Rude Citizenship: Jamaican Popular Music, Copyright, and the Reverberations of Colonial Power

Larisa Kingston Mann

Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2022.
ISBN: 978-1-4696-6724-9 (paperback), 978-1-4696-6723-2 (hardcover)
RRP: US$95 (hardcover), US$32.50 (paperback)

<https://dx.doi.org/10.12801/1947-5403.2024.16.01.16>

Aadita Chaudhury
York University (Canada) / Goldsmiths, University of London (UK)

In *Rude Citizenship: Jamaican Popular Music, Copyright, and the Reverberations of Colonial Power*, Larisa Kingston Mann unravels the moral economies and legal copyright frameworks that inform and animate the ongoing evolution of Jamaican popular music. Mann's intervention into the study of Jamaican music and culture in this context is novel in multiple ways. Existing approaches to theorizing Jamaican popular music have contended with ways in which practitioners of the culture incorporate elements of embodied social knowledge (Henriques 2011), challenge the dominance of a stratified system of social classes (Cooper 2004) and create a sense of kinship with ancestral histories of migration and ritual practices (Niaah 2010; Stanley Niaah 2008). Mann's approach presents an account of how Jamaican musical cultures challenge dominant epistemologies about intellectual property and ownership based on colonial notions of enclosure—positioning the conditions in which Jamaican popular music emerges in relation to global struggles against the loss of commons—ecological, economic and cultural.

Mann locates the legal framework of copyright as part of a wider set of colonial worldmaking apparatuses that create enclosures around popular music and culture, entangling them in regimes of ownership and intellectual property that most closely adhere to ideas of musical composition and creativity within a Eurocentric framework of cultural production, centering specific individuals and collectives in isolation from their cultural milieu as auteurs. Within the broader context of British imperialism in which Jamaican popular genres like reggae, ska, dancehall and dub have emerged, there are additionally

dancecult
JOURNAL OF ELECTRONIC DANCE MUSIC CULTURE

class, geographical and economic considerations of practitioners that contribute not only to the evolution of distinct musical styles but also to their legibility within the political economy of global music and associated legal regimes. Mann's most important and unique contribution to this growing literature on the embodied knowledges and epistemologies emanating from Jamaican music's ethos is linking the ways it challenges class and coloniality within Jamaica to how the notion of "rude citizenship" (130, 177)—the sociocultural, affective, and embodied practices of poor Jamaicans contrasted with the state-supported ideals of the elite classes—created "a kind of sheltering space where poor Jamaicans can produce this relatively autonomous cultural life" (7). It is through this perspective of rude citizenship—which encapsulates how the Jamaican poor resisted forms of coloniality by challenging certain white supremacist norms of conduct still affirmed by elites in Jamaican post-independence society—that Mann shows how anti-Blackness and coloniality pervaded post-independence Jamaica. Even though "the state and its elite intellectuals (...) were at odds over the appropriate forms and distributions of power, they tended to remain more in agreement about cultural norms of conduct, reading the poor as 'rude' rather than as challenging coloniality" (9). Accordingly, within marginalized spaces in Jamaican society, popular musical cultures reflected the moral economies and embodied representations of various approaches to pushing back against state-enforced, anti-Black understandings of personhood, creativity and conduct. These cultural practices present considerable epistemological challenges to dominant global orders surrounding the status of intellectual property and ownership when it comes to music, countering established notions of copyright law.

When considered through the prism of notions of "rudeness" and rude citizenship as per Mann's articulation, we can begin to observe the impacts of persistent coloniality and anti-Blackness in post-independence Jamaica as broad, cascading forms that create the scaffolding in which Jamaican popular music, legal mechanisms like international copyright law and notions of ownership interface and operate, each challenging the limits of the other. In this nexus, Jamaican musical practices, regardless of their genre, represent part of a pluriverse in which traditional cultures of orality, notions of sonic commons that not only enable but also celebrate forms of hybridity facilitated by mixing and sampling practices and other embodied and aural knowledges—frequently demonstrate their continuous evolution and autonomy even as newer mechanisms of legal and physical enclosure emerge by engaging with and producing forms of musical composition that defy colonial constructs of copyright law.

