

BABY RAVES:

YOUTH, ADULTHOOD AND AGEING IN CONTEMPORARY BRITISH EDM CULTURE

— FEATURE ARTICLE —

ZOE ARMOUR
DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY (UK)

ABSTRACT

This article begins with a reconsideration of the parameters of *age* in translocal EDM sound system and (super)club culture through the conceptualisation of a *fluid multigenerationality* in which attendees at EDM-events encompass a spectrum of ages from 0–75 years. Since the 1980s, it remains the case that the culture is fuelled through a constant influx of newcomers who are predominantly emerging youth, yet there are post-youth members in middle adulthood and later life that are also a growing body that continues to attend EDM-events. In this context, the *baby rave* initiative (2004–present) has capitalised on a gap in the family entertainment market and created a new chapter in (super)club and festival culture. I argue that the event is a catalyst for *live heritage* in which the accompanying children (aged from 0–12 years) temporarily become the beneficiaries of their parent's *attendee heritage* and performance of an *unauthored heritage*.

KEYWORDS: fluid multigenerationality, EDM-family, baby rave,
live heritage, unauthored heritage

ZOE ARMOUR is completing a PhD in electronic dance music culture. Her work is interdisciplinary and draws from the fields of cultural sociology, popular music, memory studies, media and communication and film. She is the author of two book chapters on Ageing Clubbers and the Internet and the British Free Party Counterculture in the late 1990s. She is a member of the Media Discourse Centre, IASPM and follows the group for Subcultures, Popular Music and Social Change. She also teaches on a variety of undergraduate and post-graduate courses and attends electronic dance music events. Email: <zoe.armour@dmu.ac.uk>.

INTRODUCTION

In the emerging field of youth transitions, older participation has been explored in music scenes, communities, (sub)cultures, neo-tribes and (life)worlds through an examination of ageing, style and identity within rock, soul, punk, EDM and goth culture (Bennett et al. 2012; Armour 2018a). In this article, I want to broaden an understanding of EDM cultural affiliation in terms of transitioning into the culture at different ages. First, I reframe the theoretical and methodological stages of what I call *EDM culture* through the lens of *age*, and propose the conceptualisation of a *fluid multigenerationality* to describe a continual pattern of teenagers and young/mid/late adults at translocal EDM-events since the 1980s. From here, I introduce British EDM sound system and (super)club culture as two enduring lifeworlds of social existence with crossover memberships.¹

I then explore the presence of what I will call the EDM-family dynamic and discuss how this relationship is negotiated within each lifeworld. I propose the use of the following descriptors, rave-parents, rave-children and (super)club-parents, (super)club-children as the foundation for the variability of family scenarios such as the super-clubber stepfather and stepson.² Finally, I interpret the emergence of the *baby rave* event (2004–present) as a relatively new chapter in the evolution of (super)club culture. I draw on four known branded initiatives that capitalise on a continuous flow of ravers/(super)clubbers, whom I group together as EDM-parents, as a way of accounting for a complex *attendee heritage* and *unauthored* personal biographies. These two concepts offer an additional perspective on the critical framework of unauthorised popular music heritage (Roberts and Cohen 2014; Baker et al. 2018). I observe that the baby rave event acts as a catalyst for what I call *live heritage* in which the accompanying children temporarily become the beneficiaries of their parents' cultural affiliation as EDM-children.

THEORISING AGE IN EDM CLUB CULTURE

In the mid-late 1980s, club culture on the Island of Ibiza (an archipelago of Spain) hosted DJs who played to a cosmopolitan and multigenerational collective of hippies, punks and soulies, men and women who were aged from their mid-teens to late-fifties and who danced to a Balearic signature sound that was characterised through a fusion of reggae, rare-groove, south American funk, disco, rock, synth-pop, hip-hop and the early house genres from Detroit, Chicago, New York and Italy (Redhead 1993: 3; Norris 2007: 68). In particular, DJ Alfredo Fiorito (1983–1988) was an early seamless mixer who had a residency at the open-air club Amnesia and is credited as a central influence on the innovators of (super)club culture in the UK. The second source of inspiration was the transatlantic connection with club culture in New York and the Paradise Garage club (1977–1986) that existed during the disco era transition from proto-house to garage house. And where DJ Larry Levan sought to create a culture of unity through attracting a diverse translocal demographic (Garratt 1998: 18–20, 287).

The first three main club nights that emulated the Balearic beat sound that evolved into acid house in Britain (1987–1988) and formed the proto 'super-club' phenomenon (1991–

present) occurred in London. Trip (Nicky Holloway), Shoom (Danny Rampling) and Spectrum (Paul Oakenfold) began with a ready-made grouping of jet-set clubbers who lived in London, Sheffield and Manchester and had worked and partied in Ibiza. The clubbing crowd rapidly expanded into a translocal mix of ages (mid-teens to thirties), genders, ethnicities and class backgrounds. In the temporary collapse of social barriers that involved listening and dancing to music and the polydrug consumption of (il)licit³ substances (alcohol, acid, ecstasy and cocaine) that lowered attendee inhibitions, the events reflected the ethos of the existing club culture abroad in Ibiza, New York and so forth (Norris 2007: 77–78).

