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'Hallowed be thy Grime? : A musicological and sociological genealogy of Grime music and its relation to Black Atlantic religious discourse.' (#HBTG?)

By

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

University of Warwick, Department of Sociology

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hope I have told your story truthfully and with integrity. Thank you. I hope this project will have impact in the social world. To those reading my thesis, thank you for taking the time to do so, may it give insight to an alternative existence or validate your own. Life is intersectional, check your privilege!

Declaration of inclusion

I have published a book chapter based on my research. The chapter is not verbatim in this project and I have not referenced it here. The ideas are similar but more detailed in this project.

- Charles, M. (2016) 'Grime Central! : Subterranean Ground-In Grit Engulfing Manicured Mainstream Spaces' in Andrews, K., and Palmer, L., (eds.) *Blackness in Britain*. Routledge pp 89-100

I draw on arguments related to an essay I published online. Nothing is used verbatim.

- Charles, M. (2006) wrote *'How do ideals of racial difference inform contemporary ideals of beauty?'* Available at: https://www.academia.edu/707815/How_do_ideals_of_racial_difference_inform_contemporary_ideals_of_beauty (Accessed 21 March 2014)

I draw on arguments and findings from my Master's Thesis. Nothing is used verbatim. Part published online.

- Charles, M. (2007) 'Has Black Music 'Souled' Out? : Capitalism, Commodification, Colonialism' Available at: https://www.academia.edu/694687/Has_Black_Music_Souled_Out_Capitalism_Commodification_Colonialism (Accessed 21 March 2014)

Abstract

Grime is a Black British music genre originating from London in the early 2000s. Linked to inner-city street/road culture, it is a subaltern subculture that initially experienced criminalisation, racialisation and marginalisation through the media and music industries, politicians, legislation, policing – mainstream British society.

This ethnographic project reclaims power from the mainstream marginalising gaze by enabling the scene's predominantly Black and White working class members to elucidate and direct Grime's narrative from its inception. The project uses Foucault's (1997) definition of genealogy to interrogate Grime's emergence musically and subculturally. It uses Lena's AgSIT (2012) genre model to examine Grime's development teleologically. Hall's (1978) 'Internal Colonies' and Baker's Black Public Sphere (1996) are used in conjunction to examine the significance of local (tangible) and cultural (intangible) influences on Grime and how these connect to African diasporic cultural and spiritual practice (Mbiti 1991).

Scene directed narrative highlights subcultural understandings of British society, the world, universe and sublime. It interrogates communal and personal identifications, subcultural fan practices and affective investments, to draw out subversive or normative meaning making with respect to politics, religion/spirituality, race, class, gender and technological democratisation.

Ethnographic data was captured through in-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observation (events and Twitter) and Musicological Discourse Analysis (sonic and lyrics), to enable the exploration of 21st century inner-city subaltern youth experience; independent from, and, in dialogue with wider British society. Thematic analysis was applied across all data collection methods. This enabled

the triangulation of Grime subcultural experience through various vantage points. This project makes a scholarly contribution by creating a new narrative for Grime, identifying the substantive issues of music, 'race', religion/spirituality, subalternity and technological democratisation, in addition to developing theories for musical analysis and affective investment through music, culture and spirituality for the social sciences.

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Introduction - FWD

Mic check - check, check, one two, one two…

Grime. Grime and spirituality? Music and religion? Black British youth experience?

"You don't look Grime."
"What made you decide to do that?"
"Why Grime?"
(Confused faces)

These are the responses I received most regularly when I told people about my research topic. It would often need further explanation as the idea of Grime and academia, seemed alien for most. Their reaction to this *strange* combination, would often determine if I would make mention of the religion and/or spirituality element infused in my research. This would only serve to further confuse. These are perceived to be disparate and unrelated subject areas. For the majority, they could not ascertain what I was doing or the point of it. Interestingly, one person assumed I must have romantic interest in someone in the scene in order to rationalise how I, who is not Grime, would weave Grime into a PhD project.

I found responses to my research revealing; in relation to the value associated with Blackness, popular music and the role of women (i.e. fans) in it, class and what qualifies as worthy of intellectual interrogation. These responses highlight the oversight of Grime music's impact on British society and the significance of inner city Black and White working class youth past times. It speaks to the value placed on popular music and its study inside the academy, soft, hard and 'respectable' subjects worthy of study. Popular music is considered a softer subject in the expansion of 'Mickey Mouse' degrees (Barrett,

Malnick and Buscombe 2010). In the British context, the disconnection of intellectual debate between youth cultural production and everyday life, directly contributes to undermining its social value and its involvement in social change. Comparatively, the USA has established disciplines to analyse popular culture and elucidate the value of its cultural practices. These range from Centres of Black Music Research[2], Hip Hop degrees and scholarships[3], to the implementation of the #LemonadeSyllabus[4] to analyse, document and distil the experiences and social changes driven by marginalised communities. In the British context of Grime, it is important for those actively involved in the scene, who shape the narrative, to have the recourse and body of scholarly knowledge to solidify and substantiate the value of their cultural production.

The institutionalisation of knowledge and control over narrative were motivational factors for this research. My Master's thesis (Charles 2007) found that the music industry's construction of Blackness directly contributed towards systematic exclusion by denying Black people equality in everyday life. The appropriation, circulation and profiteering of caricature Blackness frustrated me. I see power in music and was frustrated that it was attacked and exploited for capitalistic, political and/or religious gains.

Inspired by my own spiritual/religious journey and the popularised ideas circulating about the illuminati at the time of completing my Masters, I was keen to include 'religious elements' in any future popular music research. Lewis (2004) states the music industry is involved in demonic practices and freemasonry and I was first introduced to this idea at a Christian church in 2005. The message was targeted toward the youth ministry. In 2009, a fresh wave of claims about 'urban' music and its involvement with

[2]Centre for Black Music Research.

[3]Hiphop Archive and Research Institute at the Hitchins Centre.

[4]Anon (2016a), Essence Magazine.

demonic practices, the Illuminati and secret societies, was brought to the fore by industry insider, singer Tiffany Evans (Thomasos 2015). By this time, such ideas had become commonplace in popular culture, not limited to youth ministries in Christian churches. Prominent artists such as Rihanna, Jay-Z and Kanye West had been accused of involvement. This idea continues to circulate and was most recently addressed by Beyoncé lyrically in her 2016 single *Formation*[5]. Musical (and religious) expression since the Black Atlantic's inception have often been condemned or prohibited (e.g. 'Code Noir' - Walker 2015). In the twentieth century, Jazz and Blues were referred to as 'Devil Music' (Pinn 2003, Beckford 2006). Rock and Roll from the 1950's onwards has been considered demonic (Lewis 2004). The religious root of demonising the musical practices of economically successful Black mainstream artists has been linked to racism (Utley 2013).

British missionaries significantly influenced African religious and cultural practices during enslavement and colonisation, in order to gain control over African people and their resources (Rodney 2001). Are these oppressive regimes the very root of 'appropriate' ways of engaging in worship, music, religion and spirituality, in Africa and across the Black Atlantic? Has systematic European rejection and/or devaluation of African and diasporic creative expression been internalised (internal racism)? Is the 'Black unknown' witchery because Europeans did not understand, or had no interest in understanding anything they could not exploit for personal gain? Is Black cultural production that facilitates economic freedom for individual Black artists against God's will?

In addition to religious rejection of Black music, the political climate of Black British music and how it intersected with mainstream narratives in the mid-noughties caught my attention. British Politicians, MPs Tessa Jowell and David Blunkett, were vocal that Hip Hop culture, Rap and Grime were to blame for the spate of stabbings taking place amongst (Black) British youth. Compounding this, Dancehall music was categorically

[5]Knowles – Carter, B (2016).

stigmatised as homophobic, with artists such as Beenie Man, denied entry to Britain in 2004 (Kirby 2004). Campaigns against Dancehall music from LGBT organisations were prominent until 2006. US Hip Hop artist, Snoop Dogg, was banned entry into Britain in 2007 (Vinter 2016) owing to US criminal activity and causing a scene at Heathrow airport (now repealed). These ideas, incidents and narratives (reinforcing stereotypes) circulated heavily in the media. They contributed to the marginalisation of Black music, despite the heavy mainstream circulation (read acceptance) of industry promoted caricature Blackness (including violent lyrical content and imagery against Black bodies).

During this same time period, I became aware of 'Form 696', banning music events based on racial profiling. I was completely frustrated that there was no adequate body of scholarly work in place to challenge sweeping generalisations made about Black music in the British context. An overt attack on Hip Hop culture or Black music in the USA would never go unchallenged owing to the body of scholarly knowledge outlining its contribution, as well as issues and challenges it poses to US society. It was glaringly apparent to me that Grime needed to be contextualised, academically, and from the perspective of those in the scene. Contextualisation protects the narrative from biased opinion and mainstream attack. It ensures that it is being documented correctly.

I gave the reasons above to curious people as to why I desired to explore music, religion/spirituality and the African diaspora in the British context. The project provided me with an opportunity to delve deeper into elements of my cultural heritage and engage with it in a new way whilst examining where Grime fits in to the overarching picture.

Grime is contemporary, it is British and its earliest scene members, predominantly Black youth at the time, were undefended. British youth feel disconnected from wider society (Barham 2004 - cited in Shannahan 2009); therefore they create their own identity through creative expression e.g. Grime. This was a clear opportunity to examine an

untapped and untouched aspect of British and Black British life. Could Grime give insight into (Black) British youth experience though organic intellectuals? Gramsci describes an *organic intellectual* as a person who has close ties with their community and expresses class identities and aspirations (Stapleton 1998). The Afrodiasporic parallel with the Griot and US Rap were starting points to unpack and contextualise Grime.

When explaining how this project can give insight into what Grime says about the social climate and musical influences crucial to its inception, I often received a new found respect, understanding, and encouragement to pursue the project.

This thesis analyses Grime from various vantage points and proposes theories and ideas about music analysis related to spirituality and sonic characteristics. It also proposes ideas about Africanised spirituality and practices, cultural capital and systems of oppression.

Thesis statement/Guide

Grime is a genre of Black British music originating from London at the turn of the 21st century. It was created predominantly by Black British youth. Originating from inner-city street/road culture, Grime music, and related subcultural practices, were not easily decipherable by dominant British culture already fearful of and distancing itself from its youth, Blackness and the working classes. The criminalisation and racialisation of street/road culture, escalated by isolated violent incidents, set the precedent for the emerging genre and how it is understood by those outside the scene. These factors contribute towards the mainstream marginalisation of the music, knowledge, practices and scene members (via media, music industry, policing, legislation and politic/ians).

This ethnographic project provides a space for scene members to direct their own narrative. It uses Foucault's (1997) definition of genealogy to make an intelligible narrative for the emergence of Grime as a musical genre and subculture. In-depth semi-structured interviews, observation (events/panels and Twitter) and Musicological Discourse Analysis (MDA)[6] enabled the exploration of 21st century inner-city subaltern youth experience; independent from, and in dialogue with wider social structures.

This project makes intelligible how Grime's subcultural contestations and coalescences constitute communal and personal identifications, inform fan practices and generate affective investments. It outlines subversive and normative meaning making with respect to politics, religion/spirituality, race, class and gender. The project evaluates genre from various vantage points. It uses Lena's (2012) teleological AgSIT[7] genre model (discussed later in this chapter) to substantiate the significance of knowledge and practice (Hall 1978 and Baker 1996) to genre development. It also provided an opportunity to re-theorise genre. Owing to Grime being one of the first scenes to emerge alongside easy internet and social media access, the project explores the role of technological democratisation on DIY subcultural practice and knowledge. This project interrogates the spiritual element in everyday British life for Black and working class youth, by examining how knowledge and practice in the Grime scene and Black music streams are intertwined with the African diaspora, the local, the past and present, and how it is genealogically linked to Africanised religious/spiritual understandings of the world, universe and the sublime.

[6] MDA is an experimental method that I have developed and applied to this project to analyse music in the sociology and cultural studies fields.

[7] Avant garde, Scene, Industry and Traditional teleological development of a genre.

The specific research questions to be addressed in this project are outlined below:

1. What are the musical, technological and social influences on Grime and its development?

2. What do 'Grime' culture's origins tell us about Black (/inner-city) subaltern existence in London at the turn of the 21st century?

3. What role does Grime's subcultural contestations and coalescences play in constituting communal and personal identifications, fan practices and affective investments?

4. In what ways and to what extent do lyrical references, symbolic discourses, sonic characteristics and/or performative dimensions of Grime constitute subversive or normative meaning making with respect to politics, religion/spirituality and social relations of race, class and gender?

These questions seek to achieve the overarching research aims outlined below:

- Make a scholarly contribution by creating a new narrative for Grime which identifies the substantive issues of music, 'race', religion/spirituality and subalternity.

- Analyse music with innovative musicological discourse analysis (MDA).

- Contextualise Grime both within its subcultural context and with reference to its reception by mainstream Britain.
- Contextualise Grime in a musicological genealogical framework.

- Explore interactions of gender, class and race within Grime's subculture.

- Consider whether latent religious and/or spiritual meaning can be elicited from Grime music subculture.

Through the examination of Grime, this thesis provides the opportunity to examine assumptions about universal knowledge, Whiteness, classism, gender dynamics, racism and racialisation in the British context.

This research is ethnographic. It triangulates three research methods: a) in-depth semi structured interviews, b) participant observation, both physical and online, and c) Musicological Discourse Analysis (MDA). The findings from each method are used across all data chapters. Together, these methods provide a theoretically rich data set from multiple vantage points and facilitate varied modalities of analysis. Triangulation increases the objective rigour of the findings, arguments and theories proposed to answer the overarching question of this project *Hallowed be Thy Grime?*

The data chapters in this interdisciplinary project are each led by different but related conceptual frameworks. These frameworks also contribute to answering the overarching question *'Hallowed be thy Grime?'*

There are three (four) overarching theoretical frameworks interwoven throughout this project. The first is the definition of genealogy in **Foucault's (1997) 'What is Critique?'** This work on critique; power, truth, the subject and governmentality, is applicable to this project when evaluating mainstream Britain and its responses to subaltern youth and their music. Foucault (1997) highlights that critique legitimises types of knowledge or ways of knowing. He argues that knowledge, its articulation, implementation and

institutionalisation, are embedded in both the conditions of the era and in national context.

His definition of genealogy i.e.:

> *'…something, that attempts to restore the conditions for the appearance of singularity born out of multiple determining elements of which is not the product, but rather the effect. A process of making it intelligible but with the clear understanding that this does not function according to any principle of closure'* (Foucault: 1997:64)

is a flexible instrument that centres Grime, elucidates and pieces together the structural influences (i.e. social, cultural, musical and political) that helped to shape it. This framework primarily serves to enable a coherent narrative of Grime in relation to external factors.

The second overarching framework in this projects is **Lena's (2012) work on genre**. She identifies four phases a genre goes through in a full life-cycle: Avant garde (Ag), Scene (S), Industry (I), Traditional (T), AgSIT. Her detailed analysis of genre frames this project's interrogation from past to present. Her theory enables the Grime genre to be analysed as it developed over time. This framework complements Foucault to enable an internal *and* external analysis of Grime music and subculture.

The third and final overarching framework is a combination of **Hall's (1978) internal colony areas** [8] of Britain and **Baker's (1996) Black Public Sphere**. I identified this combination in Bramwell's (2015b) work, although I apply it differently. Hall identified internal colonies as areas where 'others' have been confined to reside in Britain. These

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[8] London Colonies

internal colonies result from the *'black sub-class' (1978: 377)* who came to Britain to fill subordinate economic roles after World War II (WWII). They found themselves falling into British ideological understandings of race based subordination and social roles, forming part of a reserve army of low skilled workers. Earning less money and experiencing racism, Black people lived in poorer quality housing and were restricted to particular residential areas in major cities. Through Worsley and Fanon, Hall found a colonial style relationship between these areas and the mainstream, replicating the exploitative and parasitic relationship economically, socially and culturally found overseas between Britain and the colonies. Hall suggests this framework enables one to analyse the context of Blackness within '*developed urban capitalist conditions' (1978: 386)*. Hall elaborates that internal colonies are considered parts of the third world *within* the first world and are treated as such by the authorities – crisis areas were criminality resides.

Despite inhospitable living and working conditions, racial harassment and violence in internal colonies, over time, a sense of community developed through an *'internally generated Black cultural identity' (1978:351).* Alongside cultural developments, the internal colonies that were once areas where reserve armies of low skilled workers resided (and reinforced racial and class based inequality), entered post-industrial Britain. The decline of manufacturing in Britain, the increase of the service and tertiary industries, feminised skills/roles (Nayak 2003:56) and technological automation replacing low skilled roles, in conjunction with the increase in qualifications needed to secure employment, undermined the employability of those *prepared* for low skilled work. It contributed to job insecurity and cycles of poverty and worklessness for colonial residents. To the authorities, their residential areas, i.e. internal colonies, became places of scrutiny, suspicion and management. Since the 1950s and 1960s when Black people arrived in significant numbers, their internal colony areas have been presented as synonymous with crime, where internally generated Black cultural practices are treated with suspicion. Compounding this, legislation and policing by the authorities

problematise worklessness created by post-industrial processes. These directives and their implementation lead to additional scrutiny and consequently problematise and criminalise the people further.

Hall suggests that those inside the colony evolve generationally, continually developing techniques to survive inside or outside the colony (such as hustling or seeking employment) and navigate criminality and problematisation by the authorities. In the context of this project, I explore some aspects of the tangible lived experiences of those involved in the Grime scene. How did the scene spread throughout the colonies and beyond? How do these internal colony practices develop and contribute towards cultural identity? I will explore new methods of colonialism and appropriation with regard to Grime's cultural production and how internal colonies and the people continue to be policed. This framework takes Hall's internal colonies and extends it into the 21st century and with a genre of music distinctly Black British, arguably the first genre of its kind. Contemporarily, internal colonies are densely populated subaltern inner-city areas of social housing and council estates, where young Black, White working class and multi-ethnic people live.

Conversely, Baker's (1996) Black Public Sphere is an intangible space of collective knowledge and practice, integral to the understanding of social and cultural capital and how to use it to express identity. It complements Hall's internal colony as the immaterial aspect of these physical residential areas. Importantly, Baker states that the Black Public Sphere is not a sanitised or romanticised version of knowledge accredited for mainstream narrative interests. He argues that the Black Public Sphere is unfiltered and reflective of the Black majority and argues that the Black majority are always constructing modernity through '*creative agency*' *(1996:16)*. I apply Baker's concept flexibly in the British context. One of the objectives of this project is to give a voice to those in the scene, unfiltered mainstream narrative interests. I seek to enable those from

the internal colonies, the majority, to speak about the scene and their lived British experience.

Complementary to Foucault's critique, the Black Public Sphere can offer insight with regard the mainstream, particularly along lines of race and class and their collective social position and knowledge. Baker argues that the Black Public Sphere must engage historical continuities, i.e. '*black majority efforts and strategies' (1996:35),* to make creative convergence possible. It is these connections that can lead to protest movements. Owing to the significant impact of Grime music and culture in Britain over the last decade, this work seeks to contextualise Grime in wider social, musical and spiritual contexts, in relation to the Black Public Sphere and mainstream knowledge production. It seeks to make visible additional Black (and working class) contributions that have remained or been contained in the Black Public Sphere by the British mainstream.

> *'The critically imagined closeness of the black majority selves and the birth of black radical modernism must be continually foregrounded' (1996:35).*

This project seeks to foreground Black majority selves. This combination of Hall's (1978) internal colonies and Baker's (1996) Black Public Sphere enables the assessment of material (practice) and immaterial (knowledge) forces that impact Grime's development. This combination enables the exploration of the music, knowledge, subcultural practice and people in the scene.

These overarching frameworks are complemented by two other scholars of note:

Mbiti's (1991) Introduction to African Religion outlines the interconnectedness of spirituality found in the visible/material world. He finds Africanised religion can operate flexibly inside existing social structures, becoming folk or cultural tradition over time. It

can take multiple generations for Africanised religious outlooks and practices to completely disappear, if at all. Applying Hall and Baker on to Mbiti's findings, creates the possibility to overlay African religious/spiritual understandings of reality on to the immaterial Black Public Sphere, knowledge (Baker 1996) and the materiality of the subaltern existence lived in the London colonies (Hall 1978). Everyday practices, perspectives and moments of music engagement become spiritual praxis. This framework navigates an understanding of cultural production in the Black British context and simultaneously explores, articulates and displays Africanised spiritual/religious practice. This approach enables an exploration of ancestral genealogical discourse that cross pollinates with contemporary culture and religion.

Whilst I do not explicitly refer to **Gilroy** in this project, I utilise his term **'Black Atlantic'** in the title of this project. He refers to the importance of music in the African diaspora as a form of expression unbound by text or language, exploring how music enables politics of Fulfilment and Transfiguration. This longitudinal/genealogical approach to modernity that leads to *'The specificity of the modern political and cultural formation' (Gilroy 1993:19) of* the Black Atlantic influence this work, and refers to those in the African diaspora that live in the West; namely the descendants of sub-Saharan Africans forcibly moved to live around the Atlantic basin under the conditions of Atlantic Slavery who still largely experience racism and oppression in contemporary times.

It should be noted that this project contains many acronyms and new words, some of which I have developed. This particular project seeks to introduce new language with which to elucidate the concepts and theories put forward, and introduce language from a particular ‘speech community’ into the academy. The concepts and theories proposed are grounded on the data and in consideration with pre-existing literature. As a result I have enclosed a glossary of all acronyms used in this project.

The development of new language is an important part of this research project. It enables new ways to articulate centered Blackness, Music and Genre for example, where current language inadequately encapsulates perspectives and nuances. The advancement of new/existing discipline(s) demand new language tools. Fanon states *'to speak a language is to take on a world, a culture' (1967:38)*. Dalal (2002) addresses the issues of racialised power in language (and religion) and it is for these reasons new tools are needed. Eurocentric dominant thought since The Enlightenment has racialised people and music. It narrowed and undermined knowledge about them. This project seeks to develop language to counter this. Lastly, this project considers the data of equal importance to that of the theories and conceptual frameworks employed, elevating marginalised voices and practices.

Chapter Summary

Chapter one examines literature on race, music and their historical relationships to the European Enlightenment and religious outlook. This chapter reveals that the West have engaged with music along a trajectory that is specific and compartmentalised. Thus, it exposes gaps in knowledge. It outlines differences between Afrocentric and Eurocentric approaches to religion, the prioritised senses and musical sensibilities. In my efforts to fill these gaps, I link music and subcultural practice to the sociology of religion sub-discipline (as it relates to finding meaning in popular culture). To quantify meaning, I have dovetailed sociology of religion with the newer field of audio culture. This pairing enables the exploration and production of knowledge around meaning linked to emotion/physiology, affect and reconnects music and practice to Africanised spirituality. This chapter outlines aspects of DIY cultures and resistance to place it within subcultural literatures. Finally, it then illustrates the innovative ways I have intersected diverse areas of study, to produce an interdisciplinary project that generally advances alternate knowledge about contemporary British youth culture and music engagement.

Chapter two addresses the state of Blackness in contemporary Britain as an academic discipline. The current literature again reveals this has been neglected as an independent discipline and across existing disciplines. The study and scope of race and ethnicity generally in British academia is marginalised, focusing on the spectacular, deviant or resistance associated with Blackness. This places the study of Blackness as peripheral and necessary only in relation/comparable to other groups: the study of Blackness rarely will examine moments of joy or the mundane. This chapter examines literature on Black youth and Black cultural impact in Britain. It finds that contemporarily, it has been severely under researched. Despite the impact of Black musical presence in British society, the academy remains largely silent. This chapter proposes reasons as to why the value and contribution of Black Britain and Black British music are overlooked. It then highlights multiple gaps in knowledge that this research project can begin to fill; a significant one is centring a wider scope of Blackness in research.

Chapter three outlines the research aims and questions this project seeks to answer. It lays out and defends the ethnographic methodologies chosen and the conceptual frameworks employed to achieve these objectives, the ethnographic methods employed and how their triangulation assist in project validity and rigour. They collectively provide a tentative base from which to put arguments and theories forward to create new knowledge spaces; such as my introduction of a new research method MDA, enabling the sonic analysis of music in the cultural studies and sociology fields. Ethical issues in obtaining data from ethnographic research methods are discussed. The conceptual frameworks guide, illustrate and inform the overarching arguments put forward in this project. They also assist in projecting knowledge into new spaces. Significantly, I examine my position as a researcher and the impact my demographic constellation has had on the data collected.

In chapter four, the first data chapter, Grime is the apparatus used to examine genre from a variety of vantage points. There are two principal reasons for the purpose of this

chapter: a) to deploy genre as an analytic concept to produce a genealogy of Grime whilst at the same time, b) to propose a mode of *generic analysis* that is genealogically inflected. Foucault's (1997) genealogy definition and Lena (2012) AgSIT genre model are integral to this chapter and are an overarching point of reference throughout this project. This data chapter proposes to advance debates and the understanding of genre and genealogy by incorporating a range of generic vantage points such as teleological, antecedental and Afrodiasporic streams, whilst simultaneously presenting genre as a dynamic set of relationships such as a combination of 'utterance', corporate, sonic, collective etc., which all have political and sociological impacts.

Chapter five examines Grime in a sociological context, within DIY and subcultural frameworks. It introduces African religious/spiritual concepts of material and immaterial, against the backdrop of Baker's (1996) concept of the Black Public Sphere and Hall's (1997) concept of internal colonies. It interrogates social elements of genre; i.e., subcultural practice. Foucault's genealogy definition and Lena's AgSIT genre model are integral to this chapter also. They assist in exploring the genealogical evolution of Grime and making its emergence intelligible in a wider social context. The subcultural dimensions of Grime explored here include the values, spaces and politics of the scene. These dimensions contribute to scene members' identifications, identities and communalities. This chapter maps the growth and social movement of the scene and notions of authenticity. It links scene practices (i.e. internal colonies and Black Public Sphere) with ideas of Africanised spirituality.

Chapter six examines race, class and gender within the scene; including issues related to multi-cultural consumption and masculinised narratives. It addresses the hypervisibility and pathology of Whiteness in the scene, double consciousness of Blackness in wider society, working classness, gender norms and racialised masculinity (infused with class and sexuality). These unpack issues of authenticity, colourism, gender and class in the Grime scene. African religious/spiritual concepts overlaid onto Hall (1997) and Baker

(1996) is also an ongoing thread throughout this chapter. It also draws from the overarching frameworks, Foucault's (1997) genealogy and Lena's (2012) AgSIT genre model, to trace the teleological development of genre to explore consumption of Grime over time. It builds on previous chapters to propose theories relating to the importance of race in the interception and disruption of a) Africanised spirituality, b) the teleological development of Black and working class cultural practices and products, and c) self-actualisation through tangible and intangible colonisation practices.

Chapter seven explores the *'power'* of Grime music itself. It analyses emotional and physical responses to Grime primarily in live settings, but also through experiences of Grime music making and sharing. Here, the combined concept of the internal colonies and the Black Public Sphere overlaying Africanised spiritualist ideas of the material and immaterial come to the fore. *Power* of music is explored by piecing together interdisciplinary concepts in the emerging field of audio culture; specifically the physiological and psychological affects that music has on a listener. *Power* of Grime focuses on spiritual, sublime, kinetic and emotive responses found in the actual moment of (individual/collective) listening and when experiencing Communitas. It uses the data to develop theories (and knowledge) about the *power* of music. To do this, it draws upon similarities and variations of ancient West (and Central) African spiritual ceremony and theories of hybridised religious practices from the Black Atlantic. Musical analysis from chapter four specifically, enables theory to make links across time and space genealogically. Aspects of audio culture enable links to be made at the human audio interface and explore biological and emotional responses. Analysing *power* in this way enables a tentative continuity/genealogy to be made between current practices in the diaspora with West (and Central) African religious and spiritual tradition that can be tested, extended and explored more fully in future research.

The concluding chapter (eight) summates the developments over the data chapters, four - seven, to identify the substantive issues of music, 'race', and subalternity that intersect

Grime. Grime is contextualised in a musicological and sociological genealogical framework threaded through data chapters that introduce the potentiality for genealogical connections with religious/spiritual practices and perspectives from the Black Atlantic. Data generated by silenced and demonised groups of British society, challenges assumptions about universal knowledge, Whiteness, Blackness, gender norms, classism, racism and racialisation. This project provided uninterrupted space for the Black and working class voices of the scene to be heard. This project highlights the impact Grime has on scene members and wider British society. It reintroduced elements of Africanised religious/spiritual aesthetic, and a new way to engage with music and musical analysis. The threads of all chapters come together in answering the overarching question of this project: *'Hallowed be thy Grime?'* Yes or No?

Chapter One - Literature Review: Religion Rides de Riddim

The next two chapters review literature related to this project. Owing to the projects interdisciplinary nature however, literature is drawn from broad and diverse fields. Collectively, they form a constellation that best supports this piece and highlights gaps in knowledge. The two literature review chapters are divided into i) music and religion and ii) centring Blackness and Blackness in Britain. The interrelated salient issues of race, racism and seeking meaning permeate both chapters.

This chapter exploring music and religion begins by outlining Eurocentric understandings of music, religion and race since the Enlightenment. This functions to primarily highlight how these three factors were infused during the Enlightenment, and evidence the impact of its trajectory into contemporary music understanding and engagement, both inside and outside the academy. Within the academy specifically, it assists in understanding the distinctions made between classical and world musics; and also its tentative (sometimes dismissive) approach to contemporary musics that fall outside of this fragile dichotomy. Grime music, the principal focus of this study, falls outside the dichotomy and is the cultural production of a marginal social group in Britain.

This project is positioned outside the music discipline, and as such, enables a new way to interrogate the musical subject without the limitations of focusing on music alone (i.e. Musicology). Here it is analysed through a sociocultural lens; in part through subcultures, but moving toward sonics and audio culture. This approach differs from previous sociology and/or cultural studies musical projects, that tended to focus on spectacle, style or scene, but not the music itself. Sociological enquiry enables audio culture and sociology of religion literature to be introduced, reviewed and then woven into modes of analysis.

Examining literature around Africanised religiosity reveals different outlooks and understanding of musical and religious engagement. This difference signposts a new way to interrogate musical and/or religious subjects within or across disciplines. From this new space (potentially entering Afrofuturist or sonic fictive space), new links to music understanding, engagement and cultural practice can be formed. The reasons why examining literatures on religious perspectives are important to this project is because, to date, the Eurocentric religious outlook has significantly shaped musical (and racial) knowledge, both overtly and covertly. Current disciplines are not fully equipped to interrogate the complexities and interdisciplinarity of contemporary life. Religious studies acknowledge its limitations when engaging with contemporary society (Lynch 2007). As outlined in the introductory chapter, race and Eurocentric religion (namely Christianity) have had a problematic relationship with Afrodiasporic peoples, race and music.

This project focusses on the specific Black British musical production and subcultural practice of Grime. Analysing it through existing academic musical or religious frameworks, rooted in Eurocentrism, would not serve this project effectively; each would construct it or place it as ‘Other’ or peripheral in their respective fields of studies.

Music

Since European Enlightenment, the Western study of modern music has been rooted in the Romantic era and classical music, including the idea of individual musical creative genius. This discourse has endured into modern times (Gilbert 2012, McClure 2011). Simultaneously European engagement with other world peoples, shifted their concepts of rationality and outlook. It significantly impacted the relationship between religion and the creative; moving individual creativity away from the ear.

> *'…during the Enlightenment the ear (by which he means not only the outer acoustical ear but the inner ear), through which one hears the voice of God, was relegated to the danger zone of irrationality – outside the bounds of universal reason.' (McClure 2011:4)*

Sound received less and less focus in Eurocentric discourse. Sight was foregrounded as the apparatus of rationality. Bull and Back (2003) identify the trajectory of the eye taking precedence over and above technologies of the ear:

> *'…orally based cultures were progressively supplanted by print-based cultures, and the world became increasingly 'silent' as sight (reading) replaced speech' (Bull and Back 2003:7).*

Eurocentric modes of prioritising and organising knowledge conspire to eradicate or primitivise peoples and processes, particularly those peoples and cultures that prioritise orality, aurality and their related cultural practices. Chernoff argues there is *'profound European misunderstanding of Afro-diasporic rhythm pragmatics'* (cited Goodman 2010:116). Other ways of knowing and understanding have been disregarded and missed for an extended period of time. This dynamic of sight and sound has meant that race and music are entwined in fundamental ways through the discursive and institutional processes of colonialism, modernity and The Enlightenment (Haynes 2013). This legacy still influences how music is categorised, interpreted and aesthetically valued contemporarily.

An unintended outcome of this prioritisation strategy is evident in the general inability to articulate sound and its impact in everyday life, in the same way visual disciplines are coded. However, academia is beginning to engage with sound, the aural and soundscapes (e.g. sonic fiction/Afrofuturism, audio culture, sound design studies and popular music studies etc.), approaching music, in sociological and cultural ways. To

date, many music research projects in sociology and cultural studies focus on lyrics, style (Hebdige 1979), or the aesthetics (Bramwell 2011) of a subcultural practice; all of which are linked to the visual. The ear is more finely tuned than the eye (Goodman 2010). This new knowledge space poses serious challenge to the current trajectory of music and how it is prioritised it in the West.

The field of music semiotics is an under researched area in Britain[9]. Kennett (2003) explores the analysis of popular music. He proposes sound as object and a semiotic analysis of sound. Music semiotics is a crucial area to the analysis of music. However, it can be inaccessible for those who do not read music or have an understanding of musical terms or theory. This can make it difficult to articulate in layperson's terms because it has its own discipline related jargon. Bull and Back's (2003) edited volume in audio culture explores the link between sound and its impact on the body, physically and physiologically. LaBelle (2010) explores natural acoustics of spaces and places. These areas of exploration are useful when brought into the field of sociology, because they enable the analysis of soundscape and environment on the development of musical styles and the human body. Combined, they break down the soundscape into specific areas of influence on a person.

Religion

Grime…spirituality…religion. There is no clear link between the two and we are living in increasingly secularised times (BBC 2012). The main Grime music makers and participants (i.e. predominantly third and fourth generation Black British youth, having Christianity forming part of their ancestral heritage), have lower levels of church participation than their (African, African-Caribbean) grandparents who settled in Britain in the 1950-1970s. Religious belief amongst young people in Britain (i.e. 16-24) has

[9]Discussion with Kennett (music semiotitian) April 2013

dropped from 68% to 53% since 1983 (BBC Religion and Ethics 2012). Despite this however, comparatively, Black British youth have stronger religious belief than their White counterparts (BBC Religion and Ethics 2012).

Irrespective of this documented decline, a reduction in the participation of organised religion does not mean the reduction of spirituality or the belief in sacred practices outside of it. The US academy in particular, has developed an extensive scholarly tradition and analysis of the relationship between Black music and religion (Pinn 2003, Dyson 1997, Utley 2012, Miller 2013, Reed 2003, Sylvan 2002); acknowledging that the majority of popular and Black secular music in the West is rooted in the Christian church (Beckford 2006). However in the West, the religious and the sacred have been dominated by Western thought (Beyers 2010). This is reflected in the repertoire on offer in the British academy; Christianity is the subject afforded the most intellectual engagement and study (Hotcourses 2013[10]). Whilst there is no universal African religion (Mbiti 1991), there are general principles that can be applied to African religions; there is no course in Britain specifically focusing on this.

> *'A sociologist would look through a sociological lens at religion, whereas a psychologist would give a definition based on a different (psychological) perspective. This would also apply to culturally determined definitions: a Westerner would provide a definition influenced by European thought and an African would formulate the answer according to African philosophy.' (Beyers 2010:2)*

There is an increased interest linking Black cultural production with belief and art as evidenced by *Black Theology: An International Journal*'s[11] special issue on Afrofuturism.

[10]www.hotcourses.com – now defunct

[11]**Special Issue:** Afrofuturism in Black Theology – Race, Gender, Sexuality, and the State of Black Religion in the Black

Significantly, this issue evidences that Africanised religions and/or major world religions, such as Christianity, take on new meanings and interpretations in an Africanised context. This acknowledgement enables Black practitioners to explore meaning and belief for themselves in more depth.

Music and sound were important to the lives of enslaved Africans. European prevention of traditional or African derived religious practices (Hebdige 1987) and musical communication (Walker 2015), had a significant impact on their musical and religious expression. Historically, the overt religious beliefs and practices of the diaspora outside of frameworks prescribed by Europeans were punishable by death in the most extreme cases. Such punishment encouraged the appropriation of Eurocentric values and practices.

Unlike Eurocentric religious thought, the dichotomy between the secular and sacred have always been blurred in African and diasporic worship (Reed 2003, Beyers 2010). Discarding the 'profane' is not a concept in Afrocentric religious practices; however an acknowledgement of things being used for good or bad is (Smith 1994). Afrocentric religious and spiritual distinctions take place between the visible/tangible/material world and the invisible/intangible/immaterial (Mbiti 1991, Beyers 2010). Crucially however, both are seen as part of one reality, including the transcendence between them; virtuality and reality are one and the same.

African religious outlook resides in the collective, it is does not have a sole founder like many contemporary monotheistic religions. Africans place themselves as central to the universe; they are the centre but not the master and must obey natural orders to preserve balance. Whilst there may be religious leaders in the community, without the active participation of all involved, the collective beliefs and religious way of life would

Metropolis Black Theology: An International Journal (2016)

die out. Africanised religion involves practices, beliefs, values and objects, in addition to religious officials. African religions celebrate life. Music and dance are powerful and are included in African worship and traditional life. Religiosity forms part of everyday life and provides practical solutions and apparatus to navigate one's life. It is for the people; all can engage and religion travels wherever the people go.

The flexible application of Africanised religion means that it can operate inside imposed or welcomed religious and/or social structures, such as Christianity or Atlantic slavery. Africanised religion's fluid nature finds spaces and ways to exhibit itself within prescribed frameworks. Mbiti (1991) suggests this adaptability means it takes generations for Africanised religious outlooks and practices to completely disappear, if at all. He gives the Caribbean and the presence of African religiosity in their contemporary practices as an example. Creolised religious practices of the Caribbean have been well documented (Sylvan 2002).

> *'Where African people have migrated from one part of the continent to another or overseas countries, they have often taken their music and dance with them.' (Mbiti 1991:27)*

Contemporarily, Gaskin's (2016) work draws attention to the importance and centrality of the Yowa/Kongo Cosmogram to contemporary Afrodiasporic art and music. She illustrates how it fits into Afrofuturism and the religious. Central to her argument is the circular motion (found in art and music), something highlighted by Mbiti in religious approaches to the universe and life. Rose (1994) refers to the circular as an integral aesthetic of Black and Africanised musical sensibilities. In religious contexts, the circular, found in nature and life, are acknowledged through rituals and used to honour the infinite nature of the never-ending and cyclical patters of the universe. In artistic expression, the circular is achieved through pastiche, reconstructing and creating anew, i.e., taking fragments of the past, rearranging to make a new present to open new

possible futures. This is an element referred to by Eshun (1998) and Rose (1994) in Black musical production. The circular evident in the Yowa/Kongo Cosmogram, Gaskin (2016) argues, signifies the journey of human souls and can be found in art and sound. She states that the Cosmogram is a nexus for belief systems, ideologies and technology; a symbol and a passage of communication between worlds and realities (material and immaterial). Africanised approaches to religion and the circular depict continuity and reflect the rhythms of life. Mbiti suggests circles are used in African artistic expression to illustrate the connectivity to the eternal.

> *'To ignore the existence of the transcendental will create disharmony in reality and will deprive the experience of the meaning of life. The pursuit of cosmic harmony is an ethical principal in traditional Africa.' (Beyer 2010:7)*

Interest in how the religious or spiritual interacts with popular culture has increased as participation in organised Eurocentric religion has declined, in both the fields of sociology and religious studies. In contemporary times, Lynch (2012) spearheads new ways to interpret Judeo-Christological religious meaning from modern/popular cultural practices within religious studies. He believes it is important to finding meaning and purpose in peoples' lives through everyday practices; especially as the post-industrial terrain and lack of participation in organised religion will inevitably lead to new forms of religious expression.

Lynch (2007) identifies three approaches to studying religion; a) Substantive; externally observable symbols of organised religion b) Phenomenological; perception, lived experience and common religious themes across different historical and social contexts and c) Functionalist; what religion does.

> *'Functionalist definitions open up the possibility that any socio-cultural*

> *system which serves these basic 'religious' needs for community, identity and meaning could be defined as religious, even though they fall far outside the conventional canon of religions.' (2007:129)*

Litonjua (2007) views religion as a social structure and diverse religions as cultural practices (subculture). Durkheim and Geertz approached religion as a social cultural system that binds people together into a set of social identifications, values and beliefs, *a 'grounding source of meaning for human cognitions, moods and motivations'* (cited in Lynch 2007:129).

These 'new' understandings of religious practice and function, in many ways, incorporate Africanised approaches to religion and have almost come full circle. Sylvan (2002) explores the religious and spiritual dimensions of popular music and proposes subcultural practices *as* religion by seeking out rituals, the ecstatic and the communal soul. McClure (2011) argues music can play a religious or quasi-religious role in the life of a fan.

> *'By the 1990s, it was clear to sociologists that music subcultures and music scenes were fulfilling quasi-religious,…"neoreligious" function in the lives of many people of all ages….attach themselves to a band, artist or genre in a way that resembles the devotional practices of religious persons who attach themselves to religions leaders, traditions and places of worship.' (McClure 2011:125)*

With specific reference to diasporan religious practice, work has been done in the USA to examine ways religiosity has been hybridized or incorporated into everyday practices. Smith (1994) uses the concept of pharmacosm to explore religious meaning in Black culture (healing/harm) - another way of talking about hope and despair. Tucker's (2011)

work on the religiosity of Chicago Stepping (Steppin') subculture[12], is a prime example of how the religious can be found in what appears completely secular within a sociology of religion framework. Her research shows a) how participants use dance to reinterpret their (organised) religious belief, spirituality and membership, b) the ways in which Steppin' subculture is structurally similar to organised religion and enhances their sense of purpose, meaning and community in their lives and c) how their organised religious practice informs Steppin'.

Utley (2012) explores the ways in which God, the Devil, and religion are used in Rap music and ways in which Judeo-Christological religious belief systems and tropes are used both for and against successful African-American musicians. She looks at how Rap images and lyrics impact listeners based on their religious belief and demographic markers. Miller's (2013) research focuses on Hip Hop culture and how it is expressed and viewed as being religious in some subcultural practices, for example such as *Krumpin'*. Smith and Jackson (2005) explore the concept of the Hip Hop church and developed an 'accessible' curriculum to engage people in the congregation and its religious and spiritual life. Further afield, St. John's (2004) edited volume, *Rave Culture and Religion*, includes multiple authors exploring 'The Religious' in dance, communion, sound and counterculture. O'Hagan (2004) interrogates the UK Garage scene and draws parallels between U.S Baptist preachers, House music and UK Garage MCs and their related cultural/religious practices. McClure (2011) constructs fandoms as comparable to religious pilgrimages, including those achieved through alternative attendance (via technology or portable devices).

In addition to cultural practices, processes are comparable to the religious and/or spiritual in the sociology of religion or religious studies fields. Producers, songwriters and song makers are analogous to religious/spiritual officials, becoming *'postmodern, ritual*

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[12] Anon 2012, Chistepper

priest of sound…' (McClure 2011:91)

> *'…the MCs responsibility was to call forth a mood of revelry with his words. Today the MCs responsibility has expanded to include spitting 16 bars over a beat but when rappers perform they invoke their own names, the names of their affiliates, as well as names of their neighbourhoods, cities, states and geographical regions. Rap invocations appeal to familiar people and places for inspiration and guidance.' (Utley 2012:11)*

> *'Invocation is central to rap music and religious practice' (Utley 2012:11)*

I will develop this idea to explore how this happens in the Grime scene. In addition to finding meaning in religious frameworks and/or subcultural practice, academics have argued that participation enables reclamation of self. Gesture and dance for example, are considered redemptive or subversive, in politics of transfiguration or fulfilment frameworks (Gilroy 1993), even shamanistic ones (Perkinson 2005).

These cultural practices in religious studies or sociology of religion frameworks, depict a quest to find meaning, joy and fulfilment: a search or desire to leave reality behind and enter a new space; to transcend ordinary life and return with a new or transformed outlook. Engagement enables critique: to gain critical perspective on ordinary experiences and connect to others. (McClure 2011, Gilroy 1993, Eshun 1998, Gilroy 1993, Perkinson 2005).

The body of research outlined above demonstrates that it is a vital and developing area of academic exploration. These examples are testament that 'the religious and/or spiritual' can be explored in subcultural practices such as Grime. Whilst I will not be exploring religion explicitly, I will use a broader Africanised spirituality framework as outlined earlier in this chapter. Like Beyers (2010), I do not wish to construct African and

Western religions as separate, but want to draw from a wider understanding of religious practices to establish if in fact Grime can be hallowed?

Audio culture and emotion

In addition to explorations outlined above, this interdisciplinary project will capitalise from the revived new interest in music, affect and the body (outside of music therapy) (Bull and Back 2003, Goodman 2010 and Eshun 1998). Audio-culture examines how sound and music affect the body (Sylvan 2002, Reynolds 2007, Eshun 1998), mind (Goodman 2010), mood (McClure 2011, Goodman 2010) and subconscious (Weheliye 2005, Filmer 2003). It explores places and spaces as components of a wider soundscape; an audio ecology or environment, and its impact on a person (LaBelle 2010). Sound moves across space and through objects and people, therefore, it should be understood temporally and spatially (Goodman 2010, Bramwell 2015). Music is a specific construct within the soundscape. It has access to both the natural and cultural processes of potential listeners. It is kinetic (Goodman 2010) and is energy of existence (Eshun 1998).

Popular music studies is also a relatively new field of study, beginning to construct tools of musical analysis by viewing music and sound as an object (Machin 2010, Kennett 2003). I will use these tools to build my own musical analysis framework - MDA[13]. This will contribute to popular music studies, but also to social sciences, cultural studies and the humanities. I will use elements of audio culture, Africanised religion and sociology of religion to make an interdisciplinary contribution to knowledge. I will link cultural practice and the physiological, with meaning making and explore how these merge with the visible and invisible to create a transcendental experience. I will link the search for meaning with DIY subcultural practice in this project, as I will be examining subcultures in Grime. Through this, these interdisciplinary areas of study will be interlinked.

[13] Musicological Discourse Analysis.

Resistance

Agency in music and subcultural practices facilitates mood enhancement individually or collectively. It suggests connecting to something larger than oneself (Reia 2014, Turner 1967). In social and political contexts, it has the potential to muster radical collective forces and generate social movements (Gilbert 2012). There is significant research on music as resistance, (Perkinson 2005, Goodman 2010, Labelle 2010, Gilroy 1993) protest and being used politically (Redmond 2014, Spencer 1990).

The very nature of being oppressed forces people and groups to develop new systems and meanings for themselves (Perkinson 2005, Utley 2012, Miller 2013). Hence, subcultures generate meaning. Music is the resource most easily available to marginalised peoples without access to substantial amounts of capital (Martineillo and LaFleur 2008) and is used to *'…express resentment, anger and frustration'* (Hebdige 1987:26)

Diaspora music is resistance and alternative communication; an internal coded resilience (Perkinson 2005, Goodman 2010, Hebdige 1987). Foucault calls this "subjugate knowledge" (Foucault, 1980, 81-84) that focuses on the ultimate concerns (McClure 2011) of marginalised groups that dominant culture fails to understand (Weheliye 2005). Eshun (1998) argues Black music encapsulates the dislocation and emotional severage of kidnap, slavery, colonialism and racism – alienation from the familiar and the self. It is laced with diaspora force, slave memory, the horrors of slavery, Black vernacular and enduring traditions (Gilroy 1993). It is made to be catchy and shared quickly, under duress to haunt the European spirit (Goodman 2010) and Western grand narrative (Weheliye 2005). It is sonic fiction (Eshun 1998).

For these reasons, Black music can be viewed as an alternative source of expression and

power (Henriques 2003), or a subversive or transformative nature or ideology (McClure 2011): a reservoir of meaning making. The composition and organising of music though the use of bass (Goodman 2010) breaks, rupture, flow, pastiche, syncopation (Gilroy 1993, Rose 1994, Weheliye 2005, Perkinson 2005), creates new dimensions (Weheliye 2005) to transmit hidden intentionality (Perkinson 2005), mixing past with present (Eshun 1998) to transcend (Gaskin 2016).

Breaks facilitate mixing of past and present. Musical and visual breaks have been linked to religious/spiritual practices in Caribbean folk traditions, Senegambia, the American South and rural America to ward off evil (Perkinson 2005). The distortion of straight lines have been used as a form of protection. Technological advances and democratisation have made breaks increasingly possible by capturing, distorting and militarizing sound (Goodman 2010) to forcefully express *'…the desire to transcend ordinary experience… not necessarily bound to specific religious traditions.' (McClure 2011:117)* and cocooning the listener inside.

The desire to transcend is also induced though the sonic manipulation of the body:

> *'Reconfigure the body and the cosmos itself is remade.' (Perkinson 2005:168)*

> *'...the interfusion of nervous system and computer matrix, sensation and information – so all battles are fought out in feeling or mood, with dreams exteriorized in the world itself.' (Csicsery- Ronay cited in Goodman 2010:50)*

This can be achieved by changing the spatial and temporal atmosphere through sound but also through dialogical contract of exchange (Pearce 1994) with peers, through speech, but also through gesture, utterance, intonation; verbal and nonverbal action.

Religion as resistance

Music, religion and subcultural practice provide a space for meaning making, safety (Utley 2012) and resistance (Perkinson 2005, Hebdige 1987) for oppressed groups; whether through protest music, liberation theology or the Black Church. They can act as mechanisms to fight for social justice. Utley (2012) states that Christian church participation and Hip Hop culture are both ways to respond to oppression. Perkinson (2005) suggests those oppressed, wrestle with 'God' to reinvent their worlds; seeking to understand or execute the demise of Babylon (Hebdige 1987, Jones 1988, Reynolds 2007, Goodman 2010). For others, it means discarding Judeo-Christological religious frameworks altogether.

> *'For many rappers. Resisting oppression requires resisting religion. It demands that they abandon oppressive ideas about God and replace them with new ones.' (Utley 2012:95)*

Links have been made between religious congregation, revolts and uprisings in the fight for justice, such as US civil rights and protesting police brutality (Utley 2012) or abolition of slavery (Hebdige 1987) for example. Music and art reflect and engage with these social resistive acts. Music uncovers the 'savagery' which lies beneath civility, uncovering those being 'eaten' by the 'civilized' (Perkinson 2005). Weheliye (2005) suggests these actions from the margins leave a long shadow over dominant ideals of the Western grand narrative. This means, in addition to meaning making for oppressed and marginalised groups, resistance is also a site to examine normative outlook and sensibilities of the subcultural or religious group.

Music as escapism

Paradoxically, engagement in music scenes enables one to escape the politics of daily life (Hesmondhalgh and Melville 2001) whilst *'making available shared ways of experiencing the late capitalist cityscape.'* (Gilbert 17:2012). Gilroy (2003) discusses how music makes hardships more bearable, and joint listening provides a sense of possibility and action. The escapism music enables is comparable to religion providing a sense of relief from the world's hardships.

This research project opens religious understanding wider than the Judeo-Christological approaches dominating academic study in Britain and brings an Afrocentric approach to religion. It will explore the body, mind and emotional responses to music to find meaning. This will contribute to sociology of religion that will be overlaid onto subcultural practices and audio culture, to link physical memetic manipulation to spiritual and emotional wellbeing and practice.

Outside of populist concepts of Illuminati and rumour, research into the spiritual effects of contemporary music is also a new and emerging area of study. Research examining contemporary Black British music is limited and my work will make significant contributions to these areas.