In this way, the musical forms, textures, pedagogies, and epistemologies that undergird the ethos of Jamaican popular music continue to refract the moral economies surrounding the idea of "rude citizenship" within the domains of music and cultural production, legal regimes and beyond. Jamaican popular music and dance culture, its technological innovations and migrating evolutionary trajectories will likely continue to lay significant challenges to the global hegemonic legal orders around creative composition, collaboration and ownership.

Mann's work in *Rude Citizenship* extends this inquiry well beyond the realm of music into broader conversations about coloniality, Indigenous approaches to legal worldmaking and the nature of cultural production itself. By questioning the fundamental underlying assumptions in Western conceptions of musical and sonic composition with examples from Jamaican popular music, Mann's provocation in *Rude Citizenship* asks readers to question their understanding of auteurship, originality and notions of musical talent.

REFERENCES

Cooper, Carolyn. 2004. *Sound Clash: Jamaican Dancehall Culture at Large*. 2004th edition. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Henriques, Julian. 2011. *Sonic Bodies: Reggae Sound Systems, Performance Techniques, and Ways of Knowing*. 1st edition. New York: Continuum.

Niaah, Sonjah Stanley. 2010. *DanceHall: From Slave Ship to Ghetto*. Illustrated edition. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.

Stanley Niaah, Sonjah. 2008. "Performance Geographies from Slave Ship to Ghetto." *Space and Culture* 11(4): 343–60.

Together, Somehow: Music, Affect, and Intimacy on the Dancefloor

Luis Manuel Garcia-Mispireta

Durham: Duke University Press, 2023.
ISBN: 978-1-4780-2008-0 (cloth), 978-1-4780-2504-7 (paperback)
RRP: US$107.95 (cloth), US$28.95 (paperback)

<https://dx.doi.org/10.12801/1947-5403.2024.16.01.17>

Rory Fewer
University of California, Riverside (USA)

Luis Manuel Garcia-Mispireta's *Together, Somehow: Music, Affect, and Intimacy on the Dancefloor* adds an essential contribution to a limited yet gradually expanding body of ethnomusicological scholarship on electronic dance music cultures. Through a multi-sited ethnography of house, techno and minimal dance music scenes in Chicago, Paris and Berlin, the author evaluates the utopian potential of the dancefloor, illustrating the affective dimensions that generate its feelings of social cohesion as well as the ambivalence and exclusions that surround its possibility. In making its arguments, this book draws not only from interviews conducted with partygoers across these scenes, but also auto-ethnographic anecdotes and analytical frameworks from sound and affect studies. A primary focus of this book centers on how the dancefloor enables forms of intimacy between strangers that would otherwise be inappropriate in other spaces, a point illustrated early on with a memorable anecdote in which the author's face was briefly caressed by a stranger while dancing at Panorama Bar in Berlin, "an exchange of surprising warmth between strangers" (3). Garcia-Mispireta builds empirically from a range of anecdotes to make potent claims about these forms of "stranger-sociability" (5), including how conventions of touch in nightlife cultures serve the multiple functions of "communicating sociability, transmitting affect, and both sensing and navigating a crowded environment" (53).

The author incorporates an extensive amount of musical analysis to argue that the affective qualities of corporeal exchanges on the dancefloor meet further intensification through the haptic qualities of electronic dance music. Specifically, the distribution of frequencies in electronic dance music composition results in a type of material impact, described as "sonic spikes [that] *strike* the body in a very concrete way, eliciting sensations not only in the ear but also in the body's skin, flesh, viscera, and bones" (70). Electronic dance music genres often utilize sounds that index tactile experience, such as clapping or breathing, a practice which "rel[ies] on the ability of listener-dancers to associate certain sounds with an enfleshed sound source" (73). Garcia-Mispireta also provides a close analysis of musical texture to argue that electronic dance music makes use of granular sounds that likewise evoke tactile experience. This combination of vibrational impact, bodily indexicality and granular texture ultimately "invites an engagement with sound that is alive to texture, touch,

and other fleshy excitations" (87). The book's larger theories of togetherness are predicated on these affects as devices through which crowd solidarity is enacted or imagined.