By 1989 these early club initiatives had inspired an entrepreneurial shift towards the spread of illegal EDM-events that were held in abandoned buildings such as warehouses, train stations, aircraft hangers and grain silos. The organisers were businessmen interested in capitalising on the emerging new youth culture. These individuals rapidly morphed this niche-leisure activity into the temporary outdoor mega-rave festival. In particular, Sunrise (1989, Tony Colston-Hayter) and Biology (1989, Jarvis Sandy) became known as the Orbital Raves that were held around the city limits of London (Essex, Hertfordshire and Berkshire) and accessed via the M25. This also led to the occasional flash-free-after-party in local London parks such as Clapham Common (1989). This brand of EDM-events attracted the existing Balearic clubber as well as new attendees of the same age group (mid-teens–thirties). By 1992, the mass gathering at Castlemorton Common Free Festival and the introduction of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (CJB), there was a bifurcation in the culture between politicised EDM sound systems and legalised (super) club events (McKay eds. 1998; Reynolds 1999: 74–79; Armour 2018b: 219–220).

With the rise of the British super-club (1991) an affluent youth-oriented target market was sought through advertising in two popular music, fashion and culture magazines of the moment—*The Face* and *i-D*. The super-club term was coined by Andy Pemberton (1995) to describe a developing set of EDM-events that had a sonic identity related to a resident DJ, a distinct logo and décor, which expanded the fan loyalty with some or all of the following parts: a record label, clothing/merchandise business, a shop, DJ agency, radio show, in-house magazine, a website, a tour team and a sponsorship team for creating partnerships with external brands. Equally, those whom I call super-clubbers (due to their attendance and associated affiliations with the brand) were expected to make the effort to dress-up in order to fit in to the glamour of the event. Promoters were strict about who was allowed access and made snap judgements in their decision to refuse entry to individuals who might detract from the ambience of the event. This created the queue tension and exclusivity to which super-clubbers became accustomed (Garratt 1998: 291, 302; Trollope 2012: 183–184).

Early academic interpretations of EDM club culture in the UK have primarily taken a youth studies approach. This perspective began with the deviance theories of the post-World War I Chicago School, and continued with the post-Second World War popular music and youth culture associated with the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies of the 1970s. Later, Steve Redhead, Antonio Melechi, Hillegonda Rietveld, Kristian Russell

and Patrick Mignon from the Manchester Institute for Popular Music therefore, maintained a tradition of critical distance through a combination of discourse and ethnographic analyses based on participant observations of acid house culture (1988–1989) that historicised the relationship between music, consumption and the media. In addition, Angela McRobbie focused on what she perceived as the apolitical attendance of young women in EDM culture, through their sartorial choices that were based on traditional forms of femininity through the wearing of hot pants and bras (1994: 164).

The most compelling research to date, from a position of critical distance, has been Thornton's seminal work on EDM club culture, which provided a portrait of British youth and the shift to British Acid house from 1988–1992 as a distinct culture (1994: 8–11). Thornton's position was conceived through the notion of 'hipness' that drew from the 1940s Chicago School of sociology – Howard Becker (1963) and the work of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1984) through a pre–post–(sub)cultural position. Thornton observed that dancing crossed “boundaries of class, race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality, but not differences of age” and that most devoted clubbers fell into two age groupings, 15–19 and 20–24. She also found that the tight age boundaries of clubbing were related to young people that lived in the parental home but who were motivated to “get out of the house and escape the family” (Thornton 1995: 15–16). As such, these clubbers did not have a curfew, could afford to spend money on expensive entrance fees and negotiate the loosely enforced drinking age of eighteen.

It is possible to place these early studies of club/rave culture during the infancy of an emerging lifeworld that began with a focus on after-hours dancing within a British working-class system, in which the majority of young people left school at sixteen and began earning a low-wage income that meant a semi-independence of prolonged living at home. By the mid–late 1990s the economic situation for young people had not changed, yet (super)club culture had become a translocal experience across towns and cities in the UK and was contentiously accepted as part of the leisure and tourism industry. Club culture peaked in terms of profit and mass participation in 1999 (Philips 2009: 6). This is reflected in the closure of permanent British super-club residencies amongst the general decline in club venues that have almost halved since 2005 according to the Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers from 3,144–1,733 in 2015 (Baker 2015). Most recently, two London super-clubs called the Ministry of Sound (1991) and Fabric (1999) have survived closure despite pressure from local authorities and the Metropolitan police (Rafaeli 2014; Ellis-Petersen 2016; Ellis-Petersen 2017). Notwithstanding super(club) culture remains a translocal activity through the construction of global brands and the return to annual festival events in 1998 that began with Creamfields (McHale 2015).

The second wave of academic research in the late 1990s to early 2000s broadened the focus on EDM club culture, through interviews that had been an omission of the previous scholarship at a time when many devoted (super)clubbers had become experientially seasoned having continued to attend events into early-adulthood (twenties) and mid-adulthood (thirties). This wave of analysis therefore extended the parameters of age and

shifted to post-subcultural analysis and new theoretical positions of EDM club culture. Malbon drew from Michel Maffesoli's discussion of vitality and interviewed clubbers who were aged from 21–28 who had started attending raves and clubs in their teens (Maffesoli 1993; Malbon 1999: 134-152, 191-198). Bennett worked through the conceptualisation of Maffesoli's *tribus* (tribes) in which he used the term neo-tribes and interviewed clubbers from eighteen–thirty (Maffesoli 1996: 609; Bennett 1999: 599-600). Pini emphasised female subjectivity, empowerment and belonging in conducting interviews with women aged from 19–35 (2001: 2). Jackson revisited the work of Bourdieu to discuss forms of abandonment in the social-sensual experience of clubbing through interviewees aged from 25–55 (2004: 3, 135-143).

