreading misconceptions about

club drug use.

During the rave era of the 1980s and 1990s, club drug use increased substantially. Club

drugs were said to be "killing many more youngsters than anyone expected […] these deadly

drugs were stalking nightclubs and the rave scene" (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009, p.213). The

media charged that these 'designer drugs' were criminogenic, instantly addictive, madness

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inducing, and were responsible for a wide range of drug related deaths. The goal to generate concern among the general public was achieved, despite a lack of evidence of club drug related deaths. However, ecstasy and other club drugs remained popular with 'Ravers' and have remained *the* defining feature of rave culture.

News specials, feature films, and even talk shows are dedicated to the subject of club drug use, especially ecstasy. Youth attending raves are commonly portrayed as habitually ingesting ecstasy – or 'popping Molly' – and other club drugs (McCaughan et al., 2005). Based largely on the popular media's presentation, many parents and educators tend to perceive ravers as a homogenous group with deviant social behaviours, philosophy, appearance, and drug-use patterns (McCaughan et al., 2005).

As a result of 'rave revival', club drug use, youth cultures, and rave communities continue to be constructed as a social problem. Moral panics surrounding club drug use continue because: (1) they suggest a convincing portrait of its threat with a highly connotative label; (2) there is unanimity among the media and elites about the seriousness of the problem and appropriate remedies; (3) claimsmakers quickly become accredited in the media as 'experts'; and (4) there is an effective alliance between individuals and groups in power (i.e. politicians and government, pressure groups and claims makers, police and judiciary, press and broadcasting, public and audiences) (Critcher, 2005). These factors not only serve to prompt and maintain moral panics, but they also spread misconceptions about the harms of club drug use altogether.

Boyd & Carter (2010), Omori (2013), Critcher (2000), and Hier (2002) have all studied Canadian media discourse in the construction of club drug use as a social problem. Boyd and Carter (2010) analyzed 15 years (1995-2009) of newspaper articles in national, provincial, and local newspapers (including *The Province, The Vancouver Sun,* and *The Globe and Mail*) in

British Columbia, finding that the meth scare in Canada was fuelled by the media, law enforcement, politicians, and citizen groups to divert public attention away from other social problems such as poverty and homelessness. Omori's (2013) research in the United States came to similar conclusions.

Critcher's (2000) earlier work analyzed the social reaction to ecstasy as interest in the rave scene peaked during the early 1990s. The behaviour of ravers was distorted by sensational media coverage and exaggerated press reports, labeling them responsible for wider social ills and cultural decline. According to Critcher (2000), media coverage actually encouraged, rather than discouraged, youth involvement in the rave scene and ecstasy consumption. Hier (2002) also came to similar conclusions in his study of news media following three deaths in Toronto and the role of political actors in constructing moral panic about raves.

2.6 The Current Study: A Media Analysis

The media continues to exert the greatest influence on the public's perception of crime, deviance, and threats to public morality (Muraskin & Domash, 2007). It determines what stories get told and exerts an influence in constructing social problems – i.e. to affect *what* an audience thinks about it, *how* they think about it, and *how* they understand it. Moreover, how the media and agents of social control construct the rave phenomenon can affect if and how the problem is addressed. It may also illuminate social and political responses towards it.

While much research has been conducted on club drug use and the rave scene, it rarely provides insight into the depiction of this phenomenon through media discourse. According to Wilson (2002), "the lack of research on rave culture […] is surprising considering the notoriety the group has received in popular media, in government-related health reports, and in scholarly work on youth in other countries" (p.374). The purpose of my study is to help fill gaps in

knowledge by examining the construction of drug use at raves (1999-2004) and outdoor EDM

festivals (2011-2016) in Canadian news media.

2.7 Chapter Summary

To summarize, this chapter began by outlining the evolving rave phenomenon and

ubiquitous club drug use. The theoretical approach used in the current study: a constructionist

approach to social problems, with additional emphasis on moral panic literature, was then

discussed. Next, an overview of the literature was presented to identify research gaps and to

provide the context for the current research study. In chapter three, the methods used in this

study are outlined.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the data, sample, and analytical strategy used to examine the construction of club drug use in Canadian news media. It begins with the methods used to collect the data followed by an overview of the resulting sample and analysis.

3.2 Data Collection

Archival data was collected from three Canadian newspapers: the *Globe and Mail;* the *Toronto Star*; and the *National Post*. All three are English-language newspapers with high-weekly circulation published seven days per week in Toronto. The *Globe and Mail* is Canada's widest circulation national newspaper (Hathaway & Erickson, 2004), often characterized as catering to 'elite audiences,' its primary focus on business, politics, and economics. The *Toronto Star* arguably more liberal than the *Globe and Mail* (O'Grady, Parnaby, & Schikschneit, 2010) and the further right-leaning *National Post*. These three newspapers represent a significant proportion of the daily print media in Toronto (O'Grady et al., 2010) and provide a diverse basis with which to sample. All newspaper sources were accessed through the Canadian Newsstand electronic database.

The sampling frame was two-fold, covering both reports of club drug use in the underground rave scene at its peak (1999 to 2004) and its re-emergence at outdoor music festivals a decade later (2011 to 2016). The selected time frames allowed for a detailed snapshot of change observed in discourse on club drug use in Canadian news media. A six-year span in both timeframes was chosen for comparison.

The data for this study were electronically sourced using the following indicators or key words: "club drug use" and "raves" or "EDM festivals". After this preliminary search, other

common terms were noted and incorporated into the search, including synonyms such as

"ecstasy or MDMA", "rave drugs", "nightclub", "scene", "dance club", and "all-night dance

party". Only newspaper articles, as opposed to letters to the editor, featured articles, and

columns, were included in the sample because they usually contain more consistent news frames

(Bates, 2011). Messages presented in both letters to the editor and op-eds, for example, are often

inconsistent due to their opinion-based nature. Because both media tools delineate the writer's

opinion on a given topic and argue a certain position to readers, they are excluded in this study.

From 1999 to 2004, the above search terms yielded a total of 1,378 articles. The latter

search, focusing on rave's revival in 2011 to 2016, yielded an additional 476 articles, for a total

sample of 1,854. As recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006), articles were read through for

content to ensure eligibility for inclusion in the data set. Articles that did not fit the study criteria

were omitted. For example, many articles which contained the indicator "ecstasy or MDMA"

referred to other topics such as smuggling and trafficking; police drug busts, raids, and seizures;

gang affiliations; or drug labs. Articles that did not specifically relate to the rave scene were

omitted from the data set.

3.3 The Sample

The data cleaning process resulted in a final sample of 129 articles: 105 news articles in

the first sample, Sample 1 (1999 through 2004) and 24 news articles in the latter, Sample 2 (2011

through 2016). Tables A through D (see Appendices A and B) provide the respective counts and

publication information of all news articles in the sample. The articles in the total sample were

unevenly distributed among the three newspapers surveyed: specifically, 32 articles were

published in the *Globe and Mail* (25%); 57 articles were published in the *Toronto Star* (44%);

and 40 articles were published in the *National Post* (31%).

The respective counts by year were also unevenly distributed (see Appendix A). In Sample 1, two-thirds of the articles were published in 2000. In Sample 2, the majority of articles were published the same year (in 2014). The higher counts in 2000 and 2014 each indicates the peak of media coverage at particular junctures of reporting on the problem.

3.4 Analytical Strategy

This study used a qualitative approach to explore the construction of club drug use in Canadian news media. In particular, this analysis was modeled on Hathaway and Erickson's (2004) study of print media representations of drug issues. They examined Canadian newspapers from 1988 to 1998 with reference to main themes, information sources, and policy positions of coverage of two popular drugs: tobacco and cocaine. A further content analysis was conducted from 1998 to 2002 to compare print media representations from one decade to the next. Five distinct sources of information were identified in their study: (1) Civil/Criminal Justice Officials; (2) Government Bureaucrats/Politicians; (3) Law Enforcement Officials/Police; (4) Lobby Groups; and (5) Science/Health/Research Professionals. My research will examine types of discourse and news sources during the underground rave scene and EDM festivals.

Qualitative Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis involves the identification, analysis, and reporting of themes in qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is the 'study of communication' and reflective analysis of textual documents to examine important patterns and apparent biases (O'Grady et al., 2010). Moreover, it examines the ways in which events, realities, and meanings, are reflections of predominant discourses operating in society (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method therefore seeks to uncover the surface of 'reality' by identifying themes and patterns in news coverage.

According to Altheide & Schneider (2013), thematic analysis is a reflexive process

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wherein the analyst defines the problem to be investigated and becomes familiar with existing

literature, thus the present research is not solely inductive. For example, some themes were

identified in my review of the literature. In particular, the work of Hathaway and Erickson

(2004) informed the coding process and development of themes.

Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that this method of analysis is compatible with

constructionist paradigms in the social sciences. Likewise, according to Gamson, Croteau,

Hoynes, and Sasson (1992), researchers have long been interested in the nature of mass media

and its relationship with constructionist paradigms. For the last century, constructionism has had

a profound impact on how social scientists understand the nature of social problems (O'Grady et

al., 2010). The way media organizations consider the 'newsworthiness' of stories, the way in

which stories and images are presented, and the notable role of claims-makers is particularly

important to social constructionists. To understand the media's role in constructing social

problems and the relationship between the media's depictions versus the public perception is

valuable to constructionist researchers (O'Grady et al., 2010).

Constructionist researchers have used these methods often to study the construction of

social problems (O'Grady et al., 2010). As quantitive researchers often 'reveal' claims-making

occasions, qualitative encounters are instead 'constructed' (Harris, 2010), which better aligns to

the social problems process.

Other studies with a focus on constructionism, the media, club drug use, and the rave

scene have used a similar methodology (see Boyd & Carter, 2010; Hier, 2002). In particular,

Hier (2002) conducted a thematic analysis of Canadian news media to demonstrate how the

construction of a moral panic was utilized as a political strategy with the intention of regulating

raves during the early 2000s. He chose three-data sources to qualitatively analyze: (1) 'hard'

newspaper articles (i.e. the *Toronto Sun,* the *Toronto Star,* and the *Globe and Mail*); (2) a variety

of supplementary materials (i.e. open forums, reports submitted to city council, audio sound

clips, and speeches); and (3) proceedings from city council meetings. Hier's (2002) thematic

analysis is relevant to my research insofar as it demonstrates how media discourses and the

dynamic interplay of social agents collaborate to socially construct a problem in society. Boyd

and Carter (2010) examined the emergence of methamphetamine use as a social problem in

British Columbia. They noted information sources in their analysis of newspapers over a 15-year

period.

Data Analysis

Coding Protocol

Each article identified was systematically reviewed, with particular attention given to

how the article was framed. Initial open coding guided the development of relevant themes and

ideas. These observations were subsequently refined, combined, or elaborated. Memoing was

used throughout the coding process to assist in the analysis of themes. Moving back and forth

between coding and memoing facilitated ongoing refinement and comparison (Palys & Atchison,

2014).

Coded material was then interpreted further to determine the relationships between larger

categories and subcategories (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Palys & Atchison, 2014). Broader level

themes were then developed and refined. For instance, codes such as "Arrests/Charges," "Law

Enforcement Frames/Claims," and "Legislation/Strategies" were regrouped under the theme

"Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement" as subcategories following focused coding of the data.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), reanalyzing codes and considering how different codes

may combine to form an overarching theme is an imperative phase in the coding process. A

detailed list of the operationalized codes and description of each code used in this study is

discussed below.

News Media Constructions Codes

To locate the way club drug use was constructed in news media, several constructions

codes were used to capture the depictions, including: "Market Differences: Local/National",

"Case Reference", Fatality/Overdose", "Framing Terminology/Salience", "Health

Effects/Consequences", "Misconceptions", "Prevalence Statistics", "Scapegoats", and "Victim".

Under the *Market Differences: Local/National* sub-node, each news article was coded as

either local or national based. Local news organizations (e.g. *Toronto Star*) are considered to be

more 'popular' in nature and have dedicated local, national, and international sections in their

newspaper (O'Grady et al., 2011). National newspapers (e.g. the *Globe and Mail* and *National

Post*) are thought to have higher journalistic standards. Including local and national coverage

provides more robust data and allows for the analysis of variation in the tone or stance of the

news coverage.

The *Case Reference* sub-node refers to use of a high-profile case to highlight the dangers,

for example, to aid in the construction of club drug use as a problem. The *Fatality/Overdose* sub-

node refers to narratives using terms like 'death' and 'overdose' to conjure further danger. By

continuously referencing rave-related fatalities in news reports, claims-makers have the ability to

suggest it is a widely regarded problem. The *Framing Terminology/Salience* sub-node refers to

steady repetition of a term to raise concern. Narratives that referred to the health effects and/or

consequences of club drug use (which were often negative depictions) were coded under the

Health Effects/Consequences sub-node.

When inaccuracies of the social problem were made evident, narratives were coded under the *Misconceptions* sub-node. Often, rave defenders, harm reduction organizers, and research professionals illuminated the misconceptions associated with club drug use and the rave scene.

The *Prevalence Statistics* sub-node was coded when reference to statistics were made to support claims. Prevalence statistics were used either positively or negatively in news stories by various claims-makers (i.e. journalists, law enforcement, medical professionals, researchers). To promote the condition of club drug use as a social problem, claims-makers were found to frequently rely on statistical inferences.

Narratives were coded under the *Victim* sub-node when specific reference to the victim was made in the social problems process. For instance, undeserving victims were often portrayed in news stories to instill sympathy or compassion and to illuminate the threatening nature of the social problem.

The *Scapegoat* sub-node was coded when a scapegoat was blamed and/or said to be responsible for the social problem. For example, drug dealers, youth subculture, rave promoters, club drugs, and victims were often outlets of blame in news stories. Identifying the scapegoat is a central component in the social problems process.

Sources of Information Codes

Under the sources of information code, three categories emerged: "Criminal Justice Officials/Law Enforcement", "Experts/Professionals" and "Government/Politicians". Each distinct grouping also had sub-categories to reflect their specific role in the social problems process, each of which are discussed in detail below.

Criminal Justice Officials/Law Enforcement narratives included three distinct sub-nodes: (a) Arrests/Charges; (b) Law Enforcement Frames/Claims; and (c) Legislation/Strategies.

Narratives that made reference to law enforcement officials making arrests and/or laying charges in relation to club drug use and/or raves were coded under the *Arrests/Charges* sub-node. Under the *Law Enforcement Frames/Claims* sub-node, narratives that made specific reference to claims made by members of law enforcement were coded here. Most claims from the police were unfavourable to the rave community and carry the most weight in framing the social problem. Lastly, a narrative was coded as *Legislation/Strategies* if it made specific reference to police efforts of social control exclusively. Law enforcement strategies and legislative efforts were most referenced as a means to 'control' the social problem.

Narratives were coded under the *Experts/Professionals* sources of information sub-node when science, health, and/or research professionals made claims about the social problem. This included, but is not limited to, medical experts, social workers, scientists, epistemologists, authors, etc.

Lastly, *Government/Politicians* narratives included two distinct sub-nodes: (a) Pro-Policy and Control and (b) Anti-Policy and Control. Narratives that adhered to the political stance to control the social problem via policy implementation were coded under the *Pro-Policy and Control* sub-node. Most commonly, city councillors presented a pro-policy and control stance in media reports. Alternatively, narratives that were opposed to policy implementation in controlling the social problem were coded under the *Anti-Policy and Control* sub-node. Notably, most narratives coded here favoured a pragmatic public health approach.

Rave Ban Code

The *Rave Ban* code was designed to capture narratives of claimsmakers making reference to rave prohibitions. Both those in favour and those against the ban are coded under this category. Overall, this theme captured the social reaction to the presented social problem of club

drug use. This theme differs from other enforcement codes as it entails references to prohibition by all claimsmakers and information sources.

Harm Reduction Code

The *Harm Reduction* code was designed to capture the essence of narratives that made reference to harm reduction initiatives (i.e. education, awareness, prevention, etc.) in news stories. Implementing safety protocols at raves was a common example of a harm reduction strategy mentioned in news articles. This theme is conceptually distinct from other alternative narratives in arguing for public health approaches.

NVivo

Data for this study were imported into and analyzed with *NVivo*. *NVivo* is a qualitative data analysis software program that allows the analyst to enter, code, and analyze unstructured, non-numerical data.

NVivo uses a basic coding unit, known as *nodes*, to capture ideas, concepts, or themes present in the data, which can then be grouped, merged, and/or transformed into hierarchies or visual displays (Palys & Atchison, 2014). For this study, nodes were created both prior to and during the coding process. Based primarily on the identification of relevant ideas in relation to the research questions, selected nodes were created in *NVivo* prior to coding the data. For example, Hathaway and Erickson's (2004) categories: "Health Effects/Consequences", "Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement", "Experts/Professionals", and "Harm Reduction" were created prior to reading the data. Additional nodes, however, were created during the coding process based on reading of the data and emerging ideas. Throughout the coding process, nodes and sub-nodes were defined and refined multiple times to ensure that each theme was internally consistent (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Unlike quantitative content analysis, qualitative analyses are not linear – moving from one stage of the analysis to the next – but rather more recursive, moving back and forth between different stages as required (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Accordingly, nodes were reviewed multiple times during the coding process "to permit emergence, refinement, or collapsing of additional categories" and appropriate adjustments were made to the protocol before completing the first stage of data coding (Altheide & Schneider, 2013, p.21). Therefore, as the coding progressed, not only were new nodes created, but also, many nodes were grouped together into emerging themes. The "Constructions" theme, for example, was not created initially, but as more specific ideas about the data and the relationship among and between coded content emerged, nodes such as "Health Effects/Consequences," "Fatality/Overdose," "Prevalence Statistics," "Scapegoats" and so on, were merged into one overarching category, as opposed to separate entities.

During the coding process, segments of the data were often assigned multiple overlapping nodal categories. For example, segments of the data that discussed the rave ban in the early 2000s were, at times, applicable to both "Pro-Control Policies" set forth by government officials and "Rave Ban" nodes. *NVivo's* option to produce a visual display of frequently occurring nodes and their relationship to other nodes was particularly useful for comparatively examining constructions of club drug use in the rave scene and EDM festivals.

3.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the methodological and analytical approach used to assess the construction of club drug use in Canadian news media. The methods used to collect the data, an overview of the sample and coding protocol, and the chosen analytical strategy were discussed. The next two chapters outline the findings of both samples.