The author details these affective encounters of sonic and embodied proximities to theorize the vague sense of togetherness that the dancefloor produces. These affective encounters (articulated corporeally and musically) intensify in a process that the author calls the "*thickening* of the social" (124). Thickening is a process whereby the imbrication of dancefloor affect gives initial coherence to a type of crowd solidarity. Thickening results in a vague feeling of togetherness that the author explains through the concept of *liquidarity*, defined as "a form of fluid solidarity in which vagueness is a crucial condition of its emergence" (32). Liquidarity is necessarily vague because in order to coalesce it must also obfuscate the power differentials that would deny its possibility. "Vagueness" is thus used by the author as an analytic to effectively describe the contradictions that allow nightlife spaces to simultaneously contain forms of inclusion and exclusion, and which threaten to dissolve these "vague" feelings of social cohesion as they are inevitably problematized by the presence of partygoers with differential access to this solidarity, including, for example, partygoers who are disproportionately targeted by unsolicited touching or have differing cultural expectations for intimacy. The duality of this vagueness is most apparent in the final chapter, in which the author details door policies and the regulation of diversity as a "dissonance between a utopian desire for unproblematically inclusive collectivity and the practices of exclusion that help to make the experience of cosmopolitan conviviality possible" (215). For these reasons, liquidarity is a phenomenon that can only take fragile shape. As the author writes, it "sustains an intimate world on the merest whiff of sociability" (104). The ultimate objective of this intimate world and its utopian aspirations—the "something" as noted in the title of the book—are likewise vague. Garcia-Mispireta writes that they "provide a sense of what a utopia of postidentitarian belonging might feel like, rather than a coherent model of how it would function" (223).

This book offers a novel contribution to ethnomusicological scholarship and will surely lend itself as an important resource for scholars and other readers interested in the global phenomenon of electronic dance music culture or studies on music and affect more generally. However, it is important to note the structural challenges that nearly made such a project impossible. This book is prefaced with a description of the obstacles the author met as a first-generation, queer scholar of color working on topics deemed "disciplinarily unconventional and low-prestige" (xv) by the institutions of ethnomusicology. As it offers a series of theories pertinent to understanding the ubiquitous communities of the "dancefloor", this book thus also serves as a reminder to current and future ethnomusicologists of the structural changes required to ensure similarly profound work continues to reach fruition.

Out of Space: How UK Cities Shaped Rave Culture (Revised and Expanded Edition)

Jim Ottewill

Bristol: Velocity Press, 2024.
ISBN: 978-1-913231-63-7 (paperback)
RRP: £14.99 (paperback)

<https://dx.doi.org/10.12801/1947-5403.2024.16.01.18>

Alistair Fraser
Maynooth University (Ireland)

A friend of mine, Breffni, tells a wonderful story about discovering rave culture in North Western (NW) London, aged 17. Out and about with friends one evening, he came across a Spiral Tribe free party in a warehouse in NW London. It was unlike anything else he'd known. It was music and a vibe, music and an embrace; a *feeling*, then, and one he continues to enjoy and chase after. Today, after a few decades of raving, he's employed to make urban places more liveable for all (and he's successful at it). Back then, though, it was the rave culture he discovered that went on to make the city liveable; it was rave culture that went on to make so many places and spaces of wonder, discovery and joy.

UK cities since the late 1980s and early 1990s have been bound up with rave culture in profound ways. Both the city and the culture have existed in relation to each other and to a *wider array* of places and spaces. Those fleeting moments on the dancefloor, the randomness of meeting and hugging strangers, the chaos, the buzz—it all needed some*where* to occur and rave culture did manage to create those geographies. Indeed, looking back at the story of rave culture, perhaps one of the most notable aspects was simply that the promoters, free party collectives, DJs, sound engineers, new age travellers, ravers and clubbers found so many spaces to embrace each other. Looking around now, it's hard not to be worried about the future. What chance will our children have of making discoveries like Breffni's?