Beyond the present UK focus, Buckland has provided insights on embodied queer identities through interviews with ageing New York gay, lesbian and bisexual clubbers from their mid-twenties–early fifties (2002: 193). And Gregory explored the perceptions of ageing female raver bodies in Toronto (Canada) who identified as no longer being active attendees at EDM-events, from their mid-twenties–late-thirties (2012: 38). To date, my own research within British club culture has focused on those to whom I have referred as seasoned clubbers and who are a particular grouping of super-clubbers called the Dedicated Followers of PaSSion (from their thirties–fifties), that are just one example of a loyal ageing collective who share their memories online within public Facebook fan groups as an act of digital gift-giving (Armour 2018a: 137–152).

These latter three works reflect the multigenerational aspect of EDM culture as part of the wider discussion in the emerging field of youth transitions. As noted in the introduction, this is in relation to older participation in music scenes, communities, (sub)cultures, neo-tribes and (life)worlds and examined through ageing, style and identity through rock, soul, punk, EDM and goth culture (Bennett et al. 2012; Armour 2018a). To briefly return to Thornton's work for a moment, she described herself as ageing out of the peer group with which she went clubbing, having started the project at the age of 23 (1995: 2–3). In contrast, my own experience has been to age in the culture with (super)clubbers/EDM sound system ravers who like myself have reached mid-adulthood (thirties–fifties) and others, though few in number at the moment, who are in late-adulthood (sixties plus). Thornton also noted that many British clubbers moved away from attending EDM-events once they formed into couples and began living together or marrying (1995: 16). In moving towards the inclusion of infants, toddlers and young children up to the age of twelve, the baby rave is what I call an EDM-family event that encompasses a new dynamic to the commercial enterprise of (super)club culture and the discussion of multigenerational membership.

ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH TO RESEARCH

On Sunday 22nd February 2015 I was invited along to a family outing with two friends and their 11-month year old son at the UK's largest multi-venue called the Southbank centre in London that hosts a year-round festival programme for art, theatre, dance, classical and contemporary music, literature and debate. The event was an afternoon affair from

2:00–4:30 PM and scheduled on the final day of the two-week Imagine Children’s Festival (2002–2019) for 0–8 year olds, which ran during the school half term and was called the Big Fish Little Fish Family Rave. The event was discovered as part of the festival activities advertised in the children’s book section of the Guardian. The two friends in this study were a white heterosexual couple and closely align to the readership and middleclass London demographic as university educated. At the time the male was 35, a senior editor and copywriter and attended EDM-events in the late 1990s–early 2000s in London during his time as a student. The female was 31, an A-Level psychology teacher and did not participate in EDM culture.

The event was undertaken as an overt/covert participant observation. My two friends were informed of the intention to document the experience as part of a “multi-sited” ethnography of (super)club and free party events (Marcus 1995; Falzon 2009). Field-notes were made on a mobile phone using the notepad application, and photographs and video footage were collected on the 12.1 megapixel camera. The images served as a shorthand record of memory to support the field-notes and were stored as a private archive (in order to recognise the ethically sensitive nature of the research). The camera was selectively used and never directly pointed at one attendee in an attempt to remain unobtrusive. Rather a general panoramic approach was taken in order to capture multiple activities and the ambience of the event. Finally, consent to take singular photographs and footage within the party of four was given.

After the event a “micro virtual ethnography” was conducted that drew from the exemplar of Christine Hine’s extensive Internet data gathering practice (Hine 2003). The original intention was to search and collect data over a three-month period so as to capture articles, images and video footage about the event beginning with the three early website sources, which were the Guardian article, Southbankcentre and Bigfishlittlefishevents. However, it became necessary to extend the data gathering process and analysis to the previous activities of the Big Fish Little Fish (BFLF) London enterprise that began in 2013 and to monitor the trajectory of the event as a family clubbing brand business model and its competitors. This was carried out through intermittent update checks over the past four years (2015–2019) that revealed the expansion of a translocal practice across the UK and Australia. To date, the BFLF event competes with an American initiative established in the UK called Baby Loves Disco (2013–present) and two other baby rave events called Rave-A-Roo (2016) and Raver Tots (2017) that each have an independent website and convergent links to SNS and comprise the data collection.

In terms of observing the mid-adult–late-adult EDM attendee some of the discussion in this article is formed from a self-reflexive approach as a “critical insider” in which I have drawn from a) a personal repertoire of recollections as an ageing female attendee who has inhabited both the (super)club and EDM sound system lifeworlds, and b) from a series of semi-structured interviews with mid-adult EDM attendees that were conducted for a larger research project (Hodkinson 2002: 4–6).

RAVE-PARENTS AND RAVE-CHILDREN

I argue that EDM itself is at the centre of the EDM lifeworld. The common features that characterise and unite (super)club and EDM sound system culture can be understood through the broad definitions of dancing, listening, dress-style and (il)licit drug consumption. The essential commonality between distinct branded EDM-events is that promoters offer a space to gather groupings of individuals together for a heightened social experience of sensorial connection and belonging. The previous section focused on a discussion of youth and ageing in which a *fluid multigenerationality* of attendance at EDM-events has been apparent since the 1980s. That is, the patterning of male and female attendees at (super)club and EDM sound system events range from those in their mid-teens–late thirties with a minority in their late-fifties and sixties–seventies. The annual influxes of attendees begin as newcomers seeking to try out the culture. The majority of first-time attendees encounter EDM culture in their youth (mid-teens–late-teens). However, slightly older first-timers (early twenties–late-twenties–early-thirties) make up the dynamic of micro-groups of people that attend together, often because of existing family ties in which older siblings go along or via work affiliations that turn into true friendships.