Research on DIY music subcultures is dominated by Punk and Hardcore (Dunn 2008, Reia 2014). This is disingenuous and is reflective of the Eurocentric music trajectory. Marginalised diaspora people have always had to make alternative use of resources to express creativity. However, they are approached and constructed differently or ignored in academic fields of study. Rose's acknowledgement of alternate use of technology in Hip Hop, experimentation in Detroit techno (How Clubbing changed the World 2012) or UK Shabeens and Blues dances (Shabbaz 2011) are rarely constructed as DIY. My work will place Grime music firmly in DIY subcultural study. Through the use of genealogy, it

will make links with other subcultures, including Afrodiasporic genres that may not have received examination in this framework.

In addition, this research will make a significant contribution to the impact of technological advancement on DIY subcultures (e.g. the rise of the bedroom DJ). Little research has examined the DIY culture with the advancement and democratisation of technology and digital/online space.

The creation of Napster was a turning point in the history of the music industry (Menn, 2003). MP3 formatted audio files, enabled compressed and reduced file sizes. This ensured music could be widely shared over the Internet without significant loss of quality (Coleman, 2005). The Internet and its platforms benefitted DIY subcultural agency and community empowerment. It provided an opportunity to share culture and information internationally; affecting the fixity of subcultural practice. This new dynamic was like nothing before. Reia (2014) finds the Internet is now an influential and a significant space in subculture and/or strengthens the communities. This project will examine the fluidity of the Grime subculture to establish if locality is still central to subcultural practice.

Summary

Music and religion explored in this chapter highlighted and made apparent the key differences in the Afrocentric and Eurocentric outlook as it exposed the significance of race to Eurocentric processes. The dominant Eurocentric understanding of music and religion is problematic and a case was made to approach the interrogation of music and religion differently. This is substantiated by religious studies now trying to find new ways to engage with non-sacred contemporary and popular culture that it originally sought to divorce itself from. Musical analysis largely fails to engage in wider social constructs.

An Africanised outlook in religion and music can give an alternative space for interrogation and can give Black music and cultural production new meaning. Researching Black music and cultural production in this project would best be suited to Africanised theoretical frameworks and/or outlooks. In addition, the incorporation of newer disciplines that approach music and cultural engagement in new ways; such as audio culture, Afrofuturism, sociology of religion, would benefit this project. In this chapter, music was explored as a form of escapism, resistance, religion and a tool of resistance in Black spaces. These approaches were primarily linked to subcultural practice and technological advancements.

The constellation of these literature reviews and fields congeals to disrupt the current trajectory of musical (and religious) study. This project's position outside the music and religious disciplines, enables scene members to ascribe meaning to Grime music and cultural practice simultaneously (an aim of this project). It reconfigures the marginality of Grime music, subcultural practice and its scene members, and builds upon frameworks that examine music as resistance or escapism, and religion as resistance in new ways. Most significantly, reconfiguring marginality subsumes resistance and escapism narratives within *wholeness*, (i.e. not the primary/solitary function of musical/cultural production and scene participation often researched in subcultural studies). Part of *wholeness* includes finding meaning and exploring the everyday or mundane, another aim of this project. An argument for *wholeness* is made in more detail in the next chapter where the importance of centring Blackness (to create the possibility of *wholeness*) and Black Britishness, where Grime is rooted, will be examined. It is possible for this project to interrogate subcultural study, class, race and gender, in addition to the subjects outlined in this chapter. Sociology and cultural studies have the tenacity and capacity to hold and interrogate these interdisciplinary ideas.

<u>Chapter Two - Literature Review: If you're Black get back…</u>

> *'Racism has worked to silence other articulations of Blackness, which is why the chasm exists in the academy.'* Andrews and Palmer (2013)

This chapter builds on some gaps identified in the previous chapter. Most importantly, it interrogates the literature to illustrate ways that contemporary studies fail to address the issue of Blackness from the position of wholeness. In most instances they focus on lack or difference, comparative to Eurocentric benchmarks. Exploration in this chapter explicitly focuses on the Black British context, as this is the location of Grime's genesis. It brings attention to the sporadicity of research, in recent times on Black Britishness. This literature review illustrates that despite the significant impact of the Black presence in British society, it is not reflected academically. There is a struggling and disconnected academic tradition/discipline that creates a lack of continuity underpinning Black British impact, contribution and knowledge produced. It is documented and curated ineffectively. This provides additional challenges such as rooting and building the field, and also shaping understanding inside and outside the academy with regard Black wholeness.

A fundamental argument within this chapter is the importance of centring Blackness in research to access Black wholeness; and Black Britishness specifically. The chapter interrogates the institutionalisation and implementation of the academic discipline to find that, across knowledge production, particularly related to subject areas relevant to this project, there is little literature to review that supports or grounds it. These findings reinforce the necessity of piecing together different disciplines for this interdisciplinary Black centred project constructs a base by selecting aspects applicable to fulfilling this purpose. It seeks to explore Black wholeness, the working class and the nuances of inner-

city British life for young people in the first decade of the 21st century. This project advances debates in Black British studies; in relation to modes of engagement, and inquiry relating to authentic lived experience in and of itself.

Many research topics focus on the material problems of Blackness, i.e. the ways racism and/or classism impacts upon them. This project shifts the focus by examining processes of identity formation, lived experiences and the mundane in contemporary Britain. The body of work on Black Studies researching Black British life in the 70s (such as Mullard 1973) focuses on the Caribbean perspective primarily and/or interactions with White people. The British experience of migrants from Africa during the 'Windrush' migratory period is under researched, leaving unknown Central and West African impact on British life. This lack of scholarly work creates a limitation on which to ground this research project. Additionally, research conducted 40 years ago is set in the context of predominantly British born Black youth and their parents who were born overseas. The reality for many Black Britons today, who are central to this project, is different. Presently, many British born Black people ranging from teenage to thirties, have British parent(s) and have grandparents or great grandparents that were born overseas. Black Britons predominantly have African and Caribbean ancestry, in some cases a mixture of the two.

This is not to discredit the work of Black Britain Studies, the research findings in the 1970s and 1980s or any advancements since then. It is to illustrate that the dynamics and social context cannot be directly overlaid and there is little, sporadic scholarly work that effectively builds on it to form a clear trajectory as to how Black British studies and experiences developed over time. Whilst this work does not attempt to bridge the gap, it builds on some aspects of it and assists in bringing the debate of Blackness forward to contemporary times.

Blackness

Black studies is an under researched area in Britain, particularly Black British Studies. Historically the tendency has been to examine Black participants as pathological (Codrington 2006), spectacular (Gunter 2010) or somehow different from 'normal' i.e. White (Garner 2007). Studies concentrate on health and social care, law, education or focus on cultural innovation (Gunter 2010). In this project, 'Black' people refers to those descended from Sub-Saharan Africa and African diaspora; specifically those affected by Atlantic slavery (i.e. predominantly, Caribbean, Central and West Africa, the Americas). The region and specific discourse Gilroy (1993) terms *the Black Atlantic*. In the British context, Black refers to the majority arriving and residing in Britain since the Windrush in the 1940s, and their descendants. The S.S. Windrush was a significant ship involved in post war migration since the Second World War from the Caribbean, docking in Tilbury on Britain's south coast[14]. Whilst there had been a small degree of migration and settlement before S.S Windrush, it marked the beginning of a specific phase of mass migration in British history (1940s-1970s). Black Britishness is a specific classification and set of lived experiences within the wider Black Atlantic or African Diaspora.

Andrews and Palmer have made significant gains reviving this discipline by setting up and heading the Black Studies Association and developing a space for Black British Studies through conferences (2013, 2015)[15]. They have an edited volume *Blackness in Britain* (2016) and forthcoming Blackness in Britain book series (Rowman and Littlefield). Birmingham City University will run the first Black Studies degree in Europe starting 2017/8, with a specific focus on Blackness in the British context[16]. This is a major step towards developing Black studies as a much needed discipline in its own right. It is

[14]British Library Board, The (n.d)

[15]Blackness in Britain Conference (2013, 2015).

[16]Anon (2016c) BCU.

essential the Black British experience is examined; by those who can intellectualise experiential knowledge, create theory and evaluate praxis. The importance of creating knowledge with an understanding of cultural processes of diverse Black British narratives, is essential to counter the current knowledge base founded in pathology and difference to 'norms' with regard, health, behaviour and intellect.

The Black Doctoral Network UK that I co-founded, is one initiative that provides space for scholars to network, share ideas, knowledge, information and experiences related to Blackness in academia. The positive response to this network, particularly by Black academics doing research on Blackness, evidences the lack of academic knowledge and/or support in this area and the need for it to be 'normalised' in the academic sphere. This space and discipline is essential owing to the challenges that political Blackness (i.e. non-white) brings forth. For example, this arrangement gives some politically Black members the choice of opting in and out of Blackness, leaving those who cannot opt out behind. Entwined with the Black British experience is racism and class oppression as a result of the introduction of the majority of African descended people arriving in the Britain since the Windrush. This 'Windrush' phase (late 40s to early 70s) saw the introduction of many diverse colonial peoples arriving to Britain to do the low paid jobs the White British did not want to do (Codrington 2006), in order to rebuild the country after the Second World War. This context made Windrush migrants a racialised class that enabled the mobilisation of political Blackness.

Differing ethnic groups united by not being White or White British may have assisted in strategic pressing for minority rights in Britain (as evidenced by gains made in the 1970s and 1980s), but it negates the nuances that differing groups experience in Britain. Even within political Black frameworks, some ethnic groups are silenced whilst others gain from its arrangement. In addition, the development of Islamophobia and anti-Blackness for example, elucidate the need for more specific types of studies on minoritised groups in Britain. This research will contribute to the vastly unexplored field of Black British life

sociologically for young people engaged in Grime music making and consumption.

Looking at the literature on Black Britishness, Hesse (2000) highlights the specificity of Black Britishness and like Fryer (2010), challenges the entry point of Black Britishness being the Windrush in 1948. He argues that making the Windrush the entry point for people of African and Caribbean heritage in British history serves only to eradicate the history of African descended people who lived and worked in Britain before that time.

> *'Black Britain' is an indigenous rather than immigrant phenomenon (Mullard 1973); 'Britishness' and 'Blackness' have been constructed in racist discourses as mutually exclusive (Gilroy 1987; Mama 1995); Black Britain is intelligible only as part of the African diaspora (Gilroy 1987; Mercer 1994); Black British identities are gendered co-productions in which the lives, struggles and misrepresentations of Black women are critical to its orientations (Bryan et al. 1985; Mama 1995; Reynolds 1997; Sudbury 1998); and Black Britishness is increasingly aspirational and entrepreneurial (Hall 1998).' (Hesse 2000:112).*

The Black British identity is regionalised and tends to largely be limited to the major towns and cities (Hesse 2000). This identity is also shaped from connections outside Britain, drawing from familial heritage, migratory patterns, usually from West African and Caribbean, but also The USA, Canada and the consumption of cultural imperialism from North America (Hesse 2000, Reynolds 2007, Gilroy 2004, Hall 1997, Gunter 2008, Codrington 2006, Rose 1994, Gunning and Ward 2009). The local is significant in the construction and measurement of Blackness (Gilroy 2004, Codrington 2006, Back 1996 and Alexander 1996). The transatlantic network provides kinship and support (Gunter 2010, Reynolds 2007) and helps retain cultural practices (Reynolds 2006).

To exemplify how these varying factors contribute to Black British identity, Gunter (2010)

found despite most participants in his research being third or fourth generation Black British East Londoners, their lifestyles, especially home life, reflected 'Caribbean norms'. It is something that Gunter (2010) found his participants were proud of, even if they described themselves as Black British. He also found that his participants felt Black people who did not show their Caribbean ancestry (i.e. speaking with 'Anglicised and 'cockney'' accents and dialects) were not considered Black. Participants would not exclusively describe themselves as solely either African-Caribbean or British.

Contemporary Britishness

In major cities where Black Britons live in higher concentrations, Back proposes such areas are not*'…mixing heritages; but making a new heritage' (Back 1996: 52),* that he termed 'neighbourhood nationalism', whereby location is not strictly tied to race per se, but commitment to the area and length of time lived in the area.

> *'...new ethnicities are produced in part through a productive tension between global and local influences. This way of framing ethnicity can be seen as radically different from the situational model prevalent within anthropology and the sociology of race relations, for it avoids the tendency to define ethnicity in primordial ways and acknowledges the simultaneously local and trans-local nature of identity formation.' (Back 1996:4)*

He drew this conclusion as a result of conducting his research in the same locations as Hewitt (1986), who explored Jamaican Patois use amongst young people approximately 10 years earlier. Alongside this adoption of Jamaicanised speech in London, White youth in Britain have enjoyed Jamaican sound system culture since the 1960s (Back 2000, Jones 1988) and adopted the stylistics and clothing of their African-Caribbean counterparts;

becoming Skinheads or Mods.

> *'American influences of Hip hop and soul, reggae and British hybrids of Caribbean culture such as Lovers Rock, Two tone and Smiley Culture's faster MC styled reggae 'Cockney Translation'. These genres, particularly two tone were influenced heavily by regional interpretations of Reggae' (Jones 1988:108).*

Living in multicultural locations since the 1960s had a *'communalising effect'* (Jones 1988:127) which *'strengthened over time'* (Jones 1988:128). Approximately 20 years after Hewitt's research, the '*neighbourhood nationalism'* Back (1996) speaks of what was present in these same London areas (Gidley 2007). Gidley (2007) finds these areas were patrolled by the youth and race was not considered a factor. Location, particularly postcode, identified who belonged: insiders and outsiders. He found 'race' was not central to belonging but noted the depoliticisation of the *'Black community leisure space'* (i.e. reggae and Black unity lyrics). He also noted ways that corporations such as Nike, Adidas and other sportswear companies have capitalised on Hip Hop culture and how combining these created space where youth generally, African-Caribbean/African/Black British, White British, Turkish etc., can engage in African-Caribbean/African-American initiated cultural styles, language and music.

> *'...an identification with Black youth culture does not inevitably lead to any ideological questioning of White racial attitudes.' (Hewitt 1986:144)*

These research projects are useful to illustrate the need for Black Studies. In some cases these projects acknowledge White youth awareness of incidents of racism towards Black peers. They provide a sense of youth culture and community amongst youth within specific localities. However, these approaches are 'integrationalist and utopic' and overlook or minimise intra and interracial issues, including the cultural appropriation of

Black culture for 'cool'. What I mean by 'integrationalist and utopic' in these instances is, that the focus is on the positive or broadening impact of Black presence/culture on White people, how White people access, engage and appropriate Black cultural forms. It centres Whiteness in Black spaces. The problems related to these interactions (i.e. how it impacts on Black people) are minimised, not a central focus of study or not considered. The interaction with centred Whiteness is where Black value is revealed and is constructed as beneficial for everybody. Approached in this way, Blackness and the Black experience is not centred and is marginalised. Enabling access to 'othered' or 'multi culture' and minimising problems associated with it, serves to inform the idea of a cohesive society where there are minimal issues or challenges to the imbalanced status quo.

Gunter (2008) redresses this balance by taking an approach similar to Whyte's (1993) street corner society. He makes intelligible the subcultural practices and experiences of those at the core of his research. He acknowledges that contemporary youth culture in *Manor* and in other youth subcultures are influenced by the Black Atlantic diasporic cultures, particularly in relation to dress, speech styles (which are largely consumed through music), Bashment and Hip Hop respectively. Significantly, he centres Black youth transitions through 'Road' culture to adulthood. Gunter also examines White working class youth transitions from 'Grafter' culture to adulthood. However, at times I found articulations about these transitions problematic, as the language sometimes appeared hierarchical. To transition, leaving road culture for something else, (e.g., grafter culture/formal education/employment) implies that to return to it, categorised as a Black cultural form, is to regress. Despite this however, this is critical work in the right direction and a significant contribution to the emergent studies centring Black experiences.

Reynolds (2006) argues that studies tend to focus on cross ethnic youth friendships, as exemplified in the models I have termed 'integrationalist and utopic' above. I agree with

Reynolds. These approaches place the Black experience of being appropriated second to the knowledge sought about how multicultural spaces impact on, or how practices are comparable to White norms. With regard to cultural norms over time, the focus is on the impact on White respondents. The process of normalising cultural practices over time, effectively Whitens them. The impact on Black respondents is not necessarily a point of significant focus or even consideration.

Re-examining the cases outlined above, I will illustrate the problems with this model. Gidley (2007), researched the same areas as both Back (1996) and Hewitt (1986). Despite suggesting race was not a factor, Gidley (2007) mentions that the territorial nature of young men in these areas is sometimes along racial lines and appears racially polarised. He was unable to, or did not unpack this, despite acknowledging the depoliticisation of the *'Black community leisure space'* and commodification of Hip Hop culture. Oversight such as this evidences the need for Black Studies, where Black British lived experiences are theorised and understood, rather than pathologised, problematised or ignored.

Watt (2006) finds that some working class residents, whilst in the same socio-economic situation as fellow residents use cultural capital to distance themselves from what he has coined *'Low Status Others'*. He finds for some White working class residents, ethnic minorities are included in this category. They can still be perceived negatively, for their mere presence:

> *'The low-status others… condemned both for their sheer presence as well as for their behaviour.' (Watt 2006:787)*
>
> *Two factors for social distinction '...moral behaviour linked to respectability and roughness, and secondly, 'race'.' (Watt 2006:791)*

The impact of racism is an aspect of intersectionality overlooked in youth studies in Britain, particularly where Black cultural capital is circulated. Researchers in youth studies, cultural studies and sociology are ill equipped to research this area if they approach their projects with 'integrationalist and utopic' ideas, particularly if they neglect to address the obvious issue of race and do not provide safe spaces for it to be discussed. The 'normalised' circulation of Black cultural capital in multicultural spaces does not equal utopia. Racism, even within multicultural working class locations impacts upon Black people.

> *'Various studies have shown of Black and Asian youth that 'localism' has partially arisen as a result of the fear of racialised violence that might take place outside the 'safe' confines of the locality.' (Gunter2010:122).*

Racist frameworks construct research centring Black experiences under the guise of Blacks' unwillingness to integrate (Reynolds 2006). Given the neglect and peripheral positioning of Black experiences in intersecting fields, I argue it is imperative to focus on and elucidate these spaces. Existing approaches superficially focus on Blackness without seeking to fully understand the Black experience in the context of systematic racism in Britain.

Within the integrationalist and utopic framework, Hewitt (1986) finds that, in White/Black friendships where there is an appropriation of Jamaican patois by White friends, fictive social relationships occur, whereby those involved cognitively transcend the actual structure of racial group relations. They replace their positional inequality encoded through their membership of different racial groups, with positional equivalence. Even if the White interactant is unaware, this very process takes place without them seeking to fully understand the realities of the Black interactant and foregrounds their own acquisition of cultural capital. This line of argument was not unpacked further to explore potential psychic damage it may cause the Black friend.

Superficial engagement did not occur to Gidley (2007) in his research nor did the dynamics of power. It is almost as if Black Studies is needed to provide space for such phenomenon. African American studies for example enables one to make tentative links to DuBois' (2007) concept of double consciousness that could be applied in this area.

As explored by Hewitt (1986), Back (1996) and Gunter (2010), transitions into 'Blackness' is something some Whites youth 'do' before *'growing up'* and '*moving on'* into employed work and formal education. This superficial engagement is not questioned or explored in depth. It implies anyone who remains or returns to 'adolescent Blackness' is regressive. This way of speaking about White routes to adulthood resonate with Hall's (1997) analysis of race where he explores the sliding scale of civilisation. This is problematic, but in some respects also silences the structural processes that create this linear construct of 'progress' to adulthood and normalcy for some members of society, whilst funnelling and legislating against others who remain 'stagnant'. Again, Black Studies can provide space to examine wider inequalities. 'Cohesion' and integrational utopic outlooks are strategically blind to racist practices, policies and procedures that stigmatise any one group for 'noncompliance', or assimilation to Whiteness – presented as normality. Black Studies seeks to dismantle the master's house[17].

Centring Black youth experience

> *'By and large it was the young people attending comprehensive schools in working class and multi-cultural communities that had a greater tendency to develop same ethnic friendship bonds.' (Reynolds 2007:390)*

Back (1996) and Gunter (2010) noted racialised friendship patterns, even in multicultural settings. Reynolds (2006) research found that Black British Youth of Caribbean descent

[17]Dismantling the Masters House (2015).

often had closest friends of similar ethnic backgrounds. These friendships had close compatibility, owing to similar values, identity and social capital, facilitating strategically essentialised friendships. These groupings/friendships act as a buffer to the marginalisation experienced in British society and serves as a space of understanding even within local multi-ethnic contexts (Gunter 2010). These experiences tell a different story to the integrational and utopic models of multicultural youth friendship and highlight fictive social relationships touched on by Hewitt (1986).

At secondary school, feelings of racial difference from White peers and direct racial discrimination were noticed by Black youth (Reynolds 2006). This resonates with Bourdieu's (1990) theory and Willis' (1981) findings regarding education's social function to eliminate working classes from higher education, and in turn, professional roles and leadership. This reproduces the working classes intergenerationally as a function of institutionalised power. Although race is not explicitly discussed in these analyses, it is evident that formal process of schooling have a class and racial impact for Black youth. Gunter's (2008) research also found Black youth of Caribbean descent were more likely to be targeted by police and other authorities, treated more harshly by these institutions and have less familial support than other ethnic groups. Gunter and Watt (2009) found that factors such as the unsatisfactory experience at school, disengaging with familiar road culture speech and style, and racial discrimination influenced education and work choice for those in their study. Black and minority ethnic youth face additional challenges when entering the job market (Cregan 2002, Bradley 2005). These factors suggest Black youth experience is not comparable to White youth experience. Youth experience, even in internal colonies, is not universal in Britain.

Friendships marked by great social differences are generally much harder to sustain over time (Reynolds 2006). These findings illustrate the redundancy of cross cultural research on understanding and supporting Black youth, their needs and their lived experiences, or integrationalist and utopic findings. These cross cultural projects primarily serve to

examine how Whiteness is affected by the presence of the ‘other’.

> *‘A report published by the Commission of Racial Equality stated that more than 90 per cent of White British people have no or few friends from Black and minority ethnic groups (Commission for Racial Equality 2004). Likewise, people belonging to minority ethnic communities also have limited number of close friends outside their own ethnic groups.’ (Commission for Racial Equality 2004, 2005, cited in T. Reynolds 2007:387).*

These findings illustrate the futility of research on interracial friendships if some groups can progress to ‘adulthood’ and others are *left behind* - friendships remain racialised. Centring Blackness in research reveals a different experience to integrationalist and utopic multiculture. It also provides a space where Black British experience can be made visible. These findings not only develop its own discipline; Black Studies, but provide a new lens to evaluate and re-theorise aspects of youth studies, cultural studies, sociology, subcultures and other fields in the humanities and social sciences.

Black cultural impact in Britain

Using Baker’s (1996) concept of the ‘Black Public Sphere', Bramwell (2015b) explores identity development and formation for young Londoners. Importantly, he centres and illustrates the relevance and continuity of the Black music tradition and related cultural practices in contemporary London life. Bramwell (2015b) presents clearly how Hip Hop and Grime provide a space for belonging, camaraderie, an environment for skill acquisition and employment for young Black, ethnic minority and White working class Londoners. For White working class Londoners the connection to the Black Public Sphere is a cultural interpretation that provides a way for White scene

members to make sense of their classed based systemic oppression.

Centring and interrogating marginal space uncovers that youth who took on road culture and related Black Atlantic cultural practices could create success, i.e. generating capital, respect and success on their own terms, thus, providing themselves with alternatives to the problems associated with 'formal/conventional' post 16 education/employment routes. However, those who choose to take alternative routes, do so in the knowledge that it attracts police attention and other means of intervention i.e. policy is constructed around misunderstood practices (e.g. NEETs[18]).

The Black Public Sphere, related identities and cultural practices are systematically denied and devalued in formalised social structures. This disproportionately positions Black males on society's periphery - in internal (London) colonies (Hall 1978). However, informal routes in education, training and entrepreneurship are cultural practices found and established across the Black Atlantic e.g. economies of Nollywood (Lobato 2010), Jamaican music industry (McMillan 2005) and American Rap and Hip Hop culture (Kitwana 2002, George 1999, Rose 1994, Goodman 2010); all of which form DIY subcultural practice. The idea of informal and alternative economies and creating one's own rules around art have also been outlined by Webb (2007) in his examination of Bourdieu (1992, 1993) who found that musicians and fans outside the industry operated on a set of 'rules' outside formalised industry.

In the US, there is a body of scholarly work linking post-industrialism with the emergence of Rap music and Hip Hop culture. Road culture entrepreneurship, training, education and employment, can arguably be an extension of these subcultural practices found in the diaspora and is an area of future interrogation. Framing practices in this way, contradicts the problematisation and legislation against Black and working class males

[18] Not in Education Employment of Training

on the periphery of society (colonies) being NEET (Bramwell 2015b, White 2014, Gunter 2010) or delinquent (White 2014). The construction of NEETs is an effect of post-industrial Britain. They are defined by what they are not. Such constructions illustrate the systematic misunderstanding of youth lived experience by the authorities (Bramwell 2015b). Centring Black and/or intersectional working class youth practices would uncover these issues and enable effective theoretical tools, concepts, methods etc. of support for young people transitioning into working life.

Race in the academy

Despite the significant impact of Black presence in Britain, the study of Blackness is marginalised, and if explored, is often 'grouped' with other minoritised groups in Britain i.e. 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic' (BAME). Alternatively, studies about Blackness focus outside Britain[19]. The lack of research highlights the value and legitimacy placed on the Black presence and contribution to Britain. The intrinsic Whiteness of knowledge production and the systems that sustain it, has only recently been challenged and critically engaged with[20]. British sociology has been identified as Eurocentric and segregated[21], dominated by Whiteness and White thought. It highlights significant gaps in knowledge and ways in encountering and understanding the world.

> *'Black sociologists have long been attentive to White sociology.' (Social Sciences Week 2015, Birkbeck).*

[19] Assessment of university courses advertised on websites www.Hotcourses.com (2013) and www.WhatUni.com(2016)

[20]Why isn't my professor Black? (2014), /Why is my university curriculum White? (2015), /Dismantling the masters house (2015).

[21]Back, L. (2015), speaking at Birkbeck.

Not all Black academics desire to study or teach in the area of sociology, race or Black studies specifically. However those who do, have found opportunities to do so overseas (Phillips 2004) due of lack of opportunity and it's undervalue as a subject in Britain. A report in 2011 highlighted that whilst there were 15000 professors in Britain, only 50 were Black (Shepherd 2011). In 2014, of 18000 professors, 85 were Black (Grove 2014). The Black category itself included British and International scholars, only 17 are women. Marginalisation for Black academics in Britain, has resulted in British Brain Drain and hindered the development of the discipline. My own investigation into the study of 'race' in higher education over a three year period (2013-2016) revealed the area of study is not only small, but decreasing (appendix xi[i]). Most courses are offered at postgraduate level, which is inaccessible for many.

Expanding the arsenal of 'classic' sociological frameworks at all levels of study, would elucidate tacit and embodied knowledge of the Black British experience and Black thought more broadly. These approaches move British - African descended peoples from objects of study to genuinely researching and developing knowledges about lived Black British experiences, outlook and contributions. Birmingham City University are the first in Europe to develop an undergraduate degree specifically focussing on Black Studies in the British context.

Findings about the study of Black and Black British music in Higher education between 2013 and 2016 produced even more dire results (appendix xi[ii]). There are limited British PhD research projects in this area (appendix xi[iii]) and patchy academic literature on the subject. Current popular music courses explore music of the diaspora, ranging from one off classes to modules (which are often optional). However the musical genres covered feature Black music located outside Britain. Furthermore, the specificity of Black music, in a British context, has not come to fruition, be it in British academia, or recognised as Black music in its own right. The University of Westminster launched the Black Music Research Unit (BMRU). It is the first of its kind in Britain. The first Hip Hop

Studies conference in Britain took place at Cambridge University in June 2016[22]. Blackness and Britishness still have an antagonistic, mutually exclusive relationship. This could account for the under theorising of Black British music, although it is slowly changing. In this project, I open the dialogue and contribute to debates relating to music and 'race' in Britain.

Grime and navigation

Black British youth culture significantly informs British youth culture (Lindner 2007). Knowledge about Grime is embodied knowledge that individuals experience every day, in dress, music and TV, and yet the British academy has not effectively theorised and conceptualised it. The gaps in knowledge about contributions to British culture and heritage from varied and disparate ethnicities have been systematically side-lined from dominant narrative[23].

Grime emerged in post-industrial Britain at the turn of the 21st century. The low barrier entry to participating in Grime (Martineillo and LaFleur 2008), results from relatively inexpensive music equipment (Sony PlayStation), the sampling of pre-existing material and freely sharing material. *'The result was a vibrant scene that evolved quickly and enrolled a large number of user/producers' (Palmas and von Busch 2008:9).* Grime grew exponentially reaching mainstream saturation in 2009.

While a large body of work exists about US Hip Hop music culture (George 2005, Strode and Wood 2007, Dyson 1997, Foreman and Neal 2004) and some on Jamaican music and bass cultures (Riley 2014, Sullivan 2013, Bradley 2012), there is very little scholarly research on Grime (Zlotowitz 2010, Bramwell 2011, 2015 White 2014, 2016, Ilan 2012,

[22] Hip Hop Studies Conference (2016).

[23] History Matters Conference (2015).

Dedman 2011, Barron 2013).

The importance of centring cultural products in context, ensures their value is made explicit and not problematised or victimised. This lack of scholarly work has left Grime open to attack and problematisation by authorities who legislate accordingly. In post-industrial Britain, the reduced opportunities for upward mobility (Higher Education Act 1998), gentrification of poorer areas (Watt 2006), fear of young people (Shannahan 2009), social capital gained through strategic essentialism (Reynolds 2006), and increased access to technology and technological platforms (Martineillo and LaFleur 2008, Palmas and von Busch 2008) have a Foucauldian 'critique-like' genealogical role to play in Grime and may be comparable to the social and political challenges that led to Hip Hop's emergence in post-industrial USA. This genealogical process is something I explore in this research project. In doing so, the contributions of members of the African diaspora living in Britain and their British music will be documented, acknowledged and centralised in the academic debate.

This chapter drew attention to gaps in knowledge related to Black Studies as a) a discipline, b) it intersects and/or shapes other disciplines, c) a methodology to approach researching and documenting Black life and d) the specificity of Black Britishness in particular. Grime music has had a significant impact on British popular culture and yet it falls within many knowledge gaps. This project aims to make contributions to aspects outlined earlier in this chapter, alongside youth studies, subcultural studies and contemporary British studies. In order to fulfil and effectively contribute to knowledge across the interdisciplinary fields outlined in chapters one and two, and, centring the lived experiences of those (who were/are) actively involved in the scene, I have outlined and analysed my theoretical frameworks, research methods and techniques to centre Blackness as a methodological approach, to be explored in the next chapter.

Chapter Three - Methods: Buildin' da Track

> *"It can be maintained that virtually no information about a person, group or social system exists without a relationship with that person or social system" (Berg and Smith, 1988:22, cited in Goldstein 2004:15)*

> *'Following Letherby et al (2012), the act of 'theorising the subjectivity' of the researcher(s) is crucial as this may provide an important glimpse into the researcher(s) epistemological, ontological and theoretical beliefs.' (Harvey 2013:87)*

In the previous chapters, I outlined knowledge gaps to which this project attempts to bridge in sociology, cultural studies, youth studies, audio culture, musicology and Black British studies specifically. However, no contribution is ever completely neutral. To ensure the transparency and integrity of this project, I outline my ontological and epistemological assumptions, and motivating factors in this chapter, before outlining methods of data collection and methodological reasons for these choices.

Not only do my social markers of sex, class and 'race' impact on those I interact with in my research, my intersectionality shapes and informs my life experience, views, ontological, theoretical and epistemological assumptions. This awareness makes me a reflexive researcher. I chose the projects' research methods for their triangulation, to increase the degree of neutrality, objectivity, rigour and validity. My academic background in the disciplines political science, sociology and psychology, contribute towards informing my assumptions, particularly with regard to 'race'. I view the personal as political; therefore, I do not consider the political dimensions or psychological impacts of race to be separate from this project or these fields of study. My lived experience makes race (and gender) central to my existence (I am confronted with it

whether I want to engage with it or not), regardless of whether it is considered a marginal issue by mainstream Britain and marginalised in British knowledge production.

My initial motivation for this project was reactive; to look at the positivity in Grime music principally with reference to Members of Parliament (MPs) condemning predominantly Black youth who were involved in the scene in the mid-2000s. I wanted to use this project to challenge MPs' stereotyping comments/propaganda and give scene members a voice to speak back. This drive possibly included my own feelings regarding stereotypes, because of my own intersectionality and the double consciousness of how I can potentially be seen by others. In relation to this project, I was also aware that whilst my motivating intentions were to 'prove' that Grime was not the mainstream stereotype and use my research to be the voice for the disenfranchised, I was, ironically, becoming increasingly frustrated with neighbours who insisted on playing music, dominated by bass, at any time of day or night, in their home or in their cars outside on a densely populated terraced street in North West London. I still consider these actions deeply selfish and inconsiderate. This paradox illustrates that unwanted loud music in private spaces can be problematic and that the arguments for or against Grime (or young people's leisure time and spaces) are not clear cut or binary. It illustrates that there is the potential for Grime to be all of these things: good and bad; exhilarating and annoying. This is an important acknowledgement in line with Johnson and Cloonan's (2008) arguments that the study of popular music often has a positive spin. This is in part to validate popular music studies (considered a soft subject) as a worthwhile and valuable subject.

To ensure that both my subjectivity and motivating factors, in addition to universal Eurocentric knowledge was mediated, my methods, methodological approaches, and their triangulation increased the level of objectivity in this piece of research. Despite the messiness of Grime (i.e., the good and bad), the 'emancipatory approach' adopted was applicable here, primarily because it challenges mainstream

knowledge perceptions of a type of music and the demographic groups most closely affiliated to it. This is important to challenging dominant discourses of power, class bias and racism targeted at the Black, poor, young and the disenfranchised.

Researching While Black - Black on Black finds

> *'One of the more substantive of these is enabled in considering the intersubjectivity created through researcher participant interactions. For example, the researcher could benefit from a consideration of how participants' will perceive them especially in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, life experience and so on (Pini 2004).' (Harvey 2013:89).*

Rollock's (2013) work gives insight into the importance of researching race and racism and its impact on the actual research process. Her work on the interviewing process and experiences resonated with me strongly as a fellow Black woman living in Britain. I felt able to empathise with the issues she referred to in her own research processes, and considerations when interacting across racial lines in day to day life. I also felt my training in race and ethnic relations[24] and lived experience made discussing race easier (for me), particularly when speaking to respondents who identified other than Black. Rollock (2013) identifies that the research process itself deems Whiteness invisible. This lack of 'political' racial awareness and unfamiliarity with one's own and/or respondents' racialised lived experience can actually impact on the questions asked and follow up questions in relation to respondents' responses.

In my research process, I found that social coordinates enabled me to be in the 'in-group' in some situations and outgroup in others. Researching something on which I had some degree of cultural capital, relevant to my lived experiences of Blackness in Britain, I found

[24] MSc Race & Ethnic Relations, Birkbeck

I was empathetic to some of the experiences relayed to me by some respondents in relation to race. This connection enabled me to instinctively ask questions another researcher may have overlooked.

It enabled me access to conversations that I believe a White researcher may not have been able to access, particularly with Black, African diaspora respondents. I believe my responses to Black respondents were perceived as genuine and I was not treated with suspicion, even with the awareness that I was a researcher. My judgment on this is exemplified by Black respondents speaking to me in inclusive ways; signalling to me that I was part of the 'in-group':

'They gave it Grime. They gave it the title. You know who they is!' Anon267

When talking about elements of race and systemic oppression faced on the grounds of race, there was the assumption that I understood, without the need for respondents to make lines of argument explicit. I was perceived as an insider when talking about general forms of cultural capital based on my assumed age and background (e.g. assuming I had a Tamagotchi toy as a youngster, singing or humming specific songs with the expectation I knew the song, slang terms used i.e. 'gassed', heritage - references to Haile Selassie or NinjaMan). Some of these examples indicate that there was an acceptance and understanding of class and racial insider-ness and shared cultural capital.

My attendance at events, particularly larger events, did not arouse any suspicion; my presence didn't present as an issue or unusual in these spaces. People did not know I was a researcher, I was just another fan, blending in inconspicuously. My camera may have been a sign that I was documenting events, however, other people had smartphones and tablets to document events. My camera was rather bulky and therefore may have indicated to those around me that I may be a photographer or videographer documenting events in a more formal capacity. However, if assumed, this

did not present as an observable problem or issue.

Being a woman placed me as an outsider in some instances. I believe this influenced the choice of questions I asked and instinctively followed up with. I was and felt like an outsider to the male dominated brotherhood and bonding I observed at smaller events where my presence was more obvious. I was approached by a man, in a non-romantic capacity, who said he had never seen me (at events) before. Based on observation, this confirmed that the smaller events had regular attendees that most people were familiar with each other. My 'femaleness' may have been the reason I was approached rather than avoided in this situation. I felt I was noticed more by the women at smaller events. I suspect because I was an obvious new face to them; as Black women were the demographic group least in attendance at smaller events. Being a woman and/or Black may have been the reason women did not approach me in this space.

Interviewing male respondents, in some cases I was objectified and infantilised:

'Alright babes?' Anon731

'A pretty girl like yourself' Anon143

These were respondents who were younger than me, even though I did not disclose my age. They had a level of familiarity with me that did not correspond to their actual knowledge of me as a person or who I was, outside of what I had told them about my research project. These comments are also reflective of gender norms in wider British society. As a female in an observation setting, I was approached in a 'romantic' capacity, by a Black male member of staff in a venue (not a scene member), urging me to get up and dance and wanting to hug me and take my mobile telephone number. I also encountered a young White man (early 20 approx.), who I suspected had taken drugs. He was fixated with my hair, touching it and telling me that I am so cool at every

given opportunity he saw me in the venue. Each time he would make attempts to hug me or give me single or double handed high-fives. That particular observation, at a smaller venue, became a game of cat and mouse, not because I felt in any danger, but because he was very distracting from the task at hand. I do not suspect this was rooted in romantic interest, more so curiosity and opportunity. I suspect it was the combination of a) my social coordinates (i.e. being a Black woman in a space where few Black women are found), b) being in close proximity, c) him wanting to interact with me and d) him possibly being 'high'. This is not to say that male researchers would not experience attention like this in contemporary times, but it is worth noting that in the situation of observation in live performance settings, I, as a woman, may have been faced with additional challenges and responses from men and women.

I believe my femininity and the perception of female vulnerability prevented me from accessing some information from male respondents, when reflecting on the content from MDA and observation data. In live event settings, I observed issues related to race and gender (explored in chapter six) and one of the MDA lyrics refers to a *'Batty Bwoy MC' (Lethal Bizzle/Dexplicit Pow 2004),* suggesting there are gender and sexuality norms in the scene. However in interviews, it is possible respondents altered their language to present gender or sexuality norms (in the scene) differently to me. They may have altered what they believed may have been offensive to me or damaging to their self-image. There may have been a need for male respondents to present themselves in a particular way to a female interviewer or researcher in general.

When referring to Grime, respondents sometimes spoke in a way indicating that I was not part of what they were talking about, even if they spoke to me inclusively with regard to race and assumed age:

> *'We were angry. And like ask why we're angry. We can't fully tell you like we were all from…most of us are from these areas like and we were going*

through hard times like you know…' Aaron Roach Bridgeman

The use of '*we'* here is exclusionary, talking about his peers and then generalising to other people in the scene who are from 'these areas'. This inadvertently implies that I may not be from these areas or experience them from a male perspective. In relation to gender and what male respondents do or did, I was not spoken to as an insider; things were explained to me. In interviews with female respondents, I did not feel like an insider or an outsider. Gendered assumptions of mutual understandings associated with race were not there.

There was a classed inclusion when speaking to the majority of respondents. 'They' was used when referring to politicians, or the 'ruling classes. This may also have been influenced by my lines of questioning and our mutual distance from the ruling classes, even if I was not perceived as being from the same backgrounds as the respondent themselves. A Black man I spoke to in casual observation said that he assumed that I was a *'posh Black girl from Hertfordshire'*. This perceived class and locational difference may have been assumed by other respondents and influenced some of their responses to my questions. Paradoxically however, there were a couple of respondents who knew the area I grew up in and the secondary/high school I attended, owing to mutual contacts and family members assisting with securing the interviews. This familiarity and knowledge about me may have given me access to more information through realising we share cultural capital.

I interviewed respondents once only. It is possible negative aspects in the scene were shielded from me in the process of image management. I did not have or establish substantive relationships with the majority of respondents beforehand and whilst I did not feel as though respondents did not trust me, my gender, perceived class and locational difference and position as a researcher, may have contributed toward guarding against relaying information about things that they may have considered

undesirable to talk about. Response bias is a type of bias where a respondent consciously, or subconsciously, gives responses that they think that the interviewer wants to hear. This research area was considered so unusual and was perceived to be so opposite of mainstream perceptions of Grime that this may have led to boosting the positivity of respondent data.

Paradoxically however, I do feel that my social coordinates made it easier to ask questions about things I didn't understand. Even without asking, I felt that some male respondents used this as an opportunity to educate me and enjoyed sharing their knowledge. I was an outsider when respondents referred to scene based jargon. Basic terms such as 'mixed-tapes' and 'sets' were explained to me; this may have been due to the perceived naivety in my questioning. Asking questions showing a lack of cultural competence may have been a source of ridicule for a male researcher, as they would not be perceived as having the cultural capital associated with the male dominated scene. This may also have led to more respondent tolerance with some questions I asked, as there may have been an assumption I would not know. At no point did female respondents feel the need to educate me nor consider that I didn't understand anything they were telling me unless I asked specifically.

Taking these factors into consideration makes me a truly reflective researcher. My awareness of self, as a woman racialised as Black throughout my life experience and the subsequent double consciousness (DuBois 2007) associated with it, has proven to be an asset in analysing my position and motivation as a researcher for this project.

Methods

> *'In other words, researchers are aware of the wider discourses that shape the lives of the participants, and demonstrate this awareness in the choices they make regarding their research. This awareness can be demonstrated through the myriad ways in which researchers may choose to design their data collection from the structure of the approach through to considering how they present themselves.' (Harvey 2013:89).*

This project triangulated three research methods: **a) in-depth semi structured interviews, b) participant observation: physical/online and c) musicological discourse analysis (MDA)**. The methods combined provided a theoretically rich data set from multiple vantage points, facilitating varied modalities of analysis and increasing the objective rigor of the findings and arguments put forward and theories proposed.

I approached forty-two people for **in-depth semi structured interviews** in total. The response rate was approximately 74%. However only 40% of those approached resulted in an interview. Of the forty-two approached, thirty-one responded; seventeen of those resulted in an interview. The highest rates of non-response were from those approached by email in the first instance or from those I spoke to in person and then followed up by email. This indicates that email is not the best method to engage people involved in the Grime scene. In the initial stages I emailed, but as my confidence grew, I began to approach people in person or through social media which are more immediate ways of engaging with potential interviewees. I had the best success dealing directly with the person I wanted to interview. Those with agents and organisations/institutions produced varied results (correspondence/no response), none of which resulted in an interview.

The fourteen respondents who replied to my initial request, but did not interview, were supportive and many had respect for the project. The recent commercial nature and multicultural consumption of the scene, compounded by the unusualness of my research, I felt, assisted me accessing information and respondents. For example, two men I did not end up interviewing, rang me to tell me about events I knew nothing about to assist me with my research. Another respondent I did not interview, emailed to tell me about a programme to be aired on the Community Channel[25] that could help my research. A respondent that I interviewed emailed to see how my research was getting on. Another interviewee tweets me from time to time to see how I was and share new music. Some others have become social media 'friends'. Many commented that focus on Grime was rare and felt that it was about time. Despite the enthusiasm, eight of the interviews that did not go ahead were for scheduling reasons, the correspondence slowed and ceased for the others. Those approached were very busy and successful in the scene and therefore were unable to devote time to the interview. This was compounded by my own time constraints by which I needed to complete my fieldwork.

[25]Community Channel: Virgin 269, Sky 539, Freesat651, FreeView 63

1 Table of those approached for interview:

	Interviewee	Ethnicity	Involvement	Method of contact	Correspondence	Interview
1.	Male Quaan	White British	Record Label Owner/Fan	P/Em	X	X
2.	Male Kienda	Black British	Music Lawyer and Lecturer	P	X	X
3.	Male SK	Black British, Caribbean	DJ/Events organiser/Radio	Em	X	X
4.	Male Dex	Black British, Caribbean	Producer/Radio	P/T	X	X
5.	Male Big Narstie	Black British, Jamaican	MC/Comedian/ Radio	P/T	X	X
6.	Male Dan	White British	Music Journalist/Fan	P/Em	X	X
7.	Male Aaron	Black, Bajan, Dominican	MC, Presenter, Youth Work	R/T	X	X
8.	Male Marsta	Black British, West African	MC/Producer	SM	X	X
9.	Male Anon	Black British, Jamaican	Producer	SM	X	X
10.	Male Axel	Black Dutch, Surinamese	MC/Producer	P/Em	X	X
11.	Male Tevyn	Black British	Singer/ Songwriter/ Producer	SM/R	X	X

12.	Male Terra	Mixed Race, British, Black, White	MC/Radio/DJ/ Educator	SM	X	X
13.	Male Mind of Grime	White British	Blogger/Business Owner/Fan	SM	X	X
14.	Male Maxwell	White American	Blogger/Fan	SM	X	X
15.	Female Raechoul	Black British, Mauritian, Pan Africanist	Songwriter/Events Organiser	SM	X	X
16.	Female Hattie	White British	Music Journalist and Editor	P/SM/ Em	X	X
17.	Female Sim Simma	Black British, Caribbean	MC/Singer/ Songwriter	P/T	X	X

<u>Non respondents:</u>

18.	Male	Black British	DJ	P/T	X	
19.	Male	Black British	DJ	P/T	X	
20.	Male	Black British	Producer	R/Em	X	
21.	Male	Black British	Artist Management	R/Em	X	
22.	Male	Black British, Jamaican	MC/Producer/ Event Planner	P/Em	X	
23.	Male	White British	Journalist/Event Organiser	P/Em	X	
24.	TV Channel	-	Music Channel	Em		
25.	Male	White British	DJ	Em	X	
26.	Male	British Asian, Indian subcontinent region	DJ	Em	X	
27.	Male	Black	Music Manager	R/Em		
28.	Male	Black British	DJ/Producer/ Record Label	R/Em		
29.	Female	British, Pakistani	PR, Marketing, Management	R/Em	X	
30.	Radio Station	-	Radio	Em	X	
31.	Magazine	-	Magazine	Em		
32.	Male	British, Muslim?	Artist Management	P/Em	X	

33.	Male	White British	Producer/Radio (Nasty FM)/DJ	Em	X	
34.	Male	White British	DJ/Radio/Business	Em		
35.	Female	White British	Singer	Em/P	X	
36.	Website	-	Website	Em		
37.	Website	-	Website	Em		
38.	Female	Black British	MC	Em		
39.	Female	Mixed Race, British, Jamaican, White	MC	Em		
40.	Male	White British	DJ	Em		
41.	Male	Black British	Fan/MC	P/BBM	X	
42.	Male	Black	Artist/Actor/Filmmaker	P/Em/A	X	

Key for 'method of contact' column:

Em= Email

P= In person

T= Telephone

SM = Social media

R= Referral from friend/family/respondent.

Ev = Event

BBM = Blackberry Messenger

A= Agent

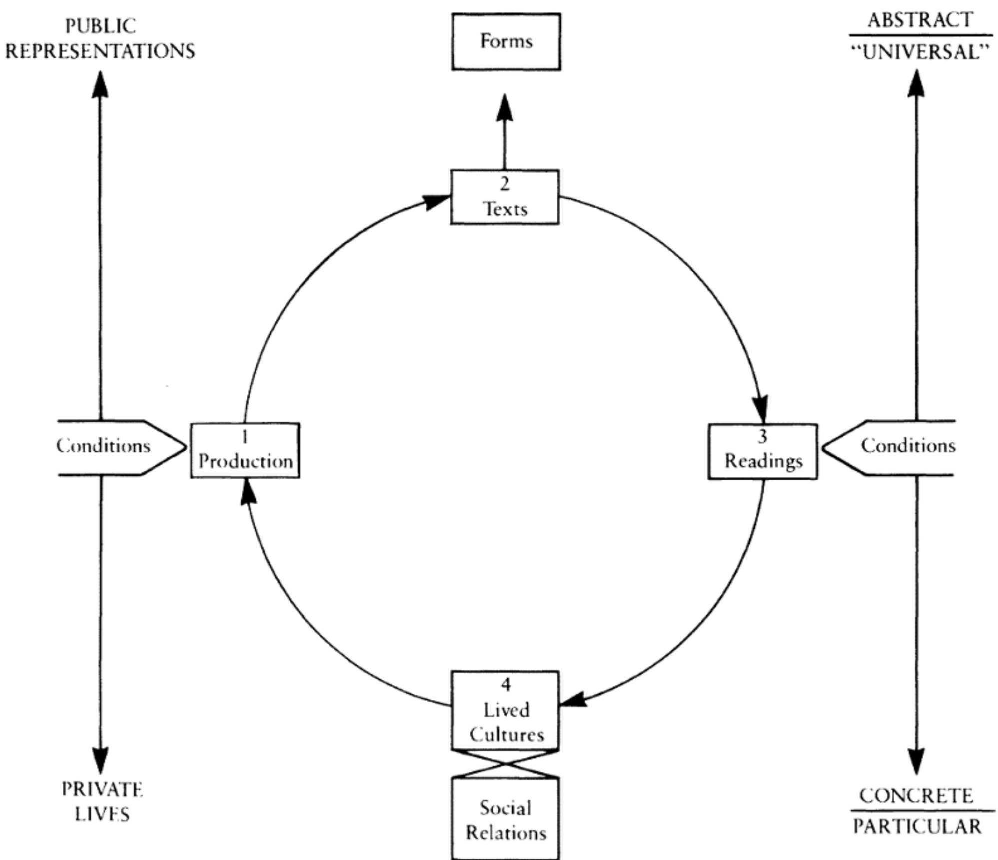
I conducted seventeen, in-depth semi structured interviews with respondents of ranging involvement and capacity in the scene. Those interviewed were predominantly male, (only three female respondents) and the age range varied, in my estimation, from approximately early 20s to 50s, with the majority falling within the estimated 22-38 age range. The respondents were predominantly London born and raised. Some grew up elsewhere in Britain but moved to London to pursue their careers. One respondent was from the USA and had never been to Britain, another travelled across the world throughout their childhood with their family owing to their father's profession. Finally, one respondent has family in Britain, but lives in The Netherlands. Respondents' self-reported ethnic backgrounds were White (European descended, i.e. White British, British and White American), Mixed-Race (Biracial, i.e. Black and White, British) or Black (African descended, i.e. Black British, British, Caribbean, Dutch (Surinamese), Mauritian, West African, African). Two thirds of those interviewed were Black.

The respondents can be categorised within the scene in clusters I have named:

- cultural producers (producers, musicians, MCs/rappers, entertainers),
- consumers (fans),
- cultural transmitters (DJs, pirate radio, presenters, raves),
- cultural commentators (journalists, bloggers),
- creative managers (editors, marketers) and
- creative administrators (legal, business owners, label owners).

Each category has a specific role in the circuit of meaning (Johnson 1986) that constitutes cultural signification.

2 Circuit of Meaning[26]



For example one respondent encountered Grime in their professional career as a music lawyer. The circulation of meaning drawn from Grime in this instance, would primarily be concerned with capital, protecting the artist's work, or the business interests related to production (1), and/or text (2), rather that reading (3), social relations or lived cultures (4). The meaning and priority for a music lawyer is completely different to a DJ or presenter for

[26] (Johnson 1986:47). I have included this diagram to illustrate that respondents in this project occupy different and in some cases various places on the circuit of meaning.

example. I did not have a quota for clusters that respondents should fit into. My priority was to interview those that were (once) active members in the scene.