CHAPTER 4: CLUB DRUG USE AND THE UNDERGROUND RAVE SCENE

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents relevant findings from the qualitative thematic analysis as they

relate to the construction of club drug use in Canada. More specifically, this section outlines the

results of the thematic analysis that was conducted on newspaper articles published between the

years 1999 and 2004 (i.e. Sample 1). The results of the qualitative analysis highlight important

patterns and trends in the construction of club drug use as a social problem.

It is important to note that this chapter will refer to "narratives" when providing examples

in newspaper articles. For the purpose of this study, narratives refer to a sentence or several

paragraphs within a news article. Additionally, to ensure meaning is demonstrated, several

examples are used to illustrate any patterns in the data, rather than using a single representation.

In relation to the rave scene, results for each code are discussed.

4.2 News Media Constructions

Market Differences: Local/National

Under the *Constructions* theme, news articles in this study were coded as either local or

national with specific reference to the tone of each headline as directly stated or inferred. Similar

to Hathaway & Erickson's (2004) categories, the stance of each headline fit into one of three

groups – 'Positive,' 'Negative,' or 'Neutral or Not Related to Controls.'

Negative reporting in this sample was comparable among national based newspapers (i.e.

the *National Post* and the *Globe and Mail*) and local newspapers (i.e. the *Toronto Star*) (52%

versus 47%). Positive headlines were more often found in local newspapers (20% versus 12%),

and neutral headlines were more equally distributed (36% versus 33%). More balanced reporting

of drug stories was found in local news.

Framing Terminology/Salience

The *Framing Terminology/Salience* code was the most frequent *Constructions* theme in

this sample (found in 71% of articles). The following narratives of words and phrases were

frequently used and often appeared in headlines to describe the social problem accordingly: "the

escalating problem of drugs" (Abbate, 2000, Article 72); "health emergency" (Abbate, 2000,

Article 72); "Generation Ecstasy" (Akin, 2000, Article 85); "raves and rave cultures […] a

reputation as *drug havens* and *corrupters of Toronto's youth*" (Drakes, 2000, Article 67,

emphasis added); "*damaging effects* […] officials fear its only a matter of time" (Foss, 1999,

Article 98, emphasis added); "drugs are a problem at raves" (Freed, 2000, Article 57); "raves are

havens for drugs" (Gollom, 2000, Article 25); "ecstasy can kill" (Laframboise, 2000, Article 53);

"raves [are] *dangerous*, *drug-infested gatherings* of *out-of-control young people*" (Unknown,

2000, Article 20, emphasis added).

To demonstrate its prevalence, rhetoric like: "it's *everywhere*" (Cortoneo & Palmer,

2004, Article 1, emphasis added); "the *epidemic* of drug use" (Freed, 2000, Article 52, emphasis

added); "the sheer number of ravers involved in illicit drug use is *disturbing* to say the least"

(Freed, 2000, Article 52, emphasis added); "*drugs are everywhere* in our community" (Gollom,

2000, Article 77, emphasis added) were also conveyed in news stories.

Moreover, in order to control the social problem, claims-makers used precise terminology

to frame the problem in a way that emphasizes the need for sanctioned measures. This is

apparent in the following examples:

> After-hours clubs should have *airport-like security measures* to curb rampant
> drug use […] they have airport security because of terrorists and bombs, which
> can kill […] likewise, in these clubs, they should have security as tight as that,
> because people die from these drugs (Gonda & Huffman, 2004, Article 2,
> emphasis added).

> I think after-hours clubs should be *regulated* more by *drug enforcement*
> *officers;* I think that they should be searched; I don't think anything should be
> allowed to be brought in that club (Gonda & Huffman, 2004, Article 2,
> emphasis added).

To reassure the public, various legislative efforts were then put forward in response. At a

conference held at police headquarters, for example, Mayor Mel Lastman claimed: "Toronto will

not tolerate illegal after-hour clubs and raves […] starting right now, we will do everything in

our power to shut them down" (Unknown, 2000, Article 81).

The above examples demonstrate the ways in which claims-makers used framing

terminology and salience in news stories to construct the damaging social problem of club drug

use. According to Altheide (2009) entertainment media formats will promote the use of terms

and metaphors that audience members will recognize. Terms like the examples above portray

club drugs as more destructive and/or addictive than they actually are. Additionally, to suggest

its pervasive threat to society, claimsmakers used loaded words such as 'epidemic.' Thus, only

the negative side of rave culture is being portrayed to the public.

Health Effects/Consequences

The second most frequent *Constructions* code was *Health Effects/Consequences* (found

in 63% of articles). Claims-makers depicted club drug use and ravers alike as destructive,

irresponsible, and uncontrolled. This representation, however, makes it easy for outsiders to

judge club drug use as reckless and problematic. News reports identified a comprehensive list of

health effects and/or consequences associated with club drug use. Ecstasy consumption, in

particular, is suggested to be deeply rooted in rave culture with up to 80% of ravers believed to

have used the hallucinogenic club drug (Keung, 2000, Article 45). As such, ecstasy is considered

to impose both short- and long-term health effects among its users. Typical statements in this

vein include the following:

> One ecstasy pill could kill (Freed, 2000, Article 43).

> Ecstasy, the club drug popular at all-night dance parties, may do serious
> damage to the brain […] science suggests that young people who pop two or
> three ecstasy pills in one evening may kill a vast number of brain cells and put
> themselves at risk of neurological disorders later in life (McIlroy, 2002, Article
> 4).

> Ecstasy users usually feel a heightened sense of euphoria, energy and
> confidence that can last four to six hours. Its negative side effects can include
> psychiatric disturbances such as panic, anxiety, depression and hallucinations.
> Its potential physical side effects include muscle tension, nausea, blurred
> vision, fainting, chills, sweating, an increased heart rate and blood pressure,
> tremors and sleep problems (Mitchell, 2000, Article 83).

> Tweny-five percent of users may experience paranoia and depressive
> symptoms – and few will have convulsions and lose consciousness. After the
> high is over, there may still be problems because the brain's serotonin stores
> are depleted. Without serotonin, a person's mood can crash to depression,
> dysphoria and anxiety (Foss, 2000, Article 39)

> Ecstasy triggers a release of serotonin, a hormone in the brain that alters mood,
> and blocks the body's natural tendency to collect and regulate the hormone.
> The resulting rush of euphoria lends the pill its name. But too much of what
> seems like a good thing is hard on the body. Body temperature rises, the heart
> races and the liver and kidneys are stressed, potentially leading to organ failure
> or seizures (Cotroneo & Palmer, 2004, Article 1)

The above narratives are just some of the many examples of how claims-makers present the

negative health effects and/or consequences of club drug use in media reports. Additionally, to

further heighten the construction of the threatening social problem, numerous claims also

indicate the dangers associated with club drug use are even more deadly, for reasons being that

there is too little known about the drug of choice among ravers:

Medical experts say the effects of taking ecstasy vary by individual and too
little is known about its potentially lethal side effects (Alphonso, 2000, Article
61).

Questions about just how dangerous the popular hallucinogenic drug is have
concerned policy-makers and public officials since several high-profile
ecstasy-related deaths captured media headlines in recent months (Bell, 2000,
Article 31).

Drug's effects poorly understood […] ecstasy is not the benign drug that
everyone though it was […] its effects remain unpredictable. Why one person
will drop dead and another won't isn't clearly established (Cotroneo & Palmer,
2004, Article 1)

Overall, the above narratives suggest unfavourable health hazards posed by club drug

use, most notably ecstasy consumption, were a prominent theme.

Fatality/Overdose

The *Fatality/Overdose* code was the third most frequent *Constructions* code (found in

62% of articles). Although rave-related fatalities are commonly discussed in news reports, they

are most frequently appearing in news headlines. The following narratives demonstrate its

repeated appearance in featured stories:

Two die at rave licensed by city of Vancouver: Use of ecstasy alleged (Hume,
2001, Article 5).

Boy, 16, dies after swallowing pills at downtown rave (Segal, 2001, Article
12).

Friend's death prompts man to swear off ecstasy (Bell, 2000, Article 31).

Woman dies after taking ecstasy; Newlywed fell ill following night at club
(Houston, 2000, Article 34).

Coroner to probe rave death; Student died after taking Ecstasy at all-night party
(Mitchell, 2000, Article 84).

Nova Scotia man dies at rave (Dooley, 1999, Article 97)

Student found dead in dense bush; 21-year-old disappeared at music rave July
17 (Avery, 1999, Article 101).

The narratives above highlight the way in which mainstream media links club drug fatalities

exclusively to the rave scene. The *Toronto Star* most often referred to rave fatalities in headlines

sampled. Local newspapers use 'popular' discourse in ways that may exacerbate the social

problems process. As the examples above demonstrate, the *Fatality/Overdose* code captures

narratives that framed the rave scene as being solely responsible for club drug related deaths in

their featured headlines.

Referencing fatalities in an alarmist tone also contributes to exaggerated public fears that

further support social control efforts (Hier, 2002). Rave-related fatalities are often used by

government officials to justify punitive measures and empowering police to "shut down raves"

(Abbate & Luciw, 2000, Article 40), "crackdown on youth dance parties" (Brazao, 2000, Article

18) and "consider measures to prevent further problems" (Abbate & Luciw, 2000, Article 40).

Case Reference

The fourth most frequent code within the *Constructions* theme was the *Case Reference*

node (found in 60% of the articles sampled). To heighten the level of concern, news stories often

present a single high-profile case and portray it as a frequent occurrence or a 'typical case,'

which often lives on for years. The infamous rave-related death of Ryerson student, Allen Ho,

was the most referenced case example to frequently appear in news stories. News stories

focusing on the rave scene presented Ho's death in a similar manner:

Investigating the death of third-year Ryerson student Allen Ho died Oct. 10,
two weeks short of his 21st birthday, after taking the illegal drug ecstasy and
collapsing at a Toronto rave held in an underground parking garage (Freed,
2000, Article 36).

The drug-driven tragedy of Ho, 20, a Ryerson business student whose death
was one of nine in Ontario last year linked to the use of Ecstasy – an illegal
amphetamine derivative called MDMA (Powell, 2000, Article 69).

Allen Ho, 20, died Oct. 10, about 15 hours after a friend found him lying on his
back, his jaw clenched and hands balled into fists, in an underground parking
garage where a rave was being held. He had taken ecstasy known as MDMA,
an illegal amphetamine-based drug that causes euphoric and mildly
hallucinatory effects" (Quinn, 2000, Article 54).

Ho, a Ryerson business management student, died in hospital about 15 hours
after being found overdosing on ecstasy, a drug that's become synonymous
with the rave scene (Quinn, 2000, Article 65).

Ho, a Ryerson student, died two weeks short of his 21st birthday after ingesting
ecstasy at the A View To A Thrill Rave (Freed, 2000, Article 49).

According to one news article in the *National Post*, "everything about Allen Ho's death makes

for a powerful story […] the city heard repeatedly how he collapsed at an underground rave,

which was held in a hot, stuffy parking garage with no lighting and insufficient fire exits"

(Prittie, 2000, Article 38). By highlighting poor conditions at raves, the threatening dangers of

club drug use, and incessant references to the high-profile case, claims-makers imply all raves

are alike and, thus, will likely have the same fatal consequences.

Additionally, as a result of the media frenzy following Ho's death and other ecstasy-

related fatalities, a high-profile coroner's inquest into the popular club drug was issued. Mr. Ho's

death was eventually chosen as its representative case to inform decision-making about the club

drug problem.

Prevalence Statistics

When references to statistics were made to support claims, narratives were coded under

the *Prevalence Statistics* code (35% of articles). In this sample, to capture the fear narrative,

alarming statistical claims were regularly presented to support the 'tough on crime' ideology. For

example, journalists in particular were able to stress the magnitude of the supposed threat

through their use of prevalence statistics, such as:

> Ecstasy and other rave-related drugs have been blamed for close to *a dozen deaths* in Ontario in the past *year and a half* (Blackwell, 2000, Article 48, emphasis added).

> *Three* young people have died after taking the so-called designer drug ecstasy at Toronto raves in the past *two years*. *Ten more* died after taking it at other venues (Brazao, 2000, Article 18, emphasis added).

> Ecstasy has killed *at least three people* in Toronto since 1999 […] *ten others have died* under the influence of ecstasy (Cotroneo & Palmer, 2004, Article 1, emphasis added).

> Ho, 20, was *one of three* people who died last year after taking ecstasy at a rave. Since 1998, *13 people have died* from ecstasy-related complications (Freed, 2000, Article 36, emphasis added).

> *Nine people died* in Ontario last year after ingesting the euphoric-inducing, mind-altering chemical that some medical experts say can cause brain damage (Mitchell, 2000, Article 84, emphasis added).

> Ecstasy *killed three people* in British Columbia last year and has been blamed for *20 deaths* in Ontario since 1998. Other Canadian deaths have been blamed on the drug (Hume, 2001, Article 5, emphasis added).

Law enforcement officials in particular were also discovered to quote alarming statistics:

"Chief Fantino said that about *80 percent* of those at the raves appeared to be high on alcohol or

some drug" (Abbate, 2000, Article 72, emphasis added); "The police department states that *80*

percent of the people who attend raves are high on a substance" (Harding, 2000, Article 21,

emphasis added); "Officers say that *70 percent* of the people at these parties are wired on

something and it's not booze. They're wired on everything from marijuana to designer drugs,

especially speed and Ecstasy" (Mitchell, 2000, Article 84, emphasis added). Such claims have

the ability to instill panic among audience members and imply that legal action is the only

remedy to control the threat to society.

Medical professionals were found to have disparate claims of club drug use. Claims were

either alarmist in nature or instead emphasized the inaccuracies in presented statistics. For

instance, in Toronto – North America's "raviest" city – St. Michael's Hospital emergency-room

manager, Karen Gaunt indicated:

> Three weekends ago, *six young people* landed in the emergency room of St.
> Michael's Hospital after attending raves in downtown Toronto […] Lately
> that's typical for the hospital. "They don't come in slightly inebriated […] they
> come in acutely ill." (Foss, 1999, Article 98, emphasis added).

Another medical professional, Dr. Bonita Porter, deputy chief coroner, quotes:

> We had *nine deaths*, majority of whom are in the range of *20 to 30*, that were
> associated with this drug in Ontario last year […] but we had one death in 1998
> and none in 1997 and it's *this increase that has caused our alarm* (Mitchell,
> 2000, Article 84 emphasis added).

On the other hand, however, Kim Stanford, a registered nurse and chair of the Toronto

Dance Safety Committee, has countered the fear-mongering, alarmist claims with reasoned

statistics:

> Of Ontario's nine ecstasy-related deaths last year, *only three* were clearly
> associated with raves […] there were also 6,503 alcohol-related deaths in
> Canada in 1995 (a stat overlooked by Heritage Minister Sheila Copps) (Klein,
> 2000, Article 62, emphasis added).

Claims from research professionals presented statistics that defended club drug use and

the rave scene. As such, evidence in research was used to highlight the inaccuracies in alarmist

claims, much like the examples provided above. One study in particular, repeatedly showed how

poor most rave-related information is:

> Instead of presenting reliable data about the age of ravers, and the percentage
> of them who may be taking drugs, experts proffer a series of bad guesses,
> proving only that such numbers should always include a proviso explaining
> how they were arrived at. Indeed, while it is now received wisdom that
> designer drugs are targeted at the city's "early teens," the St. Michael's study
> showed patients' average age to be just over 22. Among the 13 dead, ages
> ranged from 17 to 28, with nine cases over the age of 20. There is still no
> accurate, broader picture of designer drug use in Toronto (Prittie, 2000, Article
> 38).

This study implies that alarmist claims suggesting club drug use is threatening Canadian youth

are highly inaccurate representations. Moreover, a survey of 4,894 students conducted by the

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health indicated that although club drugs are still a part of

Toronto's 'clubscape,'

> [Its] use is declining among teens, according to results of the 2003 Ontario
> Student Drug Use survey, which showed a drop from 6 percent to 4 percent
> among students in Grades 7 to 12 (Cotroneo & Palmer, 2004, Article 1).

By presenting alarming prevalence statistics, the condition of the social problem becomes

recognized as widespread, threatening, and invasive. Club drug use within the rave scene is

therefore constructed and recognized as an alarming social problem. The media, law enforcement

officials and some medical professionals relied on fear-mongering statistical claims in this

analysis. To counteract hysterical claims, researchers highlighted the inaccuracies in prevalence

statistics to defend the rave scene. In this study, the examples provided demonstrate that the issue

of club drug use and the rave scene is arguably far out of proportion to evidence or reliable

statistics.

Victim

The least referenced *Constructions* theme is the *Victim* code (found in 9% of articles). In

constructing the social problem of club drug use and the rave scene, claims-makers used

sensational narratives to identify the primary victims of the harms associated with club drug

consumption (i.e. overdose fatalities). This was typically accomplished by using narratives to

'personalize the victim' (Loseke, 2011). Several news articles described the lives of the specific

victims to demonstrate how they were affected by it and further, how their families were

impacted. This strategy of constructing victims as 'morally good' was recognized throughout the

coverage.

Most prevalent would be the death of Allan Ho. An article in the Toronto Star quotes a

Ryerson student who indicates: "friends described Ho as a fun-loving, third-year student at

Ryerson Polytechnic University who loved to go to raves and listen to the music of his favourite

rapper, Tupac Shakur" (Mitchell, 2000, Article 84). Another description in the *National Post* by

coroner's counsel, Paul McDermott, stated that:

> Allan Ho, a 21-year-old Ryerson student […] was an ordinary young man who
> lived with his mother and two brothers. He was a good son to his mother, he
> was a law-abiding young man. His life will not be the subject of a great deal of
> evidence (Prittie, 2000, Article 42).

Another article tells a similar story of 21-year-old, Elizabeth Robertson, who was described as:

> A loving mother and newlywed, died Sunday morning after spending the night
> at the Systems Soundbar […] Robertson leaves behind her young son Jeremy
> and husband Charles, who live in Toronto. She is also survived by her parents,
> Christine Martin of Englehart, a small town in the Kirkland Lake area of
> Northern Ontario, and Robert Johnson of Toronto. Described by her
> grandmother Bette Martin as 'a Toronto girl at heart' […] At the time of her
> death, Robertson was beginning a new life with her husband and son after
> losing her previous boyfriend, her son's father, in a car accident. 'She's had a
> hard time in her life,' Martin added. 'They seemed to be doing so well now. I
> can remember her as a baby crawling around and now she's gone. She did well
> in school and had so many friends who are just bewildered now' (Houston,
> 2000, Article 34).