After the first time, many attendees do not return because of financial constraints (work commitments), weak group affiliations, a lack of desire to develop a taste for EDM where one has not already been formed and mass-crowd intimidation. Others begin to adapt to the environment and learn through observation, interaction and the medium of EDM focused music-media. A complete transition into the culture is through an intensity of regular (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly) attendance for a cycle of time (one, two or three years) and evolves into a type of permanence. Those who remain in the culture become fixed to what becomes a sense of collective identity through music taste, dance and dress style, attitude and buzzwords during the intensity of their (super)club attendance and socialisation within a network of groupings. For example, in 1999 devoted British super-clubbers who belonged to a particular network of groupings performed the hip-wiggle and shoulder shuffle to hard house tracks, wore the Acupuncture trainer brand and bantered phrases with the key word “random”. As such, distinctive groupings are formed that have a preference in taste for particular periods of EDM in which attendees grow up and are increasingly growing older together, and where dress-style and the music industry is transmuted into a cultural form.

The presence of babies, infants and pre-teen children in EDM culture has yet to be a topic of discussion in academic research. To begin, Castlemorton Common free festival was a small gathering of new age travellers (estimated 400) that used the event to find work and meet up with friends. In 1992 the festival became the site of an unprecedented EDM-mega-rave with an estimated 20,000 attendees. This meant that the family dynamic was first assimilated into the mass gathering of the free party crowd who were a mix of class, ethnicity, gender, age and music tastes—particularly from the crossover of punk and the legacy of the DiY ethos (Reynolds 1999: 078). The bond between new age travellers and EDM sound system collective members who chose to stay within the capitalist system has

remained. For instance, the East Midland network that includes DiY, Smokescreen, babble, BWPT, Doji, Wireless and Pysborg EDM sound system collectives began to have offspring who would be taken along to the weekender outdoor free parties. Those I call *rave-parents* take converted vehicles, caravans and micro-tents so that their children have a safe space to eat and sleep at night as well as mingle with the attendees during the daytime.

The attendees that are the offspring of ravers, some of whom have been a part of the culture since their birth, I call *rave-children*. For example, at an EDM sound system club event a founding member/rave-mother was at the same event as her rave-daughter (thirties) who had been introduced to the culture as a child. Despite an acknowledgement of each other, there was an unspoken understanding of space. The mother and daughter socialised in their separate groupings. Developing a separate identity from the rave-parent was a crucial element to the daughter's sense of belonging. This was also reflected in the fact that the daughter had altered her surname to minimise the connection during conversation and in using social media such as Facebook.

Elsewhere I have discussed the occurrence of what I call "an organic DiY pedagogy" (Armour 2018b: 228). In this case, the teenage daughter as newcomer to an EDM sound system collective, self-empowers her position within the collective as a carnivalesque performer who weaves in amongst the crowd as part of the ambience of the event (an identity she also uses to work the festival circuit) and is also an organiser/promoter of local night-time EDM charity fundraiser club events. The dress-style can be characterised as cyber-neon-Victorian that incorporates changing themes such as Alice in Wonderland. The wardrobe features an intentional macabre look that comprises of a corset, tights, chunky heels, heavy exaggerated make-up, a wig, a hat and props for flirtatious interaction such as stickers, feathers and vodka shots on a tray to help make a profit at the bar.

The younger rave-son (thirties) became a world DJ/producer. He began playing EDM at sound system events from the age of sixteen. He started his career through an association with DiY DJ/producers who allowed him to play with turntables as a young child at these events. Throughout his twenties he gained further experience of DJing and made new contacts within the translocal EDM sound system network and played at local bar/club venues. This culminated in moving affiliations from the EDM sound system collective of his childhood to another when he was offered to take over its running. Many of the EDM sound system collectives that were created in the late 1980s–early 1990s have a process of handing over the responsibilities of running the initiative that include maintenance and storage of the sound system and the organisation and promotion of the branded event, hence the term collective. This is, therefore, a careful decision in which those who could be called a rave-legacy-receiver are selected due to their commitment and fit to the existing spirit of the EDM sound system collective, as individuals who are entrusted to preserve the on-going DiY identity through the logo, mascots, a sonic style of EDM, and suitable event locations. A number of rave-children born to core members of the EDM sound system collective have grown up to make a career as DJ/producers. For example, DJ/producer Max Volume (age 24) has a preference for contemporary house and techno while his rave-parents

Ixindamix and Meltdown Mickey of Spiral Tribe (now called SP23), remain active within EDM translocal culture and continue to play acid house tracks. Also, DJ/producer Charlie Kane (age 24) has a preference for house and drum 'n' bass whereas Sim Simmer was the original MC of Spiral Tribe (Jones 2017).

The formation of the local family-rave fundraiser event is another way in which rave-parents and their rave-children are accommodated within the culture. The event is city based, involves less travel and expense to attend and is usually held at a venue such as a pub (public drinking house), with a ready-made large outdoor zone that can be fashioned into a temporary dance space and children's activity area. The pub makes a profit on the purchase of food and drink in return for the free use of the space. This type of event is held at the weekend (on a Saturday into Sunday) during the spring and summer when the weather is warmer for rave-children. For example, an event called Lestival (2013, Leicester, East Midlands) was advertised through word of mouth and circulated digitally through the Facebook event application. It was organised by Doji Sound System and presented as a micro-festival to raise funds for the local hospice charity called Loros. During the daytime (11:00 AM–6:00 PM) rave-children were provided with the opportunity to engage in the event through interactive arts and crafts, have their face painted, play on a bouncy castle as well as dance to the low base frequencies of the sound system with their parents and rave collective peers. In addition, dogs accustomed to being around a mass of wandering and dancing bodies at countryside EDM sound system events were welcome and allowed to roam freely in the enclosed space.