Grime MCs and cultural producers, occupy a distinctive place within Grime subculture – both as music makers/performers/entrepreneurs and also as fans. They are key arbiters, definers, consumers and disseminators of Grime culture. As such, they occupy multiple places on the circuit of meaning - or their role in the circuit changes over time. For example, some respondents started out as fans (i.e. recipients of culture), making readings (3) and partaking in lived culture (4) in the circuit of cultural meaning, before taking up other positions, such as fans becoming DJs, event organisers, label owners or bloggers. This possibility of multi-positioning in the Grime scene makes for very rich and triangulatable data. It suggests that positional shift influences the priorities of meaning in the circulation of culture.

> *'…the way I perceive things sometimes is -- affects my love for the music... So I may perceive different people differently due to their relationships that they have with myself or someone else close to me. So another thing as well, being in the business, I don't listen to it so much for the love, I listen to it now for more - more so the opportunity. So if there's an artist that's getting a lot of hype, I'm excited about their future as an artist.' Quaan (Fan to Label Owner)*

By having respondents with different positions in the circuit and others with multi-positions, I could access different and shifting priorities in the circuit of meaning in the scene, creating a potentially more balanced, objective and holistic research project. This, in conjunction with data triangulation increases rigour, validity and reliability of the data. I must stress however, that whilst respondents inhabited differing positions in the circuit of meaning, the overwhelming majority of these were male. My efforts to secure gender and occupation balance were unsuccessful. I knew of very few female MCs (femcees) and no producers. I expected more male respondents than female; however as my research developed, I saw a vast disparity and made a conscious and targeted effort to include women in my research. I

tweeted @FemaleArtists that I knew of, but had no response. I asked respondents if they knew any femcees[27] that I could interview. One male respondent said he knew one (who was quite well known). However nothing developed from this conversation despite following it up. A female respondent gave me contact details of a female active in a 'behind the scenes' capacity. Her role was primarily administrative support for male MCs and their business. Unfortunately, she too was unavailable for interview owing to time constraints. In the final stages of completing this project, after I had stopped interviewing and resolved that I would have no femcees in this project, I came across and interviewed a Grime femcee by happenstance. I found this respondent at my cousin's hair salon. She just happened to be talking to my cousin (whilst having her hair done) about her work and was showing my cousin video footage. Despite securing this interview very late into the project, it proved a valuable contribution. However, the female voice from multiple positions in the circuit of meaning would have been invaluable to this project and is something for consideration in future projects.

Another point of consideration in this project is respondents' position on the circuit of meaning. The respondents I interviewed covered most places on the circuit: this coverage of places on the circuit was also replicated by those respondents I was unable to secure interviews with. Therefore the data provides a good 'spread' of perspectives across the scene. Despite this, however, the perspectives I have been unable to evaluate effectively in this project from thick descriptive data are public relations, website maintenance and management (outside of blogging), marketing and television broadcasting.

Interviews provide the opportunity to obtain a more personalised, subjectively rich data set. It provides personal narratives of Grime's emergence, musical influences, meaning and perspectives on British mainstream responses and subcultural practice. This method gives insight into respondent views on their social worlds, by accessing what is valuable and

[27] Femcee = female MC

significant to respondents' lives/subcultural experiences (Bryman 2004). This method provides respondents with a) a space to be acknowledged, especially because of the ways Grime has been contained and regulated as an underground social phenomenon both by internal *AND* external forces, and b) a voice with which to direct the narrative in their own words. Part of my ontological and epistemological assumptions related to this method was to use this project to give power and platform to scene members.

> *'The expressive power of language provides the most important resource for accounts. A crucial feature of language is its capacity to present descriptions, explanations, and evaluations of almost infinite variety about any aspect of the world…' (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995:126).*

In this project, in-depth semi structured interviewing a) provided the flexibility to probe beyond my original questions relating to Grime and b) made me receptive to respondents' answers in a more interactive way. My strategies to solicit interviews were on-going and flexible. Throughout, I learned that the internet was not the best method to engage artists. Telephone and telephone technologies (such as Blackberry Messenger and WhatsApp) were more suitable, as respondents were more familiar with embedded and tangible methods of communication (outlined in chapter five). In most cases, I contacted respondents directly by attending events, speaking to people and handing out leaflets with project information. I tweeted @potentialrecipients and provided links to more information about my fieldwork online[28] (replicated in hard copy). I made contact by email, through mutual contacts or existing respondents. Interviews were conducted by video or audio conference on Skype (internet) or in person over a six month period (August 2013 – February 2014). All interviews besides one took place in a one to one setting. Big Narstie was the only person who had his brother present during the interview, and this was because he had befriended and assisted me in securing the interview.

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[28] Appendix iv.

The second strand of my research methods strategy, **participant observation,** involved immersion in a key area of Grime subcultural practice: live performance. Participant observation provides exposure to the experiential and contextual dimensions of a cultural site and community and thus can fill out and nuance other modalities of data collection (Gillham 2008). Participant observation is a key data gathering method for subcultural research (Hebdige 1979, Hall and Jefferson 1989). Immersion is particularly important for the analysis of affective dimensions of Grime. As Allett (2012) has suggested, musical subcultural research tends to underestimate or sidestep the centrality of its aural/experiential character. This means that while spectacular dimensions of musical subculture have been widely examined, their musicality and affect has been significantly underestimated and undertheorised. Participant observation in this context, enabled me to embed myself in the performance contexts of Grime's subcultural experience, where I could observe fan engagement and embodiment. I could then observe and document movement, dialogics, expressive acts of emotion and utterance as text. I could also document my own first hand experiences.

My pilot observation was a So Solid concert. I chose So Solid because they are the pioneers in the development of a new 'routes and roots' (Gilroy 1993) contributing directly into the genealogy of Grime at the turn of the 21st century. The majority of respondents, and many tweets referred to them as the pioneers of Grime. In total, I attended fifteen events (November 2012 - June 2015), seven were live performance (concerts, clubs), six were talks/panels and one was at the Houses of Parliament. I kept a research journal of all the observation events, and specifically collated and coded data from live performance events. In addition to journaling, in live performance settings, I took photographs and video footage for case study purposes.

In conjunction with physical observation, I used **online research** (Hine 2005) to conduct observation. I embedded myself in two intersecting subcultural spaces: live/panel events and web-based fan communities. I used Twitter owing to the self-categorizing function of the

hashtag (#) to immerse myself online. The hashtag enables searchable ways to locate and collect Twitter users' data in relation to a particular phrase or keyword. Marwick (2014) highlights that the use of hashtags does not indicate that it is reflective of a particular community but is open ended and subject to change over time. She also highlights that hashtags are not used in the majority of tweets (by the time of publication in 2014), finding their use in only 5-11% of tweets. I used the twitter hashtags that coincided with live performance events I attended, searched these # the day after the event and searched through the hashtags backwards to the day before the event took place. Using the hashtag in this way, I increased the likelihood of accurate searches and relevance of the data obtained. This method was one way I could identify a percentage of those talking about the event quickly in an online observation capacity. I focussed the # searches on seven live performance events attended (March 2013 - December 2014). The pilot for using the # was the So Solid concert. It proved successful using #sosolid, #sosolidcrew, and #sosolidtour as searchable ways to locate comments about the event. Owing to the ways that fans used Twitter, I sought related searchable hashtags for this event in my data. I used this approach, i.e. keywords to start with then flexible searches based on findings with the other six live events I attended. I also looked @artists' twitter pages over the same time period for data. Using physical and online observation methods together, I documented my observations at events with online fans comments about their concert experiences with a view to explore fan practices, affective investments, communal and personal identifications, subversion and subcultural meaning in a pioneering way.

3 Table of events attended and online searches:

Event Name	Event Type	No. Attended	Artist	Hashtag	Source
So Solid	Concert	2	@OfficialSoSolid, @Ms_Dynamite, @OfficialChip, @JClarke_Ghetts, @LadyLeshurr, @Paigey_Cakey, @imSarahHarrison, @Wretch32	#SoSolid, #SoSolid Crew, #SoSolid Tour	
Pulse	Rave/Club	1	@Pulse_Grime	#Pulse	
Mix 'n' Blend	Pub//Rave	1		#Mixand Blend3	
Inside Music	Bar/Rave	1	@InspireEvents_		
Eskimo Dance	Rave	1	@EskimoDance	#Eskimo Dance,	
LOTM6	Launch Party	1			
House Of Commons	Briefing	1			http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/jasmine-dotiwala/together-can-we-build-a-d_b_5160102.html
The Ultimate Seminar	Panel Event/Seminar	2			http://cre8ingvision.com/the-ultimate-seminar/
Buma Beats	Conference	1			http://www.festivalinfo.nl/festival/12772/Buma_Rotterdam_Beats/2011/
Where is the Black in British Music?	Panel Event	1			https://ualacs.org/2015/06/03/artefact-wheres-the-black-in-british-music/
Re:IMI - What have Blacks gained	Launch and Round table	1			http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/reimi-race-equality-in-music-industry-launchbritish-music-industry-gains-from-black-music-what-have-tickets-17185853350#
BMRU	Soft Launch/ Panel	1			https://www.westminster.ac.uk/news-and-events/events/soft-launch-of-the-black-music-research-unit

Moving Forward: Black British Music Roundtable and Networking	Roundtable and Networking	1			https://ualacs.org/2015/06/18/june-29-moving-forward-british-black-music-roundtable-networking/ http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/british-black-music-month-british-history-5070-harrow-mencap-tickets-17184481246#

The last research method used was what I have called **musicological discourse analysis (MDA).** It is an innovative and experimental method I created for analysing both lyrics and sonic properties in music, what they signify and their impact on the listener. Musicological elements of music are largely lost when it is studied in sociology or cultural studies; often reduced to lyrics or image analysis, subcultures, class/spectacular/symbolic resistance or style (Hebdige 1979, Hall and Jefferson 1989). With this method, the music/song itself becomes the site of analysis. Sonic properties such as frequency (bass/treble), beats per minute, pitch, rhythm, layering, volume, aural manipulations and constructions such as 'the drop', 'the break', accelerando, crescendo and syncopation are some of the identifiable and quantifiable characteristics analysed to explore connotation and signification. This method draws from elements of audio culture, that establish connections between the physiological, physical and psychological effects experienced when listening to music. Allett's (2012) technique, which elicits thick descriptions of the respondent's listening experience and their attachments ('feelings', 'emotions' and 'love') in relation to music also supports this method. This approach was applied to respondent data and tweets to detect whether there are any collectively shared experiences. Taking these ideas of identifiable and quantifiable sonic characteristics into consideration, and used in conjunction with Machin's (2010) theories for analysing song as text, I evaluated the meaning, implicit and explicit and codified the data found in the sounds, lyrics and symbolism (through images) present in Grime. I used this as a foundation for my own genre theory and Communitas construction.

Owing to the detail involved in MDA, I selected four principal songs for analysis:

Ms Dynamite's Boo,

It's Wiley's (Showa Eski) Eskimo Riddim,

Dizzee Rascal's I Luv U and

Lethal Bizzle's POW

4 MDA Lyrics[29] and Playlist[30]

I refer to other songs in passing. I allowed the respondent data to influence MDA song choices. Respondents were directly connected to them in some way, for example, involvement in their creation, and so could talk about their own work. Alternatively, the songs were mentioned consistently amongst respondents as influential tracks or riddims to the Grime scene. These songs were also chosen because they drew the biggest reactions from crowds in physical observation settings.

The triangulation of the selected three research methods[31] produce a field of theoretically rich data, that serves multiple but interconnected modalities of analysis owing to the interdisciplinary nature of this project. The measurable output (data) of Grime as the site of

[29] Appendix iii.

[30] https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1sdDFLh_rXdAyPRCItP3RxRH-VdbtOz0

[31] Interviews, observation, MDA.

analysis is triangulated through i) observation - how people react to it in live performance settings (physical), talk about it socially (panels) and share their experience (online), ii) interviews exploring feelings and attachments to music (music elicitation) subcultural practices, mainstream British reaction to Grime, making music, etc. and iii) musical genealogy and discourse analysis.

With these methods, I examine what Grime's subcultural experience does for/means to respondents. I also contextualise and trace the genealogy of Grime's subculture and musicality (including technology) and examine its cultural priorities (e.g. social theories, social norms) and its impact on the listener, temporality and spatiality.

To understand the approach to the study of music or spirituality adopted by this project, it is important to note that my principal academic training is not in musicology, theology or religious studies. I have a sociology/political science/psychology background. I am undertaking interdisciplinary research that straddles the former listed disciplines, but rooted in and includes elements of the latter. As such, this project incorporates varied conceptual frameworks to grapple with the interdisciplinary nature of this research project. However, the analysis of this work is principally sociological.

Ethical considerations

My research strategies are constituted with primary reference to the BSA Ethical Guidelines (2002). With regard in-depth semi-structured interviews, BSA Ethical guidelines (2002) specify that consent must be sought and given in order for data to be collected and used. I created consent forms for this purpose. However owing to the nature of interviews, many respondents gave verbal consent and the majority were willing to forgo anonymity (documented in recordings). Despite this however, owing the sensitive nature of some sections of this research, I anonymised some respondents, overriding their consent to be

named in particular portions of this research. I protected anonymity by changing names or numbering individual responses. Lastly, to ensure transparency, I sent respondents copies of their interview transcripts and audio for their own records and to check that they were happy for me to use the material. Interviewees had the option to opt out or withdraw consent at any time during the interview process. No respondent contacted me expressing concerns about their interview content being included in the project. No respondents withdrew consent.

There were no major ethical considerations in using Tweets as they were already available in the public domain. To ensure confidentiality (Hine 2005), I changed the names of *@TwitterHandles* linked to any specific comments I draw explicit attention to, as I did not seek consent to use them as part of my online observation fieldwork.

I did not obtain consent from attendees at the So Solid concert or any other event I attended. Disclosing my intent may have compromised the data gathered; attendee behaviour may have been adversely affected. In addition, it would not be practical to do so. I consulted BSA Ethical guidelines (2002). Observation is a covert method of obtaining data. I did not know attendees at the events, nor did I use descriptive markers that make any audience members identifiable. This method of obtaining data therefore provides no ethical issues. When filming events for case study and analytical purposes, I did not film specific attendees who could be identified. Some artists performing were observed and filmed. However as they have public stage names and personas, I will refer to them by their stage names. In cases where I am referring to my journaling of events, I anonymised public figures in some cases. I ensured that all data was kept securely and anonymously (where possible) (BSA 2002).

There are no ethical considerations related to musicological discourse analysis. The songs chosen are public and information about people connected to the songs, i.e. MCs, producers, record labels etc., are already available in the public domain.

Major Conceptual Frameworks

In this section, I give more detail about the conceptual frameworks employed in this project that were outlined in the introductory chapter.

What is Critique?

One overarching conceptual framework running throughout this project is the definition of genealogy in **Foucault's (1997) 'What is Critique?'** This work on critique; power, truth, the subject and governmentality, is applicable to this project when evaluating mainstream Britain and its responses to subaltern youth and their music. Foucault (1997) highlights that critique legitimises types of knowledge or ways of knowing. He argues that knowledge, its articulation, implementation and institutionalisation, are embedded in both the conditions of the era and in the national context. With migration and colonial histories intertwined into the contemporary British context, internal British 'Others' present ever increasing challenges for mainstream Britain with regard to legitimating knowledge about them.

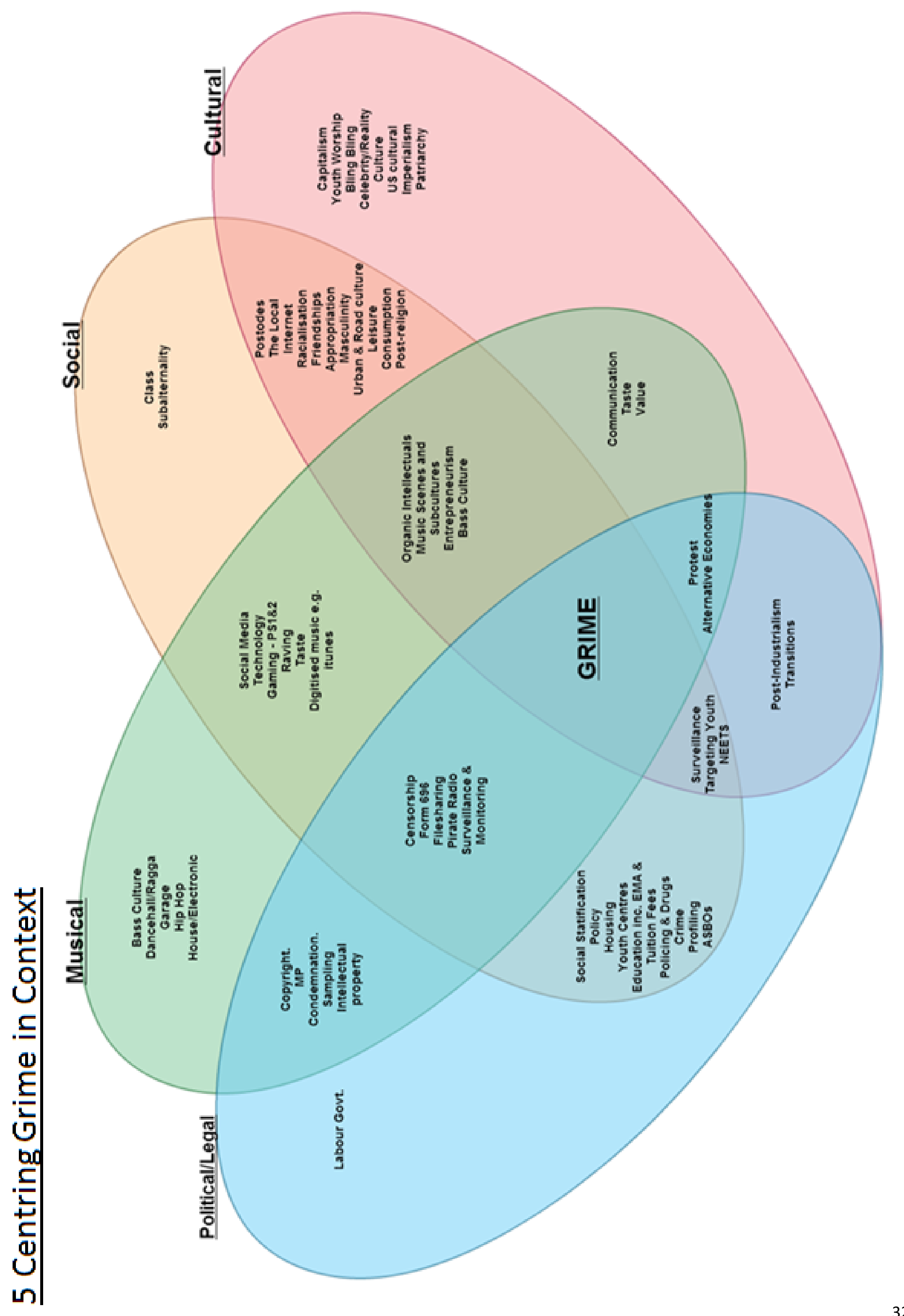
> *'…critique only exists in relation to something other than itself…'* (1997:42).

This results in fear that manifests through foregrounding crude binary examples to legitimate Islamophobia or the problematisation of Black youth in the Grime scene for example. Significantly then, in this project, I applied Foucault's critique to unpack 'legitimate' mainstream knowledge about the crude constructions of the Grime scene and its members. Grime is the 'Other' that Britain seeks to police and regulate in order to present itself as normative. However, this project will challenge crude representations by providing a space for respondents to speak back and thus, raise questions about the implementation of institutional process directed at the scene by the mainstream.

Foucault's definition of genealogy is:

> *'…something, that attempts to restore the conditions for the appearance of singularity born out of multiple determining elements of which it is not the product, but rather the effect. A process of making it intelligible but with the clear understanding that this does not function according to any principle of closure'* (Foucault: 1997:64)

It is a flexible instrument that enabled me to centre Grime by piecing together structural influences, i.e. the social, cultural, musical and political factors that helped create it. It offered a framework of investigation.


5 Centring Grime in Context
Musical
Bass Culture
Dancehall/Ragga
Garage
Hip Hop
House/Electronic
Social
Class
Subalternality
Political/Legal
Labour Govt.
Cultural
Capitalism
Youth Worship
Bling Bling
Celebrity/Reality
Culture
US cultural
Imperialism
Patriarchy
Copyright.
MP
Condemnation.
Sampling
Intellectual
property
Social Media
Technology
Gaming - PS1&2
Raving
Taste
Digitised music e.g.
itunes
Postodes
The Local
Internet
Racialisation
Friendships
Appropriation
Masculinity
Urban & Road culture
Leisure
Consumption
Post-religion
Censorship
Form 696
Filesharing
Pirate Radio
Surveillance &
Monitoring
Organic Intellectuals
Music Scenes and
Subcultures
Entrepreneurism
Bass Culture
GRIME
Social Statification
Policy
Housing
Youth Centres
Education inc. EMA &
Tuition Fees
Policing & Drugs
Crime
Profiling
ASBOs
Communication
Taste
Value
Surveillance
Targeting Youth
NEETS
Protest
Alternative Economies
Post-Industrialism
Transitions
32

This genealogical mode of analysis contextualises Grime sociologically and musicologically. This project is very much concerned with the voices in the scene and therefore respondent experiences were of central focus in building this picture. Genealogy provides a holistic context to examine Grime and makes this a political piece of work.

AgSIT

Another overarching framework in this projects is **Lena's (2012) work on genre**. Lena (2012) teleologically identifies four phases a genre goes through in a full life-cycle, (however not all genres are able to complete the full cycle). Lena's detailed analysis of American music genres identified four genre stages/phases of the AgSIT life cycle which in simplified terms are:

- **Avant-garde (Ag)**, considered new and sonically distinct from other musical forms. It is shared and followed by a core group of people. Lena identifies that there are arguments about demography in relation to whose music qualifies as Avant garde and it is important to consider this when taking on this framework; particularly with regard a marginalised group.
- **Scene-based (S),** where core members are able to monetise their work through selling to committed fans, leading to: the creation of niche markets to support this evolution; the formation of aesthetic styles; and documenting (i.e. magazines, events etc.) that inform the development of niche knowledge, practice, culture and sensibilities.
- **Industry-based (I),** the industry phase is where culture becomes

[32] I created this diagram and inserted it here to illustrate some of the factors of consideration impacting Grime as a form of music and subculture. These ideas stem from observations that became motivations (outlined in the introduction) for this project and also reading literature (academic and media) about social happenings during the noughties. This four factor Venn-diagram illustrates the interrelated nature of some factors impacting Grime music and subculture. This four factor Venn-diagram is a method to visualise Foucault's *'…appearance of singularity born out of multiple determining elements of which is not the product, but rather the effect.'* (Foucault: 1997:64)

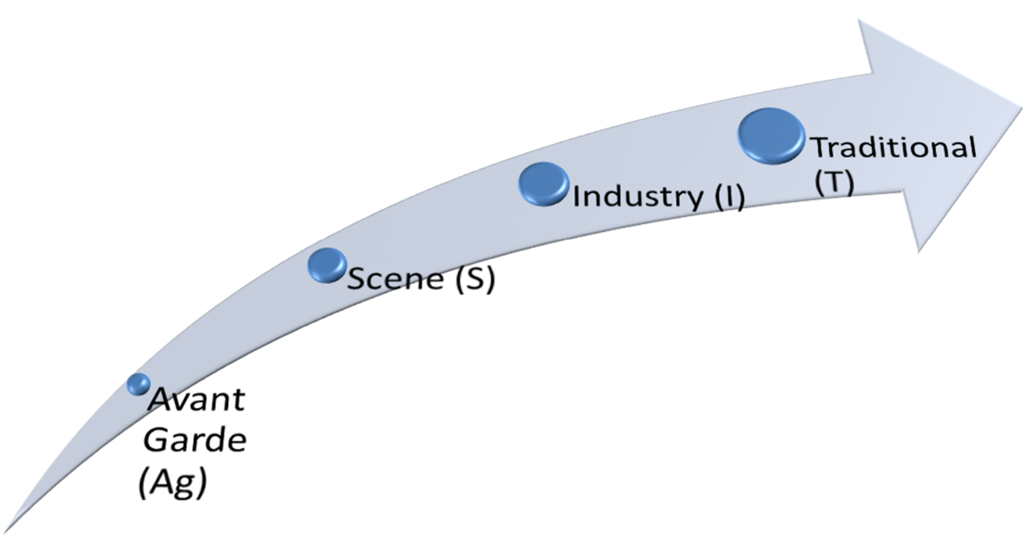
commodified and devoid of original meaning, the music moves outside of the scene and is commercialised so everyone has access.

- **Traditionalist phase (T),** concerned with preserving the genre in its Ag&S[33] based phases. It involves policing boundaries of genre and focusing on authenticity and creating knowledge and institutions to maintain this.

She argues that genre must travel through the four phases of the AgSIT life-cycle in sequential order. It must be noted however that this life cycle follows a linear trajectory and is not cyclical in nature. New Avant garde genres spring forth from Industry and Traditionalist phases.

[33] Avant garde & Scene

6 The AgSIT Lifecycle Trajectory[34]



However, she argues that new music is a result of people/groups breaking away from established norms of a parent genre. Over time this continual breaking away to produce new Avant garde music (that forms part of the rhizomatic nature of music), form musical styles with similar rooting that conjoin to form wider musical streams/communities, or musical families.

> *Music histories are full of hints that there is a pattern to the evolution of communities of sound. Lena (2012:27)*

She argues that the history and journey of music over longer periods of time form musical streams (family groupings) that are intimately linked to cultural elements that inform their musical conventions.

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[34] This diagram is a visual representation of Lena's (2012) theory regarding the 'life-cycle' of Genre. It illustrates how a genre develops over time. This is a framework I will be using as I examine Grime teleologically across chapters.

'Streams thus function as a kind of meta-genre form, organizing, to a greater or lesser extent, the progression of music across genre forms.' (Lena 2012:55)

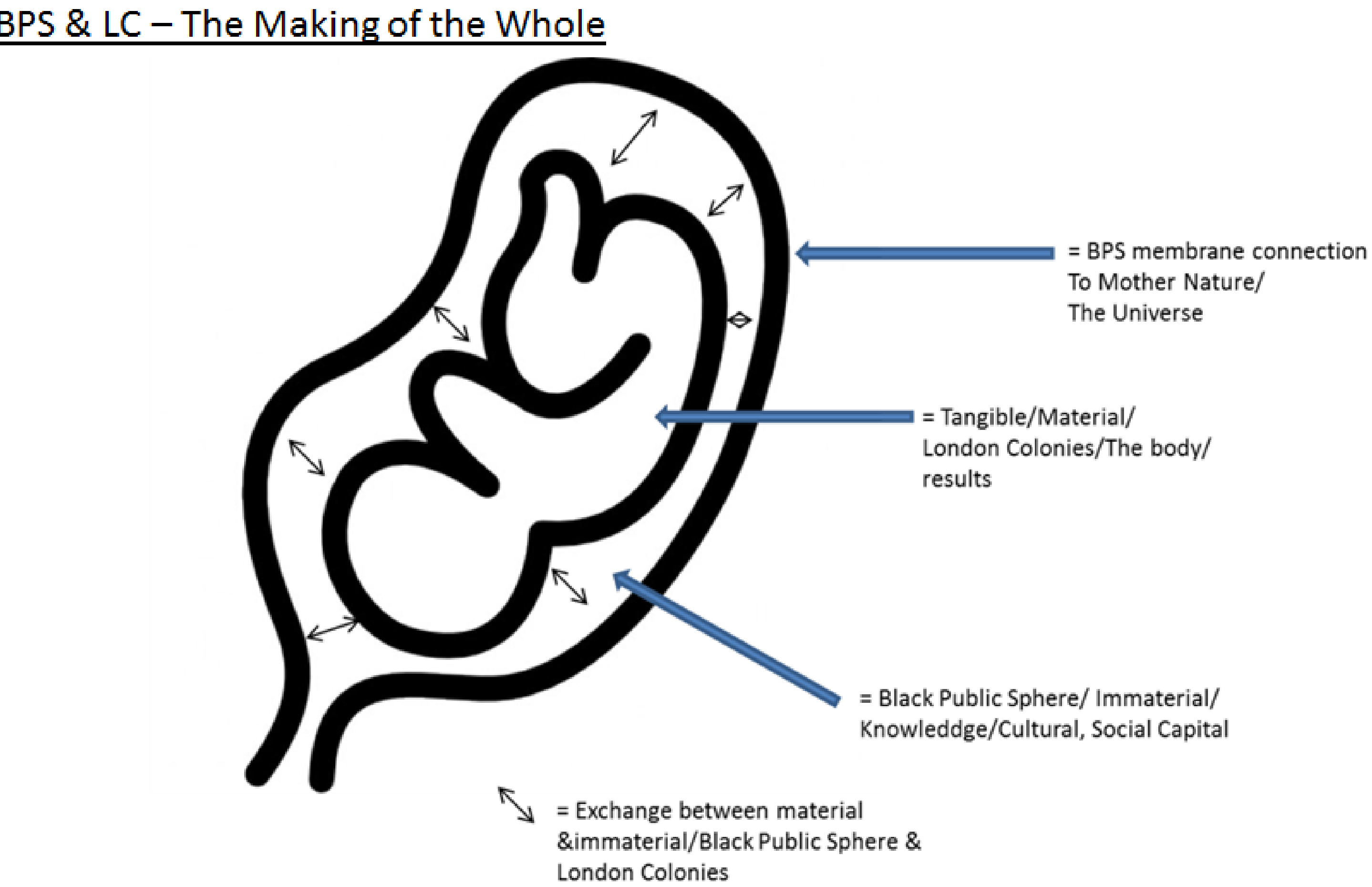
This framework enabled me to interrogate Grime genealogically, enabling me to follow its progression over time throughout the data chapters; starting from Ag through the phases to present moments of live performance. Framing it in this way made it possible to analyse the music, people, practices and norms found in the Grime scene, and the factors that have impacted its teleological development. It made situating Grime in a wider context possible, linking it to parent and related genres and practices in the music streams and families. Understanding Grime in this wider framework, elucidates internal and external forces on its formation and development. As this genre is intimately linked to subaltern youth, this approach centres Grime in a wider context and thus gives power to their voices.

Internal Colonies and Black Public Sphere

The final overarching framework is a combination of Hall's (1978) internal colony areas of Britain and Baker's (1996) Black Public Sphere. The colonies are areas where internal others have been confined to reside. In this project, it represents densely populated subaltern inner-city areas of social housing and council estates where young Black, White working class and multi-ethnic youth live and frequent. Hall's colonies are useful in understanding the creation and functioning's of Black communities in Britain since the Windrush; notably these are rooted in areas where Black Britons live in close proximity to other working class groups (where there is poorer quality housing and education). The colony is where those who operate in informal economies 'hustle' and make their living. Baker's (1996) Black Public Sphere however, cannot be applied to a tangible location. The Black Public Sphere is understood to be a collective and/or public space, accessible by a group or community of people. It is a space of collective knowledge and integral to the understanding of social and cultural capital obtained by the tangible spaces (locations) and bodies that operate within it. The sphere has formed and continues to form over time. Hall (1978) and Baker (1996)

combined form a holistic and inclusive way to document the longitudinal immaterial contributions of multiple London colonies on the Grime sound and scene and the material realities of the conditions that led to its emergence. They highlight the material and immaterial formation of the realities that constitute subcultural practice, norms and values in Grime.

Applying these two concepts in this way also fulfils an additional purpose. It makes it possible to overlay African religious/spiritual understanding of reality (i.e. the dualism of the material and immaterial integral to understanding reality and the universe as a whole) onto this project to illustrate how the hidden is intimately linked to the visible. This overlay links the immaterial Black Public Sphere and knowledge, with the materiality of the subaltern existence lived in the London colonies enabling cultural practice to serve spiritual functions. See diagram seven below:



Material/Immaterial relationship

35

Diagram seven illustrates the connection between the London Colonies (material) and the Black Public Sphere (immaterial) and how the two together are integral to the functioning of the whole (and connection to something even greater). In this way the everyday practices, perspectives and moments of music engagement becomes spiritual praxis. This framework makes a powerful contribution because it centres those involved in Grime and therefore provides a new space to analyse meaning. This approach also enables the possibility to explore how mainstream Britain interacting with Grime's subaltern members has tangible and intangible consequences.

Theoretically however, these frameworks, used in this way, enable compatibility between these sociological theories and Africanised spirituality. It also facilitates the dual function of developing an understanding of cultural production in the British context as an exploration, articulation and display of Africanised spiritual/religious practice. In connecting with ancient African practice, it also tests Mbiti's (1996) idea that religious practice takes several generations to leave (if at all) as religion travels with people.

[35] I created and designed this diagram to illustrate the connectivity between the material and immaterial that contributes to Grime music, subcultural knowledge, practice and fans, and also the importance the material and immaterial in Africanised religious outlook. Therefore this diagram can be used in two ways. By creating an embryo, amniotic fluid and uterus, it illustrates that the whole structure is connected and indebted to each other to survive or operate as a functioning whole. Remove the 'immaterial' amniotic fluid/culture/knowledge/sensibilities and the 'material' embryo/people/colonies are destroyed. The amniotic fluid cannot serve a 'materiality' it was not designed for. Remove the embryo and the amniotic fluid will disappear. The connection between the material and immaterial is vital to sustain life as per Africanised religious outlook and people/culture and subcultural practice. This vital balance is connected to a larger 'universe/sublime/higher purpose' i.e. the uterus and beyond.

Research Questions and Aims

These frameworks guide this project, however the specific research questions to be addressed are outlined below:

1. ***What are the musical, technological and social influences on Grime and its development?***

2. ***What do ‘Grime’ culture’s origins tell us about Black (/inner-city) subaltern existence in London at the turn of the 21st century?***

3. ***What role does Grime’s subcultural contestations and coalescences play in constituting communal and personal identifications, fan practices and affective investments?***

4. ***In what ways and to what extent do lyrical references, symbolic discourses, sonic characteristics and/or performative dimensions of Grime constitute subversive or normative meaning making with respect to politics, religion/spirituality and social relations of race, class and gender?***

These questions seek to achieve the overarching research aims outlined below:

- Make a scholarly contribution by creating a new narrative for Grime which identifies the substantive issues of music, ‘race’, religion/spirituality and subalternity.

- Analyse music with innovative Musicological Discourse Analysis (MDA).

- Contextualise Grime both within its subcultural context and with reference to its

reception by mainstream Britain.

- Contextualise Grime in a musicological genealogical framework.
- Explore interactions of gender, class and race within Grime's subculture.
- Consider whether latent religious and/or spiritual meaning can be elicited from Grime music subculture.

Owing to the interdisciplinary nature of this project, the data chapters are each led by a range of conceptual frameworks which all contribute to the overarching question and project title *'Hallowed be thy Grime?'* which is addressed in the conclusion. Any minor frameworks fit inside and complement the four overarching major frameworks guiding this entire project. Each chapter contributes towards mapping the genre musically, socially, demographically, and in relation to Black Atlantic religious/spiritual discourse, and is led by (minor) conceptual frameworks most suited to the data generated.

Chapter four focuses on genre, with the musicological focus on Grime taking precedence to contextualise it. It uses Lena (2012) and Frow (2005) as conceptual frameworks to examine genre from various vantage points and re-theorises it. Chapter five uses social movements as a way to understand Grime expansion. The concepts of *Relative Deprivation* (Runciman 1966) and *Means and Goals* (Merton 1957) map the transference and growth of Grime in its early Ag&S stages, and illustrate methods of personal agency in subaltern contexts. Chapter six examines the demography of the scene and its intersections, primarily race, gender and class norms, to ascertain Grimes' notions of authenticity and social norms. bell hook's (1992) *eating the other*, *proteophilia and proteophobia* (Haynes 2012), Garner's (2007) *Introduction to Whiteness* are conceptual frameworks informing this chapter. My fourth and final data chapter, chapter seven, focuses on the physical (body) and beyond it (i.e. intangible, spirit,

emotion, vibration, energy etc.). Turner (1969), Smith (1994), Kennett (2008), Sylvan (2002) and the elements in the emerging field of audio culture are the conceptual frameworks contributing towards building theory on how Communitas enters live performance spaces. This is developed further to examine links between the African diaspora residing in Britain (Black Atlantic) today, and its connection with a) Caribbean folk and cultural practice and b) West and Central African musicoreligious practice. I interlock elements of these frameworks and apply them to the data and the previous chapters' arguments to draw this together to make a new theory, focusing on elicitation, affect and movement. I use grounded methodologies to frame my conceptual tools in each chapter and apply both theoretical and empirical bases throughout to do this. The final chapter, chapter eight, concludes this project, drawing from data and analysis from data chapters four to seven, in order to answer the four sub-questions and research aims. The chapters collectively work to answer the overarching project question - *Hallowed be thy Grime?* It outlines gaps filled from the literature review in chapters one and two, before offering suggestions for future research and reiterating theory(ies) developed in this project.

Chapter 4 – Genre: Getting 2 Grips

Introduction

In the previous chapters, I explored relevant literature and highlighted the gaps in knowledge this research project aims to fill. In this chapter, I apply the conceptual frameworks and grounded methodologies to evaluate key musical influences in the genealogical evolution of Grime as both i) a musical genre and, ii) an analysis of influences in relation to its social context. I then explore the lyrical themes and sonic properties of identified sounds found in Grime. I examine the life cycle of musical genre to examine Grime's development since its inception, before proposing my own holistic concept for genre, identifying all factors of consideration that contribute to a 'genre' of music.

There are two principal purposes for this chapter, to a) deploy genre as an analytic concept to produce a genealogy of Grime and to b) propose a mode of *generic analysis* that is genealogically inflected. The components here are musicological (sonics, auralities, lyricism), subcultural (modes of identity work, intersubjective practices, spectacular-ritual elements) and historical-political-sociological narratives (personal narratives and official narratives), principally of the African Diaspora, in the post-industrial British context. This approach to genre draws modes of meaning making (comparable to Allett's (2012) extreme metal analysis) and affective attachment into analytical considerations. Constituting *genre* as a classification system based on respondent experience, their on the ground debates, perspectives and conversations about the genre location of their art, is in itself an innovation on genre theory. This chapter has all the empirical elements and theoretical tools to make a significant contribution to these two Goals.

This chapter proposes to advance debates and understandings about genre and genealogy by incorporating a range of generic vantage points such as teleological, antecedental and

Afrodiasporic streams, but also presenting genre as a dynamic set of relationships such as a combination of 'utterance', corporate, sonic and collective, which all have political and sociological impacts.

Genre is characteristically constituted of musical formalism and a degree of subcultural practice in some cases. Musicology has not informed much music culture research. Owing to the inadequate theory on aurality, I will incorporate definitions for new and pre-existing terminologies in this chapter as I go along. As it is currently understood, genre is a method of musical categorisation and in many cases it is an empty signifier. Genres are relational tools which enable one 'type' to be distinguished from another. Genre however, is simultaneously a tool for social organisation and categorisation. It serves to order and organise both musical and social worlds (i.e. people) into relational frameworks, which implicitly house rankable value judgments and hierarchical structures. It is for these reasons the two, musical and social, cannot be divorced from one another and it is my intention to illustrate this when examining Grime.

Frow's work on genre takes on a broader sociological stance looking beyond the *'stylistic devices'* (2006:2) that genre principally seek to identify. He argues genres are loaded with sensibilities and knowledges that are tied up in history and discourse, which are influenced and shaped by power relations of *'authority and plausibility'(2006:2)*. As such, the impact of genre filters through every aspect of our lives.

> '*Genres belong to an economy: a set of interdependent positions that organise the universe of knowledge and value.' (2006:4-5).*

This point of consideration will be explicitly acknowledged and addressed at various points throughout this chapter specifically, and throughout the project in its entirety, combining two fields of study, genre and genealogy. Using Grime, I rework how genre is identified as a musical form and the subcultural dimensions to its generic character. I argue that it is a

specific constellation, formed through a nuanced historically deep understanding of subculture and subcultural practice in the three overarching areas of genealogy, genre and subculture.

There are three overarching framing concepts running throughout this chapter: genre, subculture and genealogy, whereby genre and subcultural context inform the genealogy of the Grime musical form (transferrable to other musical styles). I propose the theory that it is this combination of race and heritage (including sonic characteristics) ***AND*** local soundscapes that contribute towards the uniqueness of the Grime sound. It is the combination of the global and the local, the past and the present that are influential, and these constellations must be considered when examining genre. I aim to retheorise *genre* as a field/concept/analytic frame.

Whilst I am presenting genre as having great impact on everyday life, it does not have clean, clear, fixed boundaries or lines of demarcation, even though it generates and maintains hierarchies of meaning in our individual worlds that are dependent on discourses of knowledge and power that may also change and shift over time. Genre is therefore open ended. In the context of Grime, examining genre is powerful in the sense that it provides a space to redress the discourses of knowledge and power about this musical form, and redefine subcultural practices explicitly in relation to the wider knowledge field by those active in the scene themselves.

When examining musicological elements of genre specifically however, Lena (2012) refers to genres as communities of sounds and these sounds are found within 'streams'.

> *'Some musical styles, over the course of decades, spawn a number of variants. These families of music retain their coherence through shared institutions, aesthetics and audiences. I call these sets of styles "streams" through which a number of genres may flow.' (Lena 2012:8).*

This point will be illustrated by respondents in the 'Genre' section of this chapter to show how music and musical influences can be tied together in a genealogical fashion, and as such, despite the rhizomatic nature of music influences, sound families can be traced or linked to identifiable sonic groupings.

There are three overarching areas of interest that inform Afrodiasporic musical genres, all of which operate at the same time. These are diasporic, political and locational sets of experiences, perceptions and reference points. In the context of Grime music, the Afrodiasporic musicological theoretical framework is essential in advancing debates on genre and genealogy. As outlined in chapter one, the study of music predominantly remains Eurocentric. Despite being largely overlooked academically, Afrodiasporic music and people provide numerous examples where the musical and sociological elements are interlinked. Afrodiasporic music takes on historical and musicological elements, using diasporic musical conventions which will be explored more fully in the next section 'genealogy'.

Audio ecologies and Bahktinian concepts of speech and aural communities are also used as theoretical resources to further validate the empirical research. I tapped into an existing community/subculture governed by its own 'rules', speech community and etiquette. The modes of discourses came through in the content of the interviews and illustrates how people are embedded in a speech community and audio ecology. This is evident in the language used in direct quotes, but will also be explored in depth in NILA[36] and SLSA[37] sections (of this chapter) exploring the significance of location. I illustrate that Grime is a culture bearer and (these frameworks and subsequent emergent theory) can be applied to other conventional genres of music for examination. Whilst some genres of music from this stream (Lena 2012) tend to lyrically represent where they are from, I propose that they do so sonically also as the significance of location to a song or sound is of great importance to notions of authenticity

[36] Narrative Insight Lyrical Analysis (pronounced nee-lah)

[37] Sonic Location Sound Analysis (pronounced salsa)

(which will be discussed more in chapter six), belonging and identity, whilst giving insight to the social climate.

In the 'Genre Trajectory' section of this chapter, I will explore Grime in a wider context, teleologically, to highlight how external social influences such as capitalism/industry and governance are organising tools which come into play in the creation and perpetuation of these organising principles; in the context of the music industry, *'…industry produces culture and culture produces an industry.' (Negus 1998:359)*.

Lastly, I propose my own concept/theory for musical genre in the concluding section of this chapter, where the conceptual frameworks and relevant literature inform, and are included alongside, empirical data to develop it. I produce a visual diagram to illustrate this concept/theory. The empirical data in places also illustrates how these concepts can work.

Genealogy

In this section, I explore genealogy and its significance in understanding musical genre. Using Grime as an example, I illustrate the significance a longitudinal approach, musicologically and sociologically, has in understanding musical genre in a fuller context. In the context of this research, genealogy is framed by Foucault's definition outlined in what is critique:

> *'…something, that attempts to restore the conditions for the appearance of singularity born out of multiple determining elements of which is not the product, but rather the effect. A process of making it intelligible but with the clear understanding that this does not function according to any principle of closure'* (Foucault: 1997:64)

This enables me to explore the multiple elements which resulted in Grime; cultural, social and musical, and can give insight into grounding the genre within a framework that can be used as an analytical tool. It enables connections to be made to the past and present. Both are necessary to interrogate the discourses that run through genre. This genealogical approach to music will make music and genre accessible in new ways and move the debate forward. One of the existing challenges of writing about music is the very nature of capturing sonic properties and articulating them in language.

For example music journalist Reynolds explains how Grime sounds (2007):

> *'…this is a totally post-garage genre – what some are already calling 'Grime' or 'Grimy Garage'. It's a mind boggling and body freaking hybrid that draws on beat science and bass knowledge from dancehall, hardcore, techno, electro, Jungle and Gangsta rap' (2007:356)*

Here he uses elements of pre-existing genres to explain how a new genre sounds. Unfortunately this does not give enough insight about the 'Grime' sound. With another genre, Jungle, he attempts to quantify its aurality:

> *'…the breaks get sped up, edited, processed, fantastically complex yet jagged yet groovy rhythms – the bass gets more strange and peculiar, molded and gloopy, yet also punishing, and yet also heavy in a rootical sense, the dub reggae sense, there's a skanking feel in there too.' (2009[38])*

Whilst these explanation give an indication of influences and sounds, they refer to genre in signifying terms and would require the reader to have knowledge of all if not the majority of the genres mentioned to have any possibility of understanding/imagining what they sound

[38]Presentation, 11 February 2009.

like. Terms such a *'molded and gloopy'* may be jargon, or an onomatopoeic attempt to articulate the sonic characteristics. Irrespective, it is not accessible in layperson's terms. Whilst the definition refers to antecedental genres, the sonic influences and links are not made explicit in genealogical terms which could aid understanding. For this reason, established quantifiable sound qualities as described in the scientific field of physics (i.e. frequency, pitch, tempo) are used here, alongside texts that explore sonic properties, such as Rose (1994) and Machin (2010) to provide frameworks with which analyse meaning. Their application stabilise the arguments and concepts put forward here and make the concepts of musicological genealogy here explicit.

With regards to music of the African diaspora, it is argued by academics that there are identifiable sound signatures. Research has found a distinct sound and connectedness to music from the African diaspora (Beckford 2004, Eshun 1998, Goodman 2010, DuBois 2007, Rose 1994, Reed 2003, Perkinson 2005). Gilroy suggests that there is ample research identifying markers, cultural, linguistic or religious, even if *'contemporary political significance remains disputed' (1993:81)* that are signatures of diaspora sounds and connectedness. Goodman (2010) suggests that there is a commonality amongst Black Atlantic sounds that he calls Bass Materialism, comprised of low frequencies and Dub. Rose (1994) agrees, suggesting that whilst there is an overlap in musical traditions, there are in fact signature differences between the sensibilities and priorities of music of African (including the diaspora) and European tradition; each musical tradition is skewed to favour rhythm and polyrhythmic layering or melody and harmony respectively.

As we can see here, in relation to music of the African diaspora, academics have made genealogical links in order to identify African diaspora music as something specific. Rose (1994) uses ethnomusicology concepts to explore more explicitly what sonic properties and cultural practices maintain genealogical links. She finds European tradition is focussed on sensibilities relating to the linear, i.e. progression and regression and the spectacle, whereas African music's are more cyclical and participatory.

> *'Rhythm and polyrhythmic layering is to African and African-derived musics what harmony and harmonic triad is to Western classical music. Dense configurations of independent, but closely related rhythms, harmonic and nonharmonic percussive sounds, especially drum sounds, are critical priorities in many African and Afro diasporic musical practices. The voice is also an important expressive instrument.' (Rose 1994:66)*

These identifiable characteristics are referred to as signatures that are genealogically linked to particular musicological traditions. Music of the diaspora have signatures of the low frequency drum, polyrhythm, call and response and interactivity (Rose 1994). These are key features, in addition to improvisation and montage in communication (Gilroy 1993). Gilroy (1993) links sound signatures, oral culture and kinesis to the diaspora today. As a result, a proliferation of music emerges out of the *'long shadow of our enduring traditions – the African ones and the ones forged from the slave experience which the Black vernacular so powerfully and actively remembers' (Gilroy 1993:101)*.

I draw upon these to identify signatures that assist in qualifying Grime as a 'Black' music and belonging to a specific Afrodiasporic or Black 'music stream' (Lena 2012). By making these explicit, I am better able to interpret the content of the data in my research project.

The signifying and ordering principle of genre, as it is currently understood with regard music, creates an issue that is regularly faced when talking about music of Afrodiasporic origin; actually what makes it 'Black' music? However, signatures, sensibilities and priorities of music, as highlighted by Rose (1994), the culture of the way it circulates (e.g. participatory, sound system cultures - Henriques 2011) is attributable to tradition or *'diaspora force'* (Gilroy's 1993). Although not articulated explicitly in these genealogical terms by all respondents, the 'Blackness' of Grime was corroborated by those interviewed. All respondents considered Grime or referred to Grime as Black Music and/or a British music and linked it with the Black music stream. They attributed Blackness to the way it sounded, the

culture of the scene and/or the predominance of the Black performers and innovators within the scene.

> *'In the music itself, as in the sound, it's a Black thing… I don't know whether to - know what it is or how to explain it. It's not a Black thing. If you listen to it, it's not like, right, this is Black people music, but musically it's influenced from Black people. That's how it is, it's a Black people music.' TerraMontana365*

I am presenting Grime as a Black music in agreement with respondents' data, observation, Musicological Discourse Analysis (MDA) and grounded theoretical work. The consumption of Grime music is diverse and it is not exclusively made by, nor exclusively distributed/disseminated (e.g. DJs) by Black British youth. It is important to stress here that there is a significant difference between:

- Dominant and heavily used sound signatures, sensibilities, properties and cultural aesthetics used in making music that i) prolong 'musical streams' (Lena 2012) and genealogical lines, ii) inform genres and iii) infuse 'diaspora force' (Gilroy 1993) and
- Consumption and distribution of such music.

Consumption and distribution are influenced by commodifying processes, which are integral to capitalist Western societies. Whilst this is linked to Grime's trajectory, I argue that it is not intrinsically so. I touch on elements of this aspect in the genre trajectories section (and chapter six) to illustrate how this relationship between a) music genre and genealogy and b) consumption and distribution can be problematic to subculture and subcultural practice when it enters the music industry.

When referring to Grime's predecessors, such as Jungle music, Hesmondhalgh and Melville (2001), present it as a multi-cultural or British sound, without centring the significant

influence that Black music streams had sonically and culturally on the scene. Historian Bradley's (2012) work is crucial in the documentation of Black music in London over the last century, as are the contributions of Henriques (2010), Reynolds (2007), Goodman (2010) and Sullivan (2013), who acknowledge crucial and significant African diasporic contributions. Their work highlights that Grime has roots firmly in the Jungle scene, music dominant in Afrodiasporic sonic aesthetics and created within longstanding Afrodiasporic cultural and musical practices, but applied in a London post-industrial context. It is this process that enabled multicultural consumption and reflected class aspirations and woes.

Now that I have illustrated the importance of genealogy in solidly grounding genre, I explore Grime in more depth.

Defining a genre

The naming or not naming a genre is crucial, depending upon the objectives and intentions of the person making the music.

> *'I don't -- I don't feel I did Garage, like the traditional Garage sound. I think I did music that I market as Garage…You have to realise because you need -- you need a name…You need a genre to -- to – for people to recognise, so you know — -- just saying I make music, no one's gonna care. But at the time, 'cause it was about the name Garage, (impersonates scenario) 'I love Garage!' Okay, 'I'm doing Garage.' (Laughs). Anon 987*

This respondent was crucial in changing the Garage sound to the Grimy Garage sound. He was unable to name it at that time as anything other than Garage because his priority was to have his music heard. It was only once his 'grey area/genre bordering' sound became established as different, i.e. Dark/Grimy Garage, those who came shortly after him could

declare that they do not make Garage. These declarations came about after the UK Garage sound had changed to take on a darker (i.e. more bass, less melodic) sound. Those who came afterwards made lyrical declarations cementing the difference and split from its parent genre[39]. In doing so, they solidified a new Avant garde (Ag) genre distinct from UK Garage and Grimy Garage. In three of the four songs analysed in this project, MCs were keen for the listener to know that this is Grime and nothing else.