A similar anxiety pervades *Out of Space: How UK Cities Shaped Rave Culture* (2024). In this expanded version of his 2022 book with the same title, Jim Ottewill takes the act of "looking around" to an elevated level. Ottewill works his way across the country, from north to south, to ask the promoters, the originators and the DJs who got things started and kept things going, to tell their stories. What we get out of this is a brilliant and rich historical geography of rave culture in the UK. We get insightful biographical details about the promoters and DJs; rare nuggets about how clubs got started; and fantastic quotes that capture the vitality and energy—the *love*—that went into and came out of rave culture.

Out of Space has ten core chapters. The bulk of them are dedicated to covering developments in Glasgow, Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Birmingham, London and other smaller cities and towns such as Coventry and Margate. Chapters 7 and 8 focus on party and sound system scenes with fewer fixed ties to any particular place but with strong bonds to UK cities. Then in Chapter 10 and the concluding chapter, Ottewill examines the contemporary struggle to find a place for rave culture in UK cities.

The book has two standout features. The first is a justifiable sense of awe and respect toward the great many people who have dedicated so much of their lives to *emplacing* rave culture in UK cities. It's been their task to find venues, bring in the crowds and deal with authorities or angry neighbours. It's their labour and often their capital that's generated the landscape of rave culture in the UK. *Out of Space* is a book that fist-bumps those people. It works. It's a book with love and hugs.

Alongside the love, though, the second feature is an overriding sense of dread. Ottewill has his finger on the pulse of rave culture in the UK. He's spotting the novel ideas and experiments, such as community ownership models that try to counteract rising rents and the overall loss of space; and highlighting other efforts to battle the growing sense that rave culture is on the decline. Yet, it is precisely the fact that rave culture *is* on the decline that jumps out from the book, especially in the final two chapters. This leads me to wonder if a weakness in *Out of Space* is that Ottewill is *too* committed to rave culture. He wants to spot and discuss some of the ways that rave culture can keep going. He knows this means we need space. But to my mind, Ottewill does not dedicate enough energy to asking if there is going to be enough of a commitment from younger generations to the making of spaces like clubs or other dancefloors.

For sure, processes such as gentrification are a major source of pressure on clubs and promoters. Regulations, insurance, health, safety and the wider institutionalization of cultural practice with respect to capitalist life also bear down on rave culture. But what about generational differences? Thirty years or more have passed since Breffni (and kids like him) discovered Spiral Tribe (and then, for Breffni, Bedlam and numerous other events and venues). Today, though, a great many young people are on smartphones or Playsations all day long. They're updating their followers on Instagram. They're Tik-Tokking videos; creating, capturing, commodifying and sometimes cancelling culture in novel ways that just might not need the same sorts of spaces that rave culture needed.

Against this backdrop, to want clubs and raves to keep going—to seek out a space for them in the city—is one thing. But maybe we might need to accept that our kids won't want to spend quite so much of their weekends bubbling around on an ecstatic ride in hot sweaty clubs, warehouses or other venues. One has to wonder if our kids will need the same spaces as rave culture needed. Will they seek out the same sorts of life-changing or mind-altering experience that so many ravers desired? In short, maybe rave culture *is* running out of space; but maybe it's *also* running out of ravers.

These minor critiques aside, *Out of Space* is a fantastic book precisely because it can provoke debates about the past, present and future of rave culture. Ottewill writes clearly, quotes the people he interviewed astutely and ensures the reader knows there they are relative to the rest of the book. It's a brilliantly crafted text, demonstrating serious writing skills and drawing on an incredibly rich archive of material collected via first-hand interviews and other sources. My sense is that anyone interested in the rise, development and significance of rave culture will need this book. Anyone fighting to keep the vibe alive should also get a copy.

Venue Stories: Narratives, Memories, and Histories from Britain's Independent Music Spaces

Fraser Mann, Robert Edgar and Helen Pleasance (eds.)