In accommodating the family dynamic the event was markedly divided into day and night-time activities. From mid-evening (6:00 PM onwards) rave-mothers had made the journey home with their children. This created a gendered divide in which the majority of rave-fathers stayed, some for a few hours and others for the duration of the event that lasted for as long as individuals were dancing. In addition, the event was re-populated by attendees who had waited to join the party in late evening when it was dark, the sound system bass was turned up, the strobe lighting was switched on and all traces of the presence of children had been removed. The pub owners made a donation to the charity, a collection bucket was regularly passed around throughout the day and night for donations from attendees and the profit made from the children's activities was also part of the fundraising in which EDM sound system collective members gave their time and resources to make the day fun and entertaining for rave-families.

Within the EDM sound system network of the East Midlands, attendees travel beyond their local sound system initiative and socialise regionally at outdoor/club events in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire. EDM sound system events that are held in the countryside average one or two times a year and this is repeated with the city based club events. The number of attendees is estimated to vary between 50–2,000 individuals. In this sense, these events mark a return to the underground after the CJB (1994), but also reflect the ageing dynamic in which the day-to-day responsibilities of adult life—working a job, the requirement to pay bills and family obligations that take

priority over organising and being able to attend a gathering. Higher attendance is noted at significant years such as 25 years of DiY sound system in (2014) or a milestone birthday such as the male twins of Doji sound system in 2019 (Payling 2016; Armour 2019). Equally, then there are rave-parents who take the opposite view to the previous examples in which children are included. The exclusion of children is framed through the notion that the rare and infrequent weekend rave in a field is a temporary opportunity to escape family life and to rekindle a childless freedom before they were parents. To an extent, these findings reflect the work of Nicola Smith who examined soulies and those she calls soul-children within the Northern Soul scene (2009; 2012: 159–172). Smith notes that her observations have a wider application to all music scenes with longevity.

(SUPER)CLUB-PARENTS AND (SUPER)CLUB-CHILDREN

Within the context of (super)club culture the identity of being a parent is confined to the micro-groupings in which people know each other on a personal level and socially interact with other known micro-groups in attendance at (super)club events. Those I call (*super*) *club-parents* attend (super)club events that are manufactured for profit and operate within an identity that has an imposed legal age restriction where no one below the age of 18 years may attend. In the 1990s, this was breached by teenagers as young as 15 years of age. However, since 2005 and the London bombings the tightening of security checks on the door has meant that it is practically impossible to break this rule (Hadfield 2008). The exception is when admittance is granted to a female attendee who is pregnant. Those who I will call super-club mother's-to-be, are so dedicated to the night out that they will continue to attend events into late pregnancy when a bump is visible. The sight of a pregnant woman dancing contradicts the (super)club environment as a space of individuality and yet this action is a form of embodiment and empowerment exclusive to the experience of women in the culture who defy the myth of slender bodies that represent youth and singlehood. This performance of female identity may be absent from the mediation of the event in which single and group status is often perpetuated to advertise to a youth market, yet it is not an uncommon occurrence within (super)club culture. The appearance of a woman during this phase in her life can still be a surprising sight to attendees because it challenges the perception of the event as a place of escape and abandonment for those who are yet to be tied down with structural responsibilities such as marriage. In contrast, attendees in both young and mature adulthood accept the presence of the rave-mother-to-be at an EDM sound system event due to the familial sense of belonging amongst the collective in which hereditary relationships are a part of the dynamic of the culture.

Similarly, a regular female attendee (1997–2000) at the super-club event held in the northern city of Sheffield called Gatecrasher (1993–present) recalled meeting a (super) club-mother (mid-forties) and super-club daughter (18 years old) who were super-clubbing together. The mother had originally experienced the early Balearic to acid house phenomena and had accompanied her daughter who resided within the parental home and wanted to experience super-club culture but did not have any friends with whom to attend. The bond

between mother and daughter was embodied through dancing in close proximity to each other and the shared illicit consumption of an ecstasy pill appeared to be rare group dynamic within the super-club environment. Part of the rationale for the mother seemed to be the expression of a protective maternal instinct in which a concern for a young inexperienced woman attending an event alone was unsafe. The daughter appeared to be making super-club friends with whom she could potentially make future plans to attend an event without her mother who during this outing had taken on the role of gatekeeper.

In focusing on super-clubbers who started a family in the late 1990s and super-club step-parents who partnered with someone that did not transition into the culture, the offspring produced from these unions are beginning to attend the same super-club events in the presence of their parents. For example, while attending the super-club event called PaSSion that was temporarily held at the Loughborough student union (2015) before reinstatement at the founding super-club called the Emporium (1995–present), a super-club mother (mid-forties) revealed that her two teenage sons (17 and 19 years old) were at the same event in their own grouping of friends. In this scenario, the separation between mother and two sons reflected the previous observation of the rave-mother and rave-daughter. The age gap between the two attendees was also an example of the longevity of the super-club event and the tension of a promotional history that has continually been aimed at a youth market through the replacement of ageing DJ/producers such as JFK with DJ/producer Genix. Elsewhere I discuss how JFK has since returned as the resident DJ/promoter of PaSSion that attracts a majority ageing demographic I call seasoned super-clubbers in their late-thirties–mid-fifties, and where a sonic blend of trance anthems of the 1990s (including updated remixes) are mixed with contemporary trance anthems that accommodate the carry-over of younger attendees (Armour 2018a).