The one song that does not mention Grime came about before Grime was given an official label and is considered dark or Grimy Garage. One of the first things these artists did, was establish a new genre boundary. This shifts knowledge and discourse about the new genre. A new Avant garde (Ag) genre opens a new space that enables its creators some level of influence in relation to its distinctiveness from other genres of music. This process enabled both the music and the people in the new scene to overtly distance themselves from Garage and the aspirational champagne lifestyle and ideology that went along with it (Lester 2010). Along with Grime's new sound comes a new sensibility, which will be explored in depth in the NILA and SLSA sections later in this chapter.

What does Grime sound like?

Grime 'officially' became its own defined sound in 2002 with More Fire Crew's crossover chart topper *'Oi'* (Reynolds 2007). The Grime sound, often compiled of electronic sounds, is typified by synths of the 80s, PlayStation and videogame music (Palmås and Von Busch 2008), in addition to the complex programming often found in Jungle music (Bradley 2012). Grime is typically characterised by music that is typically four beats to a bar and comprising of eight or sixteen bar cycles. It is one of the reasons why Grime was unofficially called eight bar or sixteen bar in its very early Ag stages.

[39] e.g. Wiley's Wot Do U call it, Dizzee's I Luv V videos.

Grime has lo-fi quality sounds; this means the sounds are not crisp or clearly defined; listeners are unable to trace the sound to a specific location or source. This quality and rawness has been likened to Punk (Reynolds 2007, Machin 2010). Grime includes the juxtapositions of intense heavy baselines, (i.e. low frequencies) (Sullivan 2013, Henriques 2011, Bradley 2012) and vastness of space with futuristic and 'non-musical' sounds. Another key feature of Grime is its tempo. It has an average tempo of 140 beats per minute (bpm) which is at the faster end of the musical tempo spectrum. MCs 'chat' or 'spit' over a beat with relentless velocity in a similar style to Reggae Dub toasting or Rap MCs cyphering.

In order to evaluate Grime more fully than is outlined in literature and the public domain, I have developed and applied two frameworks:

- Narrative Insight Lyrical Analysis (NILA), which examines the mind set and outlook of those active in the scene and the social value systems of the subculture and
- Sonic Locational Sound Analysis (SLSA) to assess the significance of the local soundscape in shaping the sound.

Genealogy enables the sonic analysis of historical influences, however music is always affected by the technology of the period and the local soundscape/audio ecology.

These two tools of musicological discourse analysis (MDA) I have developed can be applied to other types of music.

NILA - Narrative Insight Lyrical Analysis

> *'MC culture today remains vital and varied in its flows and its lyrical content. It speaks to local conditions articulated through mythologies of urban life…' (Zuberi 2014:200)*

Upon examining lyrics of selected songs, they were often directed towards rival MCs in clashes, crews and competition. There is definitely a competitive element within the genre to demonstrate lyrical dexterity. This is corroborated by respondents:

> *'…the whole thing is like getting a reload. Do you know what I mean?… And that's not getting a reload and another time. So one word would be said. Literally, one word would be and everyone would go just absolutely mental.'*
> *Hattie*

The spitting style and content is designed to attract audiences to listen and observe competition. It is a form of entertainment. The participatory element of this exchange in live settings, is where crowd members express their gratitude, vocally requesting for a reload/rewind of a track or lyric with shouts/sounds such as *'brap'* when responding to particular aspects of pleasurable lyrical dexterity or delivery. Lyrics often involve story telling. Whilst some lyrics use violent terms such as '*merc/merk'* (to stab, destroy etc.), they are often metaphorical rather than literal.

> *'…I stab right in the tune' (Fumin' POW 2004)*

> *'…Lyrical shot get pop…' (Ms Dynamite Boo 2000)*

The narratives of the lyrics were individualised stories. Lyrics predominantly involved MCs introducing and announcing themselves to listeners and cementing their position as the best. Lyricists speak in a declarative format. MCs have power, authority and agency in their lyrics, particularly with regard to things that have materialised (i.e. being 'top of the game', listing the venues performed at, radio shows attended and occasionally the things they own) and even when the story they are presenting may involve external forces happening to them. Grime lyrical content was predominantly material and literal, i.e. doing something tangible or relational to position themselves and their achievements as superior to others and

authenticate their alpha position. MCs compared themselves to 'Usain Bolt' and other well-known people that are socially accepted as being the best in their field to validate themselves. Bragging or boasting about lyrical dexterity and the ability to hype the crowd, male sexual prowess or their ability to control bodies (i.e. by accessing sex from women at will or getting people moving to music) were examples to affirm their alpha position. This narrative makes sense given the hyper individualism of contemporary British society, where people compare and want to be seen as leaders, celebrity and having agency.

Genealogically speaking, this style of lyrical narrative also has strong links with Black male Atlantic oratory practice. This pattern of earning stripes through challenges with other orators by crowd consensus can be linked to *The Dozens* (Kelley 2004) now called *cyphering* in the US, *toasting* and *sound clash* (Sullivan 2013, Henriques 2011, Bradley 2012) in Jamaican oratory practice or competing for the title *Calypsonian* in the Caribbean. Lyrical narratives in these musical styles include being a leader/gatekeeper, soldier/regulator, originator, the person to get people hype (dancing/enjoying themselves), to impart knowledge for others to take heed from and speaking to the existential realities of peers.

> *'…and none ah dem bwoys cyann tes' me,*
> *Coz I'm up with de best…' (Wiley 2011)*

> *'If you don't know about me (POW)*
> *Better ask someone quickly (POW)' (Bizzle 2004)*

> *'And you know we gonna get the crowd hyper' (Ms Dynamite Boo 2000)*

Inadvertently, the lyrics suggest that crews (friendship groups/collectives) and individuals needed to defend themselves against unfamiliar people, hostile environments or uncertain situations. There is a tendency for mistrust, they are defensive, pre-emptively so and the notion of a pecking order and fearlessness appear to be paramount. This ties in with Gunter's

(2010) research in relation to the desire to seek out the safety of being in a crew/gang/collective for young people in East London. NILA gives insight into young people's ideas of what constitutes masculinity and the expectations young men place on themselves and each other (to be explored chapter six). In the context of lyrical analysis, haters (people that are jealous or envious) are continually referred to.

> *'So Solid's pinched paranoid outlook is the logical upshot of twenty two years of post-socialist Britain and the emergence of a permanent underclass… But that idea of class solidarity has long since contracted to the gang, the click, the crew: a sort of microsocialist haven within dog-eat-dog capitalism.' (Reynolds 2007:337)*

Respondent Big Narstie commented about people having '*agoraphobia*'; to emphasise the territoriality and unwillingness for some scene members to travel to other areas; but also as a term to illustrate the constrictive nature of a crew when seeking opportunity. It appears there is a balance that needs to be struck between safety, authenticity and opportunity. NILA and additional data gives a sense of the intense levels of security young people sought from the familiar and their mistrust, avoidance or desire to destroy the unfamiliar.

The explicit desire to lyrically emphasise where one is from; their safe space is also present in the data;

> *'East London's finest' (POW Bizzle 2004)*

> *'…Hang in the ends…*
> *no ends could you bar me…' (It's Wiley (Showa Eski) 2011, Wiley)*

These perspectives are shaped by historical lyrical techniques, ideologies and contemporary societal changes of post-industrial Britain (past and present) and suggest a normative outlook

and sensibility in the scene. These lyrics reflect subcultural perspectives of society, realities faced and subcultural ideology; some lyrics did have real impact for some respondents in the social world. Ties to the local are a significant contributor to identity, respectability and cultural capital. One outcome of this was local areas being policed by young people and unfamiliar faces treated with hostility. Howarth's (2002) research acknowledged that Black boys/young men bore the brunt of (inter-colonial) locational violence. It increased when leaving familiar areas and/or telling 'outsiders' where they were from when in unfamiliar locations. These examples substantiate Big Narstie's agoraphobia statement, as do the comments below:

> *'When the post-code war thing was a little bit hot, it was like one or two of my friends would try to sort of represent their area. And then after a while, we sort of had to shy away from that because you thought maybe if the wrong person hears the song and then it becomes a whole, a bit you know…yeah. But nowadays, yeah, I still do kind of represent my area but not necessarily my area, that particularly- I'll just say, you know, from North London…I think nowadays, I think people are a bit more… understanding now. It's not really…if I say, "Yeah. I'm from this area," it doesn't mean I'm from this area and I'm willing to do this. It just means I'm from this area and I'm just sort of trying to represent it. That is the kind of talent that's coming out from that area. I think the younger people, I don't know how they react to these things nowadays, but I know when I was in secondary school you wouldn't always get the best reaction.' Anon589*

> *'…at that period when Grime was popular... things did get a bit; things did get a bit harder to actually go from postcode to postcode…Yeah because some of the artist that were doing Grime would mention it in their songs and what not…' Anon476*

Respondents discussed the negative impacts on the lives of fans and young people generally moving through social space. Whilst important and significant, this is not the only lyrical narrative of Grime music. Identity formation and respectability also came from the quality of lyricism, comedy and other forms of cultural capital specific to inner city life, past-times and opportunities. It is not only the spectacular that is included in Grime, it is also the day to day existence and mundane lived experiences as outlined by respondents below:

> *'…there were elements of violence in Grime, but it wasn't like casual bragging like, you know, I think it was very authentically hood and yes, there were elements of perhaps, what happened to people in the hood… that wasn't really to me what Grime is about. It is about the energy, the way that they form their lyrics, stuff they are talking about… Stuff you'd eventually laugh…Like they're talking about, you know, the t-Shirt game is healthy… reference to EastEnders. JME talking about, you know, he said, 'I don't represent the ends', you know – 'I'd be representing Year 10' Hattie*

> *'…lyrics were funny… I should emphasize, a lot of Grime was fun and it was slightly playgroundish… sometimes like the offensiveness of it kind of crossed the line, but then nonetheless it was never supposed to be taken that seriously, but at the same time you've got social realists -- social realism in the lyrics of people like Dizzee with tracks like Sitting Here and Brand New Day -- that describe like poverty and struggle and just the challenges of being young kids in London and unlike Dizzee it was (inaudible 0:13:13) the case of like being young Black and like living on the council estate as a child and single mother.' Anon591*

This was a free form of entertainment most often amongst friends. Grime included a plethora of perspectives and lyrical styles and delivery, making the genre vibrant and varied:

'…with Grime it's like you had people where it's like, they wasn't like a - a standard personality… somebody like Kano was obviously very, very much like he's a rapper personality. He's not too over the top. But then you have something like Bruza where it's like (Laughter) I mean that says it all. (Laughter) You could have somebody like you know like Tempa T or Napper from East Connection… it would never necessarily be like just the same dude saying the exact same thing in the exact the same way. It's like the way that people try to extend themselves… JME… obsessed with proving how smart he is…this really aggressive like Teenage Nerd like rap about his Rubix cube scores (Laughter)… And you know against like four or five guys talking about, "Yeah my knife this… my gun does that'. "Blood - my bicycle!"' Maxwell

This comedic element was entertaining for fans however it was also a method to pass the time and combat boredom by making fictitious and comical scenarios:

'Oh no, at first it was always off the top of the head, just mucking around with your friends on the street. Yeah, man, but most of it was funny, like 'Rah! Look at Danny/ his jeans are over baggy/ Oh God it looks like you doodoo'ed in your baggy' you know them ones there (laughter). It was (inaudible), but it was funny. Everyone would be gassed and it would be like 'Rah! He does though, Danny's jeans looked like he doodoo'ed himself!' and everyone would be laughing - you get me? (Laughter).' Big Narstie

'Oh, yeah, that was standard – cussing man about their dry face and that!' Big Narstie

SLSA - Sonic Locational Soundscape Analysis

So far in this chapter, I examined genealogy and identified the elements present in Black Music streams (Lena 2012). These speak to Black Atlantic identity and sensibilities sonically/musically from the London colonial context. NILA highlighted that whilst Grime did have elements of the spectacular, lyrical stylistics were laced with the genealogy of African diasporic lyricism, but also included contemporary issues, the mundane and comical experiences of British life and London Colonies.

In this section, I conduct SLSA to explore the impact of the location (i.e. the aural geographical areas surroundings) that Grime has come from, to assess the significance of soundscapes and audio ecologies on Grime's sound.

Rose argues music becomes the '*…space where contemporary issues and ancestral forces are worked through simultaneously' (1994:59),* and I argue this is done sonically as well as lyrically. I have already established the longitudinal connection of Grime to African diasporic sonic music priorities and sensibilities. However, in this section I examine Grime in its locational and contemporary context. These contexts and soundscapes are also significant in influencing the Grime sound and fully making genre comprehendible.

Labelle's (2010) work illustrates the significance of soundscapes in everyday life. Soundscapes and audio ecologies are the sonic landscape or habitat of a place/space. As outlined in NILA, young people in recent years have developed strong attachments to their 'area'/'endz' (Gidley 2007). As a result, I propose the soundscapes of their locational spaces inform their music making. I propose that the soundscapes (Machin 2010) and audio ecologies (LaBelle 2010) of **Public** (e.g. the street, inner-city), **Private** (e.g. homes and domestic spaces), **Informal Community** (e.g. youth centres, churches, school playgrounds, raves) and **Semi-public** spaces (e.g. the top of tower blocks, precincts) (**PPICS**) are significant components to the makeup of Grime sound.

'The city is also a noise as well as a text, a culture as well as a map, a reverberant terrain as well as a space full of signs; a history surfacing through government policy as well as the potent sonority that envelopes everyday life.' (LaBelle 2010:108)

This city soundscape, I argue, is utilised as a form of capital in identity formation, belonging and authenticity. Grime does this, both sonically and lyrically. The significance of location expressed lyrically or sonically is of equal importance to notions of authenticity, belonging and identity.

Grime's signatures include lo-fi quality sounds which Machin (2010) describes as typical of the sounds of modern urban cities. Lo-fi soundscapes comprise of multiple sounds at any given time, both in close proximity and further away. The cacophony of sounds can make it difficult to identify any particular sound distinctly *'...individual sounds and their origins are obscured.' (Machin 2010:119).* When a lo-fi soundscape is applied to music, Machin (2010) emphasises the merging of sounds within a song, and sounds being absorbed by other sounds. Lo-fi sounds were found in the hidden PPICS spaces of densely populated London Colonies. They are also found within the physical home and 'home' of the crew and contribute to the authenticity of Grimes's sound.

Goodman (2010) and Labelle (2010) touch on the ways sound effects can give the perception of depth and space in music. LaBelle (2010) argues that the echo provides a sense of space and has a disorienting sensation reminiscent of hidden and underground life worlds. The underground alludes to the vastness of dense inner city colonial spaces. These sonic effects become a place where fears and hopes are projected, and as such, become a place of vulnerability, protection or a site for resistance. Sonically Grime is also grand, cinematic and can sound eerie in anticipation of something unexpected. The vastness of space found in Grime can connote a sense of isolation or comfort, within the fast pace of the music itself.

The unpolishedness and rawness of Grime's sound, the sonic disparities of space/vastness and intense envelopment of sound (through bass or lyricism), reflect the soundscapes of the inner city colony. They are a reflection of the multi directional cacophony of sounds and experiences of everyday colonial life. This is not a soundscape all Londoners hear, but sounds most likely to be heard in high density areas, where sound is all around, all the time. Grime reflects the 'hidden' soundscapes of the inner-city colony. Grime is technological as opposed to organic sounding - post-industrial, chaotic, off-beat, yet synchronized.

It has an average tempo in the range of 136 - 140 beats per minute (bpm) (South Bank Show 2012). This element of Grime all respondents could articulate. This tempo very much reflects the fast pace of a London inner city metropolis. Filmer proposes *'…tempo in music may be determinant of the physiological aspect of an affective relationship to time… the social timing through which social activities in general are ordered' (2003:95).* Whilst the data revealed that there are debates about where in London Grime's origins began at the turn of the 21st century, it emerged at a time of fast paced gentrification and the development of the *'world's financial centre'* in the East (central) London region. The benefits proposed by the changes to this region did not trickle down to positively impact on the lives of residents already living in East London colonial areas. Many of whom did not have the skills or training necessary to take advantage of the employment opportunities offered[40] (Gunter 2010) as a result of these changes.

The vocal style of spittin' popularised by Dizzee Rascal, i.e. fast paced and high pitched, can connote the struggle to keep pace with inner city life, or attempting with great effort to be heard above the city soundscape. Lyrical elements in Grime were in local British accents and dialects, yet peppered with Jamaican patois and phraseology. This elucidates Britishness and the cultural capital an affiliation to Jamaicanness affords those from the London colonies. Vehicles, particularly motorbikes were referred to lyrically, but also sampled in some of the

[40] Wot Do U Call it? (2004)

songs analysed. This connotes the fast life, swiftness, mobility, manoeuvrability. It foregrounds being nimble and having to balance priorities to keep afloat and keep moving. The Grime sound, described as cold by respondents, had another unofficial name in initial stages, Eski. Wiley is the creator of Eskibeat and Eskibeat riddim tracks (conflated with Grime) that were named after things associated with cold, such as Eskimo (a racially loaded work for an Inuit), Morgue, Igloo and an album entitled '*Treddin' on Thin Ice'* (2004). The cold sounds could convey the sense of isolation or cold heartedness[41] (Smith 2004), the architectural nature of the blunt 'concrete', lifeless or angular objects of the inner-city (Eshun 1998), one's precarious position in inner-city London (Gunter 2010), or reflect the British climate as one respondent found the temperature affected his music making:

> *'I would be [in the Garage] in the night time with the heaters on blitz. The music was cold; the tunes that we were making were pretty – you could hear the cold, I mean my manager at that time he always attributed it to being in England…That it's cold over there so the music's cold.' Dexplicit*

To make the point about soundscapes, hidden sonic worlds and their impact on sensibilities more explicit, I examine LaBelle's (2010) work on the soundscape of the home (Private). When examining the soundscape of the home, he focuses on the soundscape of the idealised 'adult' middle class suburban home. *'In Western culture, the home has come to replace the church as a sanctuary from the diversity and intensities of street life…' (Labelle 2010:60).* He presents the acoustic space of the idealised home as silence, and this is also linked with behaviours of respectability and feelings of belonging. The home is presented as a space of meeting physical, psychological and emotional needs - providing a sense of order and control, which is synonymous with quiet, or control over noise levels in domestic life. It provides separation from the city which has*, 'a particular sonic geography' (LaBelle 2010: xxii)* spatially

[41] Wot Do U Call it (2004)

and temporally. The narrative of this idealised soundscape outlined above, silences or hides other soundscapes of the home and private spaces.

The sensibilities behind LaBelle's home could not be more different for many involved in making Grime and homes in the internal colonies. Some respondents made music ***in*** the home and lived in busy houses, filled with sound. Respondent data showed homes and private spaces were sites for cultural production. They were functional spaces and sites for cultural production, as well as sources of refuge from the outside world (that homes provide) (Labelle 2010). Respondents made music at home or at friends' homes:

> *'Yeah, I'm from a council estate, yeah…I was the one that - my bedroom was like -- I had the equipment. I had everything there so everyone who was kind of MCs or wanted a little recording with me or something, a little CD recording, we used to all go in my room and we used to do it together. So everyone in the estate used to come. It was a unit, the whole estate, everyone.' Anon 575*

> *'Yeah, it was strange because it started off as going to one of my friend's house in [London] and he used to have some decks and then we used to like spitting together on records, back in the day it was records but now all these kids are using like the CDJs and putting in CDs but we actually used vinyl records and learned how to mix and beat match with vinyl.' Aaron Bridge Roachman*

Some respondents grew up in musical home environments. Dexplicit's father was in a Reggae Sound, Terra Montana 365 and Big Narstie had family and friends that were prominent in the Garage scene. One respondent ran a pirate radio station from a friend's house. Music was significant to the livelihoods and members of these households. The soundscapes of these homes and the priority of silence - equated with refuge in an idealised home (Labelle 2010), may not be of any importance or relevance for these respondents.

The idealised soundscape of the silent home is tied to a physical building and does not fit the desires, sensibilities or intentions of those within a specific age range for example (silence may have been an issue for respondents' parents and caregivers). For young people, the home may be the intangible 'crew', or simply private space where psychological, physical and emotional needs are met, where one has influence or acquired desirable cultural capital. These aspects were not explored in this project, however, with regard music making, Dexplicit would make music in the Garage of the parental home and Aaron Roach Bridgeman amongst others interviewed would make music in their bedrooms or would be confined to making music in the bedrooms of friends at friends' homes.

Respondents' ages largely ranged from pre-teen to teenage years when first encountering Grime. They sought out leisure time with friends that did not involve the home. When leisure time did involve the home, it was with family or friends making music. In contexts such as this, making sound itself can become the silencer, principally by being the loudest, most dominating sound, silencing everything else; a paradoxal sensibility. Big Narstie clearly indicated that his leisure time was spent at youth centres/church projects, house parties, at home, friends' homes, with family, or on the street with his friends - anywhere he could partake in making music. The spaces he actively sought out provided a sense of belonging, a 'home' within a collective, amongst friends, family or crew.

> *'…anywhere and anyway you could hear me, I'd go…' Big Narstie*

> *'And then [Grime] was such a crew game as well, the game was based off crews.' Dexplicit*

Involvement in these spaces, it can be argued, gave him a sense of respectability amongst his peers, cultural capital and a sense of belonging and identity; fulfilling emotional, psychological etc. needs as outlined by Labelle (2010) previously, but, significantly in an alternative sensibility and framework.

In this section, I illustrated the significance local soundscapes and sensibilities have on Grime music making, and how, owing to paradoxal sensibilities, these have contributed to the generation and prioritisation of paradoxal sounds. It provides an explanation for the 'strangeness' of Grime's sound. I illustrated how lyrically and sonically, Grime represents where it is from, and how doing this effectively contributes to notions of authenticity, identity and belonging for respondents in the scene.

Genre

What do respondents say about Grime?

Now that I have explored Grime genealogically, lyrically and sonically, taking into consideration the impacts that past, present, local and global have had in forming the Grime genre (and genre in more general terms) more accurately, I will now examine what the respondents say about Grime.

Some respondents said that upon first hearing it, Grime was unlike anything they had ever heard before. When asked to describe the sounds, words such as '*raw', 'alien', 'futuristic', 'unpolished', 'dark', 'cold', 'hard', 'unfinished', 'visceral', 'energetic' and 'gully'* were used. Many respondents explained that it was an acquired sound. Some respondents were instantly attracted to the sound whereas others had to get used to it over time.

Respondents were drawn to different things in Grime. Some focused on the MC driven nature of the music (comedic, social realism, to vent anger), whilst others liked the sonic properties dominating the sound e.g. the bass and/or the space. Others were drawn to the production element and others were more attracted to the 'rave', clubbing and scene element of the genre. The one thing the majority of respondents could identify easily was Grime's tempo, with all those who spoke of tempo giving no more than +/-5bpm variation from the figure of

140bpm. All respondents identified Grime as a British genre of music, including those who are not British and live overseas. All respondents acknowledged London as Grime's birthplace, even if the location within London (East or South) was contested.

When exploring antecedents of Grime to make sense of its musical genealogy, respondents used conventional genre 'labelling' terms, as an identifier or descriptor. Many were unable to articulate musicological terms as there is very little language currently available to do so. Despite this however, respondents were able to express and extrapolate the cultural significance of some of the genres discussed. The genres outlined in the section below were identified by respondents.

However one respondent did not want to do this extensively:

> *'It's like and I can't separate that but at the same time there's all these people who want to kind of regulate all the influence such as like being, they kind of want to separate the production almost from the weird hybridity it had from Rap and Dancehall and Dance music. It was this really great like almost Nexus where you can have all these weird ideas come together. And it's like it didn't necessarily sound like something.' Maxwell*

Respondents identified several genres influential to Grime's sound. Going forward, I analyse these genres, drawing upon the sonic properties and subcultural practices that construct an in depth genealogy of Grime. This analytical task exemplifies the complexity that should be taken into consideration when analysing genre. Musical genres referred to fell into these groupings:

A. Dance and Electronic music
B. Experimental
C. Punk

D. Rap and Hip Hop

E. Jamaican music

A. Dance and Electronic music

Garage and Grimy Garage

The majority of respondents made a direct link between UK Garage (UK dance music) and Grime, i.e. UK Garage being Grime's immediate predecessor. Bassline and Dubstep, were mentioned; however even in those cases, the first link that the majority of respondents made was UK Garage. Garage was presented as the music that multiple variants spawned from at the turn of the 21st century.

Garage is melodic and is designed to dance (and sing along) to. It was popular in the London nightclub scene in the latter half of the 1990s and had a large and committed following that originated in South London (O'Hagan 2005). MCs lyrical style is slow in pace and included common phrases that ravers could say alongside the MC:

> *'This is the reason why Garage blew up because of its hooks. No matter how people hated DT [Dream Team] - because every tape pack they had, "We're loving it loving it loving it…" every single tape. But at the same time you knew the lyric. I didn't actually understand it really because I'm hearing it from the tape packs to start with. So when people come in the record shop and are going 'Come out with some new bars man! Eearrh!' about it's not good. But as you go into the scene and as you see him do him do it live, I understood --why. But unless you see it live you won't understand because you're just hearing a recording. So on the recording, you're just hearing – you're homing in more on the bars. But when you see it live you see the next man going on you can't hear*

a word he's saying (imitates muffled garble). They passed it to DT "We're loving it loving it loving it, we're loving it…" loud, clear -- -- crystal. Completely different volume… "We're doing it again, loving it like that", not understanding the science to it…' Anon 816

What this respondent is saying is that Garage is participatory in nature and the DJs and MCs would interact with the crowds. Performers knew the crowd would respond in a call and response fashion. Sonically, the music is cyclical in nature. It is participatory and prioritises embodied live music experience and the nightclub scene over the recordings (tape packs) that are, in some respects, a commodifiable by-product.

Respondents active in the Garage scene identified a genre in between Garage and Grime before Grime itself was given an official name: Grimy Garage.

'And at that time on the street, everyone was using the word Grimy anyway. So, it was like they just start calling it Grimy Garage which is just - meant dark Garage.' Dexplicit

Others recalled it being referred to as Sublow or Dark Garage, because of the way the Garage sound had become darker, grimier or grittier:

'The first word, the first name I heard was from -- what's his name?… 2001 and he said to me, '…big up your music, I love the 'Sublow music you're doing!' 'Pardon?' He said, 'That's what you're making, you're making Sublow.' 'I don't know'… but that's what he saw it as and so, it's Sublow, which he ended up promoting it as; and everything he did – Sublow, sounded like me but with no artists on top, just the beats, so that was it.' Anon 793

Sonically, this meant Garage began incorporating more bass and the melodic elements were being stripped away. The music had fewer vocal singing styles and reverted back to the spoken word. More non-musical sounds were also reintroduced - such as speeding motorbikes, dialling tones etc., all contributing to Grime's sound.

Genealogically, the continuity from Garage to Grime was through the electronic and technologised element of the sound. Initially, Garage instrumentals provided space for respondents to 'spit' over and, over time, the sound was modified to be more suitable for spittin'. The raving aspect of Garage directly informed Grime as well as the participatory nature of Garage; for example in Ag&S[42] Grime, the crowd could join in with what the MC was saying through call and response when lyricists used the same last word of each line (as exemplified by the track '*Countdown' - Young Guns 2005*), effectively enabling the crowd to 'join in'.

Jungle

Jungle was mentioned as another predecessor of Grime during my observation at Eskimo Dance. A veteran MC took the opportunity to educate the crowd, (where the average age range appeared to be late teens to early 20s - younger than myself and the performer). He told them that Jungle is where Grime music originated from and that that was the music he grew up listening to. Chronologically, Jungle precedes Garage, it is an underground sound that peaked in the mid-90s. For this reason, many young Eskimo attendees may be unaware of the connection. Several respondents mentioned Jungle, as a scene they were involved in or were aware of. Of those that mentioned Jungle, only one respondent said they were not a fan initially. However, the person who introduced them to Grime was an avid Jungle fan who moved on to Garage and then Grime. Another respondent liked Jungle but was not able to get involved in the scene in a musical capacity because it was dominated by selected DJs.

[42] Avant garde and Scene based

Jungle music is a fast-tempoed music with intensive percussive polyrhythms over half time (slower) basslines and is Dancehall/Ragga influenced. MCs would 'chat' very quickly over the beat; often with Jamaican accents. Genealogically, the fast lyrical styles, fast bpm and the use of half time heavy basslines of Jungle inform Grime.

Dubstep

One respondent mentioned Dubstep and stressed that sonically Grime and Dubstep were the same thing. This genre is sonically sparse but features bass centrally in its instrumentation. Significantly, Dubstep is an instrumental genre. It does not have MCs or vocalists.

> *'And even people who looking at that Dubstep and Grime as if they're two separate things. They're both 140, both got B-lines. It's the same thing, it's the same thing…It's just that one loves artists, one doesn't. But one's better produced, with no acts, 1 scene's got loads of acts.' Anon050*

Comparatively, it isn't always completely cyclical or repetitive in nature. Both Dubstep and Grime genres came about at similar times (Bradley 2012), and are offshoots of Garage. However Dubstep became more popular in the mid-noughties. This may be related to issues of classism, race and racism whereby the sounds were wanted, but the people who originated it were not. This will be examined further in chapter six.

B. Experimental

Two respondents linked Grime to Experimental music. Experimental music can be very freeform, not following 'normal' socially or culturally accepted musical structures (e.g. four beats to a bar, verse-chorus-verse etc.). Owing to the initial sonic extremity of Grime, links between Grime and Experimental music were firmly established. Dan spoke of online

communities that were drawn to Grime because of its experimental nature and extreme, unusual sounds.

> *'...music geeks that liked weird experimental noise stuff, but also liked Grime because it was just a similarly like, - I think avant-garde is the best word – just like musically it was completely out there; like breaking all the rules, not following any kind of formal…' Dan*

Genealogically, the vastness of space present in many experimental forms of music is influential to the sound of Grime, as is its challenging of cultural conventional (sonic music structural) norms.

> *'I did think that avant-garde side of the production of the space, as in the space between the beeps was sort of something like 'What' by Wonder [DJ] a track that is sort of barely there but is so powerful.' Dan*

> *'And like they are literally hearing the offbeatness of this and they're like, "I don't know about that."' Maxwell*

Although there are elements of offbeatness and experimentation in some Grime tracks, there are conventional song structures in place, particularly for the more commercially successful songs. MDA of Dizzee Rascal's '*I Luv U*' revealed that its polyrhythms, whilst not uniform to each other at all times, caused a sense of offbeatness, however, they do in fact, fall into a structure and adhere to musical convention. This effect could speak to Grime's desire to push against the social boundaries of subalternity of the internal colony.

C. Punk

Two respondents made links with British Punk. One had an interest in Punk, although was not born when the scene first emerged in the 70s, the other experienced the punk era first hand.

> *'…Grime was like Punk… Punk is a rebellion of Glam Rock… So yeah, 'we're gonna use the same instruments but we're not gonna care; we're gonna do whatever we wanna do. But we're gonna to aim at the politics, the anarchy, Thatcherism, do you know what I mean, it was something to talk about which people related to. And Grime, who was you relating to, do you see what I mean? Like, yes, the buzz of it got everyone spinning, so everyone – it was like the craze …' Anon 568*

> *'…like a Punk moment for me, in terms of a really - just an explosion of creative energy -- people who are just vibing off each other all at once… the whole being greater than the sum of the parts… I mentioned Punk I suppose because I'd read a lot about Punk and I'd listened a lot when I was 16 and liked this energy similarly. It's wasn't the only kind of music I listened to, but it was something I sort of remember reading about - in 1976, just was this sudden emergence of kind of a lot of great music all from one place I guess, and it felt the same thing was happening but you know, in my lifetime in the city I was living in, as opposed to in the past.' Dan*

Genealogically, the main sonic elements touched upon were the unpolished nature of the sound and its lofi qualities. Significantly, the energy of Punk was described as similar to that of Grime. Comparisons with Punk were mainly in relation to the social and cultural aspects of the genre.

'Also that kind of Punk like energy I described that was the main influence for me I think… they made something that was more visceral and energetic than it was finely crafted and I just wasn't interested in music that was like ooh you know, maybe spent ages you know, making sure that this particular note sounds just perfect. You know it was more about doing something from the heart, and again it's you know instinctive and doing it really well.' Dan

'And, you know, I was from the generation of don't say nothing, which leads neatly into Grime. Grime was completely the opposite of that. Grime was like, 'We don't care we're anti-establishment, we say what we like' which I liked. I liked the attitude. Didn't like the format, but liked the attitude.' Anon001

Sullivan (2013) highlights that Punk has an influence on Grime owing to the fact that artists involved in Punk, e.g. Kevin Martin (cited in Sullivan 2013:145), have worked with Grime MCs. Dizzee Rascal's secondary school teacher famously found Dizzee's first track reminiscent of Punk (Lester 2010). This is one reason why the feel and energy of the sound makes it relatable to Punk. It could also be related to a time of social change and class woes brought about through post-industrialism and government divestment away from colony areas.

Another element to note here is the DIY nature of the music, the rule breaking and intense energy. These are all connoted in Grime. Punk is interesting in this case because few respondents made this crucial link. However this very British element (principally the DIY, unpolished, unrefined sound and energy) transcended and exhibited itself in Grime decades later. This means that although there may not be conscious connections within and/or across streams, the significance of location (and social conditions) in informing sonic constellations cannot be denied and may be an area of future investigation.

D. Rap and Hip Hop

Many respondents and fans on Twitter highlighted American Rap music and Hip Hop culture as influential contributors to Grime; particularly with regard the lyricism, clashing/cyphering or the entrepreneurial business element to the music. This connection may be due to the significant amount of American Hip Hop, Rap and RnB in mainstream British music charts. Rose (1994) calls the global dominance of American culture, cultural imperialism. Hip Hop has the elements of DJing, MCing, The Knowledge, Graffiti and Breakdancing. Grime adopts the MCing element and elements of The Knowledge in some cases, alongside the DJing element.

> *'#SoSolid will 4ever be the ultimate #UK rap pioneers. They are the reason we have all these other #Artists. The past is what creates the fuch' @DaRealMrH*

> *'Big up to So Solid they started this Grime ting and opened doors for Wiley Chip Dizze and all these man #Salutes' @AyoBalo*

> *'…unlike my friends who were drawn to the production side because they went- were getting into DJing, I was very much drawn to the MC side, for just the speed, the energy and that excitement for MC going that fast.' Dan*

Whilst this comparison was made explicitly in the data. The Britishness of Grime and therefore its uniqueness was outlined by respondents:

> *'…I lived in [East London] so, you know, I just find it really exciting as a fan of music, as a fan of like Hip Hop, Black music. To me, it spoke a lot more loudly, a lot more clarity than, say, UK Garage had before or Jungle, which I didn't really rate the MCing, do you know what I mean?…Again, I could look back now*

> *and I totally get what it was about. But at that time, I was like I'd rather listen to [US rappers]…' Anon 7876*

> *'Like with Grime as well it's like it's the street commentary like UK hip hop. UK hip hop it's a real emulation of traditional American hip hop. A lot of the times the UK Hip Hop as well has American accents… With Grime man, it's the realest MC-driven music that come out to UK man and like yeah it's quite a unique sound, it's got a unique delivery, a unique production and that's what drawn me to it man, those things drew me to it.' SK Vibemaker*

One respondent highlighted that before Grime, few British rap acts were taken seriously or achieved commercial success. British Rap had issues around authenticity; primarily relating to American accents used, especially as there is no direct historical link between African-Americanness and Britain other than media consumption.

> *'The only ones that got accepted before that was London Posse 'cause they had a London accent and, you know, -- an English appeal to them. But it was cult. It was a cult thing and you kept hearing it, it was just hearsay - 'Well we like London Posse because they're English' so they liked them…Don't get me wrong, they were good. They liked them because they could rhyme with an English accent -- which wasn't that common from an 'urban' perspective, you know, it was still, (Impersonates Jamaican accent) "Winstaan"'* Anon 972

Genealogically, the lyrical element of Grime appeared to be the main factor that respondents used to make links between the two genres. Sociological elements from Rap and Hip Hop culture e.g. cyphering and spectating were also mentioned. Only one respondent was momentarily a peripheral member of a graffiti collective, but this was not exclusively linked to Grime or Hip Hop culture.

E. Jamaican music

Jamaican music's, such as Dub, Reggae, Ska, Dancehall/Bashment, all heavily utilise Bass and Dub in their sonic make-up. This element heavily features in Grime music. As a result of Jamaican settlement in the Britain after WWII (Hewitt 1986), Jamaican language, culture and music had a significant impact on British life and music culture. Crude examples were:

- Musical preferences of White British Mods (modernists) in the 60s (Back 2000), who enjoyed *'…Ska (as well as rude boy fashion and attitude)...' (Sullivan 2013:69).*

- Reggae and Punky Reggae fans in the 70s and 80s (Bradley 2012).

The Jamaican influence on Grime music is a fact that is being increasingly pushed to the fore in public discourse about the genre. In September 2014, Grime collective Boy Better Know (BBK) recorded their journey to Jamaica to pay homage to the significance Jamaican music has contributed to Grime as part of Red Bull's Culture Clash promotional material[43]. Sound clash is also an aspect of Jamaican sound system culture that has been co-opted by Red Bull.

> *'…competitions known as 'clashes' began to take place. These were a partial continuation of the competitive performance traditions of many West African cultures such as those in Trinidad and Brazil.' (Sullivan 2013:16).*

In varied form, the sound clash informed American Rap cyphering, DJ practices and Hip Hop culture. Cross pollinated influences of this practice from Jamaica and American Hip Hop culture now influence Grime. This prominent practice is an aspect found in the Black Music Stream (Lena 2012) owing to its presence in varying levels across the Diaspora.

[43] Kingwell, T. and Read, C. (2014).

When examining antecedents of Grime, respondents from Afrodiasporic backgrounds were more forthcoming and vocal when identifying Grime with the music's belonging to the Black Music Stream, particularly Jamaican music. This suggests that Grime is a locus (effect/culture bearer etc.) of a larger story (i.e. events/politics) for Black Britons. This is where the visibility of the Black Public Sphere enters the narrative. Respondents who self-identified as being of (African) Caribbean descent, and/or those of any other background with knowledge of Jamaican music specifically, spoke matter-of-factly about where Grime came from, basing this knowledge on having first hand, embodied, experiential knowledge growing up in and around Reggae/Dancehall/Bashment music, and/or sound system culture in Britain or abroad. They immediately identified cultural set ups in live event settings and musical patterns prevalent in the early stages of the Grime scene.

> *'That was just Bogle music that was just -- because Steely and Cleevie were my favourite producers. Back then, they were the Timberland of Jamaica. So they're the first Grime producers because they had the simplest beats, they sound full. There sounds like there's lots going on but there isn't. Theirs was (imitates baseline) … Simple!' Anon160*

> *'Like Grime - it's very much a foundation level thing, it wasn't complex. It was like creative simplicity.' Its whole concept was very – it came from the same thing that- it's mad – it's Dancehall!' Aaron Roach Bridgeman*

> *'I don't like to say it like that, like people might listen and think 'What's he talking about?!', but it's true, that's what it was. It was like that. If you look back to 1994 you get Saxon Sound Clash all them t'ings there at the end of the day. It's the same. If you look it's exactly the same, it's just evolved into Grime. In 10 or 20 years it will be another sound and the same atmosphere. That's what it is; that's what it was...' TerraMontana365*

Older respondents, in addition to those familiar with Jamaican music, were able to link the Jamaican influenced genealogical history of Grime music with British underground music and scenes, such a Jungle:

> *'Don't get it twisted, there are influences and origins of it that we can blatantly see in things like Jungle which then you can also take from Jamaican Dancehall music…' Aaron Roach Bridgeman*

I observed a prominent British Dancehall DJ present the argument that Grime is British Dancehall at the Buma Rotterdam Beats, plenary session conference (Nov 2012). This data and project specifically facilitate a visibility into inside knowledge, cultural and social capital in the Black Public Sphere that respondents experientially and instinctively understand.

The significance of Jamaican music and context

It is worth noting that the genres I categorised A-E identified by respondents all have ties and/or links with Jamaican Music. Sullivan (2013) draws upon the similarities between British Punk and Reggae. Both were influential in 1970s Britain, and Punk incorporated Reggae elements into its sound. He argues that both Punk ***and*** Reggae were revolutionary with anti-establishment sentiments in the British context particularly, the former expressing angst, a vehicle for anger and a desire for anarchy, the latter seeking to defy Babylon. Both sought to challenge the status quo and social order. He suggests that the relationship between Punk and Dub was fairly fluid during the mid to late 70s and early 80s.

DJ Kool Herc, a Jamaican immigrant residing in the Bronx New York, is credited for significantly contributing to developing Rap and Hip Hop culture in the USA as a result of his attempts to recreate 'home' (i.e. Jamaica - by playing his music out on the street - Rose 1994). So whilst respondents interviewed directly refer to American Rap and Hip Hop, it is in fact Jamaican

influenced. Jamaican influence in 1980s and 1990s Britain should not go unnoticed. Respondents spoke of the influence of Jamaican musicians on British music outside of Grime. Citing the success of Black British group Musical Youth, Smiley Culture, Maxi Priest and the genre Lovers Rock all being influenced by the sonics of Jamaican music, Jamaican born Reggae artists Half Pint's *'…album, also called Raggamuffin Hip Hop, was released in 1988 and had an influence on the early ragga Jungle scene.' (Sullivan 2013:119)*

> *'UK rave culture has been defined by a compulsion to use house with reggae and hip hop… You could argue that UK rave was in large part the direct transposition of Jamaican dancehall culture into Britain - the competing sound systems, the all-night parties…the bass worship… hardcore evolved into Jungle…' (Reynolds 2007:261)*

Jungle music has significant Ragga/Dancehall/Bashment influences. As outlined previously, Jungle was a source of inspiration for Garage and Grime artists who used and applied it to UK Garage, changing the Garage sound (reducing the melodic nature and re-introducing low frequencies and increasing tempo).

Finally, Jamaican Dub was one of the first genres to employ experimental techniques to music consistently (Reynolds 2007, LaBelle 2010, Goodman 2010) applying sound effects such as echoes, reverb and non-musical sounds such as foghorns to tracks (Reynolds 2007).

British group Soul II Soul were referenced specifically by one respondent in relation to the British application of Jamaican sound system culture in the late 1980s and 1990s. This respondent based their own musical career on the Soul II Soul sound system model, having seen them successfully apply it to another genre in Britain and achieve commercial success.

> *'But I took the influence from Soul II Soul because they started as a sound. They started as this -- they had that guy in Camden built their crowd, playing their*

own tunes – got a deal, sold three millions albums in The States. So I kind of took that model roughly when I started [DJ collective] – thought – well – well let just start a sound then. We start a crew, playing what they want, build an audience eventually playing my own stuff to the audience -- and the rest is history. So that was kind of the idea (laughter).' Anon348

Emulating this approach, in addition to this respondent's specialist knowledge of Dancehall and Bashment music, (their primary DJ sound specialism), these sounds influenced their own musical productions of 'Garage-like' music which were 'labelled' and marketed as Garage in order to promote their work. This influential sound was eventually called Sublow, Grimy Garage or Dark Garage, but at the time of production, did not have a name.

'…well when I did it, I did it as a Garage record and somehow it kind of, along with Eskimo and a series of other tunes, just started the Grime sound…And the rest is history. So it wasn't something where I said I'm gonna do Grime music. It was just -- it kind of evolved into it.' Anon 689

This respondent outlined how elements of Jamaican music culture found its way into Grime:

'…like Wiley took the Jamaican culture and put it into Grime to a generation that didn't know about that or part of it; took elements of clashing, riddim tracks but made it British… he embraces the new, that sort of cockney British flow and made it popular.' Anon 346

Sim Simma, incorporated the familiar musical elements she listened to growing up in her own music. These were a source of inspiration:

> *'And decided to incorporate a rapping style with a little bit of singing style. Kind of Jamaican and English Grime mix with a little Dancehall …and a bit of Hip-Hop.' Sim Simma*

Many respondents that were involved in music making were either part of a sound system or had family members that were involved in sound systems. Some respondents even referred to other Grime artists who had direct or familial links to sound systems.

> *'My dad was in a Reggae band so he has a bit of equipment already.' Dexplicit*

Wretch32 spoke of his father being involved in sound system culture at TUS2012[44] and Jammer's (BBK) father was also a soundman that had involvement in the culture (Bradley 2010, 2012).

Whilst I have made links to the significance of Jamaican music here, this section also illustrates the point stressed in the introduction of this chapter - that genre is always open and that there are never clearly defined lines distinguishing one genre to the next. The musics identified here are a cross pollination of (and in some cases with) a Black Atlantic identity (known to many active in the scene, or who understand the Black Public Sphere - its norms and all/parts of the collective histories that inform it). Sociologically, it is also of note that the genres identified A-E, are also marginal and/or controversial genres and represent people who are constructed as marginal by mainstream British society.

[44] The Ultimate Seminar.

Genre Trajectory and meaning

So far in this chapter, I explored Grime's genealogical sonic and sociocultural influences from pre-existing genres, and social and musical sensibilities. I now move on to explore the ways that Grime has progressed as a genre through its lifecycle.

Lena (2012) teleologically identifies four phases a genre goes through in a full life-cycle (not achieved by all genres). She identifies four genre stages/phases of the **AgSIT** life cycle:

- **Avant-garde (Ag),** is considered new and sonically distinct from other musical forms, and shared/followed by a core group of people.
- **Scene-based (S),** is where core members monetise their work from committed fans. Niche knowledge, practice, culture and sensibilities develop normative values and meaning; the development of aesthetic styles, documenting I.e. magazines, events etc.
- **Industry-based ('I'),** is where culture becomes commodified and devoid of original meaning, the music moves outside of the scene and is commercialised.
- **Traditionalist phase (T),** is concerned with preserving Ag and S stages. It involves policing boundaries of genre and focusing on authenticity and creating knowledge and institutions to maintain this.

She argues that genre can only travel through the four phases of the **AgSIT** life-cycle in sequential order (outlined in the introduction and chapter three). In this project, I refer to the teleological development of the Grime genre in this framework i.e. Avant garde (Ag), Scene (S), Industry (I), Traditional (T) collectively referred to as **AgSIT**.

Respondents' data reveal that Grime has traversed the Ag phase, where it started out as hybrid music heavily influenced by antecedent genres mentioned in the previous section of this chapter (A-E).

At its earliest Ag stage, the music was made, shared and followed by a core group of people who resided in internal colonies. Whilst there is literature that explores the DIY nature of the genre and the use of the PlayStation in music making (Missingham 2007, Palmas and Von Busch 2008, Sullivan 2013), the majority of music makers and distributors (i.e. DJs) interviewed, actually had access to 'proper' music equipment, such as computers, software, vinyl, microphones and record players as well as DIY methods employed in PPICS[45] for example. References were made to DIY methods and activities; one respondent had to record vocals through in-ear headphones as that was the only resource available to him at a youth club; another was able to build his own computer and made music using mobile phone polyphonic ringtones. However, these 'unconventional methods' were presented as momentary, applied in the initial stages of their musical careers. Only one respondent mentioned using PlayStation for music making and that was by a member of his crew who was more interested in the production side of music making. Two respondents casually interviewed during observation, also mentioned dabbling with Grime on PlayStations at home when they were younger, but admittedly never took it seriously. Some of these practices in Avant garde stages will be discussed in more detail in chapter five where I examine how the scene started and spread.

Respondent data indicates Grime transitioned from Ag to S phases through the Garage raving scene (initially - becoming Grimy/Dark Garage, Sublow), pirate radio and 'on road' activities such as selling and/or distributing CDs. Niche magazines such as RWD, where Hattie was Editor, started reporting on Grime. In addition, Grime specific nightlife known collectively as 'Grime nights' started. This will be explored in more detail in chapter five.

[45] Private, Public, Informal Community and Semi-Public Spaces.

Grime entered the Industry phase with a vengeance in the late noughties, i.e. around 2009. When capital becomes involved, it shapes musical output and affects musical creativity. Negus' (1999) work highlights how the corporate industry is not entirely in control of the creativity that is produced, as the industry itself is shaped by wider society and culture. However, in the industry process of 'forcing' certainty into the uncertainty of creative music output and securing audiences, music is indexed in conventional signifying ways; named and made comparable to other genres, where conventions and knowledge have been put into place. The music industry's signifying approach to genre may give insight into the ways respondents talk about music. The industry is principally concerned with selling music, raising profits and eradicating uncertainty to achieve maximum profit (Negus 1999). It therefore invests heavily in knowing/determining who the audience are and what they want. This has tangible and intangible consequences, some of which are explored here, but will be explored in depth in chapter six.

Unfortunately, in relation to Black musicians and Black music streams, the industry creates knowledge in essentialist and unstable terms, as outlined by Riley:

> *'For many Black British Musicians, the same analogy could be applied to their experience of the British music industry. Looking back over the last four decades, Black British musicians could be forgiven for viewing the British music industry's investment in their careers as a series of low budget marketing experiments that have provided access to and a stake in future trends, which the industry would eventually exploit.' (2014:112)*

Part of the problem with this was addressed at the House of Commons in April 2014. Nunu is CEO and founder of Diaspora[46], an organisation lobbying for more diversity in the British music industry. She organised a meeting with MP, David Lammy, and music professionals

[46] Nunu, R., Diaspora.

about the music industry being 97% White. The purpose of this meeting was to explore ways to tackle imbalance. Kwaku, founder of Black British Music launched the campaign Re:IMI[47] in 2015, to tackle the lack of diversity in paid positions and professions in the music industry.

> *'…the music industry shapes the possibilities for creative practice and how this intersects with broader historical, social and cultural processes.' (Negus 1999:29)*

The music industry's monolithic collective of influential musical decision makers, and their lack of knowledge and/or disinterest in Black British music and the Black Public Sphere, has led to the majority of Grime's antecedental genres (such as those outlined in A-E) being positioned as 'underground' or marginalised in Britain. I argue that decision makers in the commercial industry do not understand Black music sensibilities, the Black Public Sphere or the people. They attempt to make sense of it by forcing it to adhere to alternative (i.e. commercial) sensibilities and knowledge, which I term the Columbusphere (outlined in chapter six).

> *'I wanna thank dem fans*
> *That knew I had very good plans*
> *Had tons of music album ready*
> *But the label they didn't understand.' It's Wiley (Showa Eski) (Cowie 2011)*

Fulfilling its purpose, the Industry phase of Grime's teleological development commodifies Grime and simultaneously draws it into other music streams in order to 'cross over' to mass audiences for monetary gain. So whilst Grime had been acknowledged by the mainstream music industry sporadically since 2002 (Single '*Oi'* 2002, Album *Boy in the Corner* 2003 - Mercury Prize winner), it was not sustained or nurtured until it was economically viable.

[47] Race Equality in the Music Industry.

One respondent involved in a music legal capacity found he had to push harder for Grime acts because it was harder for them to break through into the industry.

> *'You had to be a robust kind of A&R person if you're going to sign a Grime act. The labels weren't really doing that. Do you know what I mean? Even when [MC] and those guys were at the peak, you know?' Kienda*

Simultaneously, the industry viewed Grime as an underground movement and therefore did not pursue its commercialisation. It was not considered mainstream. Music TV channels also showed little interest in playing Grime music videos.

> *'…seeing whether or not Grime succeeds. Now, that's despite the fact there's been a certain success in the music genre and I think the difficulty is with every genre of music that comes along, which is kind of new or whatever, Grime is no longer new, but what happens is there comes a point where… All, the A&R and management; everybody doesn't really see it happening.' Kienda*

However, once Grime crossed over and the industry found a formula that worked, it was fetishized and commodified in order to raise maximum income generation.