Sheffield: Equinox Publishing, 2023.
ISBN: 9781800504431 (hardcover), 9781800503731 (paperback)
RRP: US$100.00 (hardcover), US$32.00 (paperback)

<https://dx.doi.org/10.12801/1947-5403.2024.16.01.19>

Max Gibson
University of California, Davis (USA)

Drawing together a chorus of individual voices, *Venue Stories* is a dynamic collection of creative non-fiction entries that speak on music, place, experience and community across British independent music scenes in the 20th and 21st century. In their curation of the chapters, editors Mann, Edgar and Pleasance state that their mission was to "bring stories and remembrances together, add shape to them and develop a scholarly understanding of how we can offer an alternative mode of historiography through editorial processes that are akin to the role of the museum curator" (2). Conceived and developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, this is not the usual collection of formal academic essays, but instead a radical attempt at shining light on histories that are usually ignored, marginal or not considered serious enough; *Venue Stories* acts as a site of resistance to erasure through the creation of an archive of stories not usually told.

Utilizing autoethnography, journalism, historiography, essaying, interview and most importantly memoir, the authors create multiple narratives of hidden microhistories. Creative non-fiction as a genre is increasingly common within academia, yet rarely does a collection come together like this that achieves its mission of illuminating histories through a multiplicity of voices, rather than the usual single-authored narrative. This approach is apparent when examining the variety of people in this collection beyond the familiar academic researcher: band members, DJs, producers, journalists, bartenders, photographers and more. Each contribute their lived experiences and perspectives, and having an eclectic roster makes for an enjoyable read. The shifts in writing styles take the reader from the depths of despair—over half the chapters end with the closure of cherished venues—to uncontrollable laughter—who would have thought the destruction of a bass guitar could be so funny? (69–77). Yet this emotional journey is never at the expense of intention of the book. Each account reveals a microcosm within a broader community, scene and history, where musical worlds are lived, embodied and reenacted through memory, and then relived through writing; the act of memory writing affords the network of microhistories to be acknowledged and remembered and serves as a way of expressing personal experience and embodied knowledge within larger structures. Memory writing thus becomes an analytical methodology.

Venue Stories contributes a great deal to the regional histories of music scenes and venues in the areas of Birmingham, Leicester, Liverpool and London. Places such as Brighton, Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield, Teesside, York and the North of England are also represented. Each entry acts as a scratching of the surface of histories that have yet to be written, and thus could lead way to a book of each region or venue in question.

Many chapters engage with a single venue, most of which are on the *toilet circuit*. Robert Edgar theorizes on the concept of the toilet venue, arguing that they affectionately received their name from the bands and audiences who would come together as a community in seedy spaces full of mythic history (40–50). Some of the mythic venues included here are The Charlotte, Eric's, and The Bull and Gate.

Other authors, instead look inward, and focus on journeys of discovery, coming-of-age and personal troubles through their venue experiences. Especially important is how these authors grapple with the politics of access and inclusion, particularly that of safety and economic parity. Gender politics are prevalent in Penelope Wickson's experience in the 1990s Birmingham jungle scene where she describes a masculinist environment rife with sexism and inappropriate behaviour toward female participants (162–174); Vim Renault and Lene Cortina, of Punkgirldiaries, outline their experiences as female band members in the world of punk, a global phenomenon famous for breaking with traditional norms, which afforded them opportunities usually unusual for women (78–87); and Polly Hancock's memoir reveals promotional sexism during the HYPE indie night at the Bull and Gate, London (60–68). Economic politics are present in Anna Maria Barry's contribution who explicitly points out that working-class talent is underrepresented across the creative industries, not just in live music (124–134). Ed Garland's account of sitting on a bench in Leicester's The Charlotte venue introduces the reader to the perspective and experience of music in venues from a position of sitting rather than standing and points to the rarely addressed issue of physical accessibility in live music venues (145–152).

Myriad genres and scenes are represented through *Venue Stories,* including heavy metal, hard rock, Britpop, as well as indie and underground musics. Whether a product of living musical memory or simply due to its global influence, the genre with the most references is punk and its cousins. Punk memories act as the main undertow that bring venues to life. While not intentional, the narratives of *Venue Stories,* emphasize live music performed by bands; stories concerning electronic dance music and DJs, however, do make up a small number of chapters. A striking entry is Thomas Jackson's chapter on his Punk-Rock DJ Dad, whose experience as a working-class industrial worker-turned DJ illuminates the not-yet-told activities and histories of venues, towns and regions alike (238–247).