During attendance at the northern super-club event called Cream (1992–present) held in the city of Liverpool at the venue Nation (closure, 2015), a reunion night (2014) that focused on trance tunes produced in the 1990s attracted a majority older super-clubber' (mid-thirties–mid-fifties) attendance. The exception was a super-clubber stepfather (mid-forties) who was accompanied by his stepson (18 years old). The stepson had been introduced to the music in the family home, had seemingly developed a taste for this era of EDM production, had been told stories about Cream and had developed a curiosity for the culture through peer influence. His mother did not attend due to work commitments the following day but had sanctioned the night-out despite the son being of the legal age to decide (he was still a part of the family unit living in the parental home). His stepfather's intention was to share some of this past experience in the present. This included the illegal consumption of an ecstasy pill, which the son had consented to take. While this practice was not encouraged the stepfather saw this as a parental responsibility. The rationale was based on that fact that the stepson had revealed plans to consume ecstasy amongst friends. The stepfather therefore, considered that it was safer for his stepson to consume ecstasy for the first time with a parent who could be a supportive guide through the phases of the mind-altering experience. This action poses somewhat of a moral dilemma. It should be

noted that not all super-club parents would support those whom I call *super-club children* to take illicit substances of any kind and yet, this is contradictory to those super-club parents who themselves have a history of consumption. Here, super-club children are defined as the offspring of super-club parents that have grown up to join the culture through a form of peer inheritance in the parental home, in which an organic EDM pedagogy takes place through the activities of listening, dancing and sharing stories about attendance at super-club events.

FOUR BABY RAVE INITIATIVES

Elsewhere I have touched on those whom I will call here EDM-teenagers who attended what were known as legal youth raves (14–17 years) and were hosted at club venues in cities across the UK from 1991–1992. These events were held on a school night and attracted young children from the age of ten and teenagers as old as nineteen as there was no measure in place to verify age (Armour 2018b: 223–224). A decade later, and the *baby rave* is a commercial enterprise that belongs to the (super)club culture and festival paradigm as a family-oriented event. In a general sense, it provides an opportunity for both parents and their children to dress for the occasion and dance together as a collective form of social bonding in a public space that is child-friendly. I propose that the new memories that are created between those whom I refer to as the *EDM-parent* and *EDM-child* within a family unit at these events become a part of what I call the parent's *attendee heritage* of EDM-events before she/he had any dependents. Further to this, the EDM-event and its constituent parts pertain to a sensorial experience that act as a catalyst in the EDM-child's role as beneficiary of their EDM-parent(s) cultural affiliation. The baby rave event is therefore a form of what I call *live heritage*. The concept draws from an EDM-attendee's personal biography that is contained within her/his imaginary and what I call an *unauthored heritage*, as it remains undocumented. This is in comparison to academic discussions that explore the praxis of documenting popular music heritage that institutions overlook. So far, this has been framed through the following terms, unauthorised (bottom-up, everyday, anti-heritage) in comparison to authorised (official) and self-authorised authoritative voices in industry and community (Roberts and Cohen 2014; Baker et al. 2018).

To elaborate, there have been four main baby rave initiatives that have emerged over the last two decades. The first event originated in North America and is called Baby Loves Disco: The Original Family Dance Party (BLD, 2004–present). It evolved from a home party into a monthly community event at a nightclub venue (in the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) and then moved to New York for five years. Within the second year, BLD toured across twenty-nine U.S. cities and became a global franchise in 2007. Enabled through the Internet the business is managed from the U.S. and co-created with willing mothers/fathers in England, Scotland, Australia, Japan, Hong Kong and Dubai. Heather Murphy (34 years of age) was the founder of the event and self-identified as a professional dancer/mother who had no previous cultural affiliation to EDM. During the event's development Murphy partnered with DJ/producer Andy Hurwitz (founder of the ropeadope record

label, 1999). The initiative therefore, acquired an EDM cultural affiliation and a sense of promotional authenticity with which to target EDM-parents, who are drawn to the event due in part to a taste for disco and disco's revenge: house (1980s–present). Since then, it appears that Hurwitz has become the sole owner of the “mom and pop” company in which he has emphasised the family dynamic as an EDM-father through the inclusion of his wife and three sons in the promotion of the event.

The early campaign of the BLD event was advertised locally through the line-up flyers on the billboards of the club venue and supported by the mainstream media through a report of the event in the arts and leisure section in the *New York Sunday Times* (2005), which reaches a translocal readership. A logo was created to define the branded event that featured a black and white cartoon drawing of a baby with a wide mouth smile, a kiss-curl on the forehead, an upturned jacket collar, pink and yellow Ray-Ban sunglasses, a yellow rave bangle and the slogan “baby loves disco” on the front of the jacket with two pink hearts that replaced the “a” in “baby” and the “o” in “loves”. The “disco” part was placed in a row of children's play bricks underneath the baby image.