> *'Somebody like I don't know, [MC1] or [MC2] or whoever breaks through and then all of a sudden that's the next hot thing.' Kienda*

The industry, then begins mining for a 'certain' thing and the imagined audience that will generate maximum profit from it. One respondent found in their music journalistic capacity, they were involved in one such process:

> *'…they asked me to go to [radio station] and sit in on the [radio station] playlist meeting. Spent three hours listening to every big new single that was out that*

week and decided what's going in [to the playlist]. Every week they had a different presentation, every week at the beginning. It was very "secret" meeting, so it might be from somebody on the dance show, somebody on the rock show or something, somebody with some special kind of knowledge. It was a guy from … I think was head of music … and he gave a presentation on why it was the year of urban. It had slides and stuff like that. That was interesting because all of these people, who were basically taste makers in the heart of UK mainstream, [radio station] playlist, are sitting around discussing which urban songs it was that were going to go on the playlist… It's music that everyone had been ignoring for a really long time and suddenly it becomes like the only thing that they wanted … 'Send me more watered down Grime.'' Anon739

By saturating the market with more of the same formulaic Grime, the outcomes outlined by respondents below illustrate how industry shapes cultural production:

'But by the time they get to that point, everything then starts to look for something else; people start to move onto something else. And my feeling is, that's what causes the stagnation in business negotiation. Okay. So you've had a couple of people out there that have done very well with Grime, you know. How long can a market sustain success? Is it going to be that anybody else coming along now is [inaudible 00:01:01] rather than their own unique individual sound? And I think that Grime music particularly suffers from that. It's one of those things where despite the fact there's certain artists it's not something that necessarily is really ever going to go beyond where it's mainstream and such.' Kienda

Paradoxically however, one respondent felt this forcing of certainty was so fixated within a limited parameter of what Grime should be that it would never develop. It was relying on the

formula from one successful Grime artist only and sticking to that closely in the hopes of crossing over for commercial/capital success.

'…the buzz of it got everyone spinning, so everyone – it was like the craze of that, 'Yeah, I'm gonna write bars, I'm gonna write bars, I'm gonna write bars.' So yes, we created that buzz of everyone being poets basically. Masked by wanting to get signed because the opportunity was there. If the opportunity wasn't there then Grime would've gone elsewhere, would've split into like five or six different bits, so we would've had conscious Grime, we would've had (inaudible 01:40:03) Grime, we would've had clash Grime, we would've had -- do you know what I mean, you would've had so many different types of Grime but because it was '[MC1] got signed and this is how he got signed so let's do that. [MC2] got signed, that's how he got signed so let's do that.' That's why it ended up just being one thing.' Anon671

These statements suggest that whilst the industry was forcing certainty and actively limiting what they were looking for, aspiring artists were also complicit because they sought economic success. These two examples illustrate Negus' point that culture shapes industry and vice versa. I would argue however, that the power and systems of oppression that operate through this relationship make the dynamic of the relationship skewed. TerraMontana365 said that the sound changed with the crossover of some Grime artists. The sounds used to produce tracks were 'commercial' – for example a commercial kick drum was used. Big Narstie and another respondent felt that Grime's sound changed because once people crossed over, they would change the sounds used and would begin making music's that were categorised and marketed as other genres, using Grime principally to cross over and achieve commercial success.

'Grime has been out longer Dub – Funky House, but what it is, with Grime, there's a lot of Tobys and not a lot of Kunte Kintes. One thing I know about

> *Asian people, no matter how much they know about any other country, they don't let go of their heritage or their history… They got all the knowledge of (inaudible 00:39:03) or Allah. They still celebrate their national hol – their religion - their history. See with Grime, Grime artists – they get close enough in and think 'Rah, I need to go with the big p's [money] so let me go and try and make something different – a next angle!'...' Anon682*

> *'Like imagine you start hearing Tupac on some dance rhythm and David Guetta tracks – 'Hail Mary' wouldn't get no response. D'you get me? 'Hail Mary didn't do that well so let me start making songs like that where the focus is on David Guetta.' There would be no Hip Hop. There would be no Hip Hop if everybody thought about getting the ket [money] quickly and cuttin' out through [leaving]. Then nothing would have any substance. Like this is why we have people trying to do stuff like that this on the Grime scene because the whole Grime scene's history was Whitewashed; because everyone got budro [money] and dropped it out and left it.' Big Narstie*

This shows complicity between the artist and the industry to create a specific commodified thing for capital gain at the expense of creativity for those more money minded. It also exposes the power imbalance in this complicit relationship. According to Lena (2012), in the Industry phase, scene members are overlooked in preference of commercialisation and revenue. It is after this stage a genre can transition to the final Traditional phase, where concerns and discussions amongst Ag&S fans turn toward upholding authenticity, 'boundary policing' and preserving/educating/sharing the traditions and origins of the music.

Respondents were happy for the commercial and assumed financial successes of their peers. However, they felt nostalgic about old skool Grime. They felt industry involvement stifled originality, limiting it in some cases, or completely changing the sound from what it once was.

Content was seen as lacking and changed to meet commercial demands and capital success. There is a definite sense of nostalgia amongst respondents from the scene based genre.

> *'…the fact that it was underground, people, they would always say, 'it was really great…so and so was really great 'til it went overground'. Like obviously 'Dub-Step was really great 'til it got commercial'. And I don't think that about Grime coz I don't think it did get commercial, but, I think the part that everyone loves about music, underground music, is that it's underground……you know, whether it is Dubstep, Jungle, Garage. So, Grime also felt like, I suppose, like a secret thing, like a secret club that if you were into…that was obviously a big part of the choice… Everyone knew about Hip Hop. I mean, everyone knew about R'n'B, but Grime which was really quite…, which is sort of, with its foreign sort of sound and it is like weird slang and it is like sort of fast beat, was a music that a lot of people just didn't get… it felt quite like…quite inclusive in that way. Again, because, you know, I was living in East London or I still do, but I was living in East London and I was writing for a magazine, so I'd include these people all the time.' Hattie*

Many respondents reminisced about classic freestyles or sought out classic tracks; which led to one respondent setting up a business *'Deadstock Grime'* selling archived and rare and/or classic mixtapes. He explained that a lot of the material was hard to get and expressed sadness that some were lost forever.

> *'I've got the webstore coming up in 2014, Deadstock Grime which is going to selling old - Grime scene, you know them ones that are hard to find nowadays?' MindofGrime*

> *'And we know that obviously through the years of doing all this that there's certain mix tapes that come out in a like '07, '08 that Grime fans nowadays*

really want… Like, obviously a few that have really gone – you can't get them… Like, we spoke to the MC. The MC's like 'I'm sorry but I ain't even got the lyr- like a lot of the MCs - A big problem is that a lot of MCs ain't even got their own music.' MindofGrime

Other respondents have taken on the role of educating people about Grime and sharing their knowledge and experiences of Grime before it was commercialised:

'So I was one of the people that travelled around and showed everyone. I still do that now. That's what I do, I just travel around the country and show people… I'll go really far, like [location name], and tell people and stuff like. That's what my play in the music industry is as well. I just show people the sound.' TerraMontana365

'…I've travelled far and they don't know what Grime is… 'Do you know this MC, do you know that MC?' They're like 'No, no, ah we know Skepta though.' … all right, you know Skepta, yeah, all right so you'll know this tune. And then that's how I'll, like, reel them in; do you know that tune, do you know this tune? And then they start knowing about, ah that's Grime is it?… That's my mission.' TerraMontana365

One respondent enjoyed sharing stories of their experiential knowledge in Grime, or enabling others to experience old skool Grime by proxy.

'I've got other friends that are younger than me that are like, 'What was it like with like, when [Venue attended] or what was it like when [an MC] came out?…Well, that sort of stuff they're like 'Wow' – Sit down and let me tell you a story.' Hattie

These respondents active in the Ag&S phases now begin doing work of traditionalists in response to the Industry phase. According to Lena, traditionalists often desire to revert back to the pre-industry Scene phase, or declare death of a genre. Grime, based upon this research project (and my role in documenting it), is contributing to the emergent Traditionalist phase of its teleological development:

> *'No one thought about embracing the architecture of the scene, where it comes from. You get me? How can it be 2013 and you're doing it now? When I was MCing in '99!' Big Narstie*

> *'Yeah, of course, you have to [educate people about classic Grime] because it's 2013 and it's like 12, 13, 12 years old Grime is around that, and I go all places, and people don't know what it is, and it's shocking to me that people can be like, what's Grime? It's like, really?!... It is shocking, and it's a shame, because there's such a lot of history in the sound that people have missed, you know? So yeah, it's bad really. You know I never stop going around and telling everyone this is Grime.' TerraMontana365*

Paired with respondent data and the decline from the peak of mainstream music industry saturation in 2009, it can be argued that Grime is potentially transitioning into the Traditional phase amongst the older fans, (owing to respondents' nostalgia for classic tracks of Grime and educating others to preserve Ag&S based phase). Many respondents no longer listened to contemporary Grime music. Grime is now spoken of in waves; 1st wave, 2nd wave, 3rd wave to reflect the changes to the sound over time. This also reinforces the notion of an emerging traditionalism in Grime.

> *'So, yeah, I think people ask because people are more into the memory of it now than what's happening but I don't personally listen to any of the newer Grime people really that much…You know, I listen to Skepta and JME and Wiley*

> *I listen to the same stuff, but I don't listen to a lot of new artists so I don't know what they got - that much is being said at the moment.' Anon943*

Lena (2012) highlights that once the industry phase wanes, a space arises for new Avant garde genres to emerge. Respondents Aaron and Maxwell, exemplified this when they acknowledged that Grime has changed sonically to incorporate Trap and Road Rap. This in conjunction with 'waves', old skool and classic Grime, secures the idea that there in fact is a traditionalist notion of what 'original' Grime was, is and should be.

> *'Of course now like with most Grime music they all sound - like most of them sound like trap…' Maxwell*

> *'The thing about Grime - it's weird because the UK rap is kind of prevalent now… the whole UK rap thing is about being a Trapstar.' Aaron Roach Bridgeman*

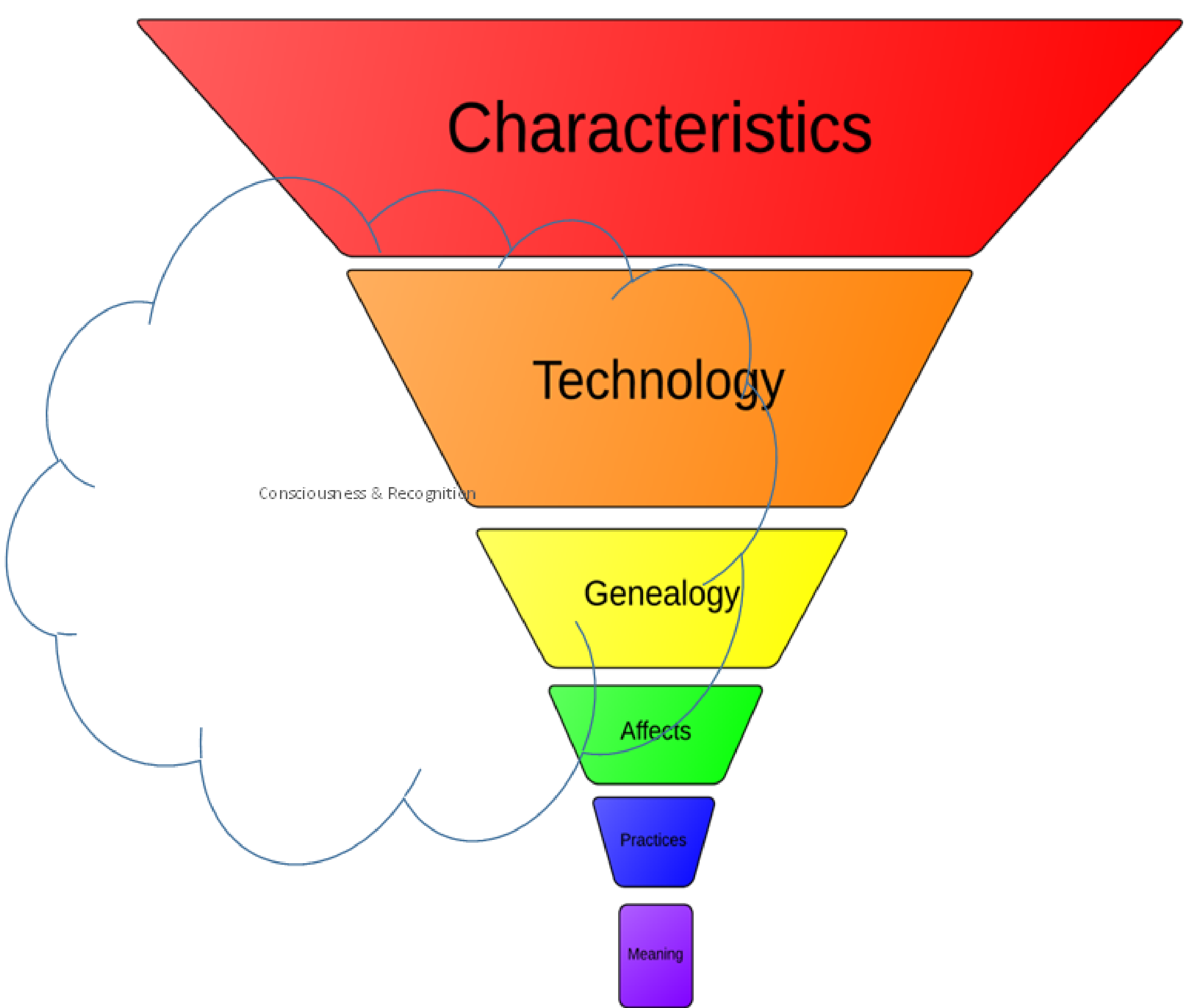
Over time the teleological aspect of Grime's AgSIT development has introduced new ways of talking about it. It is now considered a genre it its own right[48] (in 2015, the MOBO awards included it as its own music category) and people are now trying to conceptualise what it is to share knowledge with others in more authoritative and official capacities (T phase), outside of the London colonies it originated from and promote the Black Public Sphere.

[48] Ellis-Peterson, H. (2015).

Chapter Summary and genre concept

In this chapter, I explored Grime from various vantage points to contribute towards developing a new theory for genre. Presenting genre as multilingual multi-spatial meta-language, informed by the tangible and intangible. I have outlined points of consideration for this theory in diagram 8:

8 My concept of genre



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[49] (Red – Characteristics, Orange – Technology, Yellow – Genealogy, Green – Affects, Blue – Practices, Purple – Meaning, Cloud – Consciousness and Recognition). I designed this diagram from the data and wider reading to develop my own theory for genre. Music and genre are comprised of more than a music label. Sonic characteristic that dominate a sound, stylistics and the technology that is used to generate the sounds; the histories and music streams they belong are also included. Affect or connection of this stream to the people the emotional connection and practices are linked to culture from which one can draw meaning and capital in their personal lives.

The musical factors that contribute to genre are sonic signatures (characteristics), individual identifiable sounds and qualities such as bass, tempo, and pitch i.e. the things referred to usually in scientific terms. The technology used to create these characteristics is of equal importance in shaping genre, as technology itself can shape the signatures possible, by creating or preventing their possibility. Genealogy, as the history and journey of music streams and musical families, are intimately linked to cultural elements that inform musical conventions. This is where the social begins to inform the development of genre most significantly, and illustrates Frow's (2005) point that genre is both musical and social. Affect is important to genre; cultural and musical convention will be more relatable to those familiar with them. In the case of Grime, Black Public Sphere familiarity will also inform how people connect to the music, the sounds and the culture, and how they will or will not affectively invest in it.

Practice is crucial; it incorporates the cultural and locational elements that people partake in as a result of their affective investments, and, from this position, personal meaning can be drawn from the genre, as can collective connections (Communitas) in live performance settings (explored in chapter seven). Those with affective investments are not always conscious or recognise the multiple processes which take place before their affective investment is self-acknowledged.

I am arguing that genre is multilingual through NILA and SLSA and is a metalanguage that communicates with the present whilst dialoguing with the past. It is what I term a sonic footprint timestamp (SFT). Genre captures the constellation of history, the contemporary, societal intersectionality and demography. In the case of Grime, NILA and SLSA, particularly the vastness of space, intensity of bass, fast tempo and fast lyrics, illustrate the alternative existence marginalised internal colonial youth felt at the turn of the 21st century. Lost in vastness (space), determined to be heard (agency, boasting) and clinging to the familiar (security). Eerily alone in space, but consumed by claustrophobic dread (bass). The offbeatness attempts to break boundaries and conventions. The potency of the bass and

urgency of the lyrics in particular are being physically and emotionally pushed to the fore for transmission. Communicating their existence i.e. realities, pastimes, comedy and aspirations but also their disorientation, fear and dread in an uncertain and fast, ever changing social environment. Asserting their Afrodiasporic and classed existence through historically familiar cultural practices, their Britishness to assert belonging.

Chapter Five – Subculture: Grime's Growth

Introduction

> *'…a combative, anti-mainstream attitude, a deliberately DIY infrastructure (with homemade CDs and DVDs, basement battles, dedicated pirate radio stations such as Rinse FM and Freeze FM) and legions of 'rudebwoys' spitting uncompromising lyrics about life in London.' (Sullivan 2013:137)*

In the previous chapter, I examined the Grime genre from various vantage points making specific links to a) African diasporic sonic and cultural priorities (Rose 1994), b) the impact of the global and local and c) the past and present. Here, I will interrogate social elements of genre; subcultural practice. Foucault's genealogy definition, is integral to this chapter also, in order to explore the genealogical evolution of Grime and making its emergence intelligible.

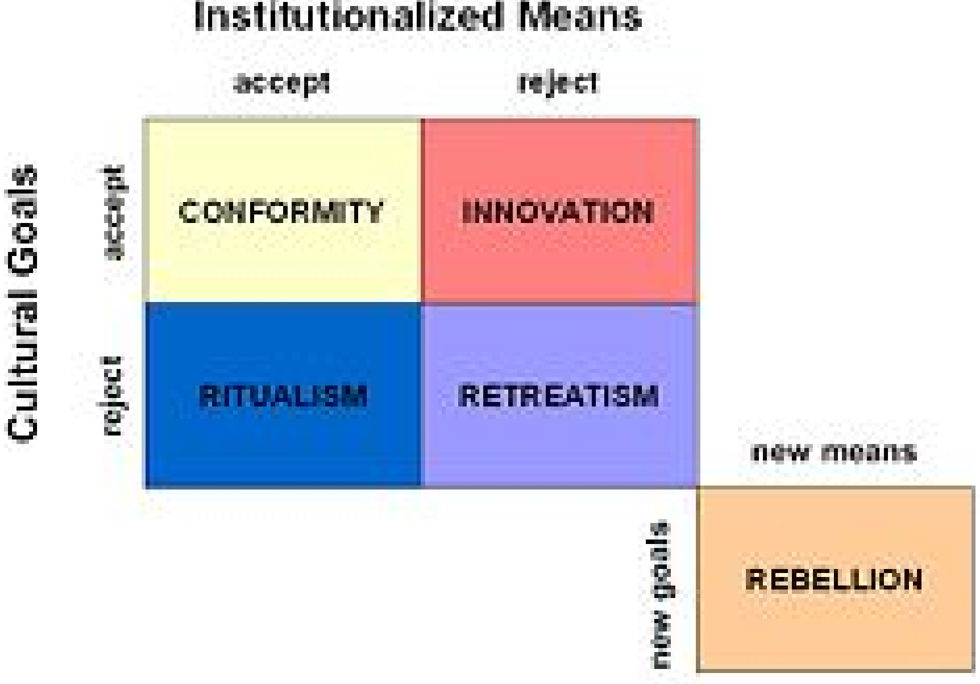
When referring to subculture, I consider Grime to be a culture which is different to, but operates within, wider mainstream British dominant culture. Owing to the socio-economic status of most involved in Ag&S[50], these subcultural practices can be considered 'alternative'. Members employ subterranean techniques inside internal colonies (Hall 1978) and adhere to Black Public Sphere (Baker 1996) sensibilities and norms. Given the generally apolitical nature of Grime's lyrical content (explored in chapter four), I refrain from constructing it as solely resistance, because it seeks to achieve mainstream rewards through *Relative Deprivation* (Runciman 1966) and *Means and Goals* (Merton 1957) models.

Both Runciman and Merton's research explore the alternative methods and outlooks those from lower socio-economic backgrounds employ to achieve socially desirable success.

[50] Avant garde and Scene based.

Runciman finds those from lower socio-economic backgrounds adhere to a series of rationales. These are, that i) Person A does not have X (where A is the person from the lower socio-economic background and desires to acquire something - X e.g. a career, object etc.) - but cannot do so through conventional means or institutional processes. ii) Person A knows of other people from different socio-economic backgrounds that have acquired X. iii) Person A wants to have X and believes that obtaining X is realistic. Merton's *Means and Goals Deviant Typology* diagram, illustrates that the means to acquire X by person A is achievable through innovation and innovative practice.

9 Merton's Deviance Typology[51]



These studies theorise ways those belonging to lower socio-economic backgrounds work to secure and enjoy the possessions, lifestyles and security through alternative means. They are useful to this project and conceptualising how the scene started and expanded as a social movement. Through alternative means, scene members achieve success, defined as

[51] http://study.com/cimages/multimages/16/250px-Mertons_social_strain_theory.jpg. I inserted this diagram to illustrate one of the frameworks I am applying to this chapter to explore how Grime expanded as a social movement. The choice to adhere to institutionalised means to achieve cultural goals may not be present for those who founded Grime as the context in my Venn-diagram begins to illustrate (image no. 5). The main argument used here is that those involved in Grime in its Avant garde stages adopted innovative practices on this grid.

economic success, autonomy and respect of peers, on their own terms. Owing to the socio-economic status of those involved in Avant garde Grime, the concepts of *Relative Deprivation* (Runciman 1966) and *Means and Goals* (Merton 1957) map the transference and growth of Grime in its early stages, and illustrate methods of personal agency in subaltern contexts.

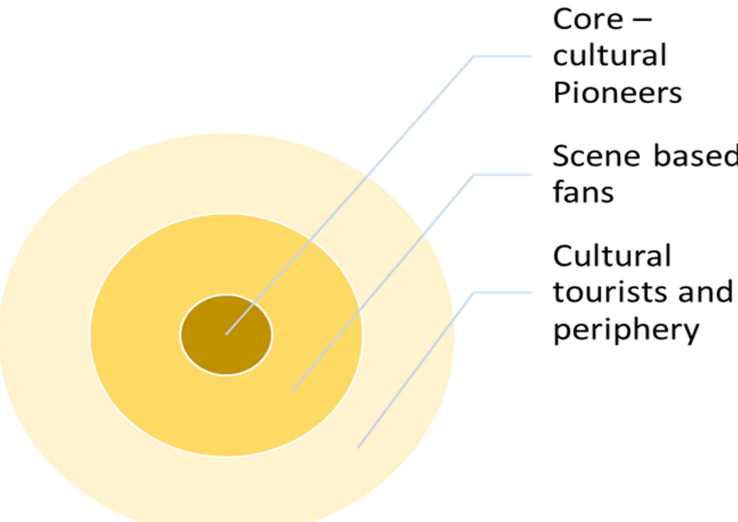
To clarify, my claim is that Grime itself as a subculture, practice and movement is political, even if the lyrical contents generally are not. Lyrical content is not overtly political or anti-establishment, nor does it encourage listeners to push for social change (however, artists have challenged politicians' views on the subculture). These two minor conceptual frameworks illustrate that colonial residents have engaged in alternative methods (which can be interpreted as subversive acts) to achieve respectability and autonomy through acquiring economic success (by mainstream standards) on their own terms. Core members of the scene aspire to aspects of mainstream British ideology and do not overtly seek to overturn it or resist it completely. However, in using these models as frameworks to illustrate the ways that scene members achieve respectability, success and economic autonomy, I am not constructing their practices/subculture as deviant, but adhering to Black Public Sphere norms to achieve aspects of mainstream British ideology through innovation. These acts and the growth of the scene itself therefore, can be considered political as it gives agency to marginalised people.

In additional to Runciman (1966) and Merton (1957), Lena's (2012) work on communities creating genre, Gunter (2010) and Rose's (1994) work on the impact of post-industrial society on music creation, and Talbot's (2007, 2004, 2011) work on the policing of Black night-time economies in Britain, are frameworks informing this chapter. Combined they illustrate the political nature of Grime.

Lena (2012) argues that scene-based genres have concentric rings; i) centrally positioned core members, (i.e. pioneers), who monetise their activities, ii) inner circle scene members i.e. fans who participate in varying levels, and iii) peripheral members; cultural

tourists/consumers. I have used this idea to refer to respondents and members in the scene more generally and employ these terms going forward; core, fans and tourists.

10 People in the Ag&S stages[52]



In addition to frameworks outlined above to illustrate the politics of Grime, I use Hall's (1978) internal colony and Baker's (1996) Black Public Sphere as reference points informing this chapter. Combined, these concepts highlight the material and immaterial involvement in forming the realities that constitute subcultural practice in the development of Grime. This framing enables the more explicit introduction of African religious understandings of reality (material and immaterial) outlined in chapters one and three and will have increasing significance throughout this project, becoming foregrounded in chapter seven.

The subcultural dimensions of Grime explored in this chapter include:

[52] This diagram is a visual representation Lena (2012) proposes are involved in a scene. This framework enables me to use the same words across chapters so one can identify what is being spoken about. The diagram effectively illustrates who is at the centre of the scene, innovating and those who come primarily to consume. Proximity to the centre illustrates strength of involvement in cultural practices and scene norms.

- Values (moral, political and aesthetic e.g. 'informalism', DIY, sensibilities);
- Spaces (Ag&S[53] PPICS[54] spaces for the coalescence of Grime music, knowledge production and circulation), and
- Politics (mainstream authoritative approaches to Grime. Fan and core members' perspectives on this).

These dimensions contribute to scene members' identifications, identities and communalities.

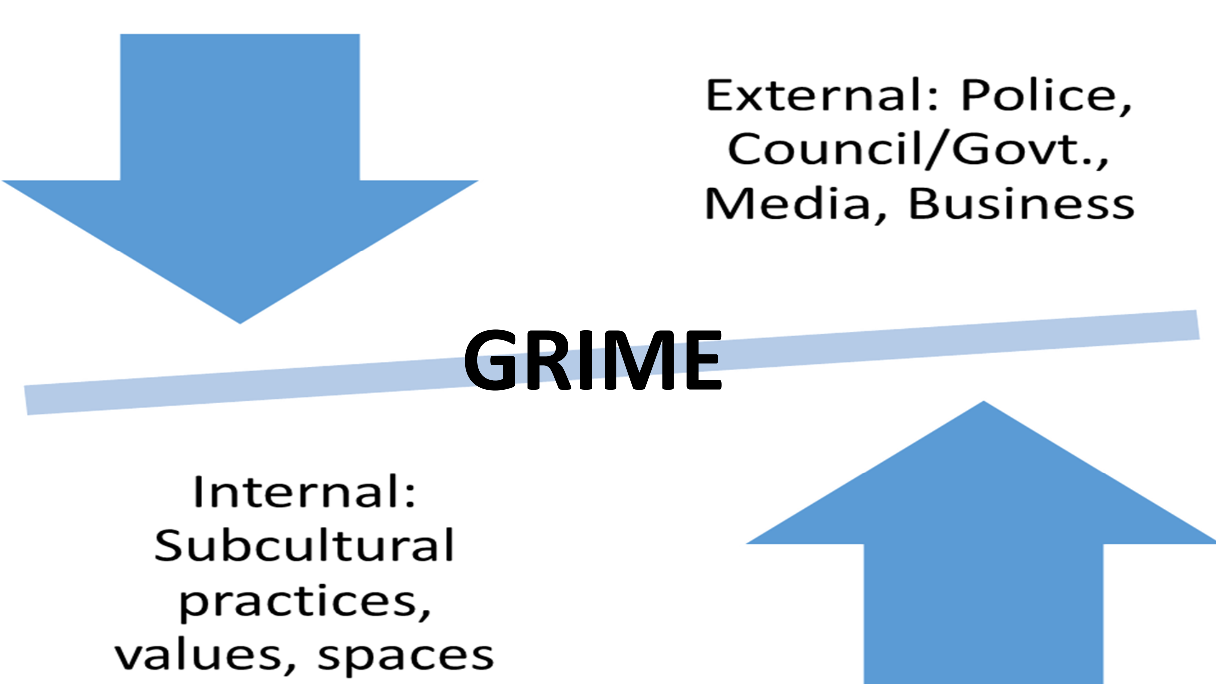
This chapter is divided into two overarching sections; I) informalism/DIY subcultures and II) politics, with the first section examining subcultural value and spatial dimensions. This exploration, using respondent data and observation, considers the internal and external factors influencing Grime subculture.

Taking Foucault's (1997) critique into account, it is worth noting that subcultural practice results from internal factors, i.e., meaning given to values and spaces – through the agency of the marginalised group AND external forces, such as government, police, council, legislation etc., as outlined in the following cultural formation diagram (diagram 11).

[53] Avant garde and Scene based

[54] Private, Public, Informal Community and Semi-Public Spaces.

11 Cultural Formation[55]



I use the data generated from the research to inform arguments made in this chapter, before illustrating how these elements are consistent with, or distinctive from, DIY musical subcultures and/or Afrodiasporic music practices.

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[55] I designed this diagram as a result of reading literature (newspapers), the data and consideration of Foucault's genealogy. It illustrates that the development of Grime's cultural practice is a combination of agency from subaltern groups in the scene and mainstream interference which can have either a positive or negative effect on the scene (some of which is outlined in the Venn-diagram I designed – image no. 5). Owing to the subaltern positon of those involved in Grime this can be tumultuous and requires agency via Merton's innovation.

Subcultural Spaces

i) Informality

There is a self-determined, self-made entrepreneurial element that runs through Grime. This is synonymous with DIY music subcultures, such a Punk, where people become creative and cultural agents rather than cultural consumer and observers. Grime is a DIY genre (Sullivan 2013, Goodman 2010, Bradley 2012), that was relatively unknown outside of the Black Public Sphere (Baker 1996) and London Colonies (Hall 1978) in particular. This enabled Grime to develop unhindered in Ag&S stages, both sonically and socially/institutionally. It operated according to Black (Rose 1994) and East End sensibilities (such as *road and grafting culture*) (Gunter 2010). Internal London colonies assisted core members in acquiring and honing skills, accessing resources, generate capital, publicity and directing the scene.

DIY and Technology

The impact of technological advancements have shaped the developments and behaviours of DIY musical subcultures (Reia 2014), particularly with democratisation of information, increased accessibility to the internet, music making and performing technologies. Core respondents who produced music or DJ'd consistently referred to using technology in their Grime pursuits. However, respondents made it clear that Ag&S Grime emerged before internet accessibility in the home was standard. At the turn of the 21st Century, the internet was still operating through dial-up and was a middle class acquisition. During this period, access to more advanced technology and/or analogue forms to technology (such as turntables, records, microphones that were more reliant on human skill and talent) in music making, ensured core members got a stronghold in the emerging scene. Core members' activities took place slightly before the democratisation of the internet, effectively making them pioneers.

Respondent data revealed that access to technology took precedence over knowing how to use it. Advanced technological knowledge was not a necessity - skills were acquired through experimentation. This falls in line with DIY musical subcultural practices (Reia 2014) and Eshun (1998) and Rose's (1994) findings about musical experiments with technology. The majority of core respondents made use of technology they a) could access, b) borrowed from others, c) acquired second hand, d) copied/pirated, or e) made themselves. Not everyone had access to the internet, technology/software or key personal contacts, so Ag&S Grime, was very tangible and embedded in nature. Informal networks coalesced around core members who had a) access to the technology, b) key personal networks to make music (music producers), or c) those who disseminated it (DJs).

Musical products (i.e. tracks and mixes – recordings) were shared through personal networks, increasing internet access and spaces/hubs where the Garage subculture was established. Respondents felt that Grime's influence on the Garage scene caused a rift. Established members of the Garage scene, subscribed to aspirational champagne lifestyle ideals (Lester 2010). Their music making and production involved making expensive tracks in the studio. Respondents reported that core Garage scene members felt *muscled in* on by youngsters with low budget DIY music and tactics. Some of the first popular Grime tracks (i.e. *Wot Do U Call It - Wiley, Vexed - Dizzee*) where the music sounded sonically distinctive to Garage, openly declared in lyrical content that it was not Garage and included a oppositional world view as its ethos.

Despite being a DIY subculture, no respondents reported using PlayStation. References were made to PlayStation by two security guards interviewed informally in an observational capacity. Some respondents did acknowledge however, that PlayStation and Music 2000 democratised music making. So whilst current Grime literature focuses on PlayStation's impact (Missingham 2007, Palmas and Von Busch 2008, Martineillo and LaFleur 2008), the data reveals that those with access to tangible analogue and specialist music equipment were the ones who had the biggest impact early on and in doing so, were situated as the core

members of Ag&S subculture. As core members with technology access, they were able to hone their DJing and production skills through experimentation. They were not reliant on the internet; that came later on, when the internet, digital music and MP3 gained significance in Grime music making. Grime was one of the first subcultures to evolve alongside the internet and technological democratisation.

DIY Subcultures Self Taught Expertise

As expected with DIY musical subcultures, no respondents made reference to having formal musical training, classical or otherwise. Few formal educational institutions offered tuition in commercial/pop music (at the turn of the 21st century), particularly training that accommodated the musical sensibilities of the Black Public Sphere or soundscapes of internal London colonies. During this period, computers used for making music to professional standard, producing high quality sound, were very expensive and difficult to access.

> *'Well in the '90's there wasn't really courses… they were A Level in music or classical music. There wasn't really proper music courses, because there weren't computers... Anon289*

The majority of Ag&S[56] core respondents learnt their skills WITHOUT the internet; developing their skills alone, with the assistance of others, or trading their technological discoveries amongst peers. This draws parallels to early Hip Hop culture, where experimentation happened in the home studio (Rose 1994). This also places Hip Hop firmly as DIY and simultaneously makes Grime distinctive from other established electronic musics on the *Hardcore Continuum* (Reynolds 2007).

[56] Avant garde and Scene

Many respondents were unable to make connections between Grime and Punk and/or DIY subcultures. Instead they drew from ancestral routes and music practices related to sound system culture (Jones 1988) which is also DIY in nature (although not often presented in this framework). This lack of framework around Black musical narrative, may have contributed towards one respondent (who identified Punk) not realising that they had taught themselves essential musical skills until I drew it to their attention during the interview:

Anon - 'And the one I had then was a two thousand. And I did everything on it.'
MC – '…was that all self-taught?'
Anon – 'Yeah?!... Literally! (Laughs).'
Anon316

Respondent data revealed lyricism (also DIY) often started off as an individual pursuit, which was shared with trusted people (teachers, friends) who encouraged their further development. Respondents believed spittin' in a British accent, local dialects and slang was arguably the biggest break from other Black musics at the time. Grime was the first genre where British accents were consistently used (outside of short catchphrases used in Garage or by niche British Hip Hop artists/acts such as London Posse). Respondents noted that Black British performers often adopted American or Jamaican accents in an attempt to connote authenticity (discussed in chapter six). Many respondents felt more connected to Grime because of the British accents. Dutch respondent XL found that when he spat in Dutch, his fans reported a greater connection to his lyrical messages and spitting abilities. They felt it was more authentic.

Unlike the experimental sonic aspects created through technology, the British accent/dialects used in lyrical delivery was more tentative and intentional, owing to accent insecurities, emotional release or comedic intent. Again the internet did not form a major role in the development of lyricism or spittin' for core members. These were developed informally from passion, hobby and inspiration from rappers and Dancehall, Garage and Jungle MCs.

'…So from there, we started to record and write… a lot of us learned our trade like that… That's how we grafted and even crafted our ability to spit and to also be able to like keep the focus and… the ability to learn how to memorise your lyrics and to flow them and to also be able to keep on reciting them on a set without flopping or making a mistake… And we ended up spending most of our time doing sets sometimes like riding the riddim, sometimes little writing sessions… some of our time doing clashes.' Aaron Roach Bridgeman

The lyrical element involved writing, memorising, reciting, quick thinking, regular practice, hard work, consistency and dedication. Like those with access to technology, lyricists and their showmanship attracted a fan base and placed them centrally as core members in Ag&S Grime.

The element of self-teaching resonates with Rose's (1994) findings about Black technology use to create music within *'distinctly black practices, articulating stylistic compositional priorities found in black cultures in the diaspora' (Rose 1994:96).* Core respondents had extensive knowledge and experience in musical genres such as Dancehall, Bashment and Garage. Their awareness of and familiarity with underground British music such as Jungle, Drum 'n' Bass and British Hip Hop (aesthetics, sensibilities and institutions) were influential to musical choices and practice when experimenting. The music thus becomes an articulation of the Black Public Sphere.

'I learned going to other people's studios, just picking up bits from there. And the studios I went to were predominantly Reggae… apart from Jungle producers, they were the next -successful musicians in the scene.' Anon 415

Self-teaching, musical sensibilities and lower specification technologies were contributing factors to the rawness and simplicity of Grime's aesthetic. Core respondents made use of

their social and cultural capital and knowledge to create something relatable with the minimal resources available.

Self-taught core respondents used analogue technologies and became the auteurs and directors of the aesthetic; expert apprentices driving the scene forward sonically and culturally. Values of DIY aesthetic, familiar sonic influences and realities from their lived experiences facilitated this. In this respect Grime has similarities to Punk and Hip Hop DIY musical subcultures reflecting the realities of the time and alternative use of the technology resources available.

In internal colonies, there was an aspiration for economic success on one's own terms (Merton 1957, Runciman 1966); a degree of autonomy and camaraderie (amongst crew members) generated through subcultural practice. Friends experiment, challenge and assist one another with a view to secure a degree of economic reward or increase cultural capital. The DIY aesthetic and practice informed entrepreneurial ventures. Values of self-reliance, flexibility and creating/taking opportunities were key to those who became and remain successful in their music careers. Core respondents created space for themselves to become the experts and authorities in Grime. They made a conscious decision that monetising their skills was the way they wanted to earn their living. This entrepreneurial element was noted and respected by respondents and fans alike:

> '*Entrepreneurial young black men to mature and successful adults. Tonihgt you should be proud, big up #SOSOLID zed way @OFFICIALSOSOLID @SoloVision*

Many core respondents began exploiting their skills informally, using their 'sensibilities', existing and newly emerging technologies, and Black Public Sphere experiential knowledge (of related scenes) as navigating tools to propel themselves and the Grime scene forward.

Black musicians balance their musical passion and direction with economical reward[57] to remain autonomous within the Black Public Sphere and/or London Colony (Bramwell 2015b). To monetise their skills, core respondents made and sold their own music and/or produced music for others for a fee. They monetised through song writing, entertaining, presenting, MCing, blogging or journalistic endeavours. Raechoul and SK Vibemaker monetised through events and event management:

> *'I'm about to get back into putting on events, my own events like sort of bimonthly beginning of next year.' SK Vibemaker*

> *'Yes, my own event. I've got tired of working for other people and going with their vision… go for my own.' Raechoul*

Respondents who collected vinyl became core DJs to capitalise on their collection:

> *'…I've DJ'ed like MOBO pre-parties…Converse parties and various things...' SK Vibemaker*

> *'…I was paid to do that at 12 and 13… doing it properly… [Rave name] raves and DJing at them places and stuff and so I had to take it serious really...' Terramontana365*

Lyricists earned through performance:

> *'…there's two sides of Grime ain't there? There's the Hip Hop side and then there's the Garage side – I was more of the rave person. I was more go to the*

[57] Where's the Black in British Music? (2015).

dance get a reload, get paid, come home. I wasn't on the freestyling t'ing at the time I just was like in raves and stuff.' TerraMontana365

The key to entrepreneurial development was flexibly applying knowledges, sensibilities, *AND* understanding and how to navigate formal and informal economies; including trading skills in kind (White 2015). Events would support additional ways to make money and entrepreneurial activity (e.g. selling CDs outside events, event promotion etc.). The distinction between the in/formal economies was never a clear cut binary nor transitioned unidirectionally (White 2015). Core members would make entrepreneurial decisions regardless of institutionalised structures; cultural capital and knowledges guided decisions principally (adhering to both conformity and innovation Merton 1957 – image no. 9).

A key value resonating from the respondent data was that Grime is a lifestyle. More than just music, it is a way of life experienced within the Black Public Sphere and internal colonies. Core members are entrepreneurs who find ways to make a living remaining in the sphere and colony, commodifying elements of the culture (e.g. LOTM, T-Shirts, CD sales). I did not ask respondents about their working lives outside of Grime; however some respondents interviewed were able to make it a full time career.

Despite being open to all opportunities, two respondents stressed the importance of understanding formal business structures for those (involved in DIY scenes) seeking commercial success. Aaron stressed the importance of preparedness for involvement in the industry, the need to have *'business smarts'* and a business plan in order for the industry to invest in you. Knowledge to navigate both formal and informal territories (although not completely distinct from each other) were crucial in achieving success from careers in Grime. Respondent data revealed hard work, maintaining momentum, strategy, creating your own opportunities and preparedness, are significant messages and values. Participating in the lifestyle and creating brand presence was also essential.

The *'Godfather of Grime'*[58] corroborated these values in the MDA[59] of *'It's Wiley (Showa Eski)'.* Wiley's lyrics reveal his entrepreneurial spirit, working hard and earning enough to give his family a nice lifestyle. He stresses the importance of surrounding himself with people he trusts. Hard work and success on your own terms resonated from the data. Success equated most explicitly with monetary reward and financial security. These values and ideological messages fit Runciman's (1966) *Relative Deprivation* and Merton's (1957) *Means and Goals* models, whereby those belonging to lower socio-economic backgrounds find methods to secure and enjoy the possessions, lifestyles and security desired by the mainstream through alternative means. The very nature of DIY, (i.e. capitalising on Black Public Sphere and internal London Colony knowledges to sustain oneself within these settings) is a political and subversive act. Autonomy within the colony offers a degree of insulation against external forces of economic crisis. This is significant, as those in the colonies are often amongst the first detrimentally affected by such changes in mainstream British frameworks.

In this section, I explored Grime's subcultural values and examined ways informality and DIY was integral to it. I made intelligible the significance of the Black Public Sphere, East London sensibilities, entrepreneurship and value of hard work. Technological experimentation and teamwork were also crucial factors to Grime's Ag&S subcultural and aesthetic genealogy (Foucault 1997). In the next section, I examine subcultural spaces and hubs, knowledge production and circulation crucial to Grime's growth.

Subcultural spaces

> *'The street, more than the sidewalk, signals the very hope of collective action, as well as cultural expression… where style take place, where trends are set and where the movements of vernacular languages from graffiti to graphics -*

[58] Wot Do U Call it? (2004).

[59] Musicological Discourse Analysis

are made explicit. It is the carrier of sonic messages, a site for musical expression and the location for noises to congeal into cultural forms.' (LaBelle 2010:130)

Geographical location

The first space to consider is Grime's geographical location of origin. Where are these London Colonies? The literature documents Grime as an East London phenomenon (Campion 2004, Southbank Show 2012, Wot Do U Call It? 2004) and many respondents made reference to this. However, those interviewed, particularly those who live(d) in South London, were forthright that the genre originated in South London:

'…'Oi' was the next big thing that… spearheaded the East London route, because Lethal [Bizzle] wasn't part of the clique so to speak. Yeah, More Fire Crew were there, but they weren't part of D Double E, or Wiley – they were just outsiders, and they had a top ten record... We're like 'what?! How could these man, ANY man come and…' Anon514

This crossover[60] hit and Dizzee Rascal winning the Mercury Prize were considered factors that stirred mainstream British consciousness and foregrounded East London. Core respondents from South London were active in the scene at the same time East London was recognised as the Grime originators (i.e. early to mid-noughties).

Respondent data revealed pirate radio stations playing Grime were established in East, North and South London, showcasing the talent in their respective internal colonies. Grime is a London thing. It originated from London. In some instances, core members from different areas of London worked together in the earliest period. The data illustrates Grime's

[60] Underground track becoming mainstream.

significant impact across London Colonies. Almost all respondents consistently mentioned a handful of artists, producers and collectives as the founders of Grime or key contributors to the sound. Those mentioned resided in different parts of London. These findings are important to the narrative of Grime. It gives voices to those active in the scene from the beginning and gives them power to tell their own history. Critical to this is centring the Black Public Sphere, enabling a holistic and inclusive way to document the contributions of multiple London Colonies on the sound, and make visible the material realities of the conditions that led to its emergence which I shall now explore.

Spaces/hubs

Outside of the home (addressed in chapter four), respondents expressed the importance of youth centres, street corners/road, school playgrounds/corridors, record shops, pirate radio and raving to Grime's growth in the colonies - PPICS. These spaces contribute to the Black Public Sphere and were significant to creating and disseminating knowledge, facilitating entrepreneurship, skill acquisition, identity and communality. Developing organically, these were informal spaces where people could create and express their musical and cultural sensibilities. Some respondents mentioned formal educational spaces that actively worked to inhibit this, whether by devaluing and/or marginalising Non-European musical sensibilities through the curriculum, or ignoring them entirely. GCSE English language and literature and post 16 educational settings had some openness to these alternative sensibilities. School was a site for creativity, predominantly outside of the classroom; in playgrounds and corridors for example. In formal processes the norms and sensibilities of the Black Public Sphere and London Colonies are silenced.

As outlined in chapter four, the home (private) is another creative space where respondents could hone their musical and/or literary skills. Technological democratisation has enabled the home to increasingly become music making *AND* distributive space. This is a significant change to DIY music subculture and democratised agency in the Black Public Sphere. Few

music cultures before Grime benefitted from technological accessibility in this way. This analysis drives the debate forward regarding DIY subcultures and technological advancements.

Internal Factors – Spaces

PPICS within the colony were crucial to Grime's Ag&S formation and subcultural practice. Respondents' data makes intelligible the ways that Grime circulated. These primarily were:

- Pirate Radio
- Word of mouth (friends and family)
- Community spaces - schools and record shops
- Public spaces - Road and commerce
- Cable/Sky TV and DVD
- Online/Internet
- Raving/nightlife
- Print

I will examine and analyse these spaces in closer detail below, making reference to aspects of their subcultural genealogy and influences.

Pirate radio and Pirate radio tours

> *'…Pirate radio also paid a significant role in the growth of Britain's hip-hop and Grime scenes.' Bramwell (2015a:260)*

The majority of respondents had involvement with pirate radio stations. In Ag&S stages, this was considered the best method to access up to date information about the music, the scene and capture (i.e. record on cassette tape) rare 'one-off' sessions.

> *'Pirate Radio, pivotal. If it wasn't for pirate radio, we wouldn't be here, like I know it wasn't legal. It's what allows these artists to be heard, to gain… now it's different as you've got all these Twitters and all these social networks. Before you got signed because of your fan-base. A lot of these fan-bases were built up; they were built up from what these artists had from the underground, the underground which is basically Pirate Radio scene, yeah. So Pirate Radio was pivotal...But Pirate Radio, if I make a statement where I could say something like 'if it wasn't for Pirate Radio like you wouldn't even know Grime music'… Pirate Radio gave them what the mainstream media and radio wouldn't give them…So pirate radio was pivotal. Without Pirate Radio you would not know what Grime music is or you wouldn't have known who these men were. They might have not been able to even to build upon that and get to the stage where they could become artists.' Aaron Roach Bridgeman*

Pirate radio has significant importance to the Black community and internal colonies in Britain (BMRU 2013). Fans could access pirate radio to listen to music and keep abreast of local issues (DaveVJ and Wesker 2012) that the mainstream side-lined. Situated in the colonies, it was considered community radio (BMRU 2013). Pirate radio served three purposes/priorities for core respondents and supporting infrastructures, i) skill acquisition, ii) skill development and iii) publicity.

> *'…My earliest involvement in Grime was being part of the… early pirate radio circuit. Basically I used to be making dubs just for him to play with the MC' Anon 736*

> *'I learned on live radio how to DJ. When I first, like went on pirate radio… I never even had a DJ set up. I never had decks in my house. I just had records… organic way to get into DJ'ing.' Anon788*

Here, core members could hone their skills to become the expert in the Grime aesthetic and disseminate it. Free from broadcasting regulations, shows were more varied and authentic to internal colony and Black sensibilities. It enabled a more intimate interplay between the station and listeners:

> *'…radio was definitely influential for my career… It was when they did exist and were they influential? Yes… the no rule policy of playing a tune more than once… on a legal station you can play it once, but for the pirates they do the reloads just sort of -- Go with the crowd… your tune's getting played for 20 minutes… on a man's show. So yes, it was definitely influential -- -- to the success of the records ---- and the artists.' Anon 247*

> *'Pirate radio was a main part in my career… I've been on plenty of pirate radio tours; I've been around the country – that's what I was known for, pirate radios. And then the DTI[61] came around and it got a bit mad so it got stopped, and that's when everything went a bit legal, and that's why it was hard for me to like break into that daytime vibe, but because it was a legal radio now, you couldn't be on there now shouting and screaming…' Anon218*

These respondents illustrate pirate radio's cruciality in developing the career and reputation of core members and Ag&S Grime. It was a significant input into the Black Public Sphere. Fans would tune in to keep abreast of developments in Grime and the colony, interacting with core members and other fans. It became a coalescing space and gave a sense of community:

[61] Department of Trade and Industry – Government Department.

'… And the community aspect of like listening to Rinse (FM)…' Hattie

'…they were on the station called the Delight FM 103.0 FM So Solid Sundays…We used to all be locked in recording that [on cassette tape] seeing who had the best quality copy on Monday…' Anon6744

This sense of community provided by pirate radio, transcended the ethereal Black Public Sphere into the materiality of real London Colonial life in Ag&S stages. It provided a space to be heard, validated, represented and included in Grimes' ongoing teleological developments. Radio shows would be topics of conversation, music exchange and competition in (tangible) social settings, usually through friends and family:

'…my Grime ambassador. She'd like, "Yeah, have you heard that?" Like, she was the actual one who schooled me. She kept up with the tape packs, she went to [Rave name] every single week. She was like heavily involved… I kept up with it...' Hattie

'So every community is different but it still has the same Grime principles coz we're all… everyone's related. People from my area's got cousins in East London, and cousins in West London and South London – because they talk and spread information… So it's just nonstop rhymes were spreading all the way through and it started to build… As a child you found out stuff – what's cool for you…' Big Narstie

This interpersonal element is consistent with DIY practices, such as 90s rave culture where information about events and happenings in the scene operated through word of mouth for example (How Clubbing Changed the World 2012).

Internal colony sites - community spaces, youth centres, school spaces, record shops

Respondent data revealed the dissemination of Grime music and culture circulated heavily in youth centres and informal spaces at school. Youth centres provided access to music technology without charge, space to socialise, exchange ideas, hone skills and perform to an audience. Despite some centres having very limited resources, the youth centre was significant to many respondents.

> *'Them times there [London location] was really deprived so there weren't no anywhere going to make no beats. We were lucky to have turntables in there and speakers and a mic. One time we was doing the set out the headphones… we MC'd through headphones… You know the foam you put in your ears – we had to spit through.' Big Narstie*

Informal spaces in school were sites for activity i.e. playgrounds, common rooms and corridors. Dexplicit's peers used to pay him to make popular ringtones on their mobile phones.

> *'…I mean in school people used to pay me to do ring tones for them [on their mobile phones]. "Give me this tune, do me Wiley Igloo" and I would just like build it yeah.' Dexplicit*

Other respondents sold music, traded cassette tapes in the school playground or MC'd:

> *'…in the school corridors that I was always the MC. MC'ing in the school corridors' SK Vibemaker*

This interactive element created a buzz and had built an energy that two respondents reported was similar to Punk.

Independent record shops were a space of cultural and commercial exchange. One respondent argued the record shop was a hub of the musical community in Ag&S Grime, a place where DJs, artists, promoters and distributors would frequent. Hattie explained that she could go to the local record shop, Rhythm Division, and see Grime MCs and producers in there. It was another material space that fostered a sense of community. Aaron found the record shop added another dimension and value to the appreciation of music that digital music does not. Those with money who would frequent records shops, (to buy music, buy/distribute tickets or promotional materials such as fliers) were generally older or centrally positioned in the scene. The record shop maintained/developed business networks. This added value and sense of community is outlined in Bramwell's (2015b) work relating to independent record labels/shops and their significance as central hubs in British Hip Hop scenes. This particular circulation space in Ag&S Grime has roots in British Hip Hop culture and cultural practices (i.e. where new music was sought, consumed and exchanged, where people could earn an income and promote events).