A standout feature of *Venue Stories* is the ubiquity of musical materiality that is littered across nearly every entry; indeed, the editors point out that "[m]aterial culture, the imagination and the memory have equal weight in these contributions and how they are

written" (16). Whether it is zines, instruments, seating, PA systems, badges, clothes or multitudinous memorabilia, objects are imbued with experiences and memories, and while they might not resonate like a venue, they are valuable for understanding how material culture fits into broader society, musics and histories. It would be wonderful to see these materials brought together in an exhibit that complements the book.

Those seeking applications of academic theory will find a selection of authors who situate their experiences and stories of venues within analytical frameworks—Ed Garland's application of Julian Henrique's *listening skin* is masterful (148)—but readers should not expect it from every chapter. Simultaneously, some might question the reliability and rigor of memory writing; the very act of working from memory elicits the possibility of inaccuracies. Yet this is to miss the point of the book. Many authors acknowledge the fallibility of memory as a caveat to their narratives and some even go out of their way to work with archival documents to crosscheck specific dates and performances—Pleasance's Postscript One, is humorously enlightening (28).

Rich in content and histories, the many individual narratives in *Venue Stories* are woven together and offer a model for those working through creative non-fiction as a methodology for writing histories pertaining to music, place and experience. The hidden microhistories of individuals represent larger structures of culture and community and are afforded agency to speak; the very nature of this book is radically effective.

Living at Night in Times of Pandemic: Night Studies and Club Culture in France and Germany

Anita Jóri and Guillaume Robin (eds.)

Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2024.
ISBN: 978-3-8376-6726-4 (paperback)
|RRP: 42,00€ (paperback)

<https://dx.doi.org/10.12801/1947-5403.2024.16.01.20>

Jack McNeill
University of York (UK)

Discourse around Dance Music Cultures (DMCs) has reached a turning point; a crossroads where underlying tensions, inconsistencies, inequalities and critical questions have begun to simmer to the surface, demanding attention and discussion. Since its inception, themes of utopianism and togetherness have dominated this discourse without questioning such a narrative's relationship with individual and community actual experiences. Scholars of and participants in DMCs alike will be all too familiar with the assertion that DMCs and their related subcultures report a dominant message: one of unity, togetherness and inclusion. While utopianism and escapism are critical to the creation of the other-worlds of dance music spaces (Garcia-Mispireta 2023; O'Grady 2012), the complex, conflicting and ever-developing politics of the dancefloor demand frank, direct and ongoing consideration.

Living at Night makes a comprehensive attempt at this through the lens of Paris and Berlin's club scenes after the Covid-19 pandemic. During the pandemic and in the following years global political movements and changes in media discourse shifted both internal and external perceptions of DMCs. Many (although naturally not all) global dance music communities and institutions began to question their practices, policies, interior structures, broader values and relationships with local and international communities. The cities that *Living at Night* deals with, have undergone this process in recent years. What this text does particularly well is use them as a site to highlight the potentiality for positive change through framing club culture as utopian, while at the same time recognising the complex realities of clubbing communities. It pulls into question narratives that have been broadly, and sometimes uncritically, accepted, highlighting inherent tensions within DMCs. While the focus is on Paris and Berlin, the work could be applied more broadly to DMCs across Europe and, in some cases, globally. Again, this is timely, joining other texts, such as Luis Manuel Garcia-Mispireta's recently published *Together Somehow*, which go some way in addressing similar issues.