Initially, the BLD event was aimed at babies, toddlers and small children from 0–6 years of age. The selected theme of disco that encapsulates a music genre and dress-style is understood in the public imagination as a retro-identity associated with the 1970s. The strategy to move the BLD to the neighbouring city of New York drew on a lived club history (GG's Barnum Room, Le Clique, Xenon, Studio 54, Ice Palace, Crisco Disco, Paradise Garage, Electric Circus, The Fun House and Hurrah) that ended in the 1980s (Garau 2017). In comparison, the baby rave event is held at the weekend in a nightclub venue akin to the adult EDM-club event. However, rather than a late evening to all-night structure the event takes place in the daytime on a Saturday afternoon for an average duration of three hours. The club venue provides access to an existing dance floor (that if possible is square lit) for children and parents to dance together with an installed disco ball that hangs from the ceiling (in order to create the glitter and glamour of what became an iconic symbol in the club), a DJ booth for mixing disco and related EDM soul-funk house tracks from the 1970s–present, a licensed bar so that parents can have an alcoholic beverage and a provision of healthy snacks and drinks for the children is arranged by the organisers. On the dance floor, parent and child social interaction is enhanced through two games, first a dance-off between parent and child vs. another parent and child and a parent vs. parent, and second, a competition for the best costume for the best dressed girl and boy. Parents are rewarded with a free alcoholic drink and children are given a toy. Props are also available such as day-glow balloons. Away from the dance floor there is a nappy changing station and further activities in a designated chill-out area. The main features are play tents, face painting, arts and crafts, instruments and toys such as hula hoops, baskets of scarves and egg shakers, inflatables and a bubble machine. This area also enables quiet time for children who need a rest or have become over stimulated. On arrival at the venue there is a pushchair area to leave child-transport that is familiar to parking a car near a (super)club or EDM sound system event.

In 2007, Naomi Timperley launched the event in her local city (Manchester in the North of England). A promotional model was used that matched the companies emerging identity in the U.S. in which Timperley emphasised her agency as a young mother/entrepreneur rather than an EDM-mother. The event was further promoted through the independent website Babylovesdisco and the social network sites Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The connection to the event's U.S. identity are maintained through these mediums in which Hurwitz's presence is apparent through promotional videos such as the advert that he starred in for the telephone company T-Mobile in which he discusses BLD as a career lifestyle. The initiative also developed an iPad App called Disco Boogie that has been designed to encourage child loyalty through extending the experience away from the event. It is a dance-oriented interactive game that includes digitally synthesised vocoder and vinyl scratch effects.

BLD toured to cities within England and Scotland that were arranged through local venues and mother/father volunteers to organise the event. This strategy enabled newcomer parents of young children to replace the organiser when her/his children had grown beyond the event's age restriction and the motivation to continue with the franchise had run its course. The event has developed to become an annual feature within the UK family/festival/arts circuit, in particular, the Fringe festival (2009–present). Other events are run during the school break such as Easter, Halloween and Christmas. Resident DJs are employed alongside super-star DJs such as Fatboy Slim (Norman Cook) as part of the event's assimilation into British EDM club culture. In focusing on child attendance the event's age range is no longer fixed. Some event's are held during school time and accommodate 0–3 years, while other event's have a restriction of 0–5 years. The broadest age range was adjusted to include primary school children 4–11 years and has featured a tattoo parlour, nail bar, neon hair streaking, jewelry making, a photograph booth, karaoke and acoustic instruments areas. The disco theme remains consistent but has been merged with alternate dress-up themes that include heroes and villains, pirates, queens and princesses, international flags and pyjamas. The most recent evolution of the event is through the tradition of Valentines Day that has been aimed at the single EDM-parent and an age range for children from 0–8 years. Finally, the brand has partnered with local children's active learning entertainment ventures such as the Scottish Government initiative called PlayTalkRead.

The second initiative, called Big Fish Little Fish: 2–4 Hour Party People (BFLF, 2013–present), was created in the UK with the first event in Bristol (south of England). Founder, Hannah Saunders self-identified as an EDM-clubber in the 1990s and has since become a club-mother that has introduced her offspring to EDM culture. This ties into the promotion of BFLF as a translocal EDM-family event that, like BLD, tours to cities on weekend afternoons throughout the UK, is anchored to annual festivals such as Camp Bestival that accommodate children and has also become part of EDM club culture in cities across Australia (Melbourne, Brisbane, the Gold Coast, Perth, Adelaide and Sydney). The slogan draws from the tradition of the British acid house dance style in which the fingers of the hands are held together to form a fish shape and rhythmically perform the sequence of a mime box shape to the original phrase, “big fish, little fish, cardboard box”.

An independent website called Bigfishlittlefishevents is the hub of the initiative's marketing campaign with convergent links to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and Pinterest. These SNS serve to increase EDM-parent interaction and loyalty and extend the promotion of upcoming events as well as providing a snapshot of previous events through photographs and video footage. The logo is drawn in the tradition of the acid smiley face but painted green, the chakra colour of love, connecting the event to the spiritual tradition of EDM culture and the ethos of PLUR (peace, love, unity and respect). As such, the agenda of BFLF has been to attract EDM-parents with children aged from 0–8 years, through the deployment of super-star/DJ/producers (2 Bad Mice, Slipmatt, Aphrodite, DJ SS, Altern 8, Terry Francis, Plastician, Jerome Hill, Krafty Kuts, K Klass, DJ Food, The Orb, Tom Middleton, Terry Farley, Hatcha, Mixmaster Morris, James Tec and Nihal) and guest appearances from vocalists such as Moloko (Roisin Murphy). The music playlist is promoted as a mixture of house, trance and techno from the 1980s–present. It enables EDM-parents to dance to familiar tracks and share this experience with each other and their children on the dance floor, and extend the sensorial embodied experience of historically being a part of an EDM-crowd.