Comparatively, those who attended youth centres were younger and attending secondary school. They had less access to money to purchase music and found opportunities in youth centres to engage and participate in the scene. In a framework where formal education denies the Black Public Sphere and London Colonies, partaking in the practices and sensibilities in the youth centre enabled marginalised youth to receive respect, a sense of validation from peers and community.

Owing to the significance of subaltern younger peoples' dominance in Ag&S Grime, 'the street' or 'road' was another significant space. It was a space (in some cases within the confines of postcode locality) of free enterprise, publicity and leisure for respondents. 'No cost' free space was an essential component to entertainment, and a place to develop skills, beatboxing, lyricism and gain popularity.

‘My whole thing came from street corners, like on the road, like entertaining ourselves… it was just real life – like Grime was the grimy life… of the underprivileged kids. You wouldn't see kids in Paddington Square hanging out with James ‘ Ah James run us another Grime tune’… Paddington Square and them ends there, they wouldn't even associate with our type of music.’ Big Narstie

‘…we stood on the roadside and MC’d, there was no youth clubs open because we’re poor kids. So we just had fun with what was the resources, what was there for us. So for one guy to just go (starts beatboxing) and start MCing, it was cheap, but it was fun.’ Big Narstie

The street is where two respondents used public space to promote their music, by distributing CDs.

‘…we gave out all 10,000 CD; no cover on the front, no writing on the front… me standing on the road… take my CD, I spit.’ Big Narstie

‘…500 or 1000 writable CDs… we went to like five big cities… Any youths, we gave it to them... We had a couple of connection with fashion stores… if someone buys anything give them the CD with it. So that’s how our name got buzzing…’ XL

One respondent recalled spittin’ and clashing (competing/cyphering) in the street with his friends to alleviate boredom. These respondents claimed public spaces and used them to create opportunities and publicity (visibility) for themselves. Famous examples include SB.TV founder/owner Jamal Edwards recording cyphers and spittin’ ‘on road’ (Featherstone 2016), or documenting lived experiences on DVDs such as Risky Roads (Various 2004). The element of public space runs throughout Grime in music videos and ties in with the embedded nature

of the subculture and London Colony. Claiming public space draws from sound system and Hip Hop cultures of street parties and selling merchandise on the street. These practices elucidate some of the methods taken by respondents within the *Relative Deprivation* (Runciman 1966) and *Means and Goals* (Merton 1957) models to achieve success, defined as economic success, autonomy and respect of peers, on their own terms.

All respondents knew about Channel AKA (formerly Channel U), a niche TV channel that airs on Freeview and extra-terrestrial TV that enabled lower specification DIY videos to be aired[62]. A TV channel dedicated to showcasing DIY videos is a newer development for DIY cultures and is reflective of democratised technology. However, respondents made it clear that TV coverage (music videos) was not prevalent in the scene until it approached the Industry stage (around 2009). Those considered as authentically Grime by respondents (i.e., core members and fan), were very much living an embedded experience, 'on road' in internal colonies. To have a Grime music video on TV in Ag&S stages would have required access to expensive 'analogue' recording equipment, which was unobtainable to many in the scene. Most people involved were young and without capital:

> *'Yeah, everything was still minimal. You've got to understand, for someone to film a video on a JVC handset them times there, and put it out… people would have thought you'd made it!… big video out – like YouTube weren't about and it weren't like 'Let's get a Canon' - you get me? Everything was done in big format, the only kind of way you could know that an MC was big and norm, you kept hearing him on underground radio or you saw flyers.'* Big Narstie

[62] Channel AKA http://www.aatw.com/tv/aka/

Internet

Over time, technology became more democratised, the focus shifted away from the material (record shops, records, DVDs, CDs and cassettes) to the immaterial (the internet and digital technologies - MP3s and MP4s, blogs, forums and chatrooms). This impacted the cultural practices of the subculture, the internal London colonies and Black Public Sphere in ways few subcultures had experienced before. Technological democratisation effectively weakened the connectedness and embeddedness between the internal colonies with the Black Public Sphere. I propose this shift propelled the scene towards the 'I' phase and simultaneously expanded the fan base by making its consumption immaterial and easier to access.

> *'…the thing about Grime as well is it kinda came up around the same time as the Internet… So, a lot happened on the forums and online, like Myspace… it created a community… you felt that you were not just a follower of a scene, but you were part of the scene.' Hattie*

The Internet was a major draw for fans seeking free music, with respondents listing the same websites to illegally download and share music:

> *…it was a programme Kazaa…That was like a programme you could download on your computer and then, you search for any type of music. But it's gone now because it was illegal downloading... and Napster.' Anon 656*

> *'…there was a lot of music that was getting shared illegally, downloads… Napster, Kazaa… sharing on MSN and whatever it is…' Anon 021*

> *'…I downloaded like a few of his songs off of like Kazaa or something along that nature.' Anon 973*

Owing to the timing, internet accessibility enabled a new way to become embedded in a scene in ways few other DIY musical subcultures had previously been afforded. As a result, some respondents used knowledge of material embeddedness, as a means to distinguish between who was original Grime or 'on road' authentic, and those who arrived later who had little or no connection to the embedded materiality of the scene.

> *Like this whole I made a track, I made a video culture, that wasn't how it was. The only videos were Lord of the Mics, Practice Hours, Risky Roadz. These are all the DVDs that we had and there were DVDs that were made that showed you and making music in their element. We never had [music] videos or stuff like that. It's very much a new thing. Aaron Roach Bridgeman*

However, artists who arrived slightly later capitalised on the democratisation of the internet:

> *'Working with some of the UK video channels such as UK Overstood, GRM Daily, a few different ones. And yeah, just started recording, putting some tracks out via YouTube.' Sim Simma*

The data revealed Myspace and other online platforms were not a staple for all pioneering core respondents, nor were they the primary means of securing an income. They were a way to network, with the possibility of business potential.

> *'…got a reply on Myspace because in sheer delusion I was trying to get [MC name] to open [Rapper''s] Show...in America… And he actually hit me back with an estimate… I must've told the promoter and they were like, "Yeah, yeah."' Maxwell*

> *'…Myspace was later down, so by the time Myspace come I was selling stuff, I was actually making music – money from music. I mean it was sure fun but it*

was work by the time Myspace came. This was my career that I was doing… In fact it was through Myspace that I all of a sudden started getting booked all around the world. I didn't have an agency, it was just people who are just hitting me up directly on Myspace and dealing straight with the promoters.' Dexplicit

In line with subcultural values and opportunity, respondents do not make distinctions between formal and informal or opportunities that presented themselves in person or online. Overall the internet contributed to Grime's expansion, enabling more people insightful access to the music and subculture. It should be noted that in the Ag&S stages, core members input directly from internal London colonies into the Black Public Sphere, however they had little to do with internet developments. The internet served different functions for the core members and fans in the scene. Core respondents who were on the internet used it because it afforded them business opportunities through being approached directly online, and for publicity. Regardless, core members were very much embedded in the material subculture of the London Colonies. Respondent data made it apparent that online activity was not systematically engaged in by core cultural pioneering members:

'I had a Myspace, but I never went on it because it was a bit complicated, but I used to have a Bebo account… I got Facebook, and that's got bare followers on there, I got a Twitter… But really I'm just a rave MC, so people know me from going out more than looking on Facebook.' Anon644

'Yeah, Myspace was used and stuff… we weren't as technological as how we are now. To be quite honest, me as a person come from the kind of life… Internet was a luxury… now it's a necessity or standard but it was luxury… I never had Myspace … Hi5… Bebo. I didn't want to be on Facebook. Like when you considered yourself to be like the kind of people that were 'road', you don't understand like - and some of them still don't, some of these guys couldn't

understand this whole Internet culture. You think they're tweeting and messaging, it's not them. They've got teams, social media teams that are doing it on their behalf and act like it's them. …I think it's very hard for us to compare the directives now, it's changed so much.' Anon911

'I had Myspace - but I'm a cave man to be honest. If it's not an X box I'm not really interested in that. I'm an X box guy. The whole internet thing I'm on Twitter – I don't really write, I just retweet you get me? - stuff 'The button in the middle' Dem ones there?! (laughter) It's all a miff even now.' Anon469

Based on respondent data, the internet was more significant for fans who accessed information about the latest tracks, shared and downloaded music (legally or illegally), debated scene happenings and sought out 'classic' songs. The internet effectively became an archive for fans to mine, research and familiarise themselves with the scene.

'I discovered how many videos were archived on YouTube and of course… "I Luv You" had already been like one of my favourite songs ever so it's like I started going into the related videos...' Maxwell

'I think Channel U… led me into it and then what I'd see on Channel AKA I'd then go and find on the internet. And then with finding pirate radio sets which had been recorded and uploaded to the internet I could then find out about different artists… It's like a bottomless pit of how much you can find.' Quaan

'…around 2004 when I started delving deeper and searching on livewire and other pre-YouTube bits of the internet, or tuning into the pirate stations, particularly Rinse and kind of Deja as well… just discovering more and more names of people – like MCs and things that I hadn't heard of before that sounded incredible.' Dan

'…I discovered some pirate radio sets, like Déjà Vu… So I downloaded them, then, some of my friends were into that music as well so we would exchange music we found on the internet.' XL

Discovery and community were important elements online and shaped respondents' online Grime subcultural practices. The informal and haphazard ways of finding information led to platforms being used by fans to share and discuss Grime. The internet enabled new connections to be made between immaterial cyberspace and the material world (i.e. friendships and acquaintances outside of pre-existing physical friend and family networks). This was unlike previous DIY subcultural practices; the internet facilitated these new networks and ways to engage in the Black Public Sphere whilst choosing whether to engage in the material world inside or outside the internal colony.

'… I've never actually managed to take the trip [to the UK]… thankfully enough I've made… so many friends through Grime blogging and like communicating with them.' Maxwell

'The internet enables people to connect and for a sense of community unlike scenes in the past were able to. People could put faces to virtual names and acknowledged each other when they were at raves. Some grew to be friends and went on to have professional or personal relationships and friendships with people they initially met online talking about Grime like a lot of people would just meet because of like the RWD forum… so people actually know each other, go to raves and see each other – know each other from the internet. You go places… we would know them by their like, online name … rather than…names like Phil or John or whatever – it would be like 'oh it's …Rude Boy 81011 or whatever'. I think the online community, yeah, it was translated to physical…Particularly in the Grime scenes down in London.' Hattie

'My girlfriend… That's part of the reason that we got to know each other. I was chatting on Twitter about Grime (laughter)… we eventually met in real life. It turned out we had become good friends – we've been together for about six months now - which is not to say that Grime brought us together or it is the foundation of all my friendships coz that would be overstating it.' Anon9543

'So I met my… business partner, online... And we were like let's set up a record label. So we set this record label up... Launchpad Records, and we've had 11 releases out now. Our most recent release has been licensed to Universal Capitol, which is quite a big deal, a major record label is licensing our track.' Quaan

'I've met, not met met… on a personal level, but I've come across and I've seen some of them in raves and I'll give them a spud and say like 'what's up?' and all that.' MindofGrime

Overall, the internet was great for core members' publicity, however economically, it appeared more beneficial for the fans who used it for free information, music and sharing. Only two respondents argued that the internet was damaging, principally for the pioneers because of illegal downloads preventing their ability to capitalise on their work.

'…I think kind of killed the Grime scene really… the internet kind of came in and everything just started getting downloaded, so artists were no longer like, Wiley was no longer able to like sell 12 inch vinyl out the back of his car. So, that kind of got killed off… they can't sell anything specifically or maybe they could make a little bit off mix-tapes, but they could still do live shows, right?' Hattie

> *'…since the internet -- I feel like the internet has kind of damaged Grime, that sort of element in Grime and the culture as well.' Quaan*

Although these two respondents did not talk explicitly about 'on road' authenticity, they distinguished that the internet and free access to information and music, somehow detracted from the material and embedded culture of Grime.

The next two spaces in the remainder of this section, raving and print, take up more formalised physical space and column inches in the mainstream British psyche and discourse. This visibility outside the Black Public Sphere and London colonies has been met with the most resistance from the formal structures and gatekeepers of mainstream British society and will be touched on here and discussed in more detail under the politics section of this chapter.

Raving

Raving was a significant subcultural practice in Ag&S Grime. This has routes in the Jamaican sound system culture, Shabeens, Blues Dances (Bradley 2012) and British Rave and Club Culture (Hesmondhalgh and Melville 2001, Reynolds 2007). Respondents would find out about events on pirate radio, in record shops or through flyers within the Black Public Sphere and colonies. Hattie referred to many small independent nights, Big Narstie attended under 18s events (all dayers) and house parties. Most respondents referred to the same influential events in the early stages of Ag&S Grime, such as FWD, Eskimo Dance (which I attended for observation in 2013) and Sidewinder.

Raves were spaces where those in the industry honed their craft and could earn money for their services in or around the venue (such as sell music, merchandise or flyers outside venues). DJ respondents learned how to read crowds and understand unspoken musical norms for genres at events (e.g. does the crowd accept you playing the song more than once

throughout the night). MCs would hone their skills to ensure they got reloads and favourable reactions from the crowd. These examples will be discussed in more detail in chapter seven.

Print

The majority of respondents did not refer to print. However, four respondents were bloggers and two of those went on to become music journalists. Journalist respondents encountered fewer barriers writing about Grime in niche magazines and in the more liberal, left leaning mainstream press. Much like TV, Grime coverage was restricted to niche spaces. Print will be explored in more detail in the politics section of this chapter.

In this section, using Foucault's (1997) definition of genealogy, I have made intelligible the spaces (material and immaterial), and internal forces and agency (image no. 11) that contributed towards the subcultural practices in Grime's teleological development. Now, I shall explore the influential external factors involved in the development of Grime.

External Factors

The way Grime developed teleologically (AgSIT) is closely related to the:

- music streams (Lena 2012), institutions and practices of other musical genres informing it as outlined in chapter four,
- values, resources and spaces that governed its production and circulation examined above and
- ways external factors such as mainstream British media, law, policy and business interacted with it.

I will explore the last point in the remainder of this chapter and use the data to provide a subcultural perspective to this narrative.

ii) Politics

The synonymous linking of Grime with Blackness (Campion 2004) has resulted in observable politics and institutionally racist practices around the scene, particularly the night-time economies (Talbot 2004, 2007, 2011). Race added was an additional dimension to British anti-youth attitudes and a history of preventing rave culture in Britain (How Clubbing Changed the World 2012). Respondent data revealed three issues in relation to mainstream responses to Grime. Grime was a) essentialised and conflated with other Black musical forms, b) criminalised and c) marginalised, by print media, TV news coverage and the authorities (i.e. councils, politicians and police).

As the Black Public Sphere became increasingly visible to mainstream Britain, TV news coverage and print media reported criminal activity and focussed on the internal colonies (and poverty) associated with where core members lived. This created *'An implicit link… between criminality and the music genre' (Martineillo and LaFleur 2008).* One core respondent saw BBC news coverage pathologising the scene and was very concerned about how it was being portrayed to mainstream British society:

> *'… I saw it on BBC news 24 and they said, everyone that's into Garage carries guns…They said that! But the way they said it was, 'but we know everyone into Garage carries guns, but the fundamental thing is…' and carried on. Middle England hearing that!' Anon 475*

Compounding media portrayals, in 2003, the then Home Secretary David Blunkett famously labelled Grime crews *'boasting macho idiot rappers'* (cited Lester 2010:101). Then Culture

Minister, Kim Howells, said Rap reduced *'killing to a fashion accessory'* and was responsible for *'glorifying gun culture and violence'* (cited in Lester 2010:101). These high profile comments and media coverage, were some of the first narratives to enter mainstream British society about Ag&S Grime, which at the time were not clearly distinguishable from Garage.

Another respondent highlighted that Grime was conflated with Gangsta Rap in mainstream British media, a related but different genre with a different history, principally because it was Black music.

> *'… the racism and just the general ignorance of the music and the culture… Seeing… outcries about Hip Hop in the US and Gangsta Rap… didn't really surprise me when I first started discovering that this was affecting Grime as well… prior to that it didn't affect Grime too badly because no one knew enough about it to care about it…They didn't want to shut it down coz they didn't know it was happening; because it was an underground scene with its own institutions…' Anon5411*

Scene members defended themselves against these accusations (Lawton 2013). Marsta Menzz highlighted that Wiley addressed the politicians about their accusations that essentialised, marginalised and stigmatised the scene. Lethal Bizzle (2006) called Prime Minister David Cameron a *donut*, suggesting politicians misunderstood the scene, were out of touch and should listen to what the scene has to say about the state of British society. Alongside these developments, music journalist respondents found they could only write about Grime in selected liberal press, despite some more conservative newspapers they wrote for allowing other genres of music to be reviewed. Respondents found even in the liberal press, editors actively limited the number of Grime artists and stories featured, whilst providing few or no caps or barriers to White artists in other genres. When queried, editor's assumed that Grime listenership was Black, and that their readers were not; and by default would have no interest in it. The 'Blackness' or pathology of Grime took precedence over the

diversity within the genre. Limiting artist coverage by imposing an unspoken quota, inadvertently contributes to the essentialising and marginalising process.

The new visibility of internal colonies and the Black Public Sphere existence in mainstream society and consciousness was presented as a threat to British ways of life. This has parallels with Perkinson's (2005) argument that music exposes the savagery integral to Western projections of civility. Coverage essentialising and pathologising the entire scene based on isolated incidents of violence, colony stigmatisation and discourses from USA Gangsta Rap, provided the authorities with the reasons they needed to *'legitimately'* intervene in the newly visible scene and begin to actively silence it. Through the use of savage acts, the newly visible colony is silenced and the presentation of British civility is restored.

Institutionalised power and intervention

> *'There are observable socially-constructed mechanisms for restricting the movement of non-white people, which develop from the practices of white decision makers.' (Garner2007:17).*

> '*The institutionally racist implementation of the initial 696 form and the subsequent 'revised' form used to determine the viability of black owned businesses and events with large black clientele , single handedly killed the scene of Grime (and related genres) in and around London. At the same time Grime began to take hold in mainstream UK society in 2003 (owing to the commercial successes of So Solid Crew, Dizzee Rascal and More Fire Crew), the government implemented licensing laws and additional laws that were anti-youth and classist and extended police powers in targeting these groups. This contributed towards the …tightening the grip of control over the cultural production at night…' Talbot (2011:85).*

Under Labour's government, councils and policy makers were given greater powers over issuing licenses to (night time economy) businesses and authority over the public and private spaces relating to them (Talbot 2004, 2011). The implicit link (immaterial) between Grime and violence in mainstream media was validated by the lawful implementation of the (material) Metropolitan Police Risk Assessment form 696 in 2005 (Rogers 2009). 696 is a compulsory document promoters had to fill out in order to obtain a licence for music events in Greater London. Failure to do so could result in £20,000 fine or six months in jail (Hancox 2009). The preliminary form caused controversy because it requested the ethnic origin of live music audiences, musical genres and the personal details of the artists and promoters, as a prerequisite to obtaining a licence. Those named on the forms would then be personally held accountable and penalised if any incidents took place in or around the venue (Talbot 2004, 2007, 2011). Grime events were regularly cancelled due to the 'intelligence' gathered by the police; 'intelligence' founded on shifting and changing parameters (Hancox 2009). These appeared to be based on racialised assumptions about Black people and mistrust in the management and ownership of Black owned spaces (Talbot 2004, 2011). These tactics and their impact was not lost on Ag&S core members and fans:

> *'…it definitely was… based around… racial profiling I believe, is that how people say it?' Anon 753*

> *'…696… it was just an issue of the Metropolitan Police trying to shut down what they viewed as problematic, but clearly Black music specifically Black music... ' Anon 514*

One respondent spoke of the wide spread destruction this legislation caused:

> *'…that's what happened, just crashed the whole thing, raves, record shops, you name it, dead, crashed, everything crashed…Police got involved, that whole situation is why you have to carry passports in to a club now. Why DJs have to*

fill out some form with your personal name, address and date of birth, to see if you are allowed to play in a club, it all came from that…' Anon 245

Other respondents recalled nightclubs being closed down, attributing this to a few well documented incidents early on in the scene's development and racial profiling. One respondent drew attention to the tactics police used to shut events down:

'…the way the police done it was, right, we can't close, but if you put a Garage event on and something happens, you lose your license. So they didn't say you're losing your license, they said, right, put a garage event on, you lose your license. But the way they done it, they will do it the day before the event… promoters already done the flyers, sold tickets etc. etc. Then the clubs ringing you 'Sorry mate, can't even put it on, the police will come down, said we might lose our license, we can't afford that.' So it's gets cancelled; this night's getting cancelled, that night's getting cancelled. Because the nights are getting cancelled, we can't record the tape packs, no one records the tape packs, no-one knows what the new tunes are, got no new tunes, can't sell them in the shop. DEAD!' Anon 873

Artist JME investigated this, but he was unable to get answers outlining the basis for police shutting down events[63]. Many respondents noticed this pattern, one attempted to investigate why an event was shut down and kept finding their efforts rebuffed and were eventually stonewalled by the authorities:

'…everyone kept passing the buck… the people that ran [organisation name 1]… said 'Oh, it was just an administrative error that's why we had to call it off, the people from [organisation name 2] hadn't put in a request in time'… I tried

[63] *The Police vs Grime Music - A Noisey Film* (2014).

> *various people in the police… trying to find out who at the Met had made these phone calls to say that no you can't let this person do [an event]… just couldn't work it out… it was like impossible! I wonder if a freedom of information request would reveal it… without being able to work out who had phoned who… putting up a wall of silence… but it was getting to the root of who was making these phone calls saying 'You know this rapper's a dangerous gangsta rapper, you've got to stop him appearing in public, you've got to stop his fans gathering the public coz there'll be a public order incident.' Anon 379*

This opaqueness and unaccountability from the authorities alludes to Perkinson's (2005) concept of savagery employed in maintaining the facade of civility. Compounding this further, one respondent highlighted that if events are allowed, specific songs were banned and attendees profiled and monitored. The pressure around obtaining and maintaining a licensed premises, impacted what music could be played, the people that were 'permitted' to attend the event and the certainty of the event itself going ahead. All conspired to compromise the livelihoods of those involved and also the enjoyment of the fans.

> *'Banned 'Pow', banned 'Oi', weren't allowed to play it…Yeah, Black event weren't allowed to play Dancehall music. You had to apply to play it. I got booked to do both rooms … I knew exactly what the politics were in both rooms… just about allowed to play Sean Paul! 'You can play Sean Paul, but not Elephant Man.' 'What?! What do you mean I can't play Elephant man?' Go in there [Raver asks] 'Can you play Elephant Man? Pun De River?' [Respondent] 'Sorry, I can't.' [Raver] 'What?! What kind of rave is this?' Go into this room – [Raver] 'Can you play 'Oi'?' [Respondent] 'No I can't.' … [Raver] What kind of rave is this? I just paid £10.00, I wanna hear my tune!' Anon 083*

Respondents reported that DJs played other genres to secure an income from events. DJs who were too niche suffered the most from authority intervention. Those who were more

established and already had a fan base, changed the music they played to maintain an income. The banning and monitoring of songs also impacted the livelihoods of core members. Lethal Bizzle's POW (2004) (produced by respondent Dexplicit) was notoriously banned from being played in nightclubs. The impact of banning songs compromised the earning potential of those involved in music making (producers and MCs), through live performances, publicity and sales.

> *'…Pow… It just blew up. The funny thing is the tune went number 11 – there's a bit of sabotage involved because the tune got signed in April, it should've been out ages ago. It should've been out when everyone was going mad for it…' Dexplicit*

One respondent informed me that they were under surveillance by the police who were looking for 'intelligence' on them on the internet. Other respondents were aware of online police surveillance, in addition to core members having to surrender personal information under 696 and being placed on a points system. Another respondent recalled that after an MC 'suspect' was cleared of all charges brought against him by the police (using police 'intelligence'), the police still used their powers to scrutinise this MC and shut his events down, preventing him from earning his livelihood.

> *'…I still think it's extraordinary how's he's been treated. As someone whose been recently been cleared of all charges levied against him by The Met. All of his… gigs are still being shut down because of intelligence 'about an incident' all the time.' Anon 111*

Targeting venues, audiences, individuals and music, put clubs trying to earn an income from Black music in a precarious and vulnerable position as outlined by respondents above. To negate this some venues avoided it all together and continue to do so. Raechoul experienced this the morning of our interview (2013), when seeking a venue for her event:

> *'…it wasn't fair. Why did everything that Black people sort of tried to do – something that was positive get – is almost sort of taken away from them… it's funny because today I called a venue… I said it would predominantly be Hip Hop and Grime and he said, "No, well we've been trying to avoid that set of music because it attracts the wrong crowd"… sad to see that that was still around, that mentality…' Raechoul*

Other respondents felt some clubs wanted the music but not the Black artists that made it, or Black fan bases in their venues:

> *'…there are clubs in central… they play the music but they don't want the people who make the music to be there... So, you're playing the music but the people who make the music you don't want them in… We're always affected, if you're aware of it… clubs don't want a type of crowd. It's not necessarily the music sometimes, it's actually the crowd. So you know interpret how you want it, that's how it goes man. Anon 502'*

Clubs adopting these practices may believe it is a tactic to continue making money from Black music, however this approach institutionalises racist practices and further divorces the Black Public Sphere from internal London colonies and contribute to marginalise and stigmatise those from the colonies who are central to the scene.

Interestingly, the one Femcee[64] I interviewed was unaware of 696 despite performing for approximately ten years. Sim Simma performed across Britain and overseas and initially thought I was referring to a group/crew. Securing performances did not pose a problem for her. As she originally started out in an RnB girl group, later going solo, there is a chance that she was seen as unthreatening. This raises questions about 696 targeting specific people in

[64] Femcee = Female MC

the colonies e.g. Black, working class and male. The control of Black masculinities specifically, falls within a wider discourse of policing Black males and spaces, something Hall (1978) explores in his work. It is rooted in the historical discourses of policing, surveillance of and controlling Black bodies. In the subcultural context of performance, it could also imply that there are degrees of genre privilege, in addition to nuanced areas of gender privilege that female performers may experience within the scene and the Black music stream more generally. This is an area within gender and intersectionality worthy of future study. Gender in the scene will be explored in more detail in chapter six.

What can be taken from the interrogation so far, is that government intervention served to facilitate the criminalisation and marginalisation (i.e. discrimination) of particular sections of society - Black people, primarily male and those residing in internal colonies. This racist practice and tactic has similarities to the tactics outlined by Ehrlichman relating to tackling the war on drugs under the Nixon administration (Love 2016). Through materialising discriminatory processes, specific groups of people or social movements are decimated. 696 intentionally and disproportionately affected the scene and Black business, despite the government's stated desire to boost and champion the creative and cultural industries as a means for British economic growth (Flew 2012). Authorities problematised Black and working class youth (colony residents) under popularised NEET[65] categories (White 2015), the implementation of ASBOs and social exclusion initiatives (Shanahan 2009). More than ten years after the introduction of 696, police licensing and coercive tactics, it is still more difficult for Rap and Grime artists to perform in Greater London than anywhere else in Britain (The Ultimate Seminar 2012). The material reality of authority intervention has had long lasting impact and continues to hinder the possibility of Black business growth in the sector. Overall, respondents reported the basis of obtaining licences were coercive and actively contributed towards setting up an environment for the failure of Black night-time economies, related livelihoods and scene(s).

[65] Not in Education Employment or Training.

Clapback

None of the respondents believed the mainstream narrative of Grime music was accurate, fair or that Grime warranted such extensive legislation. Most attributed the handling of the scene by authorities and the media to racism (classism and ageism). Respondents stressed that despite isolated incidents early on in the scene, the constant threat of violence and danger at events were false:

> *'…it was just a profiling of a very strange nature… I would understand it maybe if lots of people were consistently hurt… they just never were… we did so many nights without an incident. I mean, like a fight maybe. But like a fight that would happen, and that's not cool… fights happen… in pubs all over the country all the time.' Anon841*

> *'I think the violence that everyone kind of associates Grime with is very much early, so it's like 2002-2008… where a gunshot got let off in the club when the song went off… I don't really think that that's a factor in Grime anymore… I was at a Grime Night the other night as well, and there was no violence. It just seemed very - like good atmosphere and good vibes, just people enjoying the music.' Quaan*

> *'…no one was shot, or stabbed and everyone went home happy!… fans can gather in public and they are just like any other pop fan.' Dan*

Unsurprisingly respondents challenged and/or disregarded mainstream perspectives on Grime.

> *'I thought that was ridiculous… without sounding disrespectful… you can't really blame music on a person's upbringing or the way they view certain*

things… I could listen to a Wiley track and it's not going to make me want to go out there and start shooting someone or start stabbing someone… But that whole thing with Blunkett and Tessa Jowell or whatever, that was all stupidness, I didn't really pay that much attention to be honest.' Anon223

This respondent was able to clearly see through the marginalising and stigmatising tactics that the media and politicians were using to vilify and stereotype people from internal colonies. Another respondent stressed the importance of individual responsibility of scene members, but also highlighted the structural violence and savagery that leads to colonies in the first place – scrutinising the very politicians, policies and laws enforced to decimate peoples' life chances. These politicians critique (Foucault 1997) and condemn Grime in order to present British civility.

'…Just coz something else is occurring, that doesn't mean that you cannot be held kind of accountable… I think sometimes [MCs] will talk about it because they think it sounds good. But sometimes [MCs] will talk about it because it's important and… it's reflecting what's going on around you… being blamed for knife crime and stuff like that is mental... I think that they are crazy… look now, like what's happening – everything's being shut, funding's being cut, education… in the toilet… no one can even afford to go to university if they can't get the qualifications from the school that is… Ofsted reported… Do people listen to the rap song and go out and do something?... I just don't think they do…' Anon624

Alternatively, another respondent can understand that the circulation of negativity can be a bad influence, however they do not blame the music for the actions a person may take:

'They always say music is responsible for things don't they, something, been said about all kind of black music really, innit? They say about hip-hop as well…

for me, music is music. I wouldn't say it's responsible, now… and I'm not saying it's not an influence on some things because it…music can be a good influence; music can be, you know, bad influence. It just – on the individual and how you take thing … if you're aware that music is music and your life is your life. You have to distinguish the difference between the two. But yeah, I do get it. I do understand why people, why MPs would to say that because a lot of the music can be negative – cause my son listens to a lot of it. He listens to a lot of these guys talk about these things like Grime stuff. But again, it's what you teach your children… there's a difference between reality and what's not reality… negative stuff happens and so is the same with movies, movies can be negative, what they put in movies but, you know, they don't really talk much about that.' Anon812

This comment was the only one that took on a parental perspective to illustrate a degree of individual responsibility, and also an individual's ability to distinguish between reality and fantasy. It indicates that counter to systematic violence, parental guidance and familial connections play a significant role. Whilst they acknowledge the influence of media, including the negative aspects found in Grime, they also outline that Black music is targeted specifically. Another respondent also draws attention to violence prevalent in wider British society. Violence is not the preserve of Black people or those from internal colonies, but forms the very fabric of British civility.

'…negativity is negativity wherever it is. Some of the things in music in lots of genres, Hip Hop, Grime, Hard Rock, all that, they all cover negative subjects… but my problem was that they found it necessary to put Grime music on blast… They were going on as if the negativity is only coming from Grime music and not from EastEnders and not from films… loads of gun crime in EastEnders… you'll see someone get away with it… so why they chose to single out that scene of the young kids from the inner-cities that had actually built something

themselves and this has got bigger than everybody had initially anticipated?… it was an easy target really and obviously they back it up… using the news channels by saying, "Look we're going to report 5 stabbings in the next six months". You know stabbings happen all the time, they happened six months prior but because we're going to report six stabbings in the inner cities, it's going to help us enforce to everybody that these kids love Grime and they're stabbing each other so Grime is the problem.' Anon144

Another felt mainstream society was not happy with the success of core members on their own terms. Success achieved through *Relative Deprivation* (Runciman 1966) and/or *Means and Goals* (Merton 1957) are constructed as deviant in mainstream British discourse. This viewpoint preserves the divide between the mainstream and the colonies (explored in chapter six) and delegitimises the success achieved by those in the colonies. This ensures those with power in existing frameworks maintain it.

'But the media didn't like it though… 30 man, ultimately gang, making music topping the charts in UK… they've got to find things to say about them… let's find about their past… "So and so did this in the papers?… this person is in a case right now… He's in jail now." They're just going to wait and they ended them as soon as they made them… the media would do that, they will destroy you. If they make you, they can break you as well.' Anon729

A final respondent highlights the selective nature the media operates with when constructing narratives about Black, working class, young and poor people. Those from internal colonies are targeted and presented as deviant.

'No one's writing articles about how the revered indie singer-songwriter…who wrote an entire album 'Murder Ballads' which is about women - and it's horrible and he would say, 'No I'm a story teller; I'm telling these stories'… But

there's never an article in the [publication] saying this guy's gigs must be banned because they are a problem.' Anon473

Scene members clearly see a plethora of issues surrounding mainstream approaches to Grime. These include: individual responsibility, parental/family influence, media bias, racism, systematic poverty, forcing and maintaining colonies, classism, anti-youth, a British culture founded on violence, violent entertainment and attempts to maintain existing social order.

Observation

Tangible effects of these heavy handed institutional approaches are still present. I documented my immersive observations when attending events and then followed up online via fans' tweets about the same events. Fans expressed their annoyance and concerns about policing and surveillance at events (attended in 2013) and short notice cancellations.

'So, like, So Solid had the whole scene on the line up, but forced to cancel every date except London and downscaled from o2 arena to indigo2' @MarvinS

'@OFFICIALSOSOLID @RomeoLondon @Lisamaffiauk Not happy that Monday is cancelled!!!! Had booked to go to Norwich for it #sad #sosolidtour' @Helz

'All the dissapointed fans have missed out on #sosolidtour dates i'm as upset as you. i knoew when you did and I'm sorry they did that!' @Lisamaffiauk (Artist)

'I hope this show don't get locked off you know #sosolid' @reillyb

These tweets show a definite awareness amongst fans and artists that cancellation and sabotage of events is a real possibility; implying this is a normative occurrence in the scene.

Like respondents, fans' found policing/security at events excessive and unnecessary. They found the banning of an artist performing unreasonable.

'NO @SKEPTA Thanks To The Po-Po KMT! (#SOSOLID)' @Studiop

'So much respect 4 #SoSolid and @Officialchip for Shouting Out @Wretch32 @Skepta Still Can't Believe They Didn't Let Em In #IndigoO2' @StephD

'@danaughty1 feds r turning away nuff man at this #SoSolid concert' @RR1

'Police of every corner what do they think is guna happen #sosolid concert #goodcleanfun' @Nads

'Feds stopped me @ the o2 and asked me am I going so solid. then decided to check my insurance' @Dj_Hot

These tweets, related to larger events (i.e. Eskimo Dance and So Solid), held at the O2[66]. They corroborate respondent and physical observation data. I observed an obvious police presence; police vans, some officers in high visibility jackets and protective riot gear style clothing, at each of these large events. I too thought this was excessive attire for a concert.

I joined the long queue to enter Eskimo Dance. There was an extensive police presence. Numerous venue security staff were also present. When I got to the front of the queue I was asked for my passport or driver's license. Naively (and lacking this cultural capital), I had no idea that I would need either of these, as I looked older than the minimum age of 18 and I had other forms of non-photographic ID to prove I was old enough to enter. I did not have either of the IDs requested. The security guard was curt and effectively ejected me from the

[66] Millennium Dome, Greenwich, London.

queue because I did not have them. At this point I noticed security had ID machines to scan passports and drivers licenses, they had metal detectors and baggage check facilities. Very invasive and disproportionate I thought, this is the level of security at an airport.

> *'The #o2 and #metpolice simply reinforced the criminalisation of black culture by turning the #sosolid gig into an israeli style checkpoint.' @Thelo*

Aware of the preconceived notions about the audience attending, in addition to the double consciousness (DuBois 2007) I felt as a Black woman speaking to a large White male security guard, I purposefully and eloquently made my case to him to be allowed entry to the event. I had paid for the ticket with the same card I was trying to show him as ID. I offered to show him numerous cards with my name: my business cards, my student photo ID, my camera to show him that I was a genuine researcher and wanted to document the event. He was curt and rude, telling me I cannot come in and then ignored me. I attributed his unacceptable response to my reasonable request and behaviour to my Blackness and his unconscious/overt bias[67]. He was not interacting with me as a person. He showed no openness to finding a resolution.

> *'Of course there are police standing right by the escalators. KMT They weren't here when I came to see Kevin Hart #SoSolid' @WendiW*

I walked over to Black security guards by the baggage check area, in the hopes they would better understand my situation and interact with me as a person and not 'Blackness' alone. I hoped the experience of Blackness, double consciousness and the knowledge of my research, would gain their confidence in my genuine plight and help me gain entry. I explained my situation and why I was there. They said they could see I was of age to gain entry and believed

[67] Equality Challenge Unit (n.d).

I was no threat to the event security. However, they said they would have to get approval from the manager, although they thought approval was unlikely.

As I waited, I explained my research to three security guards and informally interviewed two about their own journeys in Grime. I told them that I did not want to compromise their position (as subordinates in their professional roles), but asked if they could check with a manager if multiple forms of ID could be accepted. They checked and I was still not allowed to enter. I remained there, speaking to the young men and one of them told me to try the VIP entrance - he directed me to where I needed to go. I walked round to the VIP entrance. By the time I got there, the same security guard had cut through the inside of the building, and was waiting at the VIP entrance to meet me. He told the security at the VIP entrance that I went to the wrong entrance and to give me a wristband. The security at this side asked no questions and I went in without problems. I was given a VIP wrist band enabling me access to the venue and VIP lounge area. My account illustrates aspects of the institutionalisation of racist practices that have been outlined by respondents, fans online and in wider literature; but also the importance of understanding and identifying double consciousness, unconscious bias and drawing on cultural capital from the Black Cultural Sphere (even if not competent or knowledgeable in all areas – not bringing appropriate ID) to negate formal institutionalised spaces and structures through small subversive acts.

Inside the venue, security patrolled and were highly visible, darting from place to place. On one occasion security descended onto a person who had a green laser light that was flashing in the air from the crowd. On another occasion security stormed into the press and stage entrance area. Later, security rushed onto the stage during the finale performance to usher the artists and DJs off the stage because there were *too many* people on the stage. To my untrained eye, the number on the stage did not appear to present a health or safety hazard. I analysed this to mean the visibility of the Black Public Sphere and internal colonies on stage was too great and an unspoken quota had been exceeded by those in charge. Once security had vacated the stage (with some of the performers), Skepta who was performing at the time

security took over, addressed the crowd, saying that the actions of security were creating bad vibes and that it was unnecessary, before hyping the crowd again.

Smaller, less visible events attended had little security. At most, they had bouncers at the door, with a baggage check. No police presence, vans, riot gear, ID scanning machines or metal detectors. I was not aware of any incidents at the smaller venues I attended. Nothing was mentioned by fans online. At no point did I feel unsafe or in danger, even though I was in male dominated spaces. These were clearly spaces for young and adult men to socialise and have fun.

Crucial to my observations were the level of Black Public Sphere and internal colony visibility and in what context/gaze. Smaller events occurred inside the colonies, larger events outside. Those visible outside were treated as spectacular by authorities. British mainstream ideals and values of savagery were projected onto these sites and provided grounds for the institutionalisation of savage behaviour to foreground the idea of maintaining civility.

Despite these institutional attempts to thwart Grime, core members, with their cultural capital, knowledge, sensibilities informed by internal colonies and the Black Public Sphere, have found ways to negotiate this. In line with (Runciman's 1966) *Relative Deprivation* and (Merton 1957) *Means and Goals* models, they find subversive, innovative and alternative methods to resist in ways systematic discrimination could not predict. The subversive act of navigating prohibitive structures enabled Grime to expand outside of London and the colonies:

> *…lots of times they would be outside of London, because… a lot of raves weren't allowed to be put on….So, you know, Straight Outta Bethnal got shut down. Whatever Magic's night was, that got shut down… Rhythm Factory… in Whitechapel… Eskimo Dance obviously got shut down…You know all these*

things sort of just - were never allowed to get up and running for too long before the police would shut them down. Hattie

Grime has grown nationally and internationally with the assistance of DIY, Black Public Sphere sensibilities and advancements in technology. Grime has reached places and people globally (e.g. War Dubs in Japan, Cyprus - Ayia Napa). Tweets suggest fans are traveling further afield to go to Grime nights. Artists are doing pop up events[68]. Innovative tactics rooted in Black and East End sensibilities (Gunter 2010, Rose 1994) are employed to enable artists to perform and interact with their fans who fully understand the systematic challenges:

'But such forces will never manager to run the beauty, bubble and convivality of the sound and culture that I grew up on #sosolid' @Thelo

In this section, I explored external forces that impacted the scene's development. This is an essential component to consider in shaping Grime's genealogy (Foucault 1997) and teleological development (Lena 2012). It is a combination of proactive and reactive actions. It places the examination of Grime in its wider context that centralises this intelligibility.

Conclusion of values, spaces and politics

Values

The informal and organic ways that Grime developed fall in line with DIY music subcultures and were key to shaping its discourse and culture. Grime started in London's colonies, with cultural producers experimenting and innovating according to their musical sensibilities; writing rhymes, making beats and collecting records that would lead to competitive battles and idea exchange amongst friends in private, public, informal community and semi-public

[68]Lordie Lord (2013), Anon, (2014) and Anon, (2015).

spaces PPICS. Competition assisted honing crafts. Opportunities were afforded to those talented individuals who had access to higher end and/or analogue music technology and products. This placed them centrally in Ag&S Grime. Technology ranging from mobile phones, PlayStation's Music 2000, illegally accessed music software, to turntables, headphones and building your own computer, were used in music making. The most sought after computer software and systems (i.e. Apple Mac, Logic), if available, were predominantly accessed in 'free' spaces such as studios and youth centres.

Young people from internal colonies used self-taught skills to become cultural agents and drivers of both scene and aesthetic; inspired by and inputting directly back into the Black Public Sphere and validated amongst peers. They monetised their skills, navigating formal and informal spaces, in person and eventually online. Values of hard work, financial security, an entrepreneurial spirit and 'business smarts' inform the scene and shaped the approaches and sensibilities used by pioneers adhering to Runciman's (1966) *Relative Deprivation* and Merton's (1957) *Means and Goals* models.

Spaces

Grime originates from a very tangible and embedded scene from London's colonies. Informal spaces were crucial to the scene's development and became hubs where knowledge, music and subcultural practices coalesced and were circulated. Informal colonial spaces insulated against mainstream Britain's scrutiny and intervention. Pioneers would make sets and mix tapes to distribute, attend raves and pirate radio stations, sell music and merchandise to earn money. Pirate radio was a significant contributor for circulating Ag&S Grime music and culture. It gave pioneers publicity and methods to hone and capitalise on their skills later on in the industry phase, where they emerged as experts on the Grime aesthetic. Youth centres and record shops were significant hubs of subcultural activity. These spaces were primarily located in the colonies and inspired by and directly contributed back into the Black Public Sphere.

The internet helped the Grime scene expand nationally and internationally, publicising core members' work and creating online niche subcultures. The internet made the exploration of Grime subculture possible, and created new connections and ways for fans and core members to interact with each other. However respondents were aware that the internet changed the scene, raised issues around authenticity (weakened the link between internal colonies and the Black Public Sphere) and threatened livelihoods.

Politics

Once visible in the mainstream British gaze, Grime was essentialised, criminalised and marginalised. The Black Public Sphere and internal colonies were targeted and vilified in law, policy, (and business – explored in chapter four) and media. Race added an additional dimension to anti-youth and class based discrimination. 696 stifled the London Black music scene and related night-time economies. The effect of institutionalised practices resulted in prevailing loss of income, sustainability of livelihoods and institutions, silencing songs, targeting fans and core cultural agents. Institutionalised racist discrimination hindered the smooth transition of Grime's AgSIT teleological development. It harmed the genre's chances of reaching T, i.e. traditional phase, and the survival of its sensibilities and institutions. Authority interference was so pernicious and pervasive that in the very moments of performance, security can intervene to remove performers from the stage (observation) without reason.

In line with Perkinson's (2005) argument, mainstream Britain exhibits savagery in containing Grime in order to present itself as civil. These processes of institutionalised power are exacted to maintain the status quo (existing power structures), and destroy *Relative derivation* (Runciman 1966) and *Means and Goals* (Merton 1957) attempts at economic or racialised autonomy outside of internal colonies and legitimises intervention and disruption at any level.

Chapter Six – Demography: I AM Grime

Introduction

> *'First… arbitrary use of power… structural parameters that bear on a given group of people constitutes a form of terror… mundane low-intensity terrorism… second… white people emerge as beneficiaries even if they do not support such a system or benefit much from it in other areas… no such thing as a neutral… it is a social process… an individual cannot remove himself or herself from it, solely by wishing it away or changing behaviour as an individual.' (Garner 2007:18)*

In chapter four, I quantified sonic characteristics and sound families to establish music streams (Lena 2012) genealogically. This positioned Grime firmly within a Black music stream, rooted predominantly in Black music traditions/institutions. I showed that the local (i.e. Britain and the London inner-city soundscape) had significant influence in shaping Grime. I briefly touched on Grime's name coming from outside the subculture, and how the music industry failed to understand its sensibilities, partly owing to lack of diversity in the sector and unwillingness to invest in Grime artists. I expand the latter two issues in this chapter.

In chapter five, I examined the cultural formations of Grime genealogy along three overarching themes: values, spaces and politics, shaped by internal agency and external forces. I made Grime cultural formation and social movement intelligible, positioning it very much as a DIY and marginalised subculture. I illustrated ways Grime subcultural practice aligned and differed from other subcultural practices.

In this chapter, I examine race, class and gender in the scene; issues related to multi-cultural consumption, masculinised narratives and notions of authenticity. The hypervisibility and

pathology of Whiteness in the scene, double consciousness of Blackness in wider society, internal colony existence, gender norms and racialised masculinity (infused with class and sexuality) are explored here. Frameworks informing this chapter are Garner's *Introduction to Whiteness* (2007), Allinson's (1994) *Hearing how Whites can't* and emergent *Anti-Blackness* theory to explore the ways Whiteness permeates and centralises itself in Black and multicultural spaces, and, disinherits them in the process. The binary philia/phobia relationship i.e., the love and hatred of Blackness (Haynes 2012, Yousman 2003) and *Eating the Other* (hooks 1992) explore issues such as citizenship and belonging, and the consumption and commodification of Black bodies, both in the Grime scene and everyday life. These frameworks combined, assist in unpacking issues of authenticity, colourism, gender and class in the Grime scene.

This chapter continues to build on and foreground the cruciality of the relationship between the materiality of internal colonies (Hall 1978) and the immaterial Black Public Sphere. By the end of this chapter, Mbiti's (1991) correlating African religious/spiritual concept (discussed in introduction, chapter one and three) outlining how both are central to African understandings of one's life, existence, the world and the universe, becomes more explicit. It illustrates how the combination of material and immaterial form cultural and spiritual practice. This understanding makes apparent how dangerous external intervention and manipulation of the material/immaterial relationship can be to the people and their psyche, culturally, and spiritually. External intervention will be illustrated in an adaptation of image 7, to illustrate the theory I have created about the Columbusphere at the end of the chapter.

This chapter is divided into four sections that will be explored in relation to consumption of Grime. These are:

- Authenticity, Blackness and stigma - to examine Black responses to multicultural consumption of Grime, and music industry involvement in the scene.

- Whiteness - explored from various vantage points, to establish what Whiteness is in a Black and embedded colony subculture.
- Racialisation - to examine how race infiltrates other social strata (gender, class) for those consuming Grime in the scene and how these are linked with wider social frameworks, and
- Gender - to explore gender in Grime and how it related to power and agency.

The first two sections of this chapter primarily explore consumption at the industry stage of Grime's teleological development. The remaining two sections examine wider social impacts filtering into the scene, ideologies and/or norms within it.

Authenticity, Blackness and Stigma

> *'People may move away from their birthplace and they may listen to a variety of music, but their natural musical preference and affinity - their musical core… it is assumed that people are born into a culture with a particular musical sensibility that they take with them when they migrate (Negus and Velazquez 2002).' (Cited in Haynes 2013:2)*

> *'Grime's rise - and the string of top ten singles by Black British artists that accompanied it - has made an important contribution to the mainstreaming of Black culture in the UK.' (Bramwell 2015a:257)*

Grime music consumption expanded rapidly in late noughties Britain. Black British youth culture became mainstream youth culture (Lindner 2008), with multi-ethnic youth engaging in and consuming Grime. Paradoxically, the cultural practices and internal colonies of the very people who founded the scene (young Black men) remained stigmatised in British society. This philic/phobic relationship is explored in this section.

Multicultural consumption

Those attending events, tweeting and respondents interviewed about Grime during the data collection period in 2012-2015, were ethnically diverse. The larger, more mainstream events had wider ethnically diverse attendees. MCs were predominantly Black males, however there was a greater variety of ethnicity with the (predominantly male) DJs at events attended.

> *'This queue covers every demographic it's jokes #SoSolid' @jaystar*

Most respondents were from multi-ethnic London crews that were predominantly Black. Non-Black crew members tended to reflect the areas' demographic makeup e.g. Turkish and Greek in North London, Portuguese in South London etc. as well as White friends. Although few were able to quantify exact characteristics of Grime sonically, respondents identified Grime music as Black music, partly owing to the sound, but also the visible and substantive Black presence in the music and the scene. MDA songs for this project were performed and produced by Black musicians. Crucially, respondents emphasised the multicultural nature of Britishness and the multiculturalness of the scene as exemplified by one respondent:

> *'…it was quite a mixed scene. Young Black males predominantly… depending on what part of London you are from… there was a lot of integration more so than other parts of the country… White people, Black people… Indian… if you look at those early sets… Dizzee and Crazy Titch, Dirty Goodz, Wiley… Geezus and Slimzee at Rinse [FM]… two White guys and then you had FWD… involved in doing the publishing for lots of different people.' Hattie*

Multicultural presence in Grime was a result of the commercialisation of Black British music, multicultural involvement in UK Garage scenes; one of Grime's predecessors and the multicultural nature of internal colonies.

Diverse listenership increased with mainstream radio's pursuit of securing a younger audience. The BBC launched 1Xtra in 2002[69], specialising in Black and 'urban' music in response to the falling and aging listenership on Radio One[70]. To do this the BBC secured DJs from pirate radio stations already catering to audiences seeking Black music. In 2005 Capital Radio bought Black radio station Choice FM[71], becoming Capital Xtra and progressively, Black music and culture mainstreamed in Britain. This is the period Black music transitioned to the industry phase of the genre life cycle. Part of this transition included industry rebranding Black music as '*Urban'*. Grime was included in this.

1Xtra declared 2009 'The year of Urban' and journalist respondents noted newspaper editors relinquishing their rebuttal of Grime coverage (outlined in chapter five) in their publications. Grime received particular attention from industry, serving top ten hits in the British music charts (i.e. Wretch 32 '*Traktor'* (2011), Tinie Tempah '*Pass Out'* (2010), Tinchy Stryder ft. Dappy's '*Number One* (2009)).

The mainstreaming of Black British music and culture was heavily commodified and visible in this phase (late noughties). In line with Allinson's (1994) exploration of Whiteness centring itself into intra Black dialogic spaces, I propose the industry phase *is* Whiteness seeking to assert itself over Black cultural products through the use of (economic) capital and racist systems. If the process does not benefit White people economically or permit domination, it is marginalised and constructed as deviant (as explored in chapter five). Commodification of Black music streams is achieved through altering sensibilities, practices and sounds, which I have framed within *eating the other* conceptual framework (hooks 1992). The process disrupts music streams, re-frames, re-classifies, alters Black cultural knowledge production (immaterial) and interferes with how it is understood and articulated. This disruption is an

[69] BBC Press Office (2002).