The death of 19-year-old Tiffany Mahoney, who graduated from Kitchener's St. Mary's High School, was also constructed as an undeserving victim in a *Toronto Star* article. According to her older sister, Nicole Amaral: "My sister was in no way any sort of druggie […] It's hard enough to explain how she died" (Gonda & Huffman, 2004, Article 1). According to her father, "she wanted to be a social worker or drug counsellor […] and planned on enrolling in a college program in the fall. 'She was full of life… she was quirky and bubbly'" (Gonda & Huffman, 2004, Article 1).

The narratives above demonstrate how journalists made use of vivid descriptions and cite statements from victims' families to reveal the severity of the harm caused by club drugs within the rave scene. The common claims-making strategy of constructing the grounds of the problem (i.e. club drug use) as having horrifying or extreme consequences for the victim was also accomplished through the use of strong claims and vivid language (Loseke, 2011). Overall, the examples above demonstrate the narratives used to personalize 'undeserving' victims of club drug use and instill panic and fear among its audiences. According to Loseke (2011), constructing victims as not responsible for the harm they experienced is necessary for audience members to feel sympathy and evaluate the claims as important because "good people are greatly harmed through no fault of their own" (p.96). This then further illuminates the scapegoats of the social problem.

Scapegoats

According to Loseke (2011), blame and responsibility should be accompanied by the emotions of hatred or condemnation. Claims that blame and demonize behaviour incite feelings of hatred among readers. Tales of dire consequences and undeserving victims can be highly effective (Loseke, 2011); 20% of articles identified a scapegoat.

Drug dealers were often first to blame in the social problems process. To villanize drug

dealers within rave subculture, the media put forth a variety of claims to depict this scapegoat in

a negative manner: suggesting drug dealers were "merchants of misery and death" at raves

(Abbate, 2000, Article 72); "drug dealers are the problem, not raves" (Rusk & Abbate, 2000,

Article 59); and "beef up club security […] daughter dies after taking ecstasy, family blames

easy access to drugs" (Gonda & Huffman, 2004, Article 1). Another article urged "judges also

need to get tough with drug dealers who would exploit the young and vulnerable" (Freed, 2000,

Article 36).

Youth subculture was also a target in local and national news reports. In connection to

rave subculture in particular, Police Chief Julian Fantino frames the root of the problem to be

youth with a lack of parental supervision: "the reality is a city with drugs, guns, and youths with

no supervision, and the symptoms of those problems are raves and after-hour clubs" (Shephard

& Huffman, 2000, Article 73). Similarly, another newspaper source emphasizes, "I would

caution anyone before they try and paint this as a rave problem, as opposed to a youth problem"

(Segal, 2001, Article 12). However, Kim Stanford, chair of the Toronto Dance Safety

Committee, suggests, "scapegoating a youth subculture isn't new" (Drakes, 2000, Article 67).

The misunderstandings are largely due to raves' key components: youth and drugs. As a Toronto

Star article puts it:

> That's hardly an uncommon combination, but it's a pretty volatile mixture
> when filtered through a media culture fond of 'children and our future'
> aphorisms and the branding of recreational drug use as a moral, not a health,
> issue. Plus, rave's raison d'etre is an electronic soundtrack that really doesn't
> connect with most members of older generations, just as rock 'n' roll's appeal
> confounded horrified parents of the '50s (Unknown, 1999, Article 93).

It's therefore easy to demonize countercultural movements – especially those as mainstream as

the global rave phenomenon – because they're alien to the larger population and generally denied

a voice in the outlets that do the demonizing.

Wrongdoings on the part of rave promoters were also attacked by claims-makers in both

local and national news. For instance, one news article claimed:

> Promoters, partiers, and rave advocates, who are more into spinning records
> than they are reporters […] in the past couple of weeks, they have been
> attacked publicly by media-savvy police chief and mayor, and behind the
> scenes, they've found the city's largest venue owners are now either too
> nervous or under too much pressure to keep holding their [rave] events (Prittie,
> 2000, Article 42).

Moreover, a *Toronto Star* article even drew attention to one rave promoter in particular and his

association with a previous overdose fatality:

> The rave was promoted by well-known Toronto DJ and Hullabaloo rave
> promoter Chris Samojlenko, also known as Anabolic Frolic. Samojlenko also
> promoted the rave where Ryerson student Allen Ho died when he overdosed on
> ecstasy on October 10, 1999 (Vermaand & Levy, 2001, Article 15).

Also receiving considerable media attention is the blame towards popular club drugs,

most notably, ecstasy. Media outlets instill fear by claiming: "ecstasy and other rave-related

drugs have been blamed for close to a dozen deaths in Ontario in the past year and a half"

(Blackwell, 2000, Article 48); "the designer drug ecstasy is blamed for the weekend death of a

young woman in Toronto's latest rave-related tragedy" (Houston, 2000, Article 34); "ecstasy

killed three people in British Columbia last year and has been blamed for 20 deaths in Ontario

since 1998" (Hume, 2001, Article 5); "these kids are using drugs all the time, and when they get

high, they kill each other" (Keung, 2000, Article 82); "raves, techno music and dancing are not

the culprit, the drugs associated with them are" (Unknown, 2001, Article 11); and "why can't

people figure out that it isn't raves that kill people? It's not the loud music or flashing lights, it's

not the friendly atmosphere or the open-mindedness of ravers that kill people, it's the fact these

people unfortunately took drugs" (Unknown, 2000, Article 19).

Lastly, although victims are people harmed by the social problem, they can also be

considered responsible for the condition, and thus labeled a scapegoat (Loseke, 2011). Although

the media was found to personalize victims of club drug fatalities, they also assigned blame. For

example, the *Toronto Star* emphasized: "no matter that the blame for almost every drug-related

fatality falls on one person: the victim, and the unfortunate choices he or she makes" (Unknown,

1999, Article 93) and "drug deaths can be blamed partly on victims who made 'bad choices'"

(Unknown, 1999, Article 91). Again, the same newspaper published the story of a drug-related

death of a 16-year-old boy at a nightclub event, claiming:

> We all know who is responsible for this boy's death. It was his decision to
> ingest the quantity of pills he did that then overwhelmed his system. The fact
> of the electronic music scene is secondary to his own personal and unfortunate
> decisions"

The narratives above demonstrate that the identified deviants in the social problem – drug

dealers, youth subculture, rave promoters, club drugs, and victims – all serve as a scapegoat.

Misconceptions

When inaccuracies of the social problem were made evident in news reports, narratives

were coded under the *Misconceptions* code (34% of articles). Often, rave defenders, harm

reduction organizers, and research professionals illuminated the misconceptions associated with

club drug use and the rave scene. Although relatively minor in comparison to other sub-nodes, it

is still important to mention narratives that highlight the inaccuracies of claims provided in the

above examples.

Defenders of rave culture, like organizer of Party People Project, Victoria Shen, who had

been going to raves for four years says: "only the negative side of the rave culture is being

portrayed to the public" (Abbate & Luciw, 2000, Article 40). She further argues: "the

mainstream media don't portray the whole picture […] they interview kids high on drugs and as

a result that's all people know about the rave scene" (Drakes, 2000, Article 67). Alike, an article

in the *National Post* contends: "the public has only been fed half the story when it comes to raves

[…] the positive cultural aspects of raves are virtually ignored by the mainstream Toronto press"

(Raphael, 1999, Article 99).

Conclusions drawn suggest the media rejects any positive aspect of rave culture in news

stories. For many, the rave scene is a safe escape from the real world. Raves are a social

experience where people talk and get to know each other, an atmosphere without the typical

social taboos usually present in dance clubs. Like Ken, a 15-year-old high school student, who

claims: "everyone is so nice there […] I like the music and it's so much fun […] so happy and

friendly. Everyone's your best friend" (Tucker-Abramson, 1999, Article 105). Another attendee

contends:

> I've been to raves both on drugs and sober, since I started last April. I can
> honestly say, that stoned or sober, raving is worth experiencing. I'm annoyed
> when people condemn the scene because of isolated incidents. Because of the
> open, loving, and accepting atmosphere raves create, I noticed many youth
> look to them for the support they may be missing in other areas. I originally
> started simply because I was curious. The strongest factor making me continue
> is the positive vibe (Unknown, 1999, Article 92).

Another misconception that is often presented in media reports is the fact that club drug

use is synonymous with the rave scene. According to a *Toronto Star* news article, news reports

are "based 100 percent on a stereotype that links to a certain kind of music with a certain kind

of illegal activity" (Rayner, 2001, Article 7). However, defenders illuminate this misconception

by suggesting that people consume the popular drugs in all sorts of environments:

> While there is drug use at raves […] it is also seen at house parties and other
> gatherings. Yes, it is present, and it's notably present, but it's not
> overpowering, and it's not all that raves are about […] The people who use
> drugs at raves are going to use drugs if they're at home, they're going to use
> drugs at baseball games, they're going to do drugs wherever they are. It's not
> the rave atmosphere that entices them to use drugs (Prittie, 2000, Article 46).

> These so-called "gateway" drugs are everywhere, not just at raves. They're in
> our schools, our workplaces, and in every nightclub that plays dance music in
> Toronto (Unknown, 2000, Article 93).

Because the news media is both a source of education and entertainment when creating

messages for the public, they are also often responsible for depicting misleading information of

club drug use and the rave scene. To suggest club drug use is solely synonymous with the rave

scene is highly inaccurate. However, because misconceptions in news reports are rarely

revealed, the general public instead is presented with inaccurate information about the social

problem. This in turn persuades public opinion and is therefore the leading cause of moral

panics in society.

4.3 Sources of Information

In constructing a social condition as a problem, the backbone of this work involves

claimsmakers typifying conditions by outlining the basic 'facts,' defining terms, identifying who

is harmed by the condition and who or what is to blame (Loseke & Best, 2003). The importance

of claimsmakers, however, directs attention to the sources of information in media stories

(Hathaway & Erickson, 2004).

In this study, sources were grouped into the following three categories: (1) Criminal

Justice Officials/Law Enforcement; (2) Experts/Professionals; and (3) Government/Politicians.

Each distinct grouping also has sub-categories to reflect their specific role in the social problems

process. The role of the above mentioned sources assist in designating deviance and instigating

moral panics to reinforce hegemonic definitions of the 'drug problem'. Moreover, the previously

discussed examples in the *Constructions* theme would not be possible if it wasn't for their

sources of information.

Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement

In many cases, the individual group who is given authority to speak about the problem in

the media (i.e. law enforcement officials) is responsible for defining and shaping the social

problem. While the media is considered to be a major source of information about drugs and

their effects, Hathaway & Erickson (2004) suggest it is the concurrent efforts by law

enforcement officials and the media that explain the preponderance of exaggerated messages and

fear mongering about the harms of club drug use. In cases of media reports, journalists often get

information from outside sources, which are generally retrieved from the police. Therefore,

members of law enforcement have a great deal of influence on what frame the story will take

both by virtue of their control of information and how it is presented.

The *Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement* code was the most cited source of information in

this study. Within this code, three identified sub-categories are used to distinguish: (a) Law

Enforcement Frames/Claims (31%); (b) Arrests/Charges (21%); and (c) Legislation/Strategies

(40%). Each will be discussed below.

Law Enforcement Frames/Claims

It is important to distinguish claims made by law enforcement officials from other

claims-makers in this study, for reasons being their level of authority has the greatest impact on

public attitude (Boyd & Carter, 2010; Hier, 2002). As such, they have the greatest success in

persuading audience members to support social control policies (ibid).

Influential law enforcement officials have the ability to effectively frame a social

condition as problematic and threatening – especially when it comes to drug problems. More

specifically, in the context of claims made, law enforcement claims will feature the recurrent

drug war theme to support policy proposals. This is evident in the following narratives:

> If we don't deal with it effectively, we're going to have some irreversible
> effects for years to come and for generations to come in this country […] we
> need a national strategy that recognizes that we in fact have a problem to begin
> with – Police Chief Julian Fantino (Abbate, 2000, Article 72).

> I would support anything we can do as a society to deal with what I call an
> epidemic of drug use […] the sheer number of ravers involved in illicit drug
> use is disturbing to say the least – Superintendent Ron Raverner, head of
> Toronto Police Special Investigations (Freed, 2000, Article 52).

> Raves are threatening the very fabric of Canadian society […] 80% of those
> who attend these events are on drugs […] this represents a health and safety
> emergency that could easily become an epidemic – Police Chief Julian Fantino
> (Laframboise, 2000, Article 53).

In the narratives outlined above, it is evident that the media supports claims made by

criminal justice and law enforcement officials in constructing the social problem. By doing so,

this further aids in motivating public support for punitive crime control agendas.

It is also discernable that law enforcement officials often make use of alarmist claims to

advocate for prevention and enforcement as a means to suppress all forms of illicit club drug use.

Therefore, the approach of law enforcement seeks to eliminate club drug use, rather than reduce

its negative health outcomes within the rave scene, regardless of the fact that enforcement has

been proven unsuccessful in the past.

Arrests/Charges

To further enhance the construction of the social problem, both the media and law

enforcement officials presented statistics of arrests, charges, and/or drug seizures made within

the rave scene. The following narratives demonstrate the preponderance of arrests, charges, and

drug seizure references in this code:

> On Easter weekend, police seized drugs, including ecstasy, crack cocaine, and
> crystal methamphetamine, and laid 57 charges during a rave attended by 8,000
> people at the Better Living Centre (Drakes, 2000, Article 67).

> At a February 20 rave, 7,000 people attended and five people were arrested on
> 17 drug-related charges; on March 25, 12,000 attended and 15 people were
> arrested on 38 drug-related charges; on April 22, 7,000 attended and 24 people
> were arrested on 57 drug-related charges (Freed, 2000, Article 52).

> Plainclothes officers seized drugs on the weekend from what they described as
> a rave party. Thirty drug-related charges were laid against 11 people, two of
> them young offenders (Freeze, 2000, Article 17).

> Nineteen people, including some young offenders, were charged with
> possessing or trafficking Ecstasy, marijuana, and crystal methamphetamine.
> Forty-two charges in total were laid. The event was considered a "legal" rave
> and part of the city's effort to participate and monitor these dances (Gollom,
> 2000, Article 77).

> Close to 100 drug-related charges were laid against 47 of the nearly 21,000
> people who attended two raves targeted by the task force on March 25 and
> April 22 at the CNE's Better Living Centre (Shephard & Huffman, 2000,
> Article 73).

The above narratives are used to present the social problem in a way that demands the need for

social control efforts. As a result, various legislative strategies are put forward in attempt to

control the social problem. However, law enforcement officials fail to acknowledge that with

stricter enforcement, club drug use within the rave scene has the potential to be driven

underground, making it even more unregulated and unsafe.

Legislation/Strategies

Following media-instilled fears about club drug use, officials are prompted to enact

various legislative strategies to combat the social problem. This process is two-fold: (1) claims

will be made to illuminate the desperate need for social control efforts, and (2) proposed

legislative efforts to control the social problem will follow. The following narratives demonstrate

how claims-makers purport the need for sanctioned measures:

> What Canada needs is a national strategy to give police the tools they need to
> tackle the escalating problem of drugs, guns, and young people, a combination
> that can be lethal (Abbate, 2000, Article 72).

> Police in Ontario should be given broad new powers to shut down raves at the
> first sign of any illegal drug activity (Abbate & Luciw, 2000, Article 40).
> Toronto needs a safe venue for raves, along with tough new provincial laws to
> curb drug use at the all-night affairs (Freed, 2000, Article 36).

> Legislation is needed to ensure safety at raves (Freed, 2000, Article 41).

> Many lawyers urged […] the federal government reinstate and sufficiently
> fund a national drug strategy (Prittie, 2000, Article 42).

Following societal reaction, criminal justice officials presented various legislative strategies to

control the social problem, such as:

> This week, city council unanimously passed the Protocol for the Safe
> Operation of Dance Events (Bragg, 1999, Article 87).

> Yesterday, a private member's bill that would give municipalities the power to
> set rules for raves was unexpectedly approved in principle by the Ontario
> Legislature. While private member's bills rarely become law, the Raves Act
> 2000 passed second reading in a close vote […] the act [will] create two types
> of offences: one aimed at rave promoters, organizers, or property owners who

violate the rules; the other at party-goers who refuse to leave if asked to do so
by police (Freed, 2000, Article 49).

An Ontario bill to crack down on raves was hailed yesterday as a tool to save
the very fabric of society […] the private member's bill to regulate all-night
dance parties passed second reading after a lively debate […] Sandra Pupatello,
Liberal MPP who introduced the bill, said she wants to help police prevent
abuse of Ecstasy and other rave-related drugs that have been blamed for close
to a dozen deaths in Ontario in the past year and a half. [The] bill would
require rave organizers to obtain a special permit from the local municipality
and would allow police to order all party-goers to leave a rave if they felt that
the law was being broken (Blackwell, 2000, Article 48).

The examples above demonstrate the variety of narratives that not only frame club drug use as

a social problem, but also instill desperate need for sanctioned measures. Often times,

criminal justice officials, law enforcement, and politicians collaborate to propose and enact

such strategies.

Experts/Professionals

The *Experts/Professionals* code was the second most frequent *Sources of Information*

theme in this sample (35% of articles) References to science, health, and/or research

professionals were coded under this category.

The health hazards of club drug use are explicit in medical expert claims. Medical experts

in this study are mostly comprised of pathologists, toxicologists, coroners, and emergency room

doctors. The below examples demonstrate the narratives used by medical experts that assist in

framing the social problem as alarming, destructive, and fatal:

'It's certainly become more common in the last year,' says Dr. Jeff Tyberg, an
emergency room doctor at St. Michael's Hospital. 'Last week, I had three cases
at the same time, from the same club. We see if quite often. I'd say we see it at
least on a *weekly basis*, here. It's *all young kids*, 16 to 25. Most of them from
clubs.' Emergency room doctors certainly are faced with *comatose patients*,
urgently performing resuscitation on 'Ged out' patients. They are, after all,

unarousable, *a classic sign of coma* (Cudmore, 1999, Article 104, emphasis added).