The baby rave experience for EDM-parents is a space where nostalgia and the present moment with EDM-children intersect to create new memories. The dance-style is markedly altered in the case of EDM-Mothers and EDM-Fathers who gently swing and sway to the 4/4 beat cradling babies and toddlers. Other parents choose to lift their feet and knees a little while holding the hands of their offspring who are perched over their shoulders. Most parents bob gently to the groove so as to avoid bumping into any surrounding children. The principle of throwing hands in the air, blowing whistles and horns is maintained and the children imitate these manoeuvres and gestures. In addition, the EDM-family initiative extends the notion of multigenerational attendance through the participation of aunts, uncles, grandparents and carers. The child-focused organisation of social activities generally resembled the pioneering BLD initiative. However, one distinct feature of the event has been the invention of the parachute-dance in which a large rainbow blanket is temporarily placed over the parents and children on the dance floor. Another development of this initiative has been to run child-friendly synthesiser workshops and interactive light installations as part of sharing EDM peer knowledge as a DiY pedagogical experience.

The third initiative, called Rave-A-Roo (RAR 2016–present, Jenny Kane), is not promoted through the founder's identity. Instead, a reserved business model emphasises the use of the super-club Ministry of Sound (London) as the main location for 0–10 years. RAR is partnered with the children's family viewing brand Cbeebies (Shaun the Sheep/Paw Patrol) and toy companies Lego and VTech. Other silent sponsors include Nickelodeon Junior, Soreen, Hoop, Selfridges&Co and LilGadgets. The DJs take on aliases and are dressed in character such as Cbeebie's Duggee whereas superstar-DJs are absent from the entertainment. There are stage performances that act as a visual aid to motivate and coordinate parents and children in combination with a projection screen that is used to play dance-along Cbeebie videos. An RAR black ink stamp is used to show payment

has been verified and also establishes a sense of inclusion (this activity replicates an adult EDM-event). RAR has adopted an ambassador model called rave-on-calling that enables the EDM-parent to sell tickets for which they in return are provided with free entry, party bags, a branded bag and prosecco. A variety of branded merchandise for adults and children to purchase follows the super-club strategy—t-shirts, hoodies, caps, cups, bags, aprons/bibs phone/tablet cases and a teddy bear. In addition, professional photographs can be printed during the event or purchased online afterwards. The use of a confetti canon is an additional feature while dancing with inflatables and the provision of healthy food parallel the established baby rave model.

The fourth initiative called Raver Tots: Throw Shapes Not Toys (RT 2017–present) was the creation of rave-father Mike Pickets (from Surrey, near London) who authenticates his agency within EDM culture as a former DJ and as an adult with an ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) diagnosis. This also provides a rationale for donations to three charities, National Autistic, Attention Deficit Disorder Information and Support Service and Nutritious Minds that promotes awareness of behavioural differences. RT invites an age range from 0–12 years, has an independent website called Raver Tots and links to SNS Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and has been endorsed by the right-wing media (the BBC, ITV, the Daily Mail and the Sun). The logo is based on the traditional yellow acid house smiley face and the EDM style is described as house, garage, drum ‘n’ bass and happy hardcore from the 1990s with guest super-star DJs (SlipMat, Artful Dodger, Nicky Blackmarket, Druid, Brandon Block). Finally, the brand runs an annual day festival with a capacity for 5,000 attendees rather than attaining a slot in a schedule at an established festival.

CONCLUSION

Within this article, I first addressed the concept of age through a reconsideration of the theoretical and methodological stages in the study of EDM club culture, in which I have proposed the conceptualisation of a *fluid multigenerationality* in order to describe a continual pattern of teenagers, young-adults, mid-adults and rare cases of late-adults at translocal EDM-events since the 1980s. The discussion was then furthered in an examination of what I called the EDM-family dynamic, through insights into the nuances of age and how this is negotiated within relationships in EDM sound system and (super)club culture. I proposed the following descriptors with which to present a general picture of these two lifeworlds, rave-parents, rave-children and (super)club-parents, (super)club-children. For individual scenarios, I used terms that were a useful fit for the sociological construct of the family in EDM culture, rave-mother-to-be, rave-mother, rave-father, rave-daughter, rave-son, super-club mother’s-to-be, (super)club-mother, super-club-daughter, super-club son, super-club stepfather and super-club stepson. From this, I discussed the emergence of four baby rave initiatives that have capitalised on a gap in the children’s entertainment market (from 0–12 years of age), appearing to create a new chapter in (super)club culture over the past two decades. In this final part, I interpreted the aesthetic sensibilities of the event as a catalyst

for what I have called *live heritage* in which the child temporarily becomes an EDM-child and beneficiary of their EDM-parent's prior cultural affiliation as a raver/(super)clubber. This experience may be fleeting for the child who is young and may or may not form a lasting taste for EDM but is nevertheless a part of the *unauthored* personal biography of the EDM-parent and their accumulated *attendee heritage* at EDM sound system and (super) club events.

NOTES

- 1 I use the term (super)club as a shorthand that joins together the super-club and EDM specific clubs. This accounts for EDM attendees who fall into one or both of these categories.
- 2 I use the term super-clubber to denote an individual who contextually belongs to super-club culture.
- 3 I use the term (il)licit as a shorthand that joins together illicit and licit drug consumption.

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