[70] Presenter speaking at Soft Launch of the Black Music Research Unit (2013).

[71] Gboyega, A. (2013).

expression of power and terrorism to Black people and operates as Garner (2007) suggested at the opening of this chapter. Lindner's finding below, illustrates the separation of knowledge from the people; effectively eating them:

> *'British youth is still far away from the dream of a multicultural utopia. Although black youth culture nowadays pervades the realm of mainstream youth in the United Kingdom… it hardly improves the prospects of the status of black youth.' (2008:107)*

The power to bring about immaterial changes leads to material consequences. Some of these were discussed at roundtable event '*British Music Industry Gains from Black Music: What Have Africans Gained?'* (June 2015). Kwaku[72] stressed that the categorisation of music has a significant impact on the success of a genre, and also the allocation of resources to artists. He identified that the categorisation of an artist changed dependent on their race. White artists who became commercially successful in a genre of music, would be integrated into the 'Pop' category, resulting in greater resource allocation to pursue their craft. Black artists were less likely to be categorised as 'Pop' and remain 'niche', resulting in less resource allocation; even if they achieve commercial/'popular' success. Immaterial knowledge re-organisation, denial or misunderstanding, has material consequences as exemplified by Riley's (2014) first-hand experience of the experimental approaches or constrictive tactics the British music industry institutionalises against Black artists (outlined in chapter four).

In 2014, *eating the other* processes and strategies reorganised immaterial knowledge in mainstream British discourse. BBC 1xtra listed Ed Sheeran as the most important person in Black and 'Urban' Music in Britain. Ed Sheeran is White British, middle class, and on the surface, is far removed from the Black and colonial origins of the Grime scene. Wiley, The

[72] Black British Music founder.

Godfather of Grime and placed number sixteen on the list of twenty, responded to the BBC 1xtra list on Twitter:

> *"We influence a man and all of a sudden it turns out he has influenced us. England music industry is backwards. God bless those who try. People think I am mad. I am not mad, I can just see skull duggery from miles away. We have been bumped basically. Not taking anything away from Ed, he is sick. But black artist in England, we are getting bumped." @Wileyupdates*

As a Black man publically speaking out, he is aware of his precarious position and vulnerability to attack, despite his credentials. The *Godfather of Grime* pre-empts challenges to his experiential knowledge by outlining his rationality. He, is, not, mad. He correctly identifies that the cycle of knowledge (immaterial - material - immaterial) is not flowing correctly, and indicates the industry does not have the authority or ability to shape knowledge it does/will not understand irrespective of Ed Sheeran's obvious talent. Wiley highlights that the institutionalisation process disrupts genealogies of Black practices, sensibilities and culture, effectively divorcing them from the people, bumping (discarding) them. What Wiley discusses here is the same conversation recently (publically) addressed by Jesse Williams at the BET Awards 2016[73]. These processes of discovery and construction of false information about the said discovery that already exists, produce alternative facts that are known as Columbusing[74]. The incorrect (immaterial) knowledge they collectively produce is what I term 'The Columbusphere'. The process and impact of the Columbusphere is outlined and its impact made apparent later in this chapter.

Newspaper and magazine articles about Ed's listed position and Wiley's response to it either; a) justified Ed's position, b) tried to remove the element of race from the decision or c)

[73] Lasher, M. (2016) and BET (2016).

[74] Stone, A. (2014).

explained the parameters/criteria this decision was based on. These approaches refuse to examine, or are ignorant about, cultural appropriation or *eating the other.* They effectively cooperate to silence the importance of Blackness and its role in 'Urban' music, the people and knowledges central to it.

The 97% White British (chapter four) music industry *eats the other* by denying race related issues. It does so through a) music i.e., reclassification of knowledge and sensibilities etc. and b) its artists, by not documenting the race or ethnicity of its unionised members e.g. *The Musician's Union* (June 2015 roundtable BBM event). Music industry bodies (i.e. PRS and PPL[75]) have signed up to the *Equality and Diversity for Music Charter*[76], there is no realistic or tangible way to monitor whether they adhere to what is outlined in it, particularly in relation to race and ethnicity[77]. This diversity strand (race) is most often overlooked in their documentation and policy. These industry approaches to race exemplify ways the materiality of race is systematically denied at the core of industry and enables what I term the S*ilent Yet Overt Dismemberment* (SYOD).

SYOD is a mechanism through which cultural appropriation and immaterial knowledge sabotage can take place; it is yet another form of colonisation. It is the interference and colonisation of the immaterial Black Public Sphere. In this (*eating the other*, philic/phobic) process, the music, sonic footprint timestamp (SFT, outlined in chapter four) and related cultures disappear. The overall outcome of these institutionalised processes is three pronged. Black music becomes: a) invisible to mainstream consciousness; b) dismembered and 'acceptable' to Whiteness through sanitisation/appropriation by the industry's eating it or; c) a novelty (cult/fetishised/parodied) to become a caricature of its original self. Each of these processes void original meaning and cultural capital, and are an expression of power and low

[75] Performing Rights Society and Phonographic Performances Limited.

[76] UK Music

[77] British Music Industry Gains From Black Music: What Have Africans Gained?' (2015).

intensity terrorism as outlined by Garner (2007) (i.e. the structural parameters that bear on an oppressed group and enable the dominant group to emerge as beneficiaries from institutionalised processes).

> *'Morrison (1987) and bell hooks (2000, 1992) stress the terror and domination of whites as the primary values seen from a black perspective in terms of the power of naming, defining, decision making and the use of symbolic and physical violence.' (Garner2007:15)*

These processes are a form of symbolic violence to the host subculture, people from the internal colonies and Black Public Sphere. There is a White love and fascination with Black culture ***AND*** being able to control and dominate it; but there is also a fear and phobia of Black bodies, particularly those who are central to the Grime scene, i.e. young Black males.

Core members (artists, producers) were predominantly of Afrodiasporic descent in Ag&S[78] Grime. Social commentators (journalists, bloggers and record label owners), and a significant number of cultural distributors/evangelists (DJs) interviewed, observed and referred to were White. Given the nature of the *philia/phobia* binary with Blackness and the existing structures of British society, this makes sense. The former category are entrepreneurs (problematised as NEET[79]), finding ways to earn a living from their cultural capital and where mainstream economic advancement may not be possible or desired (Gunter 2010, White 2015);

> *'Grime basically is what man know innit?' Big Narstie*

The latter inhabit roles where they are permitted to earn a living through an existing capitalist system that favours and rewards Whiteness. They occupy spaces where one can have a

[78] Avant garde and Scene based.

[79] Not in Education Employment or Training.

degree of authority to produce knowledge and understanding over a 'subject' of investigation (Grime/the other). This is not to suggest journalistic respondents had the power to create knowledge without institutional resistance; however, they were able to get much closer access to the gatekeepers who could disseminate it – editors/club owners etc. I am not suggesting that respondents in these roles do not possess genuine passion, interest, understanding or experiential knowledge of Grime subcultural practices, particularly as they too lived or were in close proximity to internal colonies.

Grime *IS* very much part of mainstream British youth culture. Teleologically, its consumption has become increasingly White and middle class (Platt 2015). The process of *eating the other*, disinheriting 'Blackened' sound and sensibilities, and reorganising knowledge by the music industry through commodification, are longstanding in Britain, dating back to when Reggae was first introduced and the music tweaked to incorporate strings to fulfil a 'rock' sensibility (Jones 1988). Reynolds (2007) draws attention to the dangers of dismemberment and appropriation and its impact on knowledge. He highlights that the focus on Dub in the Black music stream has shifted from the influences and aesthetic, to the technicians and the machines, ignoring its cultural significance.

> *'…desire to erase Jamaican in all its knotty cultural contradictions. So Calvin Johnson, founder of the Olympia, Washington indie label K Records and frontman of Dub Narcotic Sound System, can blithely declare: 'I never saw dub as a type of music, but as a process. That fact that it originated in reggae is inconsequential.' (Reynolds 2007:254).*

Dismemberment opens up the possibility of reorganisation; Black music, Soul, RnB, Rap, Hip Hop etc. become racially vacant, yet coded, 'urban' or infused with racially White markers (Blue-Eyed/Northern Soul), to make the music more 'easy to market'[80].

[80] Where's the Black in British Music? (2015).

In the case of Grime, Ed Sheeran being placed at the top of the list, starts a trajectory of misinformation/alternative facts (Columbusing) that facilitates the material possibility of White DJs, artists and producers *eating the other*, centring themselves and fitting into pre-existing capitalist structures to earn a living in a system that already favours them - all whilst discarding the Black body, knowledge, sensibilities and practices, deeming them of little economic value or significance to British life.

The acknowledgment of racism in the music industry, awareness of SYOD, cultural appropriation and disinheritance of Black artists experiencing low level violence and terror was obvious to Black respondents. Although not articulated in this way, the creation of the panel event *'Where is the Black in British Music?'* (May 2015) addressed this very issue. Black panellists and audience members spoke about the significant and negative impact that the industry can have on cultural chance by blocking artists, and changing what they are doing (also outlined by Riley 2014). One respondent reported being blocked by their record label and being unable to release a track. These are material outcomes of immaterial misunderstanding, denial or wilful interference of the Black Public Sphere and its sensibilities.

Event panellists and audience members working in mainstream radio, identified that their organisations do not understand Black music sensibilities or the informal DIY nature of the structures that support them. They are principally concerned with making money from it and discarding the rest. Black music (such as Grime) coming direct from informal and embedded DIY structures was often rejected by licensed radio, who declined playing the music until record companies approved of, or endorsed them. This indirectly makes mainstream radio complicit in the sanitisation and institutionalisation processes, by disseminating only industry approved songs. Compounding this, a commercially successful Black MC at another panel event confided to the audience that he still faced challenges. Radio stations in parts of Britain

were less willing to play his songs, or only want to play sections where the White artist featured[81].

SYOD was also evidenced by Black respondents' passionate articulations about the longstanding tradition of symbolic violence, appropriation, disinheritance and commodification, resulting from the reorganisation of the immaterial Black Public Sphere knowledge and Sonic Footprint Timestamps (SFT):

> *'And now, what used to be winin' is now twerking… Miley Cyrus has claimed that. So when you look at it nothing's changed from 50 years ago.' Anon943*

Some respondents expressed frustration at the genre name Grime; in Ag&S stages, they did not know where the term came from to qualify as the official name. They believed the name came from outside the scene. They did not like the name or the connotations that may be associated with it:

> *'And at that time on the street, everyone was using the word Grimy anyway. So, it was like they just start calling it Grimy Garage which is just - meant Dark Garage… I saw it went from Grimy Garage, so somebody used the word Grime, and everyone hated it and it was named Grime but the publications used it so it stuck.' Anon585*

> *'…unfortunately, we never called it Grime… that's what people don't realise. We never called it Grime… I remember one time we sat there and was like where did this title come from? They gave it Grime. They gave it the title. You know who they is… We don't even know where that came from but it was ours; it was.' Anon 805*

[81] The Ultimate Seminar November (2012).

Respondents gave a real sense of dispossession, having what was familiar to them reintroduced in an incomplete and dismembered fashion; symbolic violence. This was compounded by the officious and authoritative narrative attributed to this reintroduction. This immaterial knowledge comes from *The Columbusphere,* a place of false knowledge and alternative facts.

In MDA[82] research, I experienced symbolic violence. I was frustrated when searching for the lyrics for the four selected songs online. I found that the words online were sometimes incorrect, or were not words at all. I associate this to unfamiliarity with the speed in which some lyrics were delivered, London specific slang, Jamaican toasting styles and lack of familiarity with Jamaican patois and grammar. I have Jamaican ancestry and have an understanding of Jamaican patois (considered gibberish ForHarriet 2016) beyond the heavily used phrases that form 'Jafaican Blinglish' (Lindner 2008) often used to gain 'cool' or 'street cred'. I also understand much of the London slang used in these songs and the context in which they were used at that time (2002 - 2005) owing to my own locational cultural capital. Lyrical content gives insight to the NILA[83], SFT and identity of Ag&S core members and fans. It is more than a style or aesthetic. Language used by the MCs is authentic to them and their peers, and speaks to the larger diasporic and locational influences on identity.

Alongside the reorganisation of knowledge processes, the industry plays a role in silencing the autonomy of material structures supporting Black musical expression and culture in mainstream Britain.

> *'…you have to keep to the culture… Now Choice is Capital Xtra… So there's no legal reggae shows on FM…None on Radio 1… There's none on Capital… so they just like pretend it doesn't exist… So the longer it doesn't exist the more alien it*

[82] Musicological Discourse Analysis

[83] Narrative Insight Lyrical Analysis

sounds to the general public… unless you've got a novelty record. It's sad… every kind of music should have a say… Why you discriminating against it?… that worries me. That the culture has disappeared… off radio and… the club scene as well… off TV… It's sad...' Anon856

A well-known Reggae, Dub and Jungle producer noted the cultural disappearance from public consciousness[84], highlighting that the media consistently ignores Reggae music, despite dismembered elements of Dub mainstreaming, most notably Dub Step. In the context of Grime, the 'realness' of the Black British SFT[85], is commodified and emptied of original meaning, bite-sized, packaged for profitable consumable pleasure. Part of the sanitisation and reorganisation of knowledge processes is outlined by Riley:

'As the unspoken rules for a UK pop music production became clearer so did my role… assimilate your cultural experience into something we can market nationally and internationally as British... When working with white artists, I ensured the production had an element of 'street'. A sound and style of production rooted in Black culture, capable of transferring an element of street cred to the artist in question… it was simply understood that this was a missing ingredient that had to be added…By contrast when working on Black British artists, my primary goal was to make them 'radio friendly', that is, not to sound too Black.' (Riley 2014:110)

His first hand experiences illustrate how the industry encouraged sanitisation and capitalised upon Riley's ability to commodify Black culture through his embedded experiences and ability to reorganise knowledge. In MDA, Wiley articulates his sanitisation experiences with the music industry. His musical sensibilities were misunderstood and he was not in control of his

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[84] British Music Industry Gains from Black Music: What Have Africans Gained?' (2015).

[85] Sonic Footprint Timestamp

cultural capital; there was an evident attempt to constrain or block him. He found methods to navigate knowledges of both the industry and the Black Public Sphere and their respective commercial and underground sensibilities:

‘Had tons of music album ready
But the label they didn't understand
I'm on another label, gave me control
I play it like a game in a console
I'm talented, how could you not know
I got a super kryptonite flow
But back to the bars that I wanna hear
Playing at the back of the car
We already know that's not for the chart
But it's what I done back at the start
And I still flow smart!’

It’s Wiley - Showa Eski, 2011

These issues raise questions around authenticity, as this is not something all musicians can navigate. Respondents who were part of Ag&S Grime, rationalised the appropriation and commodification of Grime and artists in the scene in different ways:

> *‘…but they know they’re having to do music to appease the label… more mainstream, singing the chorus and that’s not what [Crew Name] was about.’ Anon475*

> *‘…you can hear instruments in there from tribal sounds. You know you got the snare, it’s a tribal snare… tribal kicks… When it comes to the beats and the*

percussions it's not a normal drum, it's not a normal kick. That's when it gets commercial… You can hear it definitely.' TerraMontana365

These respondents were aware that sensibilities changed once Grime entered the industry stage. Wiley ensured his oldest Ag&S fans knew that he was aware of the commercial/underground differences and the challenges he faced because of it and his commitment to Black Public Sphere sensibilities.

Artists are effectively made 'viable' to Whiteness, sanitising themselves and being eaten in order to succeed commercially and attract a new industry imagined fan base. How one dismembers, denies and/or changes parts of their culture, practice, sensibilities and knowledge to suit the industry, contributes directly to perceived notions of their authenticity (i.e. culture and art vs money vs fad). Whilst respondents valued authenticity, they were happy for those who had commercial success and could earn a living from Grime, even if they had to make some changes. Part of this happiness was rooted in the *Relative Deprivation* (Runciman 1966) and *Means and Goals* (Merton 1957) understanding of the significance of being able to move oneself out of the internal colony, or (perceived) class bracket. Another source of happiness was through a collective sense of pride that the culture reached the mainstream; collective representation. Some respondents believed there are MCs involved in Grime primarily for the money. Those MCs forget about its roots and are damaging the integrity of the scene, as outlined by Big Narstie:

'…Grime artists – they get close enough in and think 'Rah, I need to go with the big P's so let me go and try and make something different – a next angle!'…imagine you start hearing Tupac on some dance rhythm and David Guetta tracks – Hail Mary wouldn't get no response… 'Hail Mary didn't do that well so let me start making songs like that where the focus is on David Guetta.' There would be no hip hop. There would be no hip hop if everybody thought about getting the ket [money] quickly and cuttin' out through. Then nothing

> *would have any substance… the whole Grime scene's history was whitewashed; because everyone got budro [money] and dropped it out and left it.' Big Narstie*

Black respondents did not agree with what was happening to the representation of Grime at the height of the industry stage (2009) and rationalised why dismembering and appropriation practices happened:

> *'This is the music industry, this is England, UK. We have a small industry. With Black people we are 3.5% or 4% of the country. 96% are still white. You need to be able to have a universal music. You need to be able to satisfy the masses…' Aaron Roach Bridgeman*

> *'…when I was at my pinnacle, England wasn't ready for that type of music yet… Black people in the whole… England, they don't make no more that 8 percent, in the whole factor… you're trying to promote this music into a population of 8 percent people… England comes from the era of Rock bands, we're talking Oasis, the Beatles, John Lennon, this is English history… They deal with rebellious Rock music. So we're just a small minority of eight percent that's trying to come up with a different thing.' Narstie*

Black respondents rationalised *eating the other* and sanitising oneself, in terms of numbers; being a numerical minority in the English context. Despite respondents living in ethnically diverse internal colony areas, there was definitely an awareness that Black Britons were outnumbered and a vivid sense of being a minority in Britain. As outlined in chapter two, Black Britishness is largely confined to major cities' colonial areas. These respondents had a resignatory powerlessness and frustrated acceptance of what happens to their cultural capital once it enters industry. Both respondents inadvertently acknowledged that the music was for Black audiences and their peers inside the colonies. Interestingly, the first respondent

also conflated Eurocentric with universal, which could give insight into SYOD acceptance. Paradoxically however, this very consciousness, of being 'The Other' and outnumbered, may contribute towards some artists and musicians feeling that they should sanitise their work, integrity, authenticity, themselves and be eaten, in order to acquire commercial success and acceptance.

Black bodies in the margins

Alongside being eaten by institutionalised processes in the music industry, the media construct Black teens as dangerous and internal colony as an urban metropolis (Lindner 2011). Colonies are racialised without making reference to race explicitly (Back 1996) and are stigmatised (Howarth 2002). Where one lives impacts identity. Howarth (2002) found that distancing oneself from one's internal colony when seeking validation or recognition from others, actually erodes one's sense of identity. Street/road culture (of which Grime music is part of) is rooted in the embedded experiential knowledge of the internal colony. It is a Black influenced subculture located within *'mainstream British youth culture' (Gunter and Watt 2009:520),* that is vilified (Gunter 2010), demonised and racialised (Nayak 2003) by wider British culture. Black youth were also constructed within social exclusion (Shanahan 2009) and NEET (White 2015, LCC 2015) frameworks.

The discourse of the Black body as the site of danger and criminality was crystallised in a conversation I had with a man at an event in an observational capacity. The awareness of his double consciousness (DuBois 2007) resonated with me, as I have experienced similar feelings myself before (chapter five). We are both Black (African diaspora) and still we initially interacted through a Eurocentric gaze. Whilst seated at a live event, before it started getting busy, this man approached me to have a chat. He is tall (estimated 6ft2/6ft3) and of large build. Immediately to break the ice, he said *'I'm not a thug'* I replied *'I never thought that'* and we proceeded to talk. He said he hadn't seen me before at these events and thought he would reach out to an unfamiliar face, especially as I was sitting alone and didn't appear to

know anybody. At this particular event, it appeared that a lot of people knew each other. We continued talking.

Reflecting on the initiation of our conversation, I considered four things:

- The double consciousness and self-awareness a man of his build and proportions must experience knowing he is considered menacing through a Eurocentric gaze.
- Did I give any conscious or unconscious cues that I had such thoughts?
- That he approached me by demolishing the Eurocentric gaze, despite no White people being present in our exchange, with a view to put me at ease.
- The Black body and identity in Britain in particular, and Blackness is very limited in what it could be and how it should be perceived.

Violence associated with the body is racialised (and gendered) in British mainstream discourse (outlined in chapter five) and the Eurocentric gaze. The link is so seamless and naturalised that despite Blackness being appropriated for 'cool', jokes were made linking the two in relation to a concert I attended:

> *'Just picked up my bulletproof vest from the garden shed for so solid reunion tonight #sosolid #gunfinger #02' @Spen*

> *'So Solid Crew at the O2 tonight.... Muggings and stabbings going up ten fold tonight then #bludting' @MarkW*

These comments imply that those who attend, and those who most closely resemble the artists performing i.e. Black men, are criminals or linked with criminality (through the Eurocentric gaze).

The culmination of philia/phobia, being eaten and/or sanitising oneself to become an inauthentic self, negatively impacts the psyche (Howarth 2002) of those experiencing low intensity terror (Garner 2007). A respondent illustrates the psychological impact these processes had on them, even from a young age.

> *'And being black as well and… buying black music but not seeing it on TV very young…is when you started noticing certain things, very young, you know.' Anon587*

This respondent learnt from a young age that they were different from what was considered 'normal' or British, and their outsider position in relation to it. Understanding the dissonance i.e., knowing what is accepted in the mainstream and on the underground/margins through embedded experience, sends a clear message of belonging and place in British society. Stereotyping and vilifying Black people, side-lining and reconfiguring knowledges and culture for commodification purposes, all satisfy the Eurocentric gaze. These coercive or enforced White ways of knowing facilitate *'…the psychological deficit whiteness inscribes in the non-white subject...' (Garner 2007:51).* Being eaten into, exacts a low intensity terror INSIDE the Black body - much like a virus.

Even as an adult, Hall recounts this psychological effect:

> *'In the back of my head are things that can't be in the back of your head… I was brought up to understand you… You don't lose that...' (Adams 2007).*

Hall explicitly states that *'you don't lose that'* way of thinking; neither did the anonymous respondent above or the man who spoke to me through a Eurocentric gaze at an observation event. I did not *'lose that'* when being ejected from a queue at an event I attended (chapter five). Not *losing that* informed one's sense of Britishness and belonging for some Black respondents. Many identified as British but were keen to express their culture using their

parents’ or grandparents’ heritage to identify themselves also. Only one Black female respondent obviated Britishness and took a Pan Africanist approach: that all Blacks are African and they are all one. She arrived at this conclusion as a result of a personal and spiritual journey.

> *‘It's a hard one because I'm black British, but my culture is West Indian. And I don't wanna lose my culture… because I feel it has been forgotten… it's a bit too westernized, a bit too kind of free for all…’ Anon 695*

> *‘I'm from [London location], my parents are Jamaican, on Sunday, before EastEnders, we’d watch a Bashment showcase like Ninjaman vs Merciless… This is my heritage, innit?...’ Big Narstie*

T. Reynolds’ (2007) research is useful in helping to consider race and belonging in the Grime context and the importance of safe spaces that Grime provided, particularly in Ag&S stages. Historically, Black British (Caribbean) youth identity, leant heavily on the identity and music from the USA and Caribbean, regardless of genuine relatability (Gilroy 1993, Beckford 2006); all of these inform the Black Public Sphere. Grime music provided a way for Black British youth to assert their cultural sensibilities, experience AND their Britishness; SFT.

Safe spaces gave Black youth a sense of pride and agency within their internal colonies and cultural practices that have been criminalised and/or marginalised. Throughout all methods of data collection, the stigma associated with residing in colonies is turned on its head. In the safe space of an interview, respondents could express their locational and ancestral identities. In the safe space of a concert, on stage, shout outs were made to London regions in particular i.e., West/North/East/South London, in addition to ancestral countries or regions e.g. Jamaica, Caribbean, Nigeria, Africa. Here, one could cheer and express pride in locational and ancestral origins, experiential knowledge, culture and sensibilities.

In these spaces, performers expressed pride in being British through dress: such as wearing a Union Jack blazer, or announcing to crowds their pride in belonging; being a part of British culture, or pride in the British music they make. Observation and respondent data echoed a connection to Britishness. When looking at the language used in MDA it is an authentic location specific language. MCs prove they're authentic by referencing their Britishness, lived experiences, past times, locations and references to things that are attainable or desirable to them and their peers (e.g. motorbikes and Nike branded apparel). Iconography in some music videos shows predominantly Black males and include famous British landmarks (Mills 2003) to connote Britishness and assert belonging.

Multi layered binary philic/phobic processes of SYOD and cultural appropriation (including the marginalisation, stigmatisation, dispossession, invalidation yet paradoxically, the commodification and consumption of cultural capital, institutions, knowledges and sensibilities) successfully *eat the other*. The love and hate processes divorce Black bodies from both themselves and others, which has cultural and psychological impacts on Black bodies. Attitudes to cultural appropriation led one respondent to exclaim:

> *'So a White person can't understand what it's like to be Black. Sorry… because when it goes down to it, yeah, we can't scrub it off our faces.' Anon373*

This particular respondent's comment is relatable to hooks' (1992) work illustrating that White people can pick and choose what elements of Blackness they love (philia) and can adopt - which is predominantly the parts deemed 'fun' and 'cool'. They do not have to contend with phobic elements of the dichotomy that Black people must endure living in Eurocentric Western societies.

In this section I examined race and its role in authenticity, Blackness and stigma. I outlined a process of dispossession in the colonies and Black Public Sphere. In the music industry, this operated through disregarding embedded knowledge in the colonies, whilst seeking to

capitalise on the cultural products of it and Black Public Sphere. Those who have agency to disseminate information/knowledge and music at the industry phase, are those who fit more easily into pre-existing capitalist structures. Knowledge is reshaped, disrupting Black connections and connectivity. The material effects of reorganisation are the intervention and centralising of Whiteness and Black dispossession. Again, this is an exercise in racist power and low intensity terror (Garner 2007). Now that I have looked at how this process impacts on Black respondents and bodies, I move on to examine White members' experiences in the scene.

Whiteness and neutrality

> *'…back then I would say it was largely a Black music… It was for Black people by Black people... Although you had a couple of White emcees… it had a Black people fan base. Obviously I'm White… a couple of White friends… so it reached us as well… nowadays… there's a lot of White people that are fans of Grime...' MindofGrime*

Sonic explorers and consumption

White people can often move through social space without considering their racialised identity (Garner 2007). In the context of Ag&S Grime however, Whiteness was hyper visible. Some White respondents became aware of their Whiteness and in telephone interviews where I could not see the respondent, they disclosed this throughout the course of the interview, before I asked questions around race and ethnicity. Unlike Black presence in White dominated spaces in Britain, the inverse (i.e. White presence in predominantly Black Grime subculture) was a choice entered into by respondents who sought out Grime; this was especially the case for international, remote national and/or middle class White respondents.

Data suggests Grime operated as a safe space of Afrodiasporic and working class expression of (masculine) self-validation. This is corroborated by racialised boundaries being policed by scene members who sought to ascertain the intent and/or reasoning's behind the presence of unknown White individuals in Grime. Most White respondents grew up in and around London colonies. White respondents exclusively referred to a network of White listeners who were active online in Grime's scene phase, in Blogs and Forums, and reading magazines such as *Wire* or *Spin*. It was relayed that Grime was a geekish fascination or collectors' items for fans of experimental music.

> *'…White middle class… Musical geeks is the best way of putting it. That's how we would characterise [Magazine name] as an example of that kind of scene.' Dan*

> *'…it's mostly… White, male… the people in my generation into Grime 8 out of 10 times or at least the ones who I know through the areas of internet I'm on, tend to be White males.' Maxwell*

I term these White middle classed listeners 'sonic explorers' who sought out new 'experimental' sonic frontiers. However, Lindner (2008) finds part of the attraction for White British youth (specifically those that weren't embedded in internal colonies) may have more to do with development of identity against parents and teenage rebelliousness. White respondents who lived further away revealed that the Grime scene seemed like an exciting fantasy world. They were drawn to its sonic difference/extremity, larger than life characters, embedded experiences, humour and lifestyles that contrasted with their own. Difference formed part of the attraction:

> *'…not a dream… a distant world away… estates and gang crime and stuff that I was not used to seeing… it appealed to me in that sort of way, the same way that people in the UK… American Hip-Hop appeals to people because it's like*

> *glamorous, because they don't see it over here… I had that feeling with Grime because it wasn't around me, so the only way that I could access it was to listen to it or seeing…' Anon542*

A White American respondent was drawn to Grime for reasons of difference. Grime contrasted with popular nihilistic American Rap narratives popular during the mid to late noughties. He was particularly drawn to diverse characters and the especially super geeky narratives of some MCs.

White visibility, culture and lacking

In Grime, White middle classed mainstream norms are marginal in an alternative framework of ontology and epistemology. Whiteness is viewed as a neutral and vacant space waiting to be filled; it lacks culture. White people <u>*choosing*</u> to participate in the scene are viewed as attempting to obtain Black 'cool' or 'spice' (Riley 2014). Blackness from the music and cultural practices 'transfer' onto, and fills the cultural void of, the White artist, fan or tourist. This became an evident theme in the data as outlined in examples below:

> *'Max …people think that I'm trying to behave a certain way and I'm not. The people… who know me… They know who I am. They know how I try to behave… I never do anything that I think is completely over the top… I did try at a certain point to… emulate Grime but, it was already so difficult… trying to be 'the white friend'… "Well, we know you're not actually making fun of us or... slumming it" but at the same time you're still White and therefore I don't know about you guy...*
> *Monique- Okay. Alright, so by this I'm understanding it that it's a case of people thought that you were… in inverted commas trying to 'act Black'? Is that what you meant?*
> *Max - Yeah… without saying it so explicitly… I definitely noticed it...' Maxwell*

This respondent felt that liking Grime was met with resistance and suspicion because of his distance from the embedded authenticity of the scene locationally and racially. He felt his presence in online spaces was received by others as an attempt to consume and appropriate Grime and its aesthetic to gain culture and Blackness.

A Mixed Race respondent (Black/White) who classified himself as Black alluded to this same phenomenon:

> *'Black - I'm Mixed Race, but I'm more of the Black side of life.' Anon450*

He then classified his White friend as not completely White:

> *'He's White, yeah, but he's mixed with -- he's got a little bit of something from back in the day (laughter)…It's cultural anyway; he's got a lot of culture.' Anon857*

To this respondent, his White friend liking Grime and having culture made him less White. In choosing *'the Black side of life'* he was demonstrating that he has culture, uncovering the notion that to be White is to not have culture. He extended this further to imply anyone who partakes in Grime thinks they are Black, simply by engaging in the Grime scene and Black cultural practices:

> *'There's a lot of White people who think they're Black, there's a lot of Chinese people who think they're Black. It [Grime] was a Black thing, weren't it?' Anon816*

This theme arose again at an (observation) event where a White MC performed at Eskimo Dance. He referred to himself as *'this White boy'* in his lyrics before boasting about having talent and skill. The key word in his lyric *'this White boy'* is the word *'this'*, which illustrates

that despite his Whiteness, he is a force to be reckoned with and that he is different from other White males.

Relating these examples back to the discourse of *eating the other* (hooks 1992), White vacantness is the predator waiting to be fed with culture. It seeks to eat and devour Blackness, placing itself centrally, digesting the wanted parts (culture) before discarding the rest by eliminating the waste (people).

This conflation of Whiteness with lacking culture and authenticity in Black cultural spaces, is continually policed by Blacks and working class Whites to prevent cultural tourism and being eaten and discarded, as evidenced in a tweet at an event I attended:

> *'Some of the white people at So Solid last night looked very confused. I knew some of them just came cos they copped them season tickets.' @TrippyT*

A White respondent's experiences online provides insight into this policing. Sonic exploration lead him to become 'raced' and this created a sense of discomfort for him:

> *'…I always get self-conscious about the fact that like you know I'm a foreigner first and foremost because this is definitely a UK based genre and secondly I'm distanced from the community because… I am a White person......in a foreign nation.' Anon 482*

In an observational capacity, I was aware that I too was policing. I witnessed two White women at larger, more mainstream event who knew all the words for the artist's songs and recited them during the performance. "*Were they present at the concert as cultural tourists - to feast on the other?"* I wondered. I felt that my suspicions were confirmed when they appeared to be unfamiliar with other songs/tracks (in the music stream released in the same era - Grime, Grimy/Dark Garage and Garage) by different artists and producers played by the

DJ in the concert interlude. They looked as though they were ridiculing the songs unfamiliar to them, by posturing heavily, making 'gang signs' with their arms, hands and fingers, making faces and laughing at the songs that they did not appear to know the words to.

Sonic exploration and experiencing difference can be personally fulfilling and lead to personal growth. However, the systematic nature of racism and *eating the other* becomes problematic at individual levels. Unknown Whiteness in this space comes to represent those seeking to penetrate and centre themselves in an intra dialogic discussion for those in the colonies i.e., predominantly Black people. Presenting for purposes of consumption, as Allinson (1994) suggests, involves centring oneself to consume what may not fully be understood sonically and a lack of awareness regarding the structural representation their presence has. Unlike Allinson's exploration of Hip Hop in the USA however, racial divides in Britain are not as clearly cut owing to differing histories of segregation and integration, and the length of time of significant Black presence in each location. I touch on the significance of class later in this chapter.

When Grime entered the industry phase of genre development, there was a shift in fan base, it became increasingly White (and middle class). An informal discussion with an event organiser and journalist also revealed that the fan base has changed and become Whiter over time. Two White respondents noticed this change and commented on this shift:

> *'…nowadays there are people that you wouldn't expect to be into Grime… people that you would think are more into… indie music…they're Grime fans...'*
> *Mind of Grime*

> *You notice… the new fan base… seems to be a little bit Whiter than it was at the get-go... My personal take on it is that now as England...have Road Rap or… UK Hip-Hop… when [an MC name] and all that was going on… there was another rapper every other day. So it was working great… not everybody…*

> *younger … not White didn't feel that necessary need to do Grime. Because Grime at that point was Tinchy doing 'Number One'… N-Dubz… that seemed to be where the direction Grime went and Road Rap was going the other one. So if none of that spoke to you or look good to you, you went the other way. Whereas you know with White kids my age, I can't speak for everyone, but I can definitely imagine that no one's going to take you seriously if you're out here trying to emulate kids there with the exception of maybe [An MC name] or something like that. Anon674*

The first respondent notes the shift in fan base, I am unsure whether this is a reference to class, as Indie fans tend to have middle class tastes (Hollingworth et al 2009; McCulloch 2006), but it clearly illustrates that it is a different, 'newer', type of fan attracted to Grime. The second respondent is saying the Black fan base followed Road Rap trajectories (a newer Ag&S genre rhizomatically branching from Grime and incorporating elements of Black 'American South' Trap and Rap), which still felt more embedded and facilitated intra-diasporic/colonial dialogue. To be taken seriously by the consuming public (unless they were an embedded Ag&S MC from an internal colony), White artists followed the more commercial 'I' Grime route. White fans and tourists increasingly listened to commercial industry Grime, which the data suggests was not considered the same as Ag&S Grime.

Alongside this shift in fan base and the arrival of tourists, industry disregarded the embeddedness crucial to the subculture; altered sensibilities, production, sonic properties and aesthetics. They introduced White artists (e.g. Ed Sheeran, Connor Maynard) into mainstream Grime, which was conflated under the umbrella term 'urban'. It became more commercial and pop, which fed into issues of race and authenticity. One White respondent however, was very aware of cultural tourism in relation to Black music when it mainstreams. His awareness of cultural tourism impacted on how he approached Grime.

> *'…it's something I feel weird about because… not only am I… White… in my 20's… I'm trying to discuss a genre that's existed for over a decade now without me… It feels weird for me trying to make these projections about like communities and who's listening to what, who's doing what and also getting the reactions... there are occasions where one person I'm talking to about Grime it's like, "Yeah, well you don't know what my life is like..." …but there's definitely people who… can do Grime tourism and then if it ever gets too much for them they can leave… then two or three years later when you get bored of the music – leave…' Maxwell*

It should be noted however, that at the smaller events I attended, hardly any commercial Grime music was played. Those played were the first 'crossover' tracks of the early noughties, such as *More Fire Crew's 'Oi'*, or *Ms Dynamites (Feat. Sticky) 'Boo'* (considered Grimy Garage). More recent commercial Grime was not played in smaller venues, giving a real sense of a demarcation between underground (Ag&S) and commercial Grime.

Outlined in chapter five, notions of authenticity in Grime surrounded how the genre was accessed, even more so for White remote respondents in Grime. Embedded interactions of everyday life, raves and pirate radio, demonstrated an understanding of authentic Grime culture. Remote White fans that were most serious about their love of Grime were able to capitalise on their interest. To do this, they travelled nearer to the spaces to embed themselves where Grime was made and wanted to get involved.

> *'…a lot of them are DJs now… [A DJ name] is a White Liverpudlian lad who moved to London partly because he loved Grime. After like he left school… now DJs at [Venue Name]… fairly successful DJ and he's putting on his own Grime nights…' Dan*

'I've just said goodbye to a really good friend I've been to loads of Grime raves with… moved back to Australia… He has always been an enthusiastic follower of our Grime blog… came with us to a couple of shows and so we became friends that way.' Dan

One respondent moved from rural England to London, set up a Grime record label and embedded himself in the scene. If White respondents did not have the choice to travel or move to embed themselves in or around colony spaces for financial or familial reasons, they created online spaces to do this and found other ways to embed themselves in the scene (such as respondents setting up blogs). Lack of embeddedness and ease of internet access may also be a factor as to why White people became involved in the scene in this way.

In this section, I examined Whiteness from a variety of vantage points. Identifying those interested in Grime as *sonic explorers* who are drawn to difference. I examined the visibility of unknown Whiteness in Black spaces, and what this presence represents in internal colony spaces. It represents lack, power, tourism and consumption. The unknown White individual represents the systematic nature of racism centralising itself in Black and colony space. I outlined some of the problems that this can cause, exposing the related wider discourse of White fragility as it seeks to validate itself by proxy. This insecurity becomes a virus manifesting inside the Black host, materially and immaterially. I made links between Whiteness and the industry stage Grime. Having examined Blackness and Whiteness, I now move on to examine processes of racialisation.

Racialisation of Class and Gender

There are interracial issues relating to multicultural consumption of Black cultural products/practices; *eating the other*, philia/phobia binary processes, citizenship and

belonging, double consciousness, White paranoia/fragility, and Whiteness as: lacking, centring, cultural tourism, choice, predator, a virus.

Colourism

There are also intraracial issues within the African diaspora present in the scene. Although not presented as a rivalry, it has been noted that whilst the sounds used substantially incorporate American Rap and Jamaican musical aesthetics (chapter four), many artists at the forefront of Grime that have been most commercially successful are of immediate West African/African British heritage[86]. This may be an area of further investigation.

The Grime scene provides insight into aspects of wider intraracial legacies arising from internalising racist oppression. It presents as colourism rather than (ancestral) nationhood, which was a larger factor for previous generations of Black Britons. Colourism is linked to skin colour/complexion, desirability and gender, whereby the darker a person's skin, the more masculinised (aggressive) they are perceived to be. The lighter skinned a person is, the more feminised (docile) they are perceived to be. The desirability of these characteristics is linked to the sex of a person and ideas of beauty.

Some Black respondents expressed an awareness of colourism in Grime. Three lighter skinned Black male respondents made reference to challenges they experienced. One respondent felt he had to try harder to prove himself as masculine and was targeted by other young Black men because of his skin complexion. He took on more 'masculine traits' such as aggressiveness to earn respect and be taken seriously as Black and/or masculine enough.

> *'…I was very frustrated… I always felt like a had to… prove myself as a character… me being light skinned also what they would call something of a*

[86] Discussed by presenters at Buma Rotterdam Beats (2012) and Where's the Black in British Music? (2015).

pretty-boy, I used to have long hair as well… people look at you and then think you were certain way… you have to show people "nah! Grrrr!!!!!"…' Anon 809

Initially oblivious to histories of colourism, another respondent used his lighter skinned complexion as a form of social capital and branding. He realised that it drew negative attention and could be seen as a form of flaunting privilege. Since becoming aware, he stopped referring to himself in this way as he felt it was unnecessarily divisive amongst diasporic peoples. The final respondent found that his light skin was a problem inter and intra-racially (although he did not extend on this).

'…Wow. Am I being bumped because I'm Black?… and then being a light-skinned black guy on top of that - it's just dread!' Anon 273

These respondents outlined that they were not aware of colourism as young children. They came to understand colourism through being on the receiving end of hostilities (because of their appearance from secondary school onwards).

'I didn't see, like, the complexion argument because my immediate family were all different complexions. Me, going into the world and kind of see that…' Anon 785

Being a light skinned Black male elicited negative responses and connotations, particularly in relation to achieving alpha male status, an ideology crucial to Grime (chapter four).

These accounts and the awareness of colourism are present across the diaspora and is not specific to the Grime scene. It is known in the Black Public Sphere. This knowledge assisted into one respondent's rationale, linking commercial success to skin complexion in Grime. He thought that the mainstream would favour lighter skinned artists, mirroring other genres and in line with the discourse of favourable treatment of lighter skinned Blacks:

'…[An MC] was young and he had a squeaky voice and he was different. Like people like the [Another MC] got signed and the [Yet another MC] got signed. Boys that had a certain kind of appearance. [MC] is dark-skinned…' Anon 676

This comment suggest that the colourism legacy still operates amongst some of the youngest members in Black Britain. The internalised *eating of the other* INSIDE the Black body still operates. This respondent's rationale above is understandable and makes sense to me having an understanding of this discourse. However, given the way Grime Ag&S fans and colonies are portrayed (deviant) by the British mainstream, the more different and extreme from respectable Whiteness Grime MCs are constructed to be, the more stabilising it is for both racialised constructions of Blackness and respectable Whiteness (I touch on respectable whiteness in the racialisation of class section of this chapter). Given that what the media, music industry, police and politicians/government are doing is essentialising violence, masculinity and Black youth, it would make sense for darker skinned artists to be the visual tropes and the most successful in mainstream British discourse (this does not detract from the talents of these successful artists however).

Women

In an inverse relationship, the lighter skinned a woman is, the more genteel, beautiful, desirable and feminine she is perceived to be.

At a large mainstream event, I observed how gender was racialised explicitly. At a concert, after a light skinned femcee's[87] performance, the Master of Ceremonies hosting the event commented *'She so small and so cute and so light-skinned'.* I interpreted this comment to express endearment toward the young femcee and referencing positive attributes about her. This comment triggered my awareness of un/conscious colourism within the African diaspora

[87] Femcee= Female MC

(Charles 2006). This femcee uses a slogan referring to light skin complexion, beauty and meekness as a form of social capital. A dark skinned femcee of similar age, performed immediately afterwards. After this performance the host made reference to her six pack (stomach) and referred to her body looking great. I was alerted to these objectifying comments and the disparity between the two comments made about these young Black women. Remarks to the lighter-skinned femcee referred to her beauty and femininity, the darker skinned femcee, her body.

Later, the host was interacting with a female DJ who was on stage with him; she was light skinned. He commented to the crowd on her beauty and that he wants to *'give her a baby just because she has 'lovely hair'.* She has curly hair, a looser texture (3b) than the kinky, coily afro hair types (4b/c) commonly associated with darker skinned people of African descent. She was objectified and presented as the type of woman one should aspire to have children with. In this concert setting, in front of thousands, favour was 'bestowed' publically on women with lighter skin and curly hair. I thought about eugenics, social engineering when this was said, with reference to some views and systematic procedures[88] to *'…lighten[ing] up de race'* (Hurston 1986:209).

Another time during his hosting, he made a shout out (compliment) to the women (in the audience) who do not need to wear weaves (hair extensions). As a method of crowd participation (discussed in chapter seven), he told women to raise their hands if they don't wear a weave. Although it is now acceptable for White and other women of colour to wear *'hair extensions'*[89], women of the African diaspora wearing weaves has often been a point of contention, derision and ridicule (Agbetu 2014). In this context, the host's comments employ dog whistling (Haney-Lopez 2015) and misogynoir[90] tactics. They draw attention to, and

[88] Atlanta Blackstar (2016).

[89] Hair extensions is the 'new' name given to White women who wear weaves, despite weaves being a staple 'protective style' for Black women for decades. This is an example of Columbising and the Columbusphere.

[90] Anyangwe, E. (2015).

publicly shame Black women specifically (in front of diverse attendees) who choose to wear weaves; women who do not have *'lovely hair'* like the DJ he complimented earlier.

These incidents exemplify how race and gender combine to marginalise Black women as a matter of normalcy; shaming darker skinned women with more 'Africanised' features and attributes, and exalting yet objectifying lighter skinned women. These comments were made by the Black male host. As a woman, I felt alienated by these comments. No such objectifying or sexualising comments were directed towards men in the crowd and they reveal aspects of male privilege can operate in the scene. As a darker skinned woman, who wears weaves, I felt an attempt had been made to make me feel less than - even if the host was not aware of the impact of his comments. These instances occurred throughout the course of one concert. It was indicative to me that, as the host felt comfortable to mention these things to a diverse crowd of thousands, at least some of the audience understood this discourse; particularly as some crowd members responded by engaging (laughing, raising hands) or disengaging (turning away, sitting down) in relation to these comments.

In the context of performance, at another large concert Black women were doing an African dance piece in *African-esque* attire during an interlude segment. This performance served a more functional, practical role, i.e. the displaying of culture and athleticism. The women had their own segment in the show and were not acting as a support to any MCs on stage. Later, in the same concert, White women were objectified and their performance was their mere presence, standing in bustiers, suspenders stockings and heels, posing seductively in an unchoreographed fashion behind the MCs that took centre stage performing. In this concert, the Black female body was constructed as culture bearing, active, athletic and functional, whereas the White female body was passive, consumable, sensual and sexually available.

The women featured in the selected MDA[91] songs were light skinned and the lead female artist headlining alongside MCs (as an equal) at a concert was a light skinned woman. This woman was also in a long term relationship with one of the MCs, which may have elevated her position to an equal. In contemporary songs outside of MDA, reference to light skin femininity is prevalent.

'I wanna see a light skin gyal on the road' - Heatwave (Wiley feat. MsD - The Ascent, 2013)

'Looking at the hot girl with the red dress on
Light skin with a beautiful body like Kim' - Can you hear me? (Wiley feat. Skepta, JME, MsD - The Ascent 2013)

'Brown skinned girl in the club I want that one' - Shut Up (Stormzy 2015)

These songs were released throughout the course of this project. The concerts I attended were between 2012 and 2015 and further illustrate that colourism still operates in the diaspora and is present in Grime subculture.

Class

'The only good thing what happened is a bit like what raving did to the Blacks… we started something what everyone accepted to, because Grime no longer just stood for Black road kids anymore, it stood for every road kid, that Means if you're Jewish, Turkish, Bognor Regis, East Ham, Peckham, Brixton, Lewisham; If you're from a council estate where it's dead and you wanted to wear nice trainers, you'd be listening to Grime coz that's the people you can relate to,

[91] Musicological Discourse Analysis.

because all the stuff that these MCs are talking about is the stuff you're living as a poor kid in England.' Big Narstie

Ag&S Grime started in internal London colonies. The majority of British respondents grew up in or around these areas and experienced the same/similar class based restrictions, making Grime lyrics and references relatable and authentically British. Respondents gave a clear indication of the classed issues that they faced. The way the music was produced and the lyrical content were also reflective of class backgrounds (chapter four) and music making resources available (chapter five). Dizzee famously made *'I Luv U'* on his PlayStation; which contributes to Grime's gritty sound (Lester 2010).

MDA selected songs do not excessively refer to expensive items that are unaffordable. It is not materialistic. Motorbikes were a major feature sonically and lyrically (connoting their desirability). The only forms of clothing mentioned were a *Breitling* watch and *Nike* trainers. Dizzee declares that he has *'no chains no chaps not much dough'*. Pretentiousness is frowned upon by Ms Dynamite, who sees little point is paying to get into a rave, only to not enjoy yourself and stand around. Wiley's message is that hard work pays off. Material things acquired are principally for stability and security that he wants for himself and his family. Outside of MDA, Skepta bragged about the low cost of his music video (Shutdown 2015)[92] and that he does not wear designer clothes anymore[93]. Some artist's prefer to wear and promote their own clothing brands and business ventures (Dench[94], BBK[95]). MCs reject designer labels and conspicuous consumption (Devlin '*50 Grand'* ft. Skepta 2015[96]). This outlook is a value outlined in chapter five.

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[92] Gorton, T. (2015).

[93] Adenuga, J. and Adenuga, J. (Skepta and JME) (2016).

[94] Lethal Bizzle's brand.

[95] JME's brand.

[96] Digital download, Island records.

White respondents had inter-ethnic friendships which is common amongst respondents living in internal colonies (Watt and Stenson 1998 cited in Garner 2007). Respondents' multi-ethnic friendships reflected the demography of the local area, for example Greeks and Turkish in North London, Portuguese in South London, in addition to White (Anglo-Saxon), Mixed-Race and Black friends.

No White respondent identified as a Chav, or even working class, however those who embrace practices or appropriate authentic embedded elements of the Grime scene are viewed as a distinct form of Whiteness.

> *A person racialised as white can be ideologically exiled from this privilege, or may pursue values seen as antagonistic, or adhere to a minority religion, or are from a different country... Garner (2007:11)*

Racialising poor White people (those residing in colonies and embedded in Grime), functions as a border control to Whiteness (Nayak 2008). When Black culture is appropriated amongst the White working class, it detracts from the 'respectability' status (Nayak 2003, Lindner 2008, Garner 2007) associated with Whiteness and contributes to White working class demonisation and othering (Jones 2011), e.g. Chav. Although not colourism, there is an intraracial issue within Whiteness linked to class and proximity to 'others'.

These demarcations of Whiteness are rooted in White fragility. Chavs are easier to identify in demographically monolithic White working class areas of Britain, than in ethnically mixed colonial ones. They are undesirable, however their othering is constructed differently to the Black poor (Lindner 2011). Both groups are recipients of class based oppression and youth are 'animalised' (Lindner 2011, Nayak 2008, Garner 2007). However, Chavs are deemed stupid and relatively harmless as exemplified by caricatures such as Vicky Pollard[97] or Wayne

[97] Little Britain, BBC 2003-2006.

and Waynetta Slob[98]. Chavs can be male and female (Lindner 2008) and are represented equally in the media. Female Chavs (Chavettes) are sexually binary, either hypersexual or unfeminine and sexually repulsive.

A respondent's recollection of his then girlfriend in a rural part of England liking Grime exemplifies some of these:

> *'…she shared the same interests as me in the - music wise… she was considered a bit of a Chav because it was not the usual sort of music to listen to, so she was the Chavy one in her friend group. Even though she wasn't, but she was just considered it due to the type of music she's listen to and the way she'd dress, like she'd wear hooped earrings and wear trainers and some of her friends would be a bit girlier.' Anon 063*

Liking Grime made her a race apart; a Chav. It reduced her femininity, making her less girly than her 'non-Grime loving' friends.

Grime music is very much a 'working class' subcultural form because class has a significant influence on subcultural practices and identity (Hollingworth and Williams 2009 and McCulloch, Stewart and Lovegreen 2006). McCulloch highlights that *'...young people's membership of subcultural groupings is largely determined by social class.' (2006:539)* and therefore gives further insight into understanding Grime culture, authenticity and the significance of embeddedness.

[98] Chilton, M. (2016) and (Harry Enfield, BBC 1994-1997, 2001).

Two respondents give a real sense of the embedded authenticity associated with Grime:

> *'My whole thing came from street corners, like on the road, like entertaining ourselves… it was just real life – like Grime was the grimy life… of the underprivileged kids. You wouldn't see kids in Paddington Square hanging out with James ' Ah James run us another Grime tune'… Paddington Square and them ends there, they wouldn't even associate with our type of music.' Big Narstie*

> *'…most of us are from these areas… we were going through hard times… we weren't the richest… a pair of trainers meant so much you… ultimately, we still had somewhere to live, we had food in our yards we were going to school… we weren't as poverty driven or as disadvantaged and many people in the world are, but we were very frustrated, very angry.' Aaron Roach Bridgeman*

These respondents give a real sense of class based challenges they faced and distance they felt from mainstream Britain. However, it is important to note there are additional intersections of race and gender compounding class oppression and therefore it is multi-layered and intersectional.