According to […] toxicology expert, Dr. Margaret Thompson, 'a single ecstasy pill can kill someone with a sensitivity to MDMA' (Freed, 2000, Article 36).

Medical experts have expressed concerns that the mix of high-energy dancing, high temperatures and dehydration add to ecstasy's effects […] an estimated 40,000 to 50,000 young people – most of them teenagers and 20-somethings – attend the often crowded events, held weekly in Toronto area. '*Taking a tablet of ecstasy is a gamble in more ways that one*,' John Hugel, a senior chemist with Health Canada told […] 'The amount of MDMA in a single pill can very from 82 to 170 milligrams […] there's no way of knowing how much it contains – no way of knowing how much you're getting' (Freed, 2000, Article 36, emphasis added).

'One pill could be equivalent to 10 pills, depending on the source of where this drug is manufactured,' explained Betty Chow, a toxicologist with the Centre of Forensic Sciences in Toronto (Prittie, 2000, Article 63).

Medical experts, like law enforcement officials, emphasize harm by reporting fatalities, alarming statistics, and the unknown properties of these synthetic drugs. Academic researchers, by contrast, tend to deviate from alarmist claims by touting harm reduction strategies:

 'There is an indication that these drugs (MDMA or ecstasy, GHB, and ketamine) are being used at raves and other sites and venues,' Joyce Bernstein, an epidemiologist with the Toronto public health department, said. 'The only way to discourage such drug use is through harm reduction education,' Bernstein said. 'Our mandate in public health is prevention […] but a 'say no to drugs' approach has not proven effective' (Freed, 2000, Article 49).

Tim Weber, a former research associate at the Toronto Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, [conducted] one of the first studies of the rave scene in Canada […] Weber believes we should take a two-pronged approach when it comes to youth drug use – discouragement coupled with practical information. 'We're not dealing with a perfect world,' he says, 'It's a given that a relatively small percentage of young people will go to raves. Out of that small percentage some of them will be doing drugs […] that's your given, so what are we going to do about it? Sure you could try the 'Just Say No' approach, but we've seen

that that's been unsuccessful here and abroad. For the kids who are going to be doing these drugs, we have to work with them to teach them how to use them safely' […] 'Illicit drug use isn't something that just happened in the last couple years. It was going on in the '60s. The names of the drugs have changed. At least at a rave there are precautions being taken (on-duty police officers and ambulance services on the premises) as opposed to an event 20 years ago that maybe wouldn't have those things there' (Raphael, 1999, Article 99).

In sum, whereas medical professionals are inclined to stress the dangers of club drugs, academic researchers tended to counter with public health arguments calling for investment in harm reduction programs.

Government/Politicians

The *Government/Politicians* information source is broke down into distinct sub-categories: (1) *Pro-Policy and Control* and (2) *Anti-Policy and Control*.

The *Pro-Policy and Control* sub-category is the most referenced position among government officials (20% of article sampled). Government agencies and politicians have both a financial and ideological stake in the way social problems are presented to the public (Chermak, 1997). Much like other information sources, legislators often address the social problem with control efforts. The following examples demonstrate the pro-policy narratives captured in this sub-node:

> Toronto City Council has overwhelmingly supported a motion to establish tough new rules for rave parties on city-owned property (Harding, 2000, Article 21).

> Mike Harris' Ontario government recently decided to lend a hand to help crack down on raves (Raphael, 1999, Article 89).

> As a tough on crime pitbull, the councillor's immediate reaction was to close it all down (Raphael, 2000, Article 26).

> Mayor Mel Lastman […] was bold but evasive in his explanation of the new
> initiative. 'Our message is blunt and very clear. The City of Toronto will not
> tolerate after-hour clubs and raves' […] 'Starting right now, we will do
> everything in our power to shut them down' (Southworth, 2000, Article 80;
> Unknown, 2000, Article 81).

> Sandra Pupatello, the Liberal MPP who introduced the bill, said she wants to
> help police prevent abuse of Ecstasy and other rave-related drugs that have
> been blamed for close to a dozen deaths in Ontario in the past year and a half
> […] 'This drug has killed people… the rave itself has to be regulated […] and
> we, as legislators, have the responsibility to enact that' […] Sean Conway, a
> Liberal, went further in touting the bill, describing the rave phenomenon as a
> 'very serious disintegration of the social foundation of this community'
> (Blackwell, 2000, Article 48).

The narratives above show how news media contributes to the reproduction of hegemony in

society by printing politicians prohibitionist positions.

The *Anti-Policy and Control* sub-category is the least referenced among government

officials (found in 8% of articles). Bucking the majority of pro-policy positions, Toronto city

councillor, Olivia Chow, for example, asserted that outlawing legal raves and implementing

strict legislation is not "the responsible thing to do […] we've taken a step in the wrong

direction" (Wanagas, 2000, Article 60). Chow further advocates that strict control efforts "will

serve only to drive raves underground to venues where there are no rules to protect young people

[…] drug dealers are the problem, not raves," she told reporters, "rock concerts have drug

dealers. But you don't ban rock concerts" (Rusk & Abbate, 2000, Article 59). Similarly,

councillor, Chris Korwin-Kuczynski also criticizes the mayor's plan to shut down supervised

raves: "The mayor is wrong on this one […] All we will do by banning raves down there is drive

them underground where they are a very serious problem. It just doesn't make sense" (Wanagas,

2000, Article 70).

4.4 Rave Ban

As captured in the above information sources, when working collaboratively, agents of

social control have the ability to construct the social problem in a way that urges the need for

sanctioned measures. More specifically, criminal justice/law enforcement officials,

government/politicians, and the news media influenced the development and implementation of

public policy on club drugs. This is not only apparent in proposed legislative efforts, but also in

the rave ban during the early 2000s.

As a result of the media frenzy, issues surrounding club drug use and the rave scene

became so embedded in social policy discussions that numerous control efforts and public policy

changes were designed to address the social disorder.

The intention of the *Rave Ban* theme was to capture the societal reaction to the problem,

particularly among members of authority (37% of articles included reference to the rave ban). In

support of the pro-policy standpoint, law enforcement officials urged that the ban was necessary,

as the captured narratives suggest:

> Police chief Julian Fantino had asked Exhibition Place to *ban raves* after a task
> force reported some *alarming statistics* on young people and the underside of
> the city's nightlife (Abbate, 2000, Article 72, emphasis added).
> Police Chief Julian Fantino had *advocated the ban*, saying *80 percent of the
> people there were on drugs* (Brazao, 2000, Article 18, emphasis added).
>
> Rave culture has received increasing attention lately with Police Chief Julian
> Fantino calling on Exhibition Place to ban raves after police arrested 47 people
> at two dance events. He recently invited Prime Minister Jean Chrétien to a rave
> to show him how the parties are threatening the very fabric of Canadian life"
> (Southworth, 2000, Article 66).

In response to alarmist claims and the driving force of law enforcement, political leaders

suspended raves, as the below examples outline:

> Toronto Mayor Mel Lastman is putting forward a motion to city council today
> to ban the leasing of any city owned building for raves (Alphonso, 2000,
> Article 61).

> 'We are going to stop the raves,' Mr. Lastman told a fundraising luncheon for
> North York General Hospital. 'At the next city council meeting, I'm putting
> forward a motion. No more raves, the legalized raves in Toronto. The police
> feel very strongly' (Rusk, 2000, Article 71).

> City council banned the all-night parties from city-owned property in May
> after 24 drug arrests at an Exhibition Place rave where 54 police officers and
> 97 security guards watched over 8,100 revelers (Brazao, 2000, Article 18).

The narratives above highlight the dynamic interplay that exists between law enforcement and

legislators when implementing increased social controls. As such, those that advocate for

prevention and enforcement over public health and harm reduction are in favour of an approach

that aims to suppress all forms of illicit drug use (Hathaway & Erickson, 2004).

In spite of public support for the rave ban, some argue how the suspension will not solve

the problem, but rather pose a greater risk for partygoers. An unknown source in the *Toronto

Star* advises: "banning raves will not eliminate parties; it will merely force them back

underground, where there are no safety regulations. In fact, it probably will increase the use of

drugs and overdoses because of the lack of police and medical supervision" (Unknown, 2000,

Article 47).

Although the 'Just Say No' approach has proven unsuccessful, political leaders and law

enforcement officials remain inclined to such campaigns. However, as the below section

contends, "the war on drugs has long been lost, it's time to wake up and realize that drug harm

reduction is the next 'safe sex' […] People need the opportunity to make informed decisions"

(Raphael, 1999, Article 86).

4.5 Harm Reduction

As a pragmatic public health approach, harm reduction initiatives are recurrently

referenced in half the sample (50% of articles). Although the term 'harm reduction' is not always

used, per say, inferences to the routine occurrence of public health arguments suggest its

diffusion. In spite of its recurrence in news articles, however, harm reduction remains a highly

controversial pragmatic solution in society. As a result, many initiatives are kept at bay in many

places – especially within the rave scene. The recommended harm reduction strategies proposed

in news stories are three-fold and include the need for: (1) awareness and education, (2)

improving safety and environmental conditions at raves, and (3) implementing drug-testing

booths.

Drug Awareness and Education

The majority of health officials support the need for further club drug awareness and

education (68%). Most prominent among educational strategies were recommendations to

educate youth about club drug risks in schools, just as safer sex education is a regular component

of curricula. Statements for a plan to establish more awareness and education follow:

> More education on designer drug complications could be provided to schools
> and public health officials […] if hospital emergency department files of drug-
> related admissions were available on computer (Freed, 2000, Article 49).

> Public health officials [need to] educate youth about the risks associated with
> ecstasy, marijuana, and other drugs associated with raves (Luciw, 2000, Article
> 37).

Furthermore, one raver interviewed in the *Toronto Star* also drew similar conclusions:

> With the increased availability of different types of drugs, lack of quality
> control and new people entering the scene, many ravers interviewed say
> information about 'safer drug use' is needed, just like safe education in schools
> (Gillespie, 1999, Article 94).

In response, some pragmatic efforts have been made to introduce harm reduction within

the rave scene. Educational movements like the Toronto Rave Information Project (TRIP), the

Toronto Harm Reduction Task Force, and the Toronto Dance Safety Committee have been

implemented:

> In Toronto, the movement includes the Toronto Rave Information Project, or
> TRIP, which goes on-site with literature and advice on how to get through the
> night safely, and what to do when a friend looks like he or she is having
> problem (Powell, 2000, Article 69).

> The Project provides pamphlets on how to spot signs of drug overdoses and
> information about not mixing drugs with alcohol. The group encourages people
> to educate themselves about the dangers of drug use (Gillespie, 1999, Article
> 94).

> The only way to discourage such drug use is through harm reduction education
> […] the publicly funded harm reduction program offered by the Toronto
> Ravers Info Project offered a solution by providing information to young
> people at raves (Freed, 2000, Article 49).

> Cpl. Rintoul and his colleagues are producing a manual to help emergency and
> medical workers treat people who overdose (Munro, 2002, Article 3).

In spite of these efforts, projects like TRIP are highly restricted due to the limited funding

they receive. According to Kim Stanford, a registered nurse and chairwoman of the Toronto

Dance Safety Committee, "TRIP […] has an annual budget of $32,000 [and] could use more

funding for staff and for developing new pamphlets. Currently, the group only has enough

money to attend half the city's raves" (Prittie, 2000, Article 44). Likewise, program coordinator,

Sandy Watters, said her group "offered information at six to seven raves a month, only a fraction

of the raves that occur. The group is not funded or staffed well enough to serve the 40,000 to

50,000 people in the rave community" (Freed, 2000, Article 49). Statements such as these

support the call for allocation of more funding for harm reduction education.

Environmental Factors

Beyond the call for awareness and education, the next most prevalent theme running

through news articles addressed the environmental concerns at raves (47%). The following

examples highlight this narrative:

> Frequent references was made to environmental concerns at raves, such as
> proper exits, running water, good ventilation, washrooms, and location. The
> fear expressed is that safety issues will be compromised if raves are forced
> underground (Abbate & Luciw, 2000, Article 40).

> The primary cause of ecstasy-related death is dehydration. Therefore […] most
> of the risk from the drug can be eliminated at raves simply by making sure
> there is unlimited access to water and proper ventilation (Klein, 2000, Article
> 62).

> [There is desperate need for] fire and building code requirements, density,
> security, ambulance staff, sufficient lighting, water, ventilation, drug
> education, and the use of pay duty police officers (Freed, 2000, Article 57).

In the wake of a number of rave-related deaths, the above concerns reveal the need for

safer raves. In response, city council lifted its three-month ban on raves and unanimously passed

the Protocol for the Safe Operation of Dance events to ensure rave events follow health and

safety regulations and harm reduction strategies. The protocol called for:

> Organizers will submit a list of rave venues to the municipal licensing and
> standards division of the city's planning department. If the sites are zoned
> properly, organizers must submit an engineer's or architect's report verifying
> they comply with building codes. At raves with 500 or more people, at least
> two off-duty police officers must be hired for security, with one extra officer
> for every 500 patrons. At raves attended by more than 1,000 people, promoters
> must have paramedic services on standby for at least four hours during peak
> times. Community drug and health education projects will be part of the
> events, with a portion of profits donated to drug education programs of the

organizer's choice. Organizers will notify city officials of locations and
estimated attendance at raves at least a week in advance. Since alcohol is not
served at raves, all people attending must have unrestricted access to running
water at no charge (Bragg, 1999, Article 87).

The guidelines above are intended to prevent further deaths at rave events through increased
monitoring and safety regulations, rather than forcing raves underground.

Drug-Testing Booths

A more controversial recommendation of implementing drug-testing booths at raves was
the least mentioned harm reduction strategy in news articles (7%). David Collins of the Toronto
Harm Reduction Task Force proposed there should be on-site legal testing of ecstasy capsules or
tablets at all raves. He argues: "legal testing of drugs will let people be clear on what they are
taking" (Abbate & Luciw, 2000, Article 40). Moreover, an article from the *National Post*
contends: "drug testing at events targets people who come to the table with safe drug use
information. It reduces human guinea-pig because it puts the word out on bad drugs. It can also
filter out shady dealers" (Raphael, 1999, Article 86).

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has sought to outline the qualitative thematic analysis conducted on the first
sample of this study – articles published between the years 1999 to 2004. I have outlined the
results for each coded theme with narratives that demonstrate meaningful patterns that emerged
from the data.

Overall, findings demonstrate how club drug use within the rave scene was defined as a
social problem by multiple actors. Moreover, intensifying the social problem in news reports
through the use of framing terminology was a strategy most commonly used by claims-makers.

This strategy was recognized throughout media coverage as club drug use was consistently labeled as destructive, excessive, irresponsible, and uncontrolled.

The findings also provide insight into how sources of information played a prominent role in the social problems process. Particularly, law enforcement officials were identified to be the most cited information source in this study and had the greatest ability to persuade the general public.

The next chapter will outline a similar analysis of the second sample in this study, which will them be compared to the above findings.

CHAPTER 5: CLUB DRUG USE AND EDM FESTIVALS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the qualitative thematic analysis that was conducted

on newspaper articles published between the years 2011 and 2016 (i.e. Sample 2). The results of

the qualitative analysis highlight important patterns and trends in the construction of club drug

use as a social problem.

As outlined in chapter four, this chapter will also refer to "narratives," when providing

examples in newspaper articles. Also like chapter four, to ensure meaning is demonstrated,

several examples are used to illustrate patterns in the data, rather than using a single

representation. The format of this chapter is similar to chapter four in that the results for each

code are discussed in relation to the electronic dance music (EDM) festival scene.

5.2 News Media Constructions

Market Differences: Local/National

In this sample, negative reporting was mostly found in national based newspapers (i.e. the

National Post and the *Globe and Mail*) as compared to local newspapers (i.e. the *Toronto Star*)

(31% versus 12%). Headlines classified as neutral were more often found in local newspapers

(63% versus 38%, and positive headlines were more often found in national newspapers (31%

versus 25%). These findings give a better understanding of the relative 'balance' of reporting on

club drug use in that era.

Framing Terminology/Salience

The *Framing Terminology/Salience* code was the most frequent *Constructions* theme

referenced in this sample (92% of articles). Framing types of words and phrases were often used

in headlines such as these: "the summer of overdoses" (Humphreys & Hudes, 2014, Article 11);

"the rave boogeyman is back in town" (Rayner, 2014, Article 10); "every parents nightmare"

(Humphreys & Hudes, 2014, Article 12); "deaths at music festival spark concern over drugs"

(Platt & May, 2014, Article 14); "ecstasy blamed in overdoses" (Unknown, 2012, Article 24);

"drug dealers and pedophiles 'flock' to the events" (Church, 2014, Article 19); "the cluster of

deaths and injuries shows a clear link between dangerous drug consumption and summer music

festivals" (Humphreys & Hudes, 2014, Article 12); "It's bad drugs. It's the so-called party drugs

and its causing a lot of problems" (Humphreys & Hudes, 2014, Article 12); "Young Canadians

will die or become seriously ill because of drug use at music festivals" (Macpherson, 2014,

Article 6); "dangerous new drug-taking habits coincide with the summer music festivals" (Smith,

2015, Article 3). Framing terms provoke fear and alarm, and link dangerous drug use to EDM

festivals, increasing support for more punitive measures.

Health Effects/Consequences

The second most frequent *Constructions* code was *Health Effects/Consequences* (found

in 79% of articles). The following narratives demonstrate statements in this vein:

> Many in attendance at the parties are underage and were in danger of
> overdosing on MDMA or ecstasy (Gallant & Powell, 2015, Article 2).

> Unregulated ecstasy in large quantities is terribly dangerous (Smith, 2015,
> Article 3).

> Police have identified a 'small brown pill' and 'small clear capsule with white
> substance,' but they don't know if these were poisonous or just casual street
> drugs […] police previously speculated that it could have been MDMA,
> ecstasy, or GHB that caused these illnesses and fatalities (Hudes, 2014, Article
> 13).

> Tainted ecstasy may be behind four non-fatal overdoses at an Edmonton rave
> […] the overdoses are expected to be tied to ecstasy and PMMA, an additive
> suspected of killing at least a dozen people in recent weeks (Unknown, 2012,
> Article 24).