The book is split into three sections. The first, "Scenes and Communities", looks at questions of urban and community identity in DMCs, questioning some pervasive and oft-repeated discourses in DMCs in detail. Frédéric Trottier-Pistien's second chapter critically analyses the city-twinning of Detroit and Berlin and its consistencies and inconsistencies,

while Sophia Abidi methodically parses some, but not all, subcultural characteristics of participants in Berlin's DMCs. In the final chapter of the section, Diana Weis considers the tensions between subcultural expression and high fashion surrounding Berlin's club scene, and Berghain in particular. The second section, "Diversity and Inclusion", engages in much needed critical discussions around the tension between inclusion, exclusion, awareness and micropolitics in DMCs. xan egger, neo seefried and Mascha Naumann's chapter exposes some internal tensions in the scene, concomitantly making the case of the potentiality and concrete utopias presented by queer DMCs. Ines Liotard furthers this discussion, shining a light on the historical development of queer club culture in Paris, while Diana Raiselis discusses the potential and problematics of awareness policies and approaches in contemporary club culture post-Covid. The final section, "Social and Ecological Challenges for a Sustainable Culture", looks at some of the pressing issues facing contemporary DMCs and the role that social and ecological responsibility and action plays. Edna Hernández González writes engagingly about artificial light and the tension between nighttime and its economy. Guillaume Robin's chapter provides insight on sense of belonging and meaning in DMC communities in Berlin, providing interesting reflections on areas for future work, particularly with "migrant clubbing communities" (a term that Robin sees as problematic). This is followed by Max Eulitz' thought-provoking personal prose reflecting on a clubbing experience in Kyiv, which, like in many chapters before, presents the potentiality of club spaces in adverse times. The book ends with an insightful and practical conversation between Robin and Katharina Wolf, presenting contemporary work around the social, ecological and financial stability of Berlin's club scene.

The level of self-reflection and criticality that such a text requires is evident throughout. But this is also a complex task and there are a handful of brief moments in the book that stray into the defensive, engaging with binary suggestions of what might be good or bad for the club scene, including some attempts to "debunk" common myths. There are other moments where arguments of high and low culture are invoked; arguments that often expose the fragility with which studying DMCs comes. But perhaps in a culture where multiplicity and difference form its fabric, positioning DMCs' value in opposition to what might be considered "mainstream" is not always useful. Nevertheless, it is important to make very clear that such arguments are few and far between, and do not consist full chapters. Indeed, the work in *Living at Night* is most successful when it embraces the DMCs' diversity; in the discussions around the otherness of DMCs and their opposition to hegemony, and how actors in the scene might negotiate that, while legitimising its existence without any suggestion of what might perceived as good or bad.

Since the pandemic, European DMCs have seen club closures, thanks to gentrification, and aggressive legislation that makes it more difficult for nightlife to survive (Drevenstedt 2020; Garcia-Mispireta 2016). Criticism is directed at DMCs, where the boundaries between utopianism and permissibility are blurred (Garcia-Mispireta 2023); where hedonism as resistance to hegemony and nightlife as freedom get caught up in complex and often problematic behaviours and attitudes. It is a testament to scholarship in DMCs

and *Living at Night* that researchers and members of its community can hold themselves and their peers accountable; refocus the lens on themselves and use insider and informed perspectives to report on pertinent issues. *Living at Night* turns the mirror on DMCs in Europe, not to show the fairest of them all, but to reflect on its complexity, on the possibility of what utopia and hedonism have to offer in opposition to and harmony with the everyday, warts and all.

References

Drevenstedt, Lukas. 2020. "Dimensions of Club Culture: Learning from Berlin". In *The New Age of Electronic Dance Music and Club Culture*, ed. Anita Jóri and Martin Lücke, 9–20. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Garcia-Mispireta, Luis Manuel. 2016. "Techno-Tourism and Post-Industrial Neo-Romanticism in Berlin's Electronic Dance Music Scenes". *Tourist Studies* 16(3): 276–95. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1468797615618037>.

Garcia-Mispireta, Luis Manuel. 2023. *Together, Somehow: Music, Affect, and Intimacy on the Dancefloor.* Durham: Duke University Press.

O'Grady, Alice. 2012. "Spaces of Play: The Spatial Dimensions of Underground Club Culture and Locating the Subjunctive". *Dancecult* 4(1): 86–106. <http://dx.doi.org/10.12801/1947-5403.2012.04.01.04>.