Additionally, the adverse consequences of ecstasy consumption are not the only negative

health-related message in news reports. Claimsmakers also emphasized dangerous new drug

taking habits appearing at EDM festivals:

> The drug scene has also become DIY. Rather than flock to the age-old
> standards of cocaine, ecstasy, and acid, young partiers now favour so-called
> designer drugs in pursuit of new levels of transcendence. These can be either
> mixes of synthetic drugs or custom drugs made of common household items.
> Many of these drugs have psychedelic properties to escape the real world and a
> concerning number have resulted in deaths (Madd-Eaux, 2015, Article 1).

> In May, 29 people were sent to hospital with medical issues related to alcohol
> or drugs after a Toronto Avicii concert […] In June, 20 people at the Digital
> Dreams festival in Toronto were hospitalized with drug- and alcohol-related
> illnesses (Platt & May, 2014, Article 14).

> [There has been] a resurgence of PMMA, or paramethoxymethamphetamine
> being sold as MDMA […] and might be responsible for recent [fatal] incidents.
> It is a dangerous drug that can cause users to overheat […] People have
> dropped dead from it; that's why it stopped being popular (Posadzki, 2014,
> Article 7).

> PMMA is cheaper than ecstasy (MDMA) and is cut into ecstasy for additional
> profit. With a slower onset than MDMA, PMMA can lead to users taking more
> of the drug than usual, leading to deaths due to organ failure linked to high
> body temperatures. PMMA has been linked to at least a dozen ecstasy-related
> deaths (Unknown, 2012, Article 24).

Suggesting that the festival scene is accompanied with new drug taking habits and the

dangerous combination of drug and alcohol consumption further heightens the construction of

the threatening social problem. It also causes alarm on the grounds that new ways of tainting

club drugs are entering the scene.

Fatality/Overdose

The *Fatality/Overdose* code was the third most frequent *Constructions* theme (67% of

articles). Although rave-related fatalities are commonly discussed in news reports, they are most

frequently appearing in news headlines. The following narratives demonstrate its repeated

appearance in featured stories in both local and national news reports:

> The summer of overdoses; Drugs apparently claim four at music festivals
> (Humphreys & Hudes, 2014, Article 11).
>
> Every parent's nightmare; Music festival drug deaths prompt mournings,
> warnings (Humphreys & Hudes, 2014, Article 12).
>
> Police identified drugs that killed two; Veld festival (Hudes, 2014, Article 13).
>
> Deaths at music festival spark concern over drugs (Platt & May, 2014, Article
> 14).

The narratives above highlight the way in which mainstream media links club drug fatalities

exclusively to the EDM festival scene. The *National Post* was the most frequent media source to

reference a festival-related fatality in their headlines. Seeing as national news organizations, like

the *National Post*, receive more spectatorship than the *Toronto Star*, the construction of the

social problem is therefore circulated to a larger audience. As the above examples demonstrate,

the *Fatality/Overdose* code captures narratives that framed the festival scene as being solely

responsible for club drug related deaths in their featured headlines.

In addition, referencing fatalities in an alarmist tone further supports social control

efforts. Therefore, because the media presents festival-related fatalities as a threatening social

problem, the need for strict social control measures are thereafter justified. It is the reference to

"a rash of deaths across the country at music festivals" (Posadzki, 2014, Article 7), "shocked and

bewildered" members of society (Humphreys & Hudes, 2014, Article 12), and "bad party drugs"

(Platt & May, 2014, Article 14) that aid in the construction of a menacing and out of control problem.

Case Reference

Used as a journalistic strategy, news stories often present a single high profile case and unveil it as a 'typical case' to heighten the level of concern over the social problem. In this sample, however, not one single case frequently appeared in news stories, but rather different tragedies appeared in different articles (29% of articles):

> Willard Amurao, a 22-year-old from Ajax, Ont., died after ingesting party drugs at Veld (Posadzki, 2014, Article 7).

> Annie Truong-Lee, a 20-year-old political science student at Toronto's York University […] died at a summer music festival last weekend […] from a drug overdose or tainted drugs (Humphreys & Hudes, 2014, Article 12).

> Lynn Tolocka, a 24-year-old from Leduc, Alta., died after she collapsed from a suspected drug overdose at the Boonstock Music Festival in Penticton, B.C. (Posadzki, 2014, Article 7).

> Nick Phongsavath, 21, was found dead in a tent at Pemberton Music Festival last month (Posadzki, 2014, Article 7).

The absence of media hysteria focused on a single high-profile case (like Allen Ho) is arguably less threatening. However, references to multiple fatalities infers that all EDM festivals are dangerously alike.

Prevalence Statistics

When references to statistics were made to support claims, narratives were coded under *Prevalence Statistics* (21% of articles). In this sample, statistical claims were presented to not only capture the fear narrative but to support the 'tough on crime' ideology and to validate the

distain for electronic music festivals. City councillors and law enforcement presented fear-

mongering statistics when discussing the social problem:

> Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti is telling city council 'I told you so' after *22
> people* attending electronic dance music festival Digital Dreams were
> hospitalized this weekend with drug- and alcohol-related illnesses (Deschamps,
> 2014, Article 15, emphasis added).

> Toronto police have identified *two drugs* that likely led to *two deaths* and *13
> illnesses* over the weekend at Veld Music Festival (Hudes, 2014, Article 13,
> emphasis added).

> About *80 people* were admitted to hospital and a woman died of suspected
> drug overdose at the Boonstock festival (Posadzki, 2014, Article 7, emphasis
> added).

> At Toronto's VELD Music Festival, which attracted about *70,000*, *two people
> died* after taking drugs and another *13* were sent to hospital (Posadzki, 2014,
> Article 7, emphasis added).

When members of authority present alarming statistics and quantify its consequences, the

condition of the social problem becomes recognized as widespread, threatening, and invasive.

Club drug use within the EDM festival scene is therefore constructed and recognized as an

ominous social problem. City councillors and local law enforcement officials relied on fear-

mongering statistical claims in this analysis. However, it is important to note, claims of this

nature are often far out of proportion to the actual threat.

Victim

The least referenced *Constructions* theme is the *Victim* code (found in 12% of articles). In

constructing the social problem of club drug use and the EDM festival scene, claims-makers

used sensational narratives to identify the primary victims of the harms associated with club drug

consumption (i.e. overdose fatalities). This is recognized in the following narratives of two

female victims:

> Annie Truong-Le, a 20-year-old political science student at Toronto's York
> University, volunteered with an afterschool program for students in the city's
> tough Jane and Finch neighbourhood where she grew up […] Ms. Truong-Le
> was simply too busy to be involved in drugs, said Chris Rugel, who worked
> with her at Toronto's Mentoring Arts Tutoring Athletics program […] 'She
> was just so enthusiastic about helping the kids. They loved her. They listened
> to her, they respected her, which is tough to get kids to do,' said Mr. Rugel.
> 'Annie was someone this city could have used more of' (Humphreys & Hudes,
> 2014, Article 12).

> Lynn Tolocka, 24, grew up a martial arts enthusiast in a U.S. military family
> who settled in Leduc, Alta. […] Ms. Tolocka moved around the United States
> with her family, from Alaska to Kansas, in accordance with military postings.
> When she was just six months old her father went to fight in Iraq. Ms. Tolocka
> moved to Leduc in 2006. 'My husband and I practically raised her,' said Ms.
> Tolocka's grandmother, Agnes White. 'She was always a go-getter […] she
> was always laughing in spite of everything. A very kindhearted person… who
> just lights up the place' (Humphreys & Hudes, 2014, Article 11).

The narratives above demonstrate how journalists made use of vivid descriptions and cite

statements from victim's family and friends to highlight the severity of the harm caused by club

drug use within the EDM festival scene. The deaths of Annie Truong-Le and Lynn Tolocka

unveil the strategy the media employed to personalize the 'undeserving' victims of club drug use

and instill panic and fear among its audience.

Scapegoats

Claimsmakers construct frames that clearly blame and demonize the behaviour of

individuals or things and encourage audience members to inflict hatred (Loseke, 2011). A third

of articles identified a scapegoat. The youth subculture in particular was negatively depicted. An

article in the *Globe and Mail,* for example, contends:

> The new form of electronic dance music known as EDM that's filling the
> biggest stadiums and festivals in the world with barely clad, *drug-stupefied*
> *youth* is hated, loathed even, by everyone who does not participate in it (Smith,
> 2015, Article 3, emphasis added).

Although the media attempts to paint this as a youth drug problem, Dr. Adam Lund, a researcher

from the University of British Columbia defends youth subculture, arguing:

> 'People who spends hundreds of dollars going to music festivals are a different
> demographic from street youth with addictions […] People who are going out
> to these kinds of destination events are going there to have a really good time,'
> he says. 'They're using whatever drugs they're using to enhance their
> experience, to have a euphoric feeling.' Dr. Lund says its unfair to blame
> electronic music, or music festivals in general.. After all, drug overdoses at
> concerts are not new […] 'Every generation detests the music of its youth.
> Even Elvis was considered risky once. This is just a different brand (Posadzki,
> 2014, Article 7).

It is easy to demonize countercultural movements denied a voice in outlets that do the

demonizing. The EDM festival phenomenon is a scapegoat used to construct youth as criminal,

deviant, and in terms such as 'us' versus 'them'.

Misconceptions

When misconceptions of the social problem were made evident in news reports,

narratives were coded under the *Misconceptions* code (25% of articles). Although relatively

minor in comparison to other sub-nodes, it is still important to mention narratives that highlight

the inaccuracies of media claims provided in the above examples.

A common misconception, for example, found in news reports is to suggest that EDM

and club drug use are synonymous. At a news conference following the Veld festival in Toronto,

local law enforcement presented alarmist claims to point out dangerous drug taking patterns

among festivalgoers. This not only instilled fear among the general public, but it also presented a

stereotype that linked club drug use exclusively to the festival scene and its attendees. However,

defenders of the scene illuminate this misconception by suggesting that people consume the

popular drugs in an array of environments and the media is responsible for its over-reporting

within the festival scene:

> Yes, people do drugs at raves. But people do drugs everywhere – there's so
> much cocaine use in London that trace amounts are turning up in the drinking
> water – and the consequences of pharmaceutical misadventure at EDM events
> tend to be reported with far more gusto than similar fallout from rock shows.
> Death and disaster are hardly exclusive to dance-music festivals (Rayner, 2014,
> Article 4).

> One needn't attend an event or festival to purchase and consequently use illicit
> drugs. These drugs are readily available on most streets, through friends and
> acquaintances, as well as in clubs on any weekend of the year (Unknown,
> 2014, Article 8).

> Among the misconceptions pointed out by counterclaimants is that alcohol, not club

drugs, is the biggest concern. According to a *Toronto Star* news article:

> To those that criticized EDM for being entwined with drug culture, I might
> point out that most musical events tend to be entwined with a drug
> monoculture: that of alcohol. That's not without problems, either. Forty-six
> people were treated for 'alcohol-related illnesses' and a 17-year-old girl was
> raped at a boozy Keith Urban concert (Rayner, 2014, Article 10).

Because the media is both a source of education and entertainment when creating messages for

the public, they are also often responsible for depicting misleading information of club drug use

and the EDM festival scene. To suggest club drug use is solely synonymous with the electronic

dance music festival scene is highly inaccurate, as depicted in the above narratives. However,

because misconceptions in news reports are rarely disseminated, the general public is often

presented with inaccurate information about the social problem. This in turn persuades public

opinion and is therefore the leading cause of moral panics in society.

5.3 Sources of Information

As previously indicated, the backbone of constructing a social condition involves

claimsmakers typifying such conditions as problematic. The importance of claimsmakers,

therefore, directs attention to the sources of information in media stories.

The format of this section is similar to the first sample in that sources were grouped into

the same three categories: (1) Criminal Justice Officials/Law Enforcement; (2)

Experts/Professionals; and (3) Government/Politicians.

Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement

Within the *Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement* code, three identified sub-categories are

used to distinguish: (a) Law Enforcement Frames/Claims; (b) Arrests/Charges; and (c)

Legislation/Strategies. But only type (a) narratives were found (in 29% of articles). These are

discussed below.

Law Enforcement Frames/Claims

Types of warnings by police about the dangers of drug use at EDM festivals are evident

in the following narratives:

> Detective Sergeant Peter Trimble said drugs were consumed at the Veld
> festival in a naïve state of abandon. 'Some of these people didn't even know
> what they were taking. We have some people taking upwards of 10 pills, some
> people picking up pills on the ground' (Humphreys & Hudes, 2014, Article
> 12).

> 'No amount of policing or event security can protect people who make unwise
> choices,' said Leo Knight, a former RCMP officer and private security
> consultant […] 'It's bad drugs. It's the so-called party drugs and it is causing a
> lot of problems. You never know what's going into these things. Some of this
> stuff is really toxic. They're playing Russian roulette.' (Humphreys & Hudes,
> 2014, Article 12).

During the Veld music festival panic, local police references to "upwards of 10 pills" and descriptions that others "were picking pills off the ground" (Rayner, 2014, Article 10) suggest this is a serious problem plaguing music festivals.

Moreover, as a result of a number of fatalities and illnesses that occurred at the Veld event, police were able to enhance the fear narrative in claims made by relying on the fact that the purity of these "bad party drugs" are unknown to users and experts alike (Platt & May, 2014, Article 14). A *Toronto Star* article in particular, argues:

> Following the Veld deaths, Toronto police say they do not know exactly what sorts of drugs were taken by those who died or became ill. 'We're saying party drugs because right now people are saying it could be MDMA, it could be ecstasy, it could be GHB. So we're being as generic as possible at this point in time […] people are dying from ingesting this drug. We want to find this drug. We want to find exactly what it is' (Platt & May, 2014, Article 14).

Alarming claims that highlight the uncertainty of law enforcement officials instill a greater panic among members of society. This then leads to the question, how do we control it?

Aside from fear-mongering claims, one Toronto police constable, Kris Clark, issued a pragmatic plea during the festival educating attendees: "to refrain from ingesting unknown substances and to ensure they remain hydrated […] dehydration greatly increases the risks associated to overdose by alcohol, as does mixing drugs with alcohol" (Humphreys & Hudes, 2014, Article 12). This suggests that although the majority of law enforcement officials cited in news reports will resort to prevention and enforcement when debating drug problems, some are able to abandon alarmist-based claims and instead acknowledge the need for harm reduction to increase safety and minimize harm.

Experts/Professionals

In this code, references to science, health, and/or research professionals were coded under this category (21% of articles). With the cluster of deaths and injuries published in the news media as a result of club drug use, health officials argued a clear link between dangerous club drug consumption and summer music festivals (Humphreys & Hudes, 2014, Article 12). Consequently, claims of this nature prompt warnings from various experts in the medical profession, as the following narratives indicate:

> It's the stuff of parental nightmare – seemingly stable, engaged young people expecting massive summer fun but instead meeting distressing death (Humphreys & Hudes, 2014, Article 12).

> We are about to witness a series of exposes about dangerous new drug-taking habits that coincide with the summer music festivals, as the overdoses and sun stroke piles up […] normal kids are risking their lives every sunny weekend by dosing up on superhuman amounts of sketchy ecstasy […] an emergency room doctor says he treats far more ecstasy overdoses now than he did 10 years ago. The culprit is clearly the increasingly huge, mostly outdoor dance parties (Smith, 2015, Article 3).

> Commander Roy Suthons of Toronto Emergency Medical Services warned of unknown chemicals in pills, saying, 'if someone buys a drug on the street, one never knows what you're getting. It's very, very important that people do not consume any product that they don't know what it is. There is a significant risk and that risk needs to be understood' (Humphreys & Hudes, 2014, Article 11).

The above narratives indicate that medical experts not only label club drug use as problematic, but also the environment in which such drugs are readily available: EDM festivals. Therefore, according to this information source, the risks associated with club drug use are interchangeably linked to the festival setting where they are commonly consumed.

Alternatively, research professionals prompt a harm reduction approach in claims made to help users avoid common risks associated with club drug consumption and EDM events (i.e.

dire effects of dehydration, tainted drugs, and overdoses). A researcher from the University of

British Columbia, Dr. Adam Lund, for example, advocates for providing medical aid at large

gatherings like music festivals and criticizes social control strategies often introduced by law

enforcement. In a *Globe and Mail* article, he reasons:

> At outdoor music festivals, heat, dehydration, marathon dance sessions and
> tainted drugs sold by unscrupulous dealers can create a 'perfect storm' of risk
> factors […] in some cases, people in the midst of a crisis may sequester
> themselves instead of asking for help for fear of being reported to authorities
> (Posadzki, 2014, Article 7).

He further argues that one of the main challenges of providing medical aid at large gatherings,

like music festivals, is simply a result of the lack of research on the topic. In hopes of changing

this, Dr. Lund's goal is to: "identify risk factors and determine how much of a burden certain

types of events are likely to place on local hospitals" (Posadzki, 2014, Article 7). In his findings,

Lund stresses the reality of the scene: "it is unfair to blame electronic music, or music festivals in

general. After all, drug overdoses at concerns are not new […] Every generation detests the

music of its youth" (Posadzki, 2014, Article 7). Moreover, John Haines of Addictions Canada,

draws similar conclusions in his research:

> The types of drugs that are typically consumed at festivals like Veld, are
> available everywhere young people congregate to listen to music. Think of
> bars, concerts at private venues, after-hour clubs and underground raves on
> private property. No one is pushing to close down bars or concerts at private
> venues […] The answer isn't bans, but education and increased security staff
> trained to walk though the crowds and watch or drug deals taking place
> (Unknown, 2014, Article 9).

In addition, Haines also affirms that with large crowds of an upwards of 30,000 people at music

festivals is bound to not only draw drug dealers, but also increases the possibility that someone

will have a bad reaction to drugs – and that will make the news (Unknown, 2014, Article 9).

In conclusion, reflective in the above narratives it is apparent that medical experts resort to fear-mongering claims and negatively construct the social problem by prompting warnings about the risks and often fatal nature of club drug use. On the other hand, research professionals are discovered to identify misconceptions of claims made in the media and rely on a pragmatic public health approach in combatting the social problem. Minimizing harm and increasing safety for festival attendees and club drug users is a priority in the academic field.

Government/Politicians

The *Government/Politicians* information source is broken down into two distinct sub-categories: (1) *Pro-Policy and Control* and (2) *Anti-Policy and Control*.

The *Pro-Policy and Control* sub-category is the most referenced position among government officials (found in 46% of articles). Because legislators have both a financial and ideological stake in the way social problems are presented to the public (Chermak, 1997), they often address the social problem with control efforts. Thus, government officials will instill reactive measures, rather than preventative. The following narratives demonstrate the pro-policy narrative captured in this code:

> Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti wasted no time stoking middle-class panic this
> week, issuing a news release decrying 'these EDM events' as places where
> your children go to die of drug overdoses. He called for the resignations of
> fellow councillors Gord Perks and Mike Layton for defending local dance
> music […] 'How many more have to die before we finally accept that these
> EDM events cannot be held on government lands or anywhere else?' he raved
> (Rayner, 2014, Article 10).

> The days of electronic concerts for youth Torontonians at Exhibition Place
> came to an end Friday, as the board of governors heeded concerns about drug
> use at the so-called raves. City Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti's motion to
> outlaw all-age electronic dance music shows at city-owned facilities passed by
> a vote of 4-3. 'At this point, we're not interested in entertaining children who
> are taking drugs and babysitting them for parents who obviously don't care,'

said Mr. Mammoliti, who sits on the board of governors (Stark, 2014, Article 20).

The above narratives demonstrate the reactive control stance government officials adopt in the social problems process – promoting the 'just say no' agenda, stressing the problems plaguing EDM festivals, and critiquing current control measures and even anti-control positions of other councillors. Consequently, strict control narratives towards the social problem are not only reflective in legislative outcomes, but can also lead to prohibition. This point will be elaborated on in the *Rave Ban* theme later in this chapter.

The *Anti-Policy and Control* sub-category is the least referenced among government officials, yet found in a third of the articles sampled. Toronto city councillor, Mike Layton, for example, critiques the use of fear tactics, and policies invested in protecting business interests over public health and safety:

> Council needs to step in because the move [to control raves] goes against city policy and is designed to protect the interests of a single business, rather than the safety of young people as it was presented at the board meeting. This is all about business (Church, 2014, Article 19).

> [Current policies were] made in haste […] I think that motivation was entirely a financial one… it was clear that that was the motivation from the get-go and it wasn't this altruistic that we're protecting children somehow. That was only brought up after the fact (Pagliaro, 2014, Article 18).

Thus, according to some information sources, there is a need for more pragmatic approaches to the problem to supplant the tough-on-crime agenda of authorities.

5.4 Rave Ban

Much like the rave scene during the early 2000s, electronic dance music festivals also received increased media attention as a result of their growing popularity and reports of illness among attendees associated with club drug use (Ridpath et al., 2014). Therefore, the intention of

the *Rave Ban* node was to capture the societal reaction to the problem, particularly among

members of authority (found in 54% of articles).

In support of the pro-policy standpoint, city councillor Giorgio Mammoliti put forth the

ban on all-age dance events held at Exhibition Place. In June 2014, after 20 people at the Digital

Dreams Festival in Toronto were hospitalized with drug- and alcohol-related illnesses, councillor

Mammoliti told the *Toronto Star* he would like to see a ban on dance music raves (Platt & May,

2014, Article 14), warning "young people could die from drug overdoses if the events were

allowed to continue" (Church, 2014, Article 21). Urging that the ban was necessary, Mammoliti

further argues his position with fear-mongering claims and stoking middle-class panic with the

help of the media:

> These EDM events [are] places where your children go to die of drug
> overdoses […] How many more have to die before we finally accept that these
> EDM events cannot be held on government lands or anywhere else? (Rayner,
> 2014, Article 10).
> City Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti's motion to outlaw all-age electronic
> dance music shows at city-owned facilities passed by a vote of 4-3. 'At this
> point, we're not interested in entertaining children who are taking drugs and
> babysitting them for parents who obviously don't care,' said Mr. Mammoliti
> (Stark, 2014, Article 20).
>
> Let's take a chill pill for now […] city property will not be used for raves
> where children of all ages would be exposed to substance abuse, and taxpayers
> will not bear the burden of the difficulties that often arise from holding such
> events (Church, 2014, Article 21).

However, Mammoliti was not able to achieve the ban on EDM festivals independently. He also

received support from club owner, Zlatko Starkovski, who played an active role in the municipal

battle to ban electronic dance music parties. According to a *Toronto Star* article: "Starkovski

came out swinging in favour of the ban with the help of Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti, arguing

that many in attendance at the parties are underage and were in danger of overdosing on MDMA,

or ecstasy" (Gallant & Powell, 2015, Article 2).

Opponents of the ban, including city councillors and Exhibition Place board members,

Mike Layton and Gord Perks, countered for example:

> Cancelling these events doesn't mean they're all going to go home and do
> homework […] What it means is they are going to go to places that are less
> safe – Councillor Gord Perks (Alcoba, 2014, Article 17).

> We're not going to be able to stop these events from happening […] What we
> can do is determine whether or not they're going to be a little bit safer –
> Councillor Mike Layton (Stark, 2014, Article 20).

In response to claims made by Layton and Perks, Mammoliti criticizes the actions of both

councillors for promoting electronic dance music festivals, like Veld at a press release:

> Councillors Perks and Layton should resign their seats on council […] if it
> wasn't for them pushing for these events and insisting they be held on
> government lands I don't believe these kids would be dead today… These
> councillors are telling you it is acceptable for your children to go to EDM
> events and even encouraging it, knowing that illicit drug use is rampant and
> possibly fatal (Hudes, 2014, Article 13).

In sum, while the public often supports tough on crime campaigns, such as the EDM

festival ban proposed by councillor Giorgio Mammoliti, there indications of dissension in the

ranks.

5.5 Harm Reduction

> We need to acknowledge that drug use is not going away. Which isn't to say
> we should condone it or encourage it. However, it's naïve to think that we can
> eliminate drug use at music festivals, or anywhere, for that matter. So let's
> make it safer (Macpherson, 2014, Article 6).

Harm reduction and related terms were referenced in 42% of articles. Harm reduction

approaches remain controversial. Those mentioned most in articles were: (1) awareness and

education and (2) implementing drug-testing booths.

Drug Awareness and Education

Most health officials cited (60%) supported such initiatives to educate about the dire

effects of dehydration, tainted drugs, and overdoses. For example:

> Health advocates are enthusiastic about the approach […] giving people safety
> information – such as the importance of staying hydrated, or which drugs mix
> well and which do not – can prevent trouble (Posadzki, 2014, Article 7).

> With open minds, harm reduction education […] and maybe a little more free
> water on the dance floors too, a lot of the ugly stuff can easily be taken care of.
> Bans and hysterical ranting don't help anything (Rayner, 2014, Article 10).

> To reduce harm […] the city can do our very best with policing, security, and
> public education to prevent youth drug use at raves (Stark, 2014, Article 20).

> The answer isn't bans, but education […] if kids were educated, they wouldn't
> succumb to the lure of these drugs (Unknown, 2014, Article 9).

In response to these proposals, some pragmatic efforts have been made to introduce harm

reduction initiatives within the popular festival scene. Implemented during the rave era in the late

1990s, the Toronto Rave Information Project (TRIP) continues to provide educational

information and supplies around safer drug use "for the perpetual cohort of partiers for whom

simply 'saying no' is not a realistic goal" (Macpherson, 2014, Article 6). Aside from this

however, little has been done to increase educational efforts and minimize harm within the

Canadian festival scene.

Drug-Testing Booths

Beyond the call for awareness and education, the second most prevalent theme running

through news articles was the recommendation to implement drug-testing booths within

electronic music festivals (20%). An article in the *National Post* for example, argues the need for

on-site legal drug testing and reveals the flaws with Canada's current approach:

> Young people will die because no one in authority is willing to consider
> product safety as a potential solution to music festival deaths. Product testing
> isn't complicated. It wouldn't require any major legislation overhaul, and the
> public-health workers could partner with existing grassroots organizations
> active in the space to carry it out […] Outside of these events themselves,
> police could more regularly disclose Health Canada results of the contents of
> substances seized at raves. Currently, they only do so in exceptional
> circumstances when it suits their purposes (Macpherson, 2014, Article 6).

Although professional drug-testing booths that examine drug purity and ensure accurate

labeling are readily available in the Netherlands, Switzerland, Portugal, Columbia, Spain, and

Austria (Macpherson, 2014, Article 6), this harm reduction system is not warranted in Canada.

5.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has sought to outline the qualitative thematic analysis conducted on the

second sample of this study – articles published between the years 2011 to 2016. I have outlined

the results for each coded theme with narratives that demonstrate meaningful patterns that

emerged from the data.

Much like the first sample, findings demonstrate how club drug use within the rave scene

was defined as a social problem by multiple actors. Moreover, intensifying the social problem in

news reports through the use of framing terminology was a strategy most commonly used by

claims-makers. This strategy was recognized throughout media coverage as club drug use was

consistently labeled as destructive, excessive, irresponsible, and uncontrolled.

The findings also provide insight into how sources of information played a prominent role in the social problems process. Particularly, government and political actors were identified to be the most cited information source in this sample and had the greatest ability to present and persuade a pro-policy and control position. Harm reduction counterarguments were frequently presented, while remaining controversial and rarely formally enacted.

The next chapter will discuss the results of both samples in the context of the theoretical approach and literature review in chapter two and will also provide plausible explanations for the observed similarities and differences.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Raves don't need to be a problem. They can be a solution
- Grayson, 2008

6.1 Introduction

The media can shape *what* audience members think about and *how* they think about

social problems (Best & Harris, 2012). When problems are constructed by influential social

actors in the media, such as law enforcement or government officials, claims are recognized as

legitimate, supporting calls for more punitive control measures. The news media and agents of

social control work in tandem to construct club drug use as a social problem. Such information

sources often present exaggerated and distorted images of deviance to highlight it as threatening

to moral standards (Critcher, 2008). Social problems tend to be framed in such a way as to instill

fear, leading to calls for strict regulation and control.

As discussed in chapter two, the media has long been in the business of fuelling drug

scares marked by public concern. Illicit drugs historically have been portrayed as a new social

problem requiring increased attention and regulation (Boyd & Carter, 2010). Concurrent efforts

by law enforcement, political actors, and the media have been shown to explain the

preponderance of exaggerated messages and fear mongering about the harms of club drug use

(Hathaway & Erickson, 2004). Chapters four and five present news media depictions and efforts

by claimsmakers to successfully construct club drug use as a social problem.

This chapter will discuss the themes emerging in my study of news media constructions

of the underground rave scene and EDM festivals. Despite the similarities, the coverage of

modern electronic dance music festivals is arguably more balanced and less oriented to 'panic'

than earlier depictions of the rave scene in Canada.

6.2 News Media Constructions of Drug Use in Two Eras

Successful claimsmaking requires establishing effective warrants and solutions to a

putative social problem. News coverage of club drug use in both eras was found to have

elements required for instigating moral panic. I will discuss the similarities and differences

observed.

Establishing the Grounds for a Panic Over Drug Use

Claimsmakers tend to typify social problems in such a way as to encourage the audience

to perceive the condition as widespread, harmful, and deviant. People define which conditions

are considered social problems by the way they react to things (Best & Harris, 2012). Therefore,

for a social problem to exist, at least one person must notice a situation, interpret it as

bothersome and inform other people about it (Best & Harris, 2012). Establishing the grounds for

a condition as a problem requires presenting the 'facts' that demonstrate the existence and extent

of harm (Loseke, 2011). In other words, definitional activities are central to the subject matter

and often summarize the central element of a social problem (Ibarra & Kitsuse, 2003).

According to Best, experienced claimsmakers will work from principles established in

earlier campaigns to demarcate the grounds for a new drug panic (as cited in Hathaway, 2001).

Constructing the grounds of a new 'drug problem', therefore, incorporates similar rhetoric and

panicked discourse used in previous drug campaigns.

In both analyses, the grounds for typifying club drug use as a social problem were

captured by these codes, in order of frequency: *Framing Terminology/Salience*, *Health

Effects/Consequences*, and *Fatality/Overdose*. This finding suggests that, with the help of the

news media, information sources portrayed club drug use using similar discursive strategies for

establishing the problem. As compared to these three codes, other strategies, while still relevant,

do not carry the same weight in the social problems process. More specifically, because successful claimsmaking campaigns guide policy actors' decisions, these types of grounds contribute most to the construction of a threat that requires immediate action.

Present in both eras, news articles used distressing language and relied on terms that alluded to numerous overdoses, fatalities, and other illnesses. Phrases such as: "escalating problem of drugs", "health emergency", "the cluster of deaths and injuries", and "every parents nightmare" regularly appeared in news reports and headlines to document the harm caused by club drugs at raves and make the problem worthy of public attention. By: (1) using framing terminology, (2) presenting negative health effects and consequences of club drug use, and (3) emphasizing fatalities and overdoses, claimsmakers were able to portray both the rave scene and EDM festivals as dangerous, establishing the grounds of the problem in both eras.

Establishing Warrants for Action

Persuading an audience that the putative condition must be changed often requires that it be framed as threatening to social values (Loseke, 2011). Claimsmakers often use prevalence statistics to indicate the magnitude of threat. News media reports of overdoses and fatalities were especially common throughout the rave era. Alarming prevalence statistics in this era indicated that club drug use was widespread, threatening, and invasive. Journalists, law enforcement, and medical professionals reported rave- and ecstasy-related deaths in ways that have tended to exaggerate the scope of the problem (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009). As previously observed in the tragic case of Benji Hayward, who overdosed during a rock 'n' roll concert in 1988 (Grayson, 2008), the high-profile case of Allen Ho was framed as 'typical' to illuminate the threat of club drug use. Frenzied media coverage following his death prompted a coroner's inquest, which further intensified the problem and corresponding calls for action.

During the EDM festival era, cited prevalence statistics tend to focus more on hospital admissions as opposed to overdose fatalities. These types of warrants seem less threatening and lack the level of hysteria that can be generated by a single high-profile case. Despite compelling grounds, the same level of concern was not observed for festivals as the earlier rave era. Thus, the problem today is perceived as less ominous.

Constructing People and Conditions

Establishing effective warrants for action includes the construction of victims and villains (Loseke, 2011). According to Hjelm (2014), the most successful claims are those that focus on describing social problems, conditions, and people, as opposed to abstract values. Moral panics thrive when the deviant group or scapegoat is presented as a threat to social values (Martel, 2006). The condition must be framed in such a way as to encourage feelings of sympathy towards victims and hatred towards villains. In turn, audience members may be motivated to evaluate the condition as a social problem worthy of their attention (Best & Harris, 2012).

Villains and Victims

Scapegoats in news stories during the rave era included drug dealers, youth subculture, rave promoters, and club drugs themselves. Claims during this period assigned blame to such villains to an extent that was not replicated during the festival area. Nevertheless, claimsmakers were able to galvanize particular types of threat constructions that targeted specific classifications of people, substances, and spaces as inherently dangerous to Canadian society (Grayson, 2008) in both eras. However, important differences exist between the two eras that explain the opposing constructions of scapegoats.

According to Spector and Kitsuse (1977), in labeling a scapegoat, a behaviour or condition must be defined as a violation of some norm and regarded by a large number of people

as being repugnant to moral consciousness. Authorities and moral entrepreneurs are always able

to correlate, if not link, dangerous drug consumption and medical consequences to deviant

behaviours, identities, and conditions (Grayson, 2011). Drug dealers, youth subculture, rave

promoters, and club drugs were all constructed as a violation to social norms during the rave era.

Raves were discursively constructed as "drug fuelled, hedonistic, and dangerous wastelands that

threatened the principles and mores of normal society" (Grayson, 2008, p.207), which

subsequently led to the demonization of the subculture and other deviants associated with it. In

contrast, because the drug problem was not 'over-dramatized' during the EDM festival scene,

fewer parties were subject to deviant labeling.

And furthermore, according to Grayson (2008) spatial dimensions play an important role

in initiating the diverse construction of scapegoats and deviant others. One of the main

differences between raves of the past and current EDM festivals is their location. Raves were

commonly held in underground club venues and heavily criticized as being a haven for drug

dealers and classified as a dangerous space (Grayson, 2008). In particular, raves were suggested

to be spatially defined, unsupervised, wild crazy parties with tons of drugs (Grayson, 2008). This

unsafe spatial construction is absent with outdoor rave parties.

The severity of the harm was amplified in the rave era in particular with news stories that

suggested all youth are potential victims and by personalizing victims to elicit sympathy. This

finding is consistent with past research documenting club drugs being framed as a threat to

Canadian youth (Grayson, 2008). A climate of fear is cultivated by urging parents to be aware

and monitor their children.

The resurgence of raves as dance music festivals led Toronto city councillor Giorgio

Mammoliti to warn that EDM events are "places where your children go to die" (Rayner, 2014,

Article 10). He further warned "at this point, we're not interested in entertaining children who

are taking drugs and babysitting them for parents who obviously don't care" (Stark, 2014, Article

20). Constructing youth as victims encourages audience members to believe they have an interest

in stopping the condition. It has been shown that fear can be a powerful motivator in support of

calls for action (Loseke, 2011).

By personalizing victims, grounds established through the use of prevalence statistics are

augmented by detailed narratives using vivid language to describe the impact on victims, friends,

and families.

Constructing the Solution: The Role of Information Sources

Claimsmakers must construct a solution to the problem in a way that is consistent with

constructions of conditions and people (Loseke, 2011). How the problem is perceived influences

the solution. In the social problems process, solutions presented in news media require attention

to the role of information sources (Hathaway & Erickson, 2004).

Different groups tend to make competing arguments about the extent, causes, and

solutions to the problem (Harris, 2013). Those with power and authority have the greatest

influence on how drug stories are framed and what solutions are proposed. Their control of

information and how it is presented means that the media is often a reflection of elite opinion

(Omori, 2013). Because access to the media is not evenly distributed, 'official sources' such as

political elites or law enforcement officials are overrepresented and not only influence how

social problems are framed but also how they are responded to.

The information sources in my study of news media shaped the construction of the social

problem and its recommended solutions in both eras. Through the use of media, criminal

justice/law enforcement officials, experts and professionals, and government/politicians incited

fear and moral panic about the use of club drugs to support the call for regulation and control.

The primary information sources were found to vary between samples. My findings are reviewed

and interpreted below.

Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement

News media is often used by law enforcement to bring public attention to dangers and

threats. Public support for punitive actions is sought by dramatizing the enormity of the threat

(Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009). A 'tough-on-crime' agenda was especially apparent in the earlier

rave era. Law enforcement officials presented alarming statistics of arrests, charges, and/or drug

seizures, demonstrating the need for more resources and control. This finding is consistent with

past research documenting law enforcement claims based on misinformation, exaggerating the

effectiveness of the war on drugs. Law enforcement officials have strong incentive to exaggerate

the nature and extend of the drug problem in order to gain funding and increase police powers

(Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2009; Omori, 2013).

My findings document the way exaggerated claims are used by law enforcement to

justify new regulations. Many justifications for increasing police powers, revamping legislation,

and implementing new drug strategies were noted in the claims made by law enforcement

sources. In particular, during the spring of 2000, the Toronto Police Service began to make its

presence felt at rave events held in Toronto by initiating arrests; imposing drug charges; and

seizing quantities of ecstasy, ketamine, cocaine, crack, and crystal methamphetamine (Drakes,

2000; Freed, 2000; Grayson, 2008). The crackdown was presented as evidence of a growing

illicit drug problem among Canadian youth (Grayson, 2008).

In the second sample of news media reporting, law enforcement officials continued to

frame club drug use at EDM festivals as serious and dangerous by focusing on risks. However,

claims were found to be more moderate and balanced. This is evident in three aspects of law

enforcement reporting. Firstly, there were no reports of any arrests and/or charges made by law

enforcement officials during the EDM festival era. Likewise, law enforcement officials made no

mention of, nor resorted to, any legislative strategy to combat the 'problem'. Lastly, during the

rave era, most law enforcement officials resorted to prevention and enforcement when debating

drug problems. During the EDM festival period, there are few signs of law enforcement

abandoning this position in favour of increased safety and minimizing harm. One law

enforcement source, however, acknowledged the potential benefits of changing their approach.

Police Constable Kris Clark, stressed the need for education. He recommended that

Toronto festival attendees refrain from ingesting unknown substances, ensure they remain

hydrated, and know the dangers of mixing unknown substances with alcohol (Humphreys &

Hudes, 2014, Article 12). This may suggest some movement toward more progressive policing.

Experts/Professionals

As secondary claimsmakers, experts play a critical role in the process of defining and

resolving a social problem (O'Grady et al., 2010). Media coverage of club drug use both within

the rave scene and electronic music festivals carries similar claims by experts and professionals.

In this study, medical experts cited in both samples presented alarming claims to emphasize the

risks of club drug use. They portrayed youth and club drug use as reckless and dangerous and

were not supportive of harm reduction strategies, choosing rather to embrace more punitive

approaches as a solution to the social problem. By contrast, non-medical professionals used less

alarmist claims in recommending public health approaches to minimize harm to the club drug

user. These sources were more critical, pointing out misinformation and explicitly opposing the

'war on drugs' approach.

Contrary to academic literature that contends discourse by medical professionals often favour a harm reduction and human rights model for illicit drugs (e.g. Critcher, 2000; Boyd & Carter, 2010), my findings indicate retreat from this pragmatic stance to align with those of law enforcement and political elites. Favouring a criminal justice model and supporting the increase in law enforcement efforts were largely supported by medical professionals identified in this study. Frequently issuing calls for alarm; criticizing young, experimental generations; and supporting legal sanctions conveys their reluctance to accept the benefits of the viable public health strategy.

To resolve such controversy between the pragmatic public health model versus more traditional approaches means health professionals in the medical profession must first come to terms with their values concerning adolescent drug use and the benefits of harm reduction. In particular, the field must recognize the paradigm shift from the *problem of use*, as viewed by adults, to *problems with use*, as experienced by youth (Hathaway, 2001), including health, social, and legal consequences.

Government/Politicians

Government officials and politicians strongly influenced the media's construction of the social problem of club drug use in both eras. In both samples, the most referenced position among government officials in news stories was the need for more control. In line with law enforcement sources, legislators during the rave era proposed to 'crack down' on raves, implement new legislation, and establish tough new rules for rave parties. Likewise, during the EDM festival era, councillors proposed various reactive measures and a 'just say no' agenda. Greater conflict was apparent in the later era over the proposed measures, as pro-control

councillors began attacking anti-control positions of other government officials and vise versa.

The lack of controversy during the rave era may indicate diffusion of alternative perspectives.

My findings are consistent with the literature suggesting that claims made by politicians influence the policy process and legislative outcomes. The media serves as a social space where authoritative agendas are both constituted and configured and contested and reconfigured to shape public opinion (Hier, 2002). Also consistent with other studies, politicians have continued to 'scapegoat' drug users to divert public attention away from social/structural issues such as poverty and homelessness (Boyd & Carter, 2010). Despite some signs of progress, politicians in both eras, as well as many experts, have continued to divert public attention through news media from the needed focus on reducing harm.

During the rave era, political elites and members of law enforcement were successful in constructing the problem to favour tough-on-crime responses. Use of this frame was less apparent during rave's revival in the festival scene, although due to prohibition, criminal justice responses continued to dominate policy discussions of drug issues (Hjelm, 2014; Loseke, 2003).

Other studies have observed a similar pattern of news reporting and its contribution to the social problems process (see Boyd & Carter, 2010; Hier, 2002), wherein illicit drugs were presented as a new drug scare in attempt to broaden powers of control. Boyd & Carter (2010), for example, found that meth use was described using dramatic terms that obfuscate its actual use. Terms such as 'epidemic' and 'plague' were frequently presented to describe the prevalence of the drug. The headlines they examined were comparable to my analysis of explicit terminology: "the menace of crystal meth", "meth 'ravaging' towns in BC", "fast, cheap, and out of control", "communities ravaged by meth addiction want action taken" (Boyd & Carter, 2010, p.227). Likewise, the negative health effects of meth were emphasized by claimsmakers who

warned repeatedly that: (1) its use will spread uncontrollably; (2) young people are at the greatest

risk, and (3) it is uniquely addictive and contagious and thus, more difficult to treat than other

drugs (Boyd & Carter, 2010). As with other media-based drug scares, the negative effects of

meth use were often described through the use of dramatic personal stories to demonstrate the

evils of the drug, particularly noting the ruination of young people, to influence the response to

the problem.

My study also corroborates Heir's (2002) analysis of the ecstasy panic. Hier noted that

'retrieval cues' appearing in news headlines enable readers to identify with certain aspects of a

story. The discursive technique of pairing raves with ecstasy use created a retrieval cue centered

on 'rave drug parties.' That standard framing terminology was partly responsible for constructing

the ecstasy panic as a social problem. The negative effects of ecstasy were a dominant news

frame: "Raves worsen ecstasy", "Psychological reactions to ecstasy and hot, stuffy air at raves

could be a deadly cocktail for party-goers", and "Condition: catastrophic" (Hier, 2002, p.42).

The dangers of ecstasy use in Hier's (2002) study were further heightened in news reports of

fatalities and/or overdoses. This is consistent with findings in my analysis.

Summary and Implications

The purpose of this study was to explore how the evolving rave scene and club drug use

has been constructed in Canadian news media. The findings conclude that club drug use within

the rave and EDM festival scenes were constructed as a social problem in common terms

denoting moral panic. Important differences were noted, with the latter being characterized by

more moderate and balanced news reporting.

The findings of this study illuminate collective efforts through news media by agents of

control to construct club drug use as a social problem. During the festival era, there is coverage

of competing interpretations of and solutions for the 'problem', indicating more support for harm

reduction interventions and some indications of retreat from this position by medical

professionals since the earlier rave era.

6.3 Theoretical Implications of Key Findings

This study relied on the assumptions of social constructionism and moral panic theory to

explore how club drug use is constructed in Canadian media discourse. As discussed in chapter

two, because moral panic theorists work within a constructionist framework (Cornwell &

Linders, 2002), both perspectives were particularly useful in this study. Therefore, as social

constructionist and moral panic theory predicts, several factors contributed to the construction of

club drug use in the evolving rave scene. More specifically, they offer an explanation for the

competing discursive formations seen in the early rave era versus contemporary EDM festivals.

A Multi-Mediated Social World

Dialogue on moral panic has confirmed that the media serves to disproportionally

propagate social anxieties of a social problem (Hier, 2002). Particular interest groups, such as

law enforcement and politicians, will most often label deviant and vulnerable social groups

through sensational media coverage to culminate a 'moral panic' in society (Hier, 2002). Moral

panic, therefore, is a strategy used by the ruling elite to manipulate the media and the general

public in favour of a tough-on-crime agenda. Scholars contend, however, with the proliferation

and fragmentation of mass, niche, and micro-media and the multiplicity of voices contest the

original meaning of 'moral panic' in contemporary society (Hier, 2002; McRobbie & Thorton,

1995).

Comparable to previous research, the makings of a classic moral panic were in place

during the early rave era, with the construction of discourse centering on the dangers and risks of

club drug use (Hier, 2002). In particular, the media and agents of social control played an active role in alienating and demonizing raves, youth subculture, and club drug use. For this reason, moral panic was used as a political strategy with the ultimate intention of regulating raves and increasing public support for new legislation. Alternatively, newspaper coverage during the festival era subverted moralizing discourse in mainstream media to better advocate for a rights-based approach as a solution to the problem (Hier, 2002). One reason for the disparate perspectives between both rave eras can be explained in terms of the progression to a multi-mediated social world.

According to McRobbie & Thorton (1995), because a multitude of media platforms currently exist in society, it is important to acknowledge that media creation is no longer solely within the control of elites. In such a multi-mediated social world, those who were perhaps more easily labeled as 'folk devils' in the past, could not so easily be labelled a folk devil today simply because there is now a way to achieve 'balance' in media coverage (Hier, 2002; McRobbie & Thorton, 1995). In particular, folk devils, such as rave attendees, are now becoming empowered and participating in the social problem debate of club drug use.

As a result of this complex, multi-mediated reality, rave communities that were initially denied a voice during the earlier rave era began challenging what Hier refers to as "common-sense understandings" of rave communities and subverting moralizing discourse of EDM festivals (2002, p.47). Thus, because more voices contributed to the debate of electronic dance music festivals, defenders of the scene were better able to emphasize misconceptions and challenge oppositional sub-politics. Therefore, it can be argued that folk devils during the festival era challenged the cycle of social control in attempts to gain support from elite groups (McRobbie & Thorton, 1995).

A multi-mediated reality can also help explain the shift from enforcement to rights-based discourse on the social problem of club drug use. Not only does the preponderance of media platforms provide folk devils an authoritative voice in contemporary society, but it also provides a basis for agents of control to acknowledge the cycle of sanctions and social control (McRobbie & Thorton, 1995). In other words, it allows political elites, for example, to move away from enforcement and instead support the need for pragmatic public health.

The predominant discourse observed during the earlier rave era was problematized in a way to justify regulation, control, and enforcement. Subverting this earlier construction of raves, the actions of political elites during the festival era represented competing interpretations of and solutions to the problem. As mentioned in previous chapters, government officials began heavily criticizing tough-on-crime campaigns and actions of law enforcement, particularly during the ban of city-sanctioned festivals. By doing so, greater conflict and opposing discourses were apparent among agents of social control in the later era. Accordingly, criminal justice agendas no longer dominated policy discussions of club drug use during this era, but rather movement towards the reconciliation of harm reduction and enforcement was documented.

Overall, this study demonstrates that several factors contributed to the social construction of club drug use during both rave eras. However, in accordance with moral panic theory, important differences were noted, as competing discourses were more apparent during contemporary EDM festivals than the earlier rave scene. The rethinking of moral panic during the electronic dance music festival scene involved empowered folk devils, differentiated societal responses, and a diverse media (Hier, 2002). This study, therefore, provides a unique exploration of how the construction of club drug use has transformed overtime to merge with a multi-mediated society. It would be valuable for researchers to continue to utilize this approach.

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6.4 The Future of Harm Reduction and Club Drug Use

Drug policy discussions are increasingly divided between those that advocate for harm reduction measures and those that advocate for prevention and enforcement. The focus on prevention and enforcement in claimsmaking documented in this study will be critically examined before discussing prospects for expanding harm reduction.

Enforcement and Prevention

In Canada, drug policies and initiatives over the last century have emphasized enforcement and prevention over public health and harm reduction (Hathaway & Erickson, 2004). Law enforcement officials and political actors believe that through stricter enforcement, drug use can be reduced, if not eliminated. Bans on raves and EDM festivals were sought by moral panic, centering on risks and dangers of club drug use. It is worth noting that this strategy serves to distance state officials from the responsibilities of reducing harms of drug use.

During the rave era, the principle catalyst for heightened concern surrounding raves in Canada came in 1999 following the deaths of three Ontario youth that had ingested tainted ecstasy. To address club drug use and other rave related concerns, law enforcement and political leaders responded by banning raves to protect young people. Following the rave ban, despite attempts to find a balance, enforcement and prevention continued to be emphasized at the expense of harm reduction (Hathaway & Erickson, 2004). The outcome of the Allen Ho inquiry serves to demonstrate a failed attempt to integrate harm reduction and enforcement. The coroner's inquest concluded that raves should not be banned, but rather held on city-owned properties so as to make them safer. The lifting of the ban left much discretion to law enforcement and raves were over-policed as a result. Attempts at regulating the rave community thus in practice tend to emphasize enforcement at the expense of harm reduction.

Fifteen years later, electronic dance music festivals attracted similar media attention due to their growing popularity and reports of problems with drug use. In 2014, after 20 people at the Digital Dreams Festival in Toronto were hospitalized with drug-related illnesses, ban on raves on city-owned property ensued. This time, opponents of the ban were better organized and had support from city councillors for a public health approach.

Prospects for Harm Reduction at EDM Festivals

During the rave era, environmental concerns appeared in news stories, such as improper exits, lack of running water, poor ventilation, inaccessible washrooms, and absent first responders. It seems conditions have improved since the implementation of the Protocol for the Safe Operation of Dance Events (Hier, 2002). Unanimously passed by Toronto city council on December 15, 1999, these measures were adopted to ensure raves followed health and safety regulations and harm reduction strategies where appropriate. The Protocol provided guidelines pertaining to health and safety, zoning and building codes, size, ventilation, security, and requiring drug and health counselling be made available at raves (Hier, 2002). Since dance music festivals take place outdoors, environmental concerns are quite different.

To account for these differences, new harm reduction strategies are needed in addition to the need for more drug awareness education. At the time of underground raves, health officials stressed the need for educating youth about the risks associated with club drug use and information about safer drug use. To address these concerns, harm reduction initiatives, like the Toronto Rave Information Project (TRIP), the Toronto Harm Reduction Task Force, and the Toronto Dance Safety Committee were implemented in the early 2000s. Yet, there is still a lack of drug awareness and education tailored to youth in the festival scene. Much like their predecessor, EDM festivals require harm reduction education to help attendees avoid the risks of

dehydration, tainted drugs, and overdoses; and on-site drug testing is needed to minimize potential harm. Yet, little has been done since the rave era to increase support for harm reduction in actual practice (Hier, 2002).

Fully adopting a coherent harm reduction framework would be more effective than 'half measures' that have not been effective, despite preventative efforts. The construction of drug use at EDM festivals may indicate a shift toward new forms of regulation that are more compatible with harm reduction measures.

6.5 Limitations and Future Research

This research is not without limitations. Future studies by other media researchers ought to utilize mixed methods to both quantify and qualify constructions of drug problems. Furthermore, newspapers are not the only source of information on club drug use available to the Canadian public. Future research should consider examining other sources of popular media such as televised news segments, social media websites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, YouTube), or video documentaries. Moreover, letters to the editor, featured articles, and columns could also be included in future studies to assess any differences in the social construction of club drug use among different types of newspaper publications (Bates, 2011). These analyses might also include online responses to news articles made in the 'comments' section of news websites.

Ethnographic investigations of EDM festivals should also be conducted on the construction of drug use by users and harm reduction strategies employed to further unveil the realities of the phenomenon. Lastly, future research should continue to critically examine the relevance of social constructionism and moral panic theory to understanding these phenomena.

6.6 Concluding Remarks

Club drug use and harm reduction in news media is understudied in the Canadian context. The current study provided comparative data on how three Canadian newspapers constructed the problem in two noteworthy time periods: 1999 to 2004 and 2011 to 2016. The results indicate that news media and other information sources described club drug use as a social problem in both eras, in common terms denoting moral panic. Law enforcement officials, political elites, medical experts, and the media shaped and responded to the problem with enforcement and prevention, rather than support for harm reduction.

The findings of this study suggest EDM festivals require more balanced coverage from news media to counter claimsmaking that is anti-harm reduction. Although some progress has been made, further improvement will require focused dissemination of harm reduction discourse and counterclaims opposing prevention and enforcement. Misinformation must be countered with scientific facts to compete with sensationalized media coverage. Attention to establishing more legitimate discursive parameters based on evidence has been called for in the past (Grayson, 2008). It must be acknowledged that past influential statements in media both reflect and reinforce Canadian attitudes and values that have wrongfully constructed certain kinds of drug use as a social problem. According to Harris: "it is the process of calling attention to a troubling condition, not the condition itself, that makes something a social problem" (2013, p.3).

Historically, drug taking was not seen as an activity that required a drug strategy nor formal prohibitionist response (Hathaway & Tousaw, 2007). Continuing commitment to the war on drugs, however, has been apparent in news coverage of the evolving rave scene. Police perspectives on 'prevention' in particular, do not align with the non-punitive approach of harm reduction. By emphasizing a criminal justice agenda, law enforcement officials were successful

in treating club drug use as a deviant and marginal activity. This perspective ultimately hinders

any process in advancing public health approaches to drug problems. Broadening support for

harm reduction will require an alliance of academics, medical professionals, law enforcement,

progressive politicians, and service providers (Hathaway & Tousaw, 2007).

Marshalling support for harm reduction requires further commitment to the treatment of

drug users as full citizens. Harm reduction is philosophically aligned with humanism and legal

liberalism, which seeks to find a balance between social responsibility and respect for individual

rights (Montigny, 2011). Humanizing drug users imposes limits on policing by exposing the true

cost of drug law enforcement.

Harm reduction and enforcement may be reconciled by making human rights the main

foundation of drug policy (Hathaway & Tousaw, 2007). A shift away from prohibition will

require collaboration by harm reduction advocates to continue the reshaping of media coverage

of drug use at raves and other forms of drug use among youth.

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APPENDIX A: THE SAMPLE

Table A. Articles on Club Drug Use (N=105)
Sample 1: 1999 to 2004

	N	%		n	%
S1. Search Terms			Date of Publication		
"club drug use"			1999	20	19
or "ecstasy"			2000	70	67
or "MDMA"			2001	11	10
or "rave drugs"			2002	2	2
and "rave"			2003	0	0
or "nightclub"			2004	2	2
or "scene"					
or "dance club"					
or "all-night					
dance party"					
or "EDM					
festival"					
Newspaper					
Globe and Mail	25	24			
National Post	31	29			
Toronto Star	49	47			

APPENDIX A: THE SAMPLE

Table B. Articles on Club Drug Use (N=24)
Sample 2: 2011 to 2016

	N	%		n	%
S2. Search Terms			Date of Publication		
"club drug use"			2011	0	0
or "ecstasy"			2012	1	4
or "MDMA"			2013	2	8
or "rave drugs"			2014	17	71
and "rave"			2015	3	13
or "nightclub"			2016	1	4
or "scene"					
or "dance club"					
or "all-night					
dance party"					
or "EDM					
festival"					
Newspaper					
Globe and Mail	7	29			
National Post	9	38			
Toronto Star	8	33			

APPENDIX B: PUBLICATION INFORMATION

Table C. Publication Information of Sampled Newspaper Articles (N = 105)
Sample 1: Club Drug Use in the Underground Rave Scene (1999 to 2004)

	Title	Author	Newspaper	Published On
1	Coroner links teen's death to ecstasy; Drug's effects poorly understood; It's not a 'benign' as once believed	Cotroneo, Christian & Palmer, Karen	Toronto Star	March 25, 2004
2	Beef up club security, dad pleads 'She was full of life'; Daughter died after taking ecstasy; Family blames easy access to drugs	Gonda, Gabe & Huffman, Tracy	Toronto Star	March 24, 2004
3	Most Ecstasy pulls tainted: UBC study: Deadly additives found	Munro, Margaret	National Post	October 26, 2002
4	Drug ecstasy could damage users' brains, research says	McIlroy, Anne	The Globe and Mail	September 27, 2002
5	Two die at rave licensed by city of Vancouver: Use of ecstasy alleged	Hume, Mark	National Post	October 3, 2001
6	Party/protest draws 30,000 to city hall square: Dance fans get together to pressure politicians to enable raves to continue in city venues: Must pay for officers	Kelly, Malcolm	National Post	September 3, 2001
7	Rave features heavy hitters; But festival organizers still have issues with costs of policing	Rayner, Ben	Toronto Star	August 31, 2001
8	A new wave of raves: After a stormy 10 years of Ecstasy and acrimony, the Toronto rave scene comes full circle - and the beat goes on	Raphael, Mitchel	National Post	August 27, 2001
9	Fire code violations at rave bring company $10,000 fine	Small, Peter	Toronto Star	August 17, 2001
10	Rave inquest holds key to saving lives: experts	Smith, Graeme	The Globe and Mail	July 10, 2001
11	I'm proof that you can survive ecstasy	Unknown	Toronto Star	July 10, 2001
12	Boy, 16, dies after swallowing pills at downtown	Segal, Adam	Toronto Star	July 9, 2001

	rave			
13	Postcards from the edge: Check out these drug-information cards at your next rave ... it could save your life	Raphael, Mitchel	National Post	April 17, 2001
14	Stabbing victim a dutiful son; Salim Jabaji's life was 'all about giving,' family remembers	Nolan, Dan	Toronto Star	February 6, 2001
15	Dock rave death probed: Police sift clues in nightclub stabbing of man	Vermaand, Sonia & Levy, Harold	Toronto Star	February 5, 2001
16	Same freakin' song and dance; First big rave on public property held since ban lifted	Shinn, Eric	Toronto Star	October 30, 2000
17	Police seize drugs at Docks rave	Freeze, Colin	The Globe and Mail	October 10, 2000
18	Hosting raves won't address a host of issues	Brazao, Dale	Toronto Star	August 8, 2000
19	Raves don't kill people	Unknown	Toronto Star	August 8, 2000
20	Right decision on raves	Unknown	Toronto Star	August 6, 2000
21	Council lifts ban on raves; Fantino endorses tough new rules	Harding, Katherine	Toronto Star	August 4, 2000
22	Peaceful rave rally was a seminal event; Youth accented positive vibe to city politicians	Stanleigh, Sean	Toronto Star	August 4, 2000
23	Rave on	Unknown	National Post	August 4, 2000
24	Council expected to lift rave ban; New rules could put parties out of business, enthusiasts say	Harding, Katherine	Toronto Star	August 3, 2000
25	Ravers rally to defend dances: Council votes on lifting rave suspension today	Gollom, Mark	National Post	August 2, 2000
26	She wanted rave ban, now she's MC Fran: Nunziata changes tune	Raphael, Mitchel	National Post	August 1, 2000
27	Everyone has the right to party	Walcott, Rinaldo	The Globe and Mail	July 26, 2000
28	A dance lesson for Mel Lastman: Rave fans to lobby City Hall to reinstate safe venue protocol	Wanagas, Don	National Post	July 26, 2000

29	Rave supporters use audio clips: to suggest opponents uninformed	Rusk, James	The Globe and Mail	July 25, 2000
30	Ecstasy use may cause depression: Study; Rave drug depletes brain chemical linked to mood, appetite, sleep, emotions	Talaga, Tanya	Toronto Star	July 25, 2000
31	Friend's death prompts man to swear off ecstasy	Bell, Udy	The Globe and Mail	July 24, 2000
32	Raves should be allowed, city committee urges	Abbate, Gay	The Globe and Mail	July 14, 2000
33	Ravers to give city demo; Dance rally at Nathan Phillips Square could attract 10,000	Moloney, Paul	Toronto Star	July 14, 2000
34	Woman dies after taking ecstasy; Newlywed fell ill following night at club	Houston, Andrea	Toronto Star	June 28, 2000
35	Making raves safe	Unknown	Toronto Star	June 3, 2000
36	Bubbling with victory Don't ban raves: Jury; Inquest verdict urges city to allow safe parties Asks province to give municipalities power to control raves	Freed, Dale Anne	Toronto Star	June 2, 2000
37	Raves should stay, jury recommends	Luciw, Roma	The Globe and Mail	June 2, 2000
38	Many questions left unanswered: Issues surrounding designer drug use remain cloudy	Prittie, Jennifer	National Post	May 30, 2000
39	It can kill but no one knows how	Foss, Krista	The Globe and Mail	May 27, 2000
40	Ravers scoff at police request for broader powers	Abbate, Gay & Luciw, Roma	The Globe and Mail	May 26, 2000
41	Rave rules urged as inquest wraps up; Lawyer calls for legislation to prevent ecstasy-related deaths	Freed, Dale Anne	Toronto Star	May 26, 2000
42	Lawyers seek rules on raves, not ban: Allen Ho inquest	Prittie, Jennifer	National Post	May 26, 2000
43	Rave pamphlet like ad for ecstasy, inquest told; Information describes drug as 'jewel'	Freed, Dale Anne	Toronto Star	May 24, 2000
44	Debate over raves turning	Prittie, Jennifer	National Post	May 24, 2000

	into 'moral panic': U.S. expert: Allen Ho inquest: Issues presented out of proportion to evidence, he says			
45	Attach drugs, not dancing, Chow says; Councillor warns against banning raves	Keung, Nicholas	Toronto Star	May 22, 2000
46	Ravers to get their say at inquest: 'Moral panics': Toronto Dance Safety Committee to give evidence	Prittie, Jennifer	National Post	May 22, 2000
47	Raves are about music, not drugs	Unknown	Toronto Star	May 20, 2000
48	Party divide: MPPs either view rave bill as saviour or killjoy: Would require permits	Blackwell, Tom	National Post	May 19, 2000
49	Ravers need facts, inquest told; Anti-drug education more effective than a ban, experts say	Freed, Dale Anne	Toronto Star	May 19, 2000
50	Education will reduce overdoses, inquest told	Southworth, Natalie	The Globe and Mail	May 19, 2000
51	No antidote for Ecstasy abusers, doctor tells coroner's inquest: Allen Ho inquiry: Users of 'club drugs' regularly showing up at St. Michael's emergency room	Prittie, Jennifer	National Post	May 18, 2000
52	Officer likes sound of new raves bill; Private member's proposal good start, inquest told	Freed, Dale Anne	Toronto Star	May 17, 2000
53	The sky isn't falling	Laframboise, Donna	National Post	May 16, 2000
54	Police found ecstasy easily, inquest told; 'Took 30 seconds' to purchase drug at Toronto raves	Quinn, Jennifer	Toronto Star	May 16, 2000
55	Ecstasy now ranks as top street drug, coroner says; Three deaths tied to use so far this year, inquest told	Small, Peter	Toronto Star	May 15, 2000
56	Rave drug unsafe in any amount – coroner: Allen Ho	Prittie, Jennifer	National Post	May 13, 2000

	inquest			
57	Ecstasy use at raves problem, promoter admits; Inquest told arrests over one pill 'extreme'	Freed, Dale Anne	Toronto Star	May 12, 2000
58	Police couldn't close 'firetrap' detective says; Site of overdose a sweltering rave, inquest hears	Freed, Dale Anne	Toronto Star	May 11, 2000
59	Police chief takes charge of dealing with raves	Rusk, James & Abbate, Gay	The Globe and Mail	May 11, 2000
60	Council puts temporary ban on city-run raves: Minority warn that city's reversal could increase drug use	Wanagas, Don	National Post	May 11, 2000
61	Experts know little of ecstasy, jury hears	Alphonso, Caroline	The Globe and Mail	May 10, 2000
62	How to radicalize a generation	Klein, Naomi	The Globe and Mail	May 10, 2000
63	Dead raver's drug usage unclear: Allen Ho inquest: Security firm head says promoters have tolerated narcotics	Prittie, Jennifer	National Post	May 10, 2000
64	Inquest to focus on raves, not student who died: Some fear scene could be forced underground	Prittie, Jennifer	National Post	May 9, 2000
65	Man collapsed at rave, inquest told; 'We're not here to preach,' coroner's counsel says	Quinn, Jennifer	Toronto Star	May 9, 2000
66	Inquest begins with a lesson on rave culture	Southworth, Natalie	The Globe and Mail	May 9, 2000
67	Ravers ready to fight 'elimination' of dances; Subculture has received bad rap, participants say	Drakes, Shellene	Toronto Star	May 8, 2000
68	A political pastime: On the eve of a high-profile coroner's inquest into Toronto's rave scene -considered the liveliest in North America -- promoters, partiers and rave advocates are worried their culture won't get a fair shake. After all, the city's police	Prittie, Jennifer	National Post	May 8, 2000

	chief has already said raves are 'threatening the very fabric of Canadian life'			
69	Drugs, death and dancing Jury to look at rave rules; Tomorrow's inquest looks at raves, but what goes down at these all- night dance parties has been going down for generations	Powell, Betsy	Toronto Star	May 7, 2000
70	City councillors oppose ban on supervised raves: Disagree with Lastman	Wanagas, Don	National Post	May 6, 2000
71	Councillors resist making hasty move	Rusk, James	The Globe and Mail	May 4, 2000
72	Fantino wants ban on raves at Exhibition place	Abbate, Gay	The Globe and Mail	April 29, 2000
73	Ottawa urged to deal with raves; Toronto chief seeks drug education, faults parents	Shephard, Michelle & Huffman, Tracy	Toronto Star	April 29, 2000
74	The parental press has just discovered rave. Maybe: no one told them this important cultural movement is over	Smith, Russell	The Globe and Mail	April 29, 2000
75	24 arrested, drugs seized after rave at Ex	Unknown	The Globe and Mail	April 24, 2000
76	Police chief pleased with rave despite drug arrests	Freeze, Colin	The Globe and Mail	March 28, 2000
77	Police chief, mayor defend supervised rave: 12,000 attend, 19 arrests made for drug offences	Gollom, Mark	National Post	March 28, 2000
78	Ecstasy trade sparked gang war, police say	Southworth, Natalie	The Globe and Mail	March 25, 2000
79	Drug use by young is culprit	Unknown	Toronto Star	March 24, 2000
80	Lastman, Fantino vague on how they plan to fight illegal raves	Southworth, Natalie	The Globe and Mail	March 15, 2000
81	And what will the neighbours think?	Unknown	Toronto Star	March 15, 2000
82	Man killed in rave club shooting; Three others injured after alleged dispute involving bouncers	Keung, Nicholas	Toronto Star	March 5, 2000
83	Police take aim at Ecstasy trade by organized groups;	Mitchell, Bob	Toronto Star	February 2, 2000

	Investigators say trafficking of rave drug is on rise in Toronto			
84	Coroner to probe rave death; Student died after taking Ecstasy at all-night party	Mitchell, Bob	Toronto Star	January 28, 2000
85	Johnny be rich: Punk versus rave: dirty old reality succumbs to a nostalgic age of wonder	Akin, David	National Post	January 15, 2000
86	Drug harm reduction is the next 'safe sex': Most in the dance scene don't want to die, but need to be educated	Raphael, Mitchel	National Post	December 22, 1999
87	New rules for raves please promotors	Bragg, Rebecca	Toronto Star	December 18, 1999
88	Toronto council passes guidelines for raves: Health, safety rules: City reacted after two deaths	Raphael, Mitchel	National Post	December 16, 1999
89	Government rants while kids rave	Raphael, Mitchel	National Post	November 8, 1999
90	It's no party: Crackdown looms on all-night raves; Illicit dances known for 'designer' drugs, blamed for three deaths this year	Brennan, Richard	Toronto Star	November 4, 1999
91	No rave review for this performance	Unknown	Toronto Star	October 23, 1999
92	Tragic drug death doesn't deter raver	Unknown	Toronto Star	October 19, 1999
93	And the public raves on	Unknown	Toronto Star	October 16, 1999
94	Ravers say parties misunderstood; Focus turns to drugs after three deaths	Gillespie, Kerry	Toronto Star	October 12, 1999
95	ONTARIO: Rave-scene swoop cracks 'designer' drug ring	Bourette, Susan	The Globe and Mail	September 25, 1999
96	Rave on, it's a crazy feeling	Unknown	Toronto Star	September 18, 1999
97	Nova Scotia man dies at rave	Dooley, Richard	National Post	September 13, 1999
98	A deathwatch on raves New synthetic highs have hit the social life of Canada's 15- to 25-year olds and experts	Foss, Krista	The Globe and Mail	September 7, 1999

	worry about their damaging effects. While reports of overdoses, even deaths, from rave drugs are unsubstantiated, officials fear it is only a matter of time			
99	"They're not going there just to get high": A new study explains why kids are attracted to raves, and why shutting them down is exactly the wrong solution	Raphael, Mitchel	National Post	September 2, 1999
100	Hed goes here Flyer Art	Rayner, Ben	Toronto Star	August 21, 1999
101	Student found dead in dense bush; 21-year-old disappeared at music rave July 17	Avery, Roberta	Toronto Star	August 16, 1999
102	Search suspended after police find body in Owen Sound	Unknown	The Globe and Mail	August 16, 1999
103	The party that never stopped: Other youth cults have come and gone, but raves are still going strong more than a decade after the dance and drug marathon began. Why?	Raphael, Mitchel & Klinck, Todd	National Post	June 19, 1999
104	Rave drug GHB doesn't mix well: T.O. club goers increasingly end up in hospital	Cudmore, James	National Post	March 9, 1999
105	Rave reviews are mixed now; Some complain that wild all-night parties have become more about money, clothes and drugs than peace, love, unity and respect	Tucker-Abramson, Myka	Toronto Star	February 23, 1999

APPENDIX B: PUBLICATION INFORMATION

Table D. Publication Information of Sampled Newspaper Articles (N = 24)
Sample 2: Club Drug Use at Outdoor EDM Festivals (2011 to 2016)

	Title	Author	Newspaper	Published On
1	808S Water breaks; How the return of rave culture is about more than the resurgence of electronic music	Madd-Eaux, Sabrina	National Post	November 2, 2016
2	Muzik often at the eye of the storm	Gallant, Jacques & Powell, Betsy	Toronto Star	August 8, 2015
3	The perils of pop music: Part LXXIV	Smith, Russell	The Globe and Mail	July 13, 2015
4	SUMMER festivals guide	Rayner, Ben	Toronto Star	June 6, 2015
5	Nay Mr. DJ; After influencing pop for the half decade of its ascendancy, electronic dance music passed its peak	Dekel, Jonathan	National Post	December 23, 2014
6	New ideas for preventing bad trips	Macpherson, Donald	National Post	August 20, 2014
7	A GOOD TIME, A SAFE TIME	Posadzki, Alexandra	The Globe and Mail	August 16, 2014
8	Rave promoters must do more	Unknown	Toronto Star	August 13, 2014
9	Don't stop the music	Unknown	Toronto Star	August 8, 2014
10	Let's not demonize rave scene	Rayner, Ben	Toronto Star	August 7, 2014
11	The summer of overdoses; Drugs apparently claim four at music festivals	Humphreys, Adrian & Hudes, Sammy	National Post	August 7, 2014
12	Every parent's nightmare; Musical festival drug deaths prompt mourning, warnings	Humphreys, Adrian & Hudes, Sammy	National Post	August 7, 2014
13	Police identify drugs that killed two; Veld festival	Hudes, Sammy	National Post	August 6, 2014
14	Deaths at music festival spark concern over drugs	Platt, Brian & May, Warren	Toronto Star	August 5, 2014
15	Mammoliti urges new look at raves	Deschamps, Tara	Toronto Star	June 30, 2014
16	Ban lifted on Exhibition Place dances	Church, Elizabeth	The Globe and Mail	May 9, 2014
17	Mammoliti protests reversal of music ban; Fears 'overdose'	Alcoba, Natalie	National Post	May 8, 2014

18	Councillors hope to reverse ban on electronic music	Pagliaro, Jennifer	Toronto Star	May 5, 2014
19	Councillors seek to veto ban on all-ages dance parties	Church, Elizabeth	The Globe and Mail	April 26, 2014
20	Did club press for ban on city raves?; Ford a patron	Stark, Erika	National Post	April 12, 2014
21	Ban on dance events stirs debate about safety, competition	Church, Elizabeth	The Globe and Mail	April 12, 2014
22	The rise of the big night out, the fall of indie-rock and the pervasiveness of EDM	Smith, Russell	The Globe and Mail	December 27, 2013
23	The taming of the groove	Morris, Dave	The Globe and Mail	June 1, 2013
24	Ecstasy blamed in overdoses	Unknown	National Post	February 10, 2012