Young people in internal colony areas such as Gunter's (2008) Manor (East London) or Hewitt's (1986) area B (South London) grow up in more multicultural surroundings. However, Reynolds' (2006) study shows that Black British youth often had closest friends of similar ethnic backgrounds and socioeconomic status. Interracial friendships were sustained by a common interest, such as football, more so than similar values, identity and social capital that occurred in same ethnic friendships. Although most respondents spoke about having inter-racial friendships, most Black respondents stated that their closest friendships were with other Black people.

Middle class youth have the option to opt in and out of Black, 'Chav' or subaltern subculture, selecting elements of it, something the working class cannot (Hollingworth et al 2009 and McCulloch et al 2006). The middle classed nature of opting in and out again falls within the cultural tourism, *eating the other* or philia/phobia binary. It illustrates how:

a) Whiteness is altered in the context of class and proximity to Blackness, and
b) The dismembering and commodifying processes of Whiteness (i.e. policing, industry etc.) are not the same as non-respectable working class Whiteness,

and how these two factors contribute towards maintaining an intra-racialised boundary through respectability politics. It highlights White fragility in remaining autonomous and independent of external factors.

In this section, I examined the significance of race as it operates in social interactions, knowledge and physical space. Using examples from the data, I illustrated how racialisation, exerted through *low intensity terror* (Garner 2007), creates an immaterial virus that materialises in horizontal violence intraracially for Black respondents along the strands of colourism and gender. Low intensity terror also impacts on the poor, however not in exactly the same way. Racialisation uncovers the fragility of respectable Whiteness, which is only established by proxy. Respectable Whiteness is dependent on class and distance from the other, and the ability to CHOOSE whether or not to consume the White poor and/or other. Within respectability frameworks, White women engaging in Grime lost their Whiteness and femininity. I now move on to explore gender in the scene.

Gender

'No more girls, this is now for the man.' TerraMontana365

'Yeah, it was all guys. Obviously every now and then there would be a female… it was all guys and we were mixed, we had Asian, White, Black, just everyone and we just got on.' MindofGrime

Women in Grime

Grime is a male dominated underground genre, much *'harsher, grittier, [that] reflected the world as it was rather than a varnished, romanticised version of the truth'* (Lester 2010:26). The live[99] events I attended were male dominated spaces - especially in the smaller, less mainstream venues. Respondents identified the Grime sound and scene as masculine - for *'Da man dem'*. There are few femcees and I was unable to secure interviews with any during the designated fieldwork period. However, I was able to secure one at my cousin's hair salon nearer the completion of this project.

Grime makes little room for numerous women to have agency or be in leadership roles. It is primarily a space where heterosexual men have power and agency. This imbalance was acknowledged as intentional by one male respondent who felt Grime doesn't respect women or feminised sonic aspects. He felt women on tracks were there primarily to provide decorative hooks, and that there was a serious lack of female lyrical content or narrative. The main focus of Grime is showcasing the male MC's lyricism.

[99] I refer to live events as observation in leisure spaces i.e. concerts, raves Grime nights etc. as opposed to talks, panels, roundtables and discussions.

I'm saying like with Dancehall -- the reason why I like Dancehall is because you have melody…AND bars…So it's kind of a mixture of the two… Grime is more bars… Hardly any melody… If they've got melody it's any bird doing any hook they don't care about…Just put any hook on there…radio will like that… They've got no respect for the female… you're doing it for man. That's it. It's a man t'ing yeah? But it could be a unisex thing. You can still have it gully - but still attract more girls. Anon 329

He identifies masculinised and feminised sound, and speaks about the lack of balance, sonically, as well as in the scene, where women are a minority. However, respondent data revealed that, the few successful femcees, were well known and respected[100]. No respondent could name a female Grime producer, most of the women with active roles in the scene were DJs or presenters. The one femcee interviewed in the project wrote her own lyrics but did not produce; although she did have some degree of agency over her work.

'I've never…I've co-produced them, you know, I sat down with someone who's an engineer and co-produced stuff, trying to produce that but not me actually use it.' Sim Simma

Most often however, she was mainly given beats by male producers.

One respondent pointed out that women in Grime do not have to be an MC, producer or DJ to be involved in the scene owing to the *Brap culture* which has roots in call and response practices (Gilroy 1993). The role of the fan is not an entirely passive role. Fans shout '*Brap',* scream or make other noises expressing appreciation when an MC gets a reload/bunback or a DJ stops and/or 'wheels' a track to restart it from the beginning, it is considered a vital role in Grime. Supportive roles are not entirely passive.

[100] This may be influenced by my presence as a female interviewer.

Another respondent identified that femcees adopted a more Jamaican stylised 'Ragga flow' which can be interpreted as a more masculinised stylistic. In MDA song '*Boo'*, Ms Dynamite lowers the pitch of her voice and adds Jamaican patois, grammar and intonation to her delivery, to communicate her lyrics with a more masculine and powerful authority; intensifying her message and agency. Ms Dynamite sings briefly - the only singing (and feminised vocalisation) that is done in any of the MDA songs. Masculinity is a governing principle in the scene, even for women.

Unlike male MCs, there was little lyrical competitiveness with other femcees in the selected songs. Although Ms Dynamite mentioned *'Though some gyal t'ink dem too nice'* she notes women can be hostile towards each other, but there is no need for this. Femcees were likely to spit from a female perspective as a focal point in some of their songs, giving them agency (May 2013) which is largely denied in the scene. Sim Simma did find that the competitive element between women stemmed from a wider narrative in relation to things like beauty and style for example, not just lyrics:

> *'I do think women generally, whether it's music or anything else, women generally always like to compete with each other anyway. I do feel that like in, music just in general life, I think women are like that anyway.' Sim Simma*

The lack of competitiveness lyrically could result from there being few women in the scene. Female narratives challenge or disrupt the dominant discourse in Grime which silences and/or objectifies women. In MDA songs, the women are pushing back against objectification. These women were able to speak from their perspectives in 'romantic or sexual' relationships and exchanges. In *'Boo'* Ms Dynamite had agency, speaking back to men and instructing women to have agency over their bodies and to respect and protect

themselves. In *'I Luv U',* Jacques[101] spoke back against Dizzee's narrative, illustrating that she was not passively objectified and how she negates unwanted male attention.

At smaller events I attended, I was aware I entered male dominated spaces. Black women in particular, outside of the occasional performer and those attending larger, more mainstream events, were mainly absent. There were few Black women, if any, at smaller events and in some cases (from my observation), I was the only one in attendance. The majority of women at smaller events were White. Paradoxically in the online community, an international Grime fan and blogger found White women were not present:

> *'There's definitely some persons of colour who I know are Grime fans… male and female. To be 100% honest though I don't know of any like say Caucasian… females who are into Grime per se.' Maxwell*

Despite the limited number of events attended, this is a significant finding that would warrant further study. However, speculation would suggest this is a result of two factors: accessibility and sexual attraction. Black women may already be in close proximity to the culture (at home, through friends and familial networks) and may have little interest, or may perceive Grime engagement as a gendered thing (as the sound and content is largely geared towards other men). Black women will have other spaces, personal and social to engage with Black Men. White women comparatively, may not have access to the same spaces to interact with Black men, and may be motivated to enter these masculine spaces as a result of sexual attraction. As the sample size is very small, this can only be speculation and would warrant further study.

At smaller events, I did not feel objectified or sexualised. I was not approached as a potential romantic interest by attendees. I did not get the impression that the men who attended smaller events went there with the intention of looking for women or romantic or sexual

[101] Featured female artist in *'I Luv U'.*

encounters. Owing to colourism norms present in the scene, I am aware that being a dark skinned Black woman may have impacted on this aspect.

Men in Grime

Smaller events attended felt like spaces where men could bond and *'be men'*. Paradoxically however, some male respondents felt that women may attend for romantic reasons (females fancied males attending), to hear specific songs, or support their friends who were performing or DJing.

> *GQ '…I think the girls would often… be influenced to go by the boys. If that makes sense. So if they caught wind that the boys were going, they'd go as well.*
> *MC 'So you think maybe they were going for the boys, not so much for the music?'*
> *GQ 'Yeah, yeah, yeah. Potentially, potentially. They might know the one song by Tempa T for example, but they wouldn't know his whole set.' Quaan*

MDA reinforces the notion that Grime is a male space, where masculinity is expressed and has agency. Sonically, the songs contain a lot of space and not much melody or harmony, which are associated with a more feminised sound (Machin 2010, Sylvan 2003). It is dominant in low frequency bass and dub, considered masculine owing to its penetrative nature (felt vibrating inside the body) (Sullivan 2013). Masculinity is connoted through the use of bass - and is referred to explicitly in the lyrics in three of the four MDA songs.

MDA songs predominantly have a male narrative, with MCs asserting their position as, or vying for, the alpha spot. Interestingly one respondent identified that egos were a problem in the crew they were affiliated with and this resulted in high turnover:

'…there was a lot of egos. Like when you got a collective of men, there's always, ALWAYS egos.' Anon 492

Power and Agency

Lyrically, men tended not to address women in their challenges. They do not appear to be considered as competitors. Male MCs use words associated with femininity and homosexuality to insult one another. Homophobia is an element that should be considered and explored in future studies of Grime as it did not present as a theme in my data, possibly owing to my question choices.

Women were referred to in sexualised, derogatory and objectified ways. Dizzee Rascals' '*I luv U'*, referred to young women as dispensable and exchangeable objects for his pleasure purposes only; they were presented as problematic even within this construct. As outlined by one respondent previously, the entirety of female narrative never features, even in any of the selected MDA songs with male dominated narratives. Jacques had some degree of agency in *'I Luv U'*, but her speaking back is presented as a problem to Dizzee's life. Her sounding robotic, combined with the stammering and intonation of the phrase *'I Luv U'* can almost connote malfunction, derangement, abnormality and alienness, of a) females, b) love and/or c) romantic relationships - and that one should be wary.

The narrative of women as object and appendage is integral to wider discourses of sexism within the music industry, where women do not have agency or autonomy. This is often highlighted and foregrounded as a Black music specific problem (e.g. Hip Hop misogyny). However, this culture runs through the fabric of the music industry, with regard to music creation, distribution and business (Emerson 2002). This has recently come to mainstream attention again in the Kesha legal case (Redden 2016). This is extendable beyond the music industry and is also reflective of the sexism against women prevalent in patriarchal societies and reinforces Negus' (2009) claim that industry shapes culture and vice versa.

For male MCs, lyrical content suggests the pecking order is hyper individualistic and reveals women and homosexual men are beneath them (and may also include colourism). Men compete to exert their dominance or position over one another only. There is a sense of brotherhood and loyalty to those within a group/crew (collective where each member has a distinctive personality or name/tag). The pecking order can be extended to the crew, but can still be revoked from members at any time (as exemplified by Dizzee Rascal's desire to obtain passively constructed women from other men/peers). The riddim track and the individual lyrical flows over them (versioning), are also representative of a collective of individuals, each with their own distinctive inflections and voice within a wider framework. The data clearly suggests Grime is a space for hyper masculine heterosexual expression and consumption.

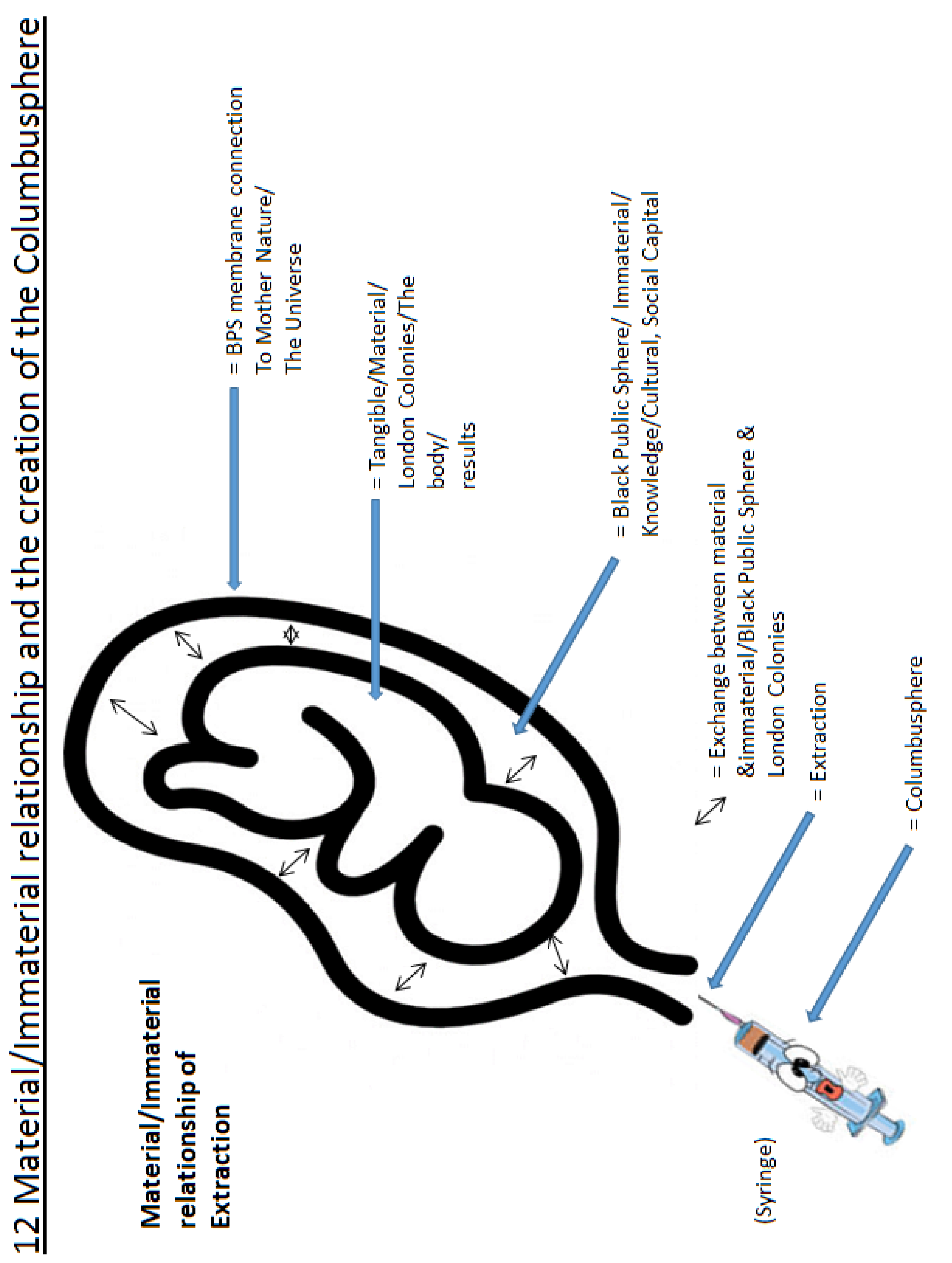
In this section, I examined the significance of gender in the scene. Grime is a male dominated scene and intentionally so. Masculinity is an ideological principle in the scene. Whilst showing some evidence of homophobia, it is an intra-gendered scene, by men, for men. Few women have agency and largely operate on the periphery on the scene. Masculinity is asserted through denying women and homosexuality. To achieve agency, women masculinise themselves. At smaller venues, the data revealed Black women are notably absent from live spaces. Women were perceived to attend events more so for the men than the music.

Conclusion of impacts of multicultural consumption

This chapter built upon the previous two chapters. Whilst paying particular attention to race and class, I used the data and contemporary stories as case studies to foreground the human interactive processes involved in the consumption of Grime, exploring it along its teleological trajectory into the industry phase. I explored aspects of gender in the scene that arose as thematic issues in this project. I examined race and class, and its role in authenticity, Blackness and stigma. Using the conceptual frameworks to shape this chapter, I proposed multicultural consumption and industry intervention created a process of dispossession for

people in internal colonies and undermined knowledge of the Black Public Sphere. These processes operated through White *eating the other*, Black philia/phobia binary processes, which involved sanitising Blackness for multicultural consumption through a White gaze. This process was executed immaterially and materially.

This was operationalised through disregarding embedded knowledge of colonial peoples and the Black Public Sphere (immaterial and material), whilst simultaneously seeking to capitalise on them and centring Whiteness within it. Internal colonies and the people are disregarded, problematised and the Black Public Sphere is extracted. *The extracted information and knowledge is altered, 'Columbussed'*, and creates a parallel sphere unrelatable to colonial people, the originators of the knowledge and subsequent materiality. This space of altered knowledge and alternative facts creates The Columbusphere:



[102] This diagram is an extension of the diagram 7 in chapter three, representing the duality of Africanised religion and the London Colonies and Black Public Sphere. This extension is result of the data and some theoretical frameworks leading

Diagram 12 shows that the Columbusphere is dangerous. It threatens the delicate balance of the Black Public Sphere, internal colonies and the people. If Mbiti's (1991) African spiritual outlook is overlaid onto this diagram, one can see the cruciality of the material and immaterial to the functioning whole. Combined, these create one's sense of self, existence, an outlook of the world and universe. I have used Grime as a case study to illustrate that in contemporary times, cultural and folk practices can be equated to religious practice. The flexibility of Africanised religious outlook facilitates this model, and exemplifies how generationally, religious and cultural elements remain - despite coercion to stop practicing them by external oppressive forces.

The entry of an external force to *eat the other* creates a vacuum and parallel space unfamiliar to the peoples of the internal colonies - The Columbusphere. To inject this altered contaminated substance back into the Black Public Sphere or the internal colonies, such as introducing alternative 'Columbussed' facts or policies that impact material outcomes, is damaging to the internal colonies and Black Public Sphere. This results in damage to the psyche and Black bodies *being eaten*. It also disrupts genealogies and intervenes in important spiritual practice as outlined in examples used in this chapter exemplified by the data.

Allinson (1994) makes a crucial point that respectable White listeners consume through a mediation of the industry, distributors, lawyers etc. This parallel sphere is constructed to appease the Eurocentric gaze of Blackness and the White poor. Using data and the conceptual frameworks, I outlined the impact of low level terror on the Black body, internal colony and psyche. The industry disinherits those from the colonies, particularly Black people. Possibly due to awareness of being a numerical minority in England, embedded colonial members

this chapter. Therefore this diagram includes the overarching and combined frameworks of Hall, Baker and Mbiti. The significant addition is the syringe that represents cultural tourists and mainstream British industries that are primarily concerned with taking cultural practices/immaterial/amniotic fluid for itself. This process cannot fully collect all fluid and yet, this process is harmful to the people /material/embryo - anything extracted from the BPS, altered and reintroduced (from the Columbusphere) is harmful to the embryo/material/people.

sanitise themselves and are eaten by industry, sending a clear message to those eaten that their knowledge and existence is not valued and will be rejected.

Data shows White people fit into existing capitalist structures to begin shaping knowledge. Intervention, and industry's dissemination of knowledge becomes divorced from the embedded experience of internal colonies and Black Public Sphere. 'New' knowledge (i.e. the creation of alternative facts) from the Columbusphere creates an opening for Whiteness to intervene, intercept and centre itself. This process illustrates Garner's (2007) argument that Whiteness and racism constitute a systematic process and hooks' (1992) argument of *eating the other* in order to centre oneself, consuming philic aspects and discarding phobic elements (Yousman 2003, Haynes 2012).

I examined Whiteness from a variety of vantage points. Identifying those interested in Grime as *sonic explorers* who are drawn to difference. Using the data, I made links between Whiteness and industry phase Grime, where the fan base changes to include tourists. I highlighted the relationship between individual unknown White presence, and Whiteness as a representation or agent of systematic oppression, centralising low level terror in Black and colony spaces. Unknown Whiteness represents lack, power, tourism and consumption, the threat of penetration, centring and altering in a Black, colonial knowledge and space that it fails to understand, yet has the potential to destroy – a virus.

The data exposed the fragility of respectable Whiteness as it seeks to validate itself by proxy. Undesirable Whites are placed on the borders of Whiteness. They are racialised, demonised and not quite White; close proximity to, and interracial friendships reinforce the not-quite-White status. Respectable Whiteness is dependent on class and distance from 'The Other' and the ability to CHOOSE whether or not to consume the poor and/or Other. Here again, it illustrates that White people benefit from the systematic nature of racism (Garner 2007), irrespective of intentions and motivations.

Using examples from the data, I illustrated how racialisation, exerted through *low intensity terror* (Garner 2007), impacts social interactions, knowledge and physical space. Whiteness consumes Blackness and poverty, Black men consume women. It materialises in *horizontal violence* (Fanon, Freire, cited in Dalal 2002:98) intraracially for Black respondents along the strands of colourism and gender. Low intensity terror also impacts on the White poor, however not in exactly the same way. Within respectability frameworks, White colonial residents are stupid and harmless. Additionally, White women lose their Whiteness and femininity.

Grime is a male dominated scene. Masculinity is aspirational; men vie for alpha position. Masculinity is in part asserted through consuming women and expelling homosexuality. Women are given very few opportunities to enter and centre themselves. To achieve agency in the scene women masculinise themselves.

In this chapter, I made the idea of the material and immaterial more explicit, linking it to internal colonies and the Black Public Sphere. Doing so enabled me to introduce Mbiti (1991) more explicitly into the closing of this chapter and construct my Columbusphere theory. Grime music is a SFT[103], its cultural practice thus becomes spiritual (discussed in chapter seven) and central to one's outlook. Diagram 12 makes it clear how external intervention is damaging to those *being eaten.* This presents as damage to the psyche, horizontal violence and policing (anti-bodies) over one's cultural production/spiritual practice. It also illustrates how the extracted 'Columbussed' material is different from the original and how reintroducing this alternative, material or immaterial, is damaging to the balance that sustains original culture, knowledge, outlook and life - causing disruption to how the original develops.

[103] Sonic Footprint Timestamp

Chapter Seven – Spirit: On a Hype!

Introduction

In this chapter, I explore responses to moments of Grime music making and sharing. In previous chapters I explored Grime teleologically (chapters four to six) and within its music stream (Lena 2012, chapter four) mapped its growth and its containment in a social context (chapter five), its demographic norms (chapter six) and the embeddedness of the scene (chapter five). I examined these with reference to internal colonies and the Black Public Sphere, to link Grime music and subculture to Black music streams and related Black Atlantic practices. I examine these to illustrate how Grime music and subcultural practice is spiritual practice and the cruciality of the material and immaterial in sustaining the culture and people's sense of self. Here, I examine the '*power*' of Grime music itself, primarily in live[104] music settings with a view to theorise and contribute to debates in sociology of religion frameworks regarding affective investments and meaning (chapter one).

For the purposes of this chapter, I have included a playlist[105]. It includes footage of live events I attended to support my arguments about the '*power*' of music in the moment. Each video is embedded into the text for ease of access if reading this project electronically. However, a short synopsis of each video clip (and link) will be included alongside the embedded footage if direct electronic access is not possible.

Of the seven live performance events attended, five were dedicated Grime nights, two were concerts for a collective considered founders of Grime and influencing the UK Garage and British Hip Hop sound. The majority of the music played at these events were Grime and

[104] Concerts, raves, Grime nights, as opposed to talks, roundtables, panels and discussions.

[105] Monique Charles' MDA Playlist (2016).

Grimy Garage, with occasional Jungle and Hip Hop. The subcultural elements of sound system culture; loud music and large speakers to prioritise the sonic characteristics of bass (chapter four) were particularly evident at these events.

Power of music is explored through piecing together concepts in audio culture, specifically the physiological and psychological affects that music has on a listener. Sylvan's (2002) concept outlines multiple realms of music. It is a more holistic framework that will be applied here when examining the impact of sound and Grime music. He states:

> *'Music <u>does</u> affect people in all the ways… at the physiological level, it affects the body and is subsystems; at the psychological level it affects the structure of the psyche and the state of consciousness; at the sociocultural level, it affects and reflects the social order and the cultural paradigms; at the semiological level, it provides symbolic structures which create affective meaning systems; at the virtual level, it creates compelling temporal and spatial worlds into which one is drawn; at the ritual level, it fits into a larger set of spiritual activities, with their own functions and purposes; and, finally, at the spiritual level or religious level, It establishes the link to the spiritual world and the contours and dynamics of that world. Moreover, music affects people in all these ways <u>simultaneously</u>, integrating all the levels into a powerful and harmonious whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.' (Sylvan 2002:42-43)*

Kennett's (2008) study on individual listening experiences and affect, will contribute towards understanding fans' affective investments with Grime's sonic characteristics. This concept highlights the significance context plays in meaning making at the moment of listening to (and reflections on) the music. With regards listening, he outlines:

- Personal listening - involves the time-gap between when the song was first made (entered the public domain or encountered) and the moment the person is currently listening to it (days, month, years later). The person's demography and culture.

- Situational listening - what is the level of immersive listening and what is the quality of the sound-source equipment?

- Intentional listening - what is the intended purpose of the music by the producer? What is the listener's purpose for listening to the music? These are not always the same thing.

Kennett (2008) concept will be applied throughout this chapter to physical and online observation data. Live music settings (inevitably produces a specific set of expectations, i.e., situational listening and fan engagement in person and online (personal/intentional). In addition, respondents' recollections of listening to Grime (personal/intentional), making Grime (intentional) and my intentional and immersive listening, will also contribute to this chapter. This chapter examines the live performance space to explore Black Atlantic religious/spiritual discourse and Mbiti's (1991) concept of the material and immaterial more explicitly than in previous chapters.

The primary focus of '*power*' in Grime here, is on the spiritual, sublime and emotive responses that have significant impact on fans in the actual moment of (collective/individual) listening. As established earlier, Grime is music (chapter four) and subcultural practice (chapter five), a SFT[106] intimately linked to the local, to internal colonies and the Black Public Sphere, ancestral knowledge, the past and present, the African diaspora etc. It results from a material and immaterial *ecosystem,* that if interfered with can have dire effects (chapter six), including

[106] Sonic Footprint Timestamp

damage of the psyche, the altering of knowledge through Columbusing and devaluing of people.

To examine *power*, I introduce the anthropological concept of Communitas. Adapted by Turner (1969), Communitas explores the collective feelings of community and joy music can usher into a space. It is usually referred to in sacred practices (Spencer 1990). However, much like Lynch (2007) and Utley (2009) who adhere to sociology of religion frameworks (chapter one), and Mbiti's (1991) Afroreligious outlook (introduction, chapter one and three), I argue the sacred can be found in any space and cultural practice, such as in live music settings.

Sylvan's (2002) explorations of musical impact on multiple realms are based on West African musicoreligious practices. I use this general idea to make genealogical links to Black Atlantic religious discourse (an objective of this project). He refers to Yoruba ceremonies and examples of the music's ability to invoke spirits that possess a person. Spirits can be identified by the sonic characteristics present in the music and the movements and dances a possessed person makes. He argues that *'…even though the West African [musico] religious complex has gone through a myriad of major transformations on its journey into American culture and is now tied into a white youth audience and a corporate economic structure, its transformed expressions still thrive and have the capacity to profoundly affect people's lives in powerful ways.' (Sylvan 2002:75)*

To clarify, I am not making claims that Grime fans are possessed by spirits in live performance settings. I am utilising the scholarly research of musicoreligious practices rooted in West and Central African religious ceremonies to make links with Afrodiasporic folk/cultural practices and contemporary internal colonies and Black Public Sphere. Owing to the webbed nature of the Black Atlantic, Sylvan's (2002) proposal can be applied to the British context. Black Britain's ancestral roots primarily come from West and Central Africa and the Americas, particularly the Caribbean. Practices originating from West and Central Africa will take generations to disappear, if at all, as outlined by Mbiti (1991). This concept, i.e. the

contemporary African musicoreligious practice, in conjunction with sociology of religion frameworks, provide apparatus to understand meaning making through ritual and practice found in the data. Through making links between Black Atlantic religious/spiritual discourse, transformation and the sublime, this chapter facilitates analysis of the material and immaterial in live performance settings.

The energy of Grime is palpable; it leads to observable emotional and kinetic responses from fans (and tourists) involved in and recalling immersive live performance - situational listening. Using the data, I examine:

- Emotional responses to music through fan and respondent self-reporting (i.e. online tweets),
- How energy is described by both fans and performers and
- Kinetic responses to the music.

Live performance events took place between November 2012- December 2014, well into the industry phase of Grime's teleological development. As a result, these events will include fans and tourists (image 10, chapter five, Lena 2012). For the sake of simplicity, I will refer to them collectively as attendees or the crowd. Additionally, those commenting on Twitter will also be a combination of fans, tourists and possibly trolls[107] (image 10), therefore; for the sake of simplicity, I will refer to them collectively as tweeters. I will refer to core members in this chapter as either core, or by their specific profession, although as a collective, they will be referred to as 'performers'.

I am less concerned with organised religion analysis in this chapter. Therefore, I am not making claims that attendees or performers believe Grime to be God, or a religion in the live

[107] An internet/social media user, who makes inflammatory or provoking comments, usually triggering emotional responses from other internet/social media users.

performance context. I seek to unpick practices that take place in these settings to ascertain ways meaning making and 'power' are considered *hallowed* – if at all.

Overt religious symbolism

It is worth noting that the data had sprinklings of overt religious references, ideas and objects. In MDA[108], Wiley's track *It's Wiley (Showa Eski)* refers to God, both as a protector:

> *'Coz I walk with God,*
> *Die when my time's up'*

and life orchestrator:

> *'Tell them the Father God sent me',*

who is present in his life. In interviews, some respondents referred to intrareligious friendships to elucidate the diversity of Grime fans. In this context, Christianity was not mentioned and this may be due to it functioning as a silent marker of Whiteness and/or normalcy as opposed to 'othered religions' in the British context. One respondent referred to Ras Tafari, as a protective force in his life:

> *'Babylon cyan' hol' we – you know Ras Tafari.'* Big Narstie

In observation, one MC performing at a concert wore a 'blinged out' crucifix and another MC changed his lyric from *'Worship the Devil'* to *'Worship Allah'*, inferring his religious belief/value systems and/or affiliations have shifted. This shift was something I noticed during the performance, as did an attendee/tweeter:

[108] Musicological Discourse Analysis

'He changed the lyric from 'worship the devil' to 'worship Allah.' #SoSolid 12 years changes a man yo' @follow

This is an area worthy of future exploration and study, particularly as two performers referred to a spiritual entity as protector. This could give insight into cultural and/or social outlooks linked to folk Afrodiasporic religious outlooks deriving from the Black Public Sphere. The relationship between performers and 'God' are personal ones they display publicly through lyrics or symbolism as testimony.

Outside of these religious sprinklings, the music's 'power' was able to evoke something that attendees could connect to, something immaterial. I explore this in detail to ascertain how:

a) Grime music affects the individual,
b) Core members work together to make music in home/studio settings, and whilst performing
c) Core members prepare for a performance and
d) Music is received by attendees in a live performance setting.

Individual listening in the moment and reflections

For the majority of respondents, Ag&S[109] Grime was unlike anything they had heard before. The sonic extremity caused strong attraction or repulsion:

'…I thought, what shit, to be honest… terrible, it was weird; I don't get it. I was like, "What is that noise?" And then another day I was like, "play that record again,"...' Hattie

[109] Avant garde and Scene based.

'I think it was the beat, it was a completely different sound and it was almost a bit like Hip-Hop but it was more advanced because it was more sort of futuristic.' Raechoul

'First time I heard him I was like "who the hell is this?" and he sounded so different.' Aaron Roach Bridgeman

These comments suggest that Grime opened up a new space/portal (Eshun 1998) so unfamiliar to the listener upon first hearing it, that it challenged them on several musical realms (as outlined by Sylvan above) simultaneously. The psychological, physiological, biological, social and cultural foreignness resulted in strong emotional reactions, primarily due to not understanding or being able to easily organise existing knowledge, capital or experience around it. If respondents were able to make connections to their existing knowledge, the new unfamiliar elements were the focus of discussion. These were perceived as advanced, pushing the boundaries, or connotations associated with the newer/unfamiliar sonic elements were used to describe it. Words such as *alien* and *futuristic* repeatedly came up to describe Grime.

Some respondents felt Grime was an acquired taste that grew on them over time. I found this resonated with me. Other respondents instantly connected and embraced Grime, potentially already familiar with the music and local soundscapes influencing its sound.

'And from there Pay as You Go bus' me, from there I liked music.' Big Narstie

'One day I heard the tune Eskimo by Wiley; when I heard that there was no turning back...' XL

'That's kind of what caught me, beat, tempo and, yeah, it was just easy to feel them.' Sim Simma

Once exposed to the new sound, the above respondents spoke of their introduction almost like an awakening. Big Narstie spoke of being *burst open* and XL spoke *of never returning to how things were before hearing the music*. Sim Simma expressed a familiarity to the soundscape, *feeling* it with ease. This suggests something intangible and immaterial happened to them. It created immense excitement, attraction and affective investment.

> *'…for the first time. I heard man go [recites lyrics] He did gas me though I can't lie…Put me on a million and seventy-five!' Big Narstie*
>
> *'It just made me excited.' Quaan*
>
> *'…I hear it and I'm excited by it.' Dan*

Respondent listening varied in focus. Some connected to a) the MC driven nature of the music (comedic, social realism, to vent anger), b) the bass and/or the space in the music, c) the production element, d) the 'rave' scene and social element or e) any combination of the above. Irrespective of which aspects impacted them most, almost all respondents spoke of Grime's intense energy and its sonic extremity when it first emerged.

With regard the Black Public Sphere, inside London's internal colonies, specific interactions created a new space; a Black British SFT. This new space expands the sphere, opening new temporal and spatial worlds, sociocultural and semiological meaning, a new point of reference and knowledge. The Black Public Sphere is always evolving. Grime's NILA[110] and SLSA[111] (chapter four) trigger strong conscious emotion upon first hearing, as respondents tried to place new SFT information into their existing knowledge.

[110] Narrative Insight Lyrical Analysis

[111] Sonic Location Soundscape Analysis

Making Music, Collaboration and Immaterial Navigation

Core respondents involved in Ag&S Grime, placed great importance on the connections they had with those they made music and/or performed with. Many felt that collaborating on musical pursuits made for stronger, longer lasting friendships compared to non-musically based friendships. In some cases, friendships were made over the process of making music. Eshun (1998) believes human machine interaction with music technology (as found in Grime) is an extension/externalisation of the producers thoughts, and the 'pieces' produced subsume listeners/fans into the producer's world. Core respondents considered the anticipated affect their music would have on attendees in a live performance setting. This suggests core members have an understanding of the portal they are creating, its dimensions, limits and the ways sonic cultural capital music affects the body and emotions (but also how this fits into and expands the Black Public Sphere).

For core respondents, musical collaborations were voyages, journeys or experiences into unknown space/portals, whereby contributors must rely on one another to experience and understand the space they are creating and exploring together. Making music or performing together required mutual trust, respect and understanding, almost intuitively, to produce something that was accurately reflective of their collective vision. Words such as *chemistry*, *connection*, *intuition, knowing* and *instinct* repeatedly came up in respondent data. One respondent considered making music a *spiritual* practice. This immaterial connection is vital in the collaborative process as outlined by respondents below.

> *'…they know my personality... if I say to them, this is my vision… and then they see what I see… it's the chemistry… that makes the track or makes the tune or makes the 16 in the rave, it's the chemistry.' TerraMontana365*

> *'...a chemistry, because we bounced off each other.' Raechoul*

These comments demonstrate a skill set and understanding of immaterial Black Public Sphere portal work and how to connect to it. Core respondents were keen to select the correct people to ensure that the collaborative work produced reflected their collective vision, and the music produced was believable to fans.

This connection and understanding, individually or collectively, is crucial to locating and opening a portal within the Black Public Sphere to create a new SFT liminal space, where transformation and the sublime can be experienced. Respondent data suggests that if this connection cannot happen organically, the music or performance will never be able to effectively open the portal to induce liminal space and ultimately, the Communitas, where attendees reach the ecstatic:

> *'…you've got to have the same vision though…You need to understand where they're going and they need to understand where you're going… it's just crazy when you see that and you have that with someone who you've not met before.' Raechoul*

> *'…this DJ knows me now, so he knows the chemistry… Drops the tune, you say your quick sick bars and everyone goes mad!… If the DJ's not looking at you or you can't work with him it's never going to pop off properly. He has to know when you're going to spit that bar… If you can't get that chemistry with him it's never going to work.' TerraMontana365*

Taking Kennett's (2008) work on listening contexts into account here, core members already competent with accessing immaterial music portals and exploring liminal space, now focus their attention on maximising 'affect' on fans (image 10, chapter five, Lena 2012). In a live setting, in addition to trust, intuition and teamwork amongst performers, a mutual understanding and anticipation desired of crowd reaction were considered. Performers achieve this by capitalising on both situational and intentional listening dynamics. In most

cases core respondents consider and replicate sound system or rave environments with speakers able to bring out all sound quality at high volumes. Their considerations were ‘party tracks’ - to get the crowd dancing and/or verbally joining in through call and response, building *drop*s and delivering lyrics/bars to get ‘reloads’.

> *‘I’ve always kind of gone club with it, club music. My music is always club music. My thing was when I’m making songs, I would always envision the tune that I’m making playing in a club and how can I see people reacting to it. And so it was all about trying to capture an energy… that people would latch on to and just go wild with it...’ Dexplicit*

At other times, core respondents made music for their own personal reasons. In these situations, situational and intentional listening (Kennett 2008) were not considered extensively. TerraMontana365 used the music making process as a diary where the process facilitated the channelling and purging of emotion.

> *‘…if I make a tune I'll quickly dead it off… This tune’s been around a week – to me that is like, ‘That’s old’, like I have to quickly get a new one out… I don't want to make a tune today, I'm feeling that way and drop it tomorrow, because I won’t feel that way, so to me it will just be a tune… So I like to just do it that way. (Interviewer - …it's almost like a diary then, isn't it kind of?) Yeah, it is exactly a diary. Oh my gosh, saying it on a tune – it is exactly like a diary.’ TerraMontana365*

MC respondents particularly liked the sonic space Ag&S Grime gave them to spit bars. The sonic characteristics, tapped into and expressed the teenage emotional angst and familiar soundscapes that sometimes words alone failed to convey.

'It was the match to the sound that I needed. You couldn't be angry and say what you needed…on 'Flowers'… them kinda tunes, you know what I mean? It just wasn't working, so when Grime came out it worked properly then.' TerraMontana365

'…I was teenager then as well so the whole troubles you go through as a teenager were being expressed. This was a Means really for expressing and a lot' Anon682

'Yeah, it's a spiritual thing for me. It is a release of stress, worries, hurt… It's the best way I know to get over something I can't express verbally to someone…' Anon914

For MCs and producers, not thinking in commercial (industry) terms, the listening process here is secondary to the catharsis the music provides. Paradoxically, this lack of consideration was attractive to Ag&S fans who connected to relatable emotions, frequencies and realities within a track. The purging element in some cases, and the ability to create something on your own (or collaboratively) gave some core respondents a sense of self (also cultural and social capital). Powerfully, the interview process itself elucidated this for some respondents by giving them the opportunity to critically analyse and reflect upon their choices, motivations and practice. One respondent became very emotional upon realising this:

'…I'm getting all emotional, I've never really got emotional over the music before. I'm saying "why am I getting so emotional, but it's true… its more than just music though, it contributed to like, everything that we are... I've never thought of it like that before. Only cause I've done this now I'm thinking, "You know what it's actually deeper that just…the foundation of what we are as young men"…This music boy! Thank you.' Anon 973

Ag&S Grime was significant to this respondent's identity formation because they wrote, produced and used sounds to make music about what inspired and resonated with them. Ag&S Grime was made during a period where core members were discovering themselves as young men, making their SFT in locational, national and diasporic dialogue and marking their place in the Black Public Sphere. Grime, made with honesty about the realities, challenges, fantasies, aspirations and humour, are relatable to peers who can connect with the same emotions and/or narratives in the song as outlined by one fan:

> *'It's like they're talking to me you know like because certain aspects that they talk about in their life or certain things that I've been through in my life it feels personal…Like they made the song for me. Obviously, I know they haven't…But that's how it feels at that time.' Mind of Grime*

The process of music making and listening, clearly involved more than just musical skill and talent. It connects to energies and a constellation of emotions and aspirations accessible by core members and fans. Grime is a method to make their mark and document their existence. Cultural practice is spiritual practice. Core members have the ability to dialogue between material and immaterial – central to Grime subculture, diasporic folk practices and Africanised understandings of religious and spiritual engagement. They created, negotiated, navigated and understood portals and liminal spaces. They know how these impact on potential listeners and employ effective collaboration, chemistry, intuitive connections, trust and open communication when working with others. The music making process is a creative stream, navigated through material internal colonial embeddedness, knowledge of the Black Public Sphere (chapters five and six), the genealogical music streams informing it (chapter four) and the political context it emerged from (chapter five). This reveals that Ag&S Grime was about more than just the music itself.

Significant to this creative, knowledge building and extending process inside the Black Public Sphere however, is, *taking the time out*, away from portal work, as outlined by Sim Simma:

'And sometimes you lose your creative energy as well and again, that takes you away from it and you go back and think about yourself.' Sim Simma

She spoke of music making as a creative process that ebbs and flows. This suggests that one cannot be in the creative stream needed to open new space constantly. One must engage with it and leave it to experience different things already existent in one's life, in order to be re-inspired and return or be receptive to it again. She outlined that the passion for this creative process will always bring one back to it naturally.

So far in this chapter, I outlined how listeners organise un/familiar sonic territories/portals in Grime, into their existing knowledge and their emotional responses to unfamiliarity. I explored some factors core members consider when making music for themselves, with colleagues and their fans. I proposed a theory to explain how immateriality is significant in the processes involved in friendship formation (material). I suggested how collaborative connections and the resulting music produced, is a SFT contributing to the Black Public Sphere.

Preparation for performance

I now focus on the interactions between performers immediately before and during a performance, to ascertain how they prepare and navigate this. Interviews revealed that core respondents prepared for their performances, incorporating a contingency to flexibly adapt their work in response to crowd reaction. These respondents had, or developed, an ability to improvise on the spot, read the crowd, feed on, and respond effectively to the energy that is exchanged between themselves and the crowd. As no two events are the same, performers are flexible, very receptive and present in the immaterial portal to liminal (live performance) space they are working in. Three respondents illustrate the processes they go through in relation to preparation for performance and the actual performance itself.

'It's a little like fighting, before you go into a fight, you're going to say I'm gonna put him in a headlock and punch him in the face, but when it gets down to it you're probably squeamish and poke him in the eye; everything goes out of the total window - each crowd is different... you just kind of go with the flow…' Big Narstie

'…every set that I do, before the set, every single set, I'll plan out a general playlist, so what I'm going to start with and what I'm going to lead into but you also have to read the crowd. So that is almost like 50/50. Planning is 50% of it and reading, in real time, is 50% as well…when I was younger, my plan is to go on and throw on the hardest tunes. Whatever the hardest is I'm just going in, but the scene at that time Grime was such an explosive scene that it worked… Nowadays, I find myself building up so starting with something… And I spread it out a bit and stagger it, so yeah it's a bit different and it also depends on what the DJ before me is playing…' Dexplicit

'…when I'm on a stage and I see the people I've been performing to. That kind of makes me come alive, sort of. In terms of what to give and how much to give.' Sim Simma

Reading the crowd and the energy were important to ensure an event was successful. DJ, SK Vibemaker, believes that DJs have a lot of power and therefore should be responsible with the music played at events (because it could lead to fights or romance amongst attendees for example). This suggests performers have to understand and set limits in the immaterial portal they have created and are operating within during live performance, particularly when negotiating Grime energies. In the context of performance, performers take attendees on a journey, safely through the portal they've created into liminal space and back again. Owing to this, SK felt it essential to expose crowds to new music as well as familiar favourites:

Reading the crowd is funny because when that argument comes up it's like there are two things depending on where you play. You got people that really want to hear only what they want to hear and what they know or you got crowds who are open to new music… whenever I DJ anywhere I've got to educate people. There's a balance between giving them a bit what they like and there's also a bit of like introducing them to new music and pushing the boundaries. You got some DJs that will just stick to the format and they will get paid and they will have a nice career and they'll do what they got to do. But in my opinion, what they do is more dictated by the people, I feel like I dictate to the people…more than being dictated to by the people… as a DJ you're supposed to control the crowd and not let the crowd control you…' SK Vibemaker

SK Vibemaker acknowledged the cyclical nature of energy exchange but alluded to elements of power within it. Dexplicit said he read the energy levels of the crowd to assess what type of crowd they were, responding accordingly:

'What are they reacting to? Are they reacting to…I might play a MC tune. Are they reacting to the MC or are they more of an instrumental crowd? Do they love bass or is it too much bass for them? So I have certain tunes that I'll play and that's a tester, a big bass tune. If they love it then I'll give them more bass. If they're just kind of carrying on and bubbling then they might be a melodic crowd… They might like breaks, you know old skool breaks. I've got instrumentals where I'd use the break. And I mean all generations have had breaks in their generation of music. So I would use some of those, if they have that I'll give them more of it. It's just feeling based on reactions, just normal human reactions, hands up in the air, screaming, shouting, yeah, 'gun fingers' they call it.' Dexplicit

XL said he fed off the crowd's energy; as he responded to them, they in turn, would respond to him and it would continue in a cyclical fashion. Alternatively, if the crowd did not respond well, their reaction would provide him with more motivation to win them over.

Before the moment of performance, some performers had *rituals* that they would perform to prepare themselves:

> *'…walking around almost like in a circle and I'm like almost talking to myself… getting things in my head and rehearsing things in my head… try to free tension from my body… that's something that I think I always done even to now. Yeah that's what I do until now in terms before going on stage and preparation.' Aaron Roach Bridgeman*

> *'Whereas, my whole thing – my belly I always have to go toilet, if I go toilet, I find I'm getting rid of my bubble guts.' Anon370*

> *'No there's none… sometimes I will drink one shot of Cognac or mostly strong drinks…whiskey or Hennessy or something. But only one… That's probably what I do sometimes not even all the time. I don't really have the routine… I try to relax before I got on stage.' XL*

Releasing tension in the body seemed to be a common thread amongst respondents. It is almost as if performers are emptying themselves (the vessel). I propose the vessel needs to be empty and receptive in order to open the portal and navigate liminal (live performance) space. Here, there is a degree of comparability with West African musicoreligious practices outlined by Sylvan (2002) where performers' bodies become receptive to deities that are present during traditional ceremonies. However in the cases here, rather than opening up oneself to deities that take over a person, one opens oneself to engage the crowd through energy exchange and then lead the crowd on a journey through a portal into liminal space.

Being able to perform in front of crowds is a skill that develops organically over time. Improvement occurs principally by doing; it is a practical and kinetic skill (not theoretical). This includes ridding oneself of nervous energy, focusing the mind on the impending task, making space for receptivity to what lies ahead and being able to respond accordingly. Relaxation, receptivity and responsiveness are key performance skills.

> *'…I am still a performer but I think what I developed more of, especially now is direct interaction to get them hype… shouting… addressing [the crowd] directly which is hard, you have to be able to get to the level of confidence that you can eye look people and my first technique to be able to be on stage that's something that I learned through acting… some performers do really have it straight away… but a lot of us have to kind of like learn it and develop it and… by doing these sets and shows he's doing they're really helping him.' Aaron Roach Bridgeman*

The data used in this chapter so far examines processes involved in individual listening, music making and performance preparation to reveal that, for respondents, tweeters and attendees, Grime is more than *just music* being exchanged and consumed. Grime, significantly compounded by embeddedness, promotes an understanding of cultural capital that is material and immaterial for performers, who anticipate and lead attendees on an immaterial journey through the portal into liminal (live performance) space. In this liminal space, performers monitor reactions of those they are leading, whilst attendees can relate to lyrics and the sounds within a track emotionally. All this links to the crowds' previous knowledge levels and un/familiarity. The SFT created by core members, is an authentic representation of self and (collective) identity. Performers prepare through emptying themselves, but use relaxation, receptivity, responsiveness, intuition, trust and flexibility during performance.

The remainder of this chapter builds on these ideas to examine live settings and explore

respondent and attendee affective investment. Conceptualised through frameworks of Kennett's listening contexts (2008), audio culture, liminality, Smith's (1994) culture conjuration (i.e. opening portals) and Communitas, the collective emotion and 'energies' of attendees will be made intelligible. This approach will enable me to explore whether Grime can actually be *hallowed*.

Liminality, conjuring spirit and energies, tangible outcomes/audio culture and moments of Communitas

To explore musical dimensions and the transformative *power* of music, I outline the concepts of conjuring culture, liminality, audio culture and Communitas, before elaborating on how they apply in this context. I have argued that performers open up portals to navigate liminal (live performance) space. Performers empty themselves (vessel) and/or release tension as they become central to accessing liminal space; they are the key to the portal. As outlined earlier, they prepare for the event but remain open to the energy of the crowd to ensure a liminal state remains throughout the performance. Liminal space functions to engage and sustain a musical dimension, to facilitate the possibility of Communitas occurring. I must make explicit that situational listening (Kennett 2008) of the venues observed is the focus of this argument together with theory proposition that can then be tested in other settings for generalisability and effectiveness.

I am arguing that performers open up portals to liminal (live performance) space for their own and attendee enjoyment. In live performance settings, performers take attendees on a journey that momentarily overrides existing societal structures that construct Grime fans as marginal. Liminal space in Grime disregards elements of existing structures (e.g. racial hierarchies) and forcibly solidifies others (e.g. masculinity, gender roles, sexuality). Restructuring social hierarchies through music is something both Perkinson (2005) and

Goodman (2010) argue is achieved through rhythmising architecture and sonic dominance to gain access to an alternative power.

The *power* that comes from restructuring in liminal space is what government and legal enforcers[112] seek to control and manipulate in order to maintain the existing status quo, particularly as attendees can return from the journey with a renewed outlook on life. Legal enforcers exert pressure to ensure that portal journeys do not happen through legislation, policy, media misrepresentation and industry interference (chapter five). Alternatively they introduce strategies to prevent Communitas in liminal/portal space through heavy security and over-policing at events (chapter five).

Opening the Portal, Liminal Space and Communitas

I want to present a theory I have developed outlining how performers induce moments of Communitas into the immaterial portal/liminal space. To develop this, I will use concepts from Smith's (1994) '*Conjuring culture'*, where he outlines traditional West and Central African religious practices that are present in Afrodiasporic religious/spiritual practices. I focus specifically on:

- Mimetic conjuration - i.e. the spirit is brought in by the use of the voice, choice of words and the movement of the performer.

Grime MCs use their voice, lyric/bars, stage presence and movement to bring energy, open a portal and induce liminality. In agreement with LaBelle (2010), I argue that the voice can be substituted by bass and space (sonic characteristics heavily used in Grime):

[112] Police, policy etc.

> *'…the interplay of percussion, skins (of drums and bodies), and the beat interlock power with the corporeal and emotional intensities generated by music. The drum acts as a signalling device with great command replacing the voice of the commanding officer with percussive precision…' (LaBelle 2010:119)*

- Theopoetics - i.e., using materials to conjure spirits for a specific purpose. The materials have been traditionally herbs and roots, animal products or human body effects, to harm or heal intended recipient(s).

This idea can be applied to core members who use a combination of sounds or music tracks to open portals to bring forth energies and vibes to arouse romance, happiness, aggression etc. in attendees/listeners. This corroborates SK's earlier comments regarding DJ responsibility when playing music to ensure it does not lead to harm of attendees.

- Pharmacosm - i.e., using action and things/materials to conjure spirits for the purposes of good or harm.

In the case of Grime in a live setting, the application of Mimetic Conjuration and Theopoetics bring about liminal space and create moments of Communitas. This is navigated by the performer.

To summate, this theory I am constructing for Grime and general live music contexts considers the performers' actions in the ultimate pursuit of Communitas to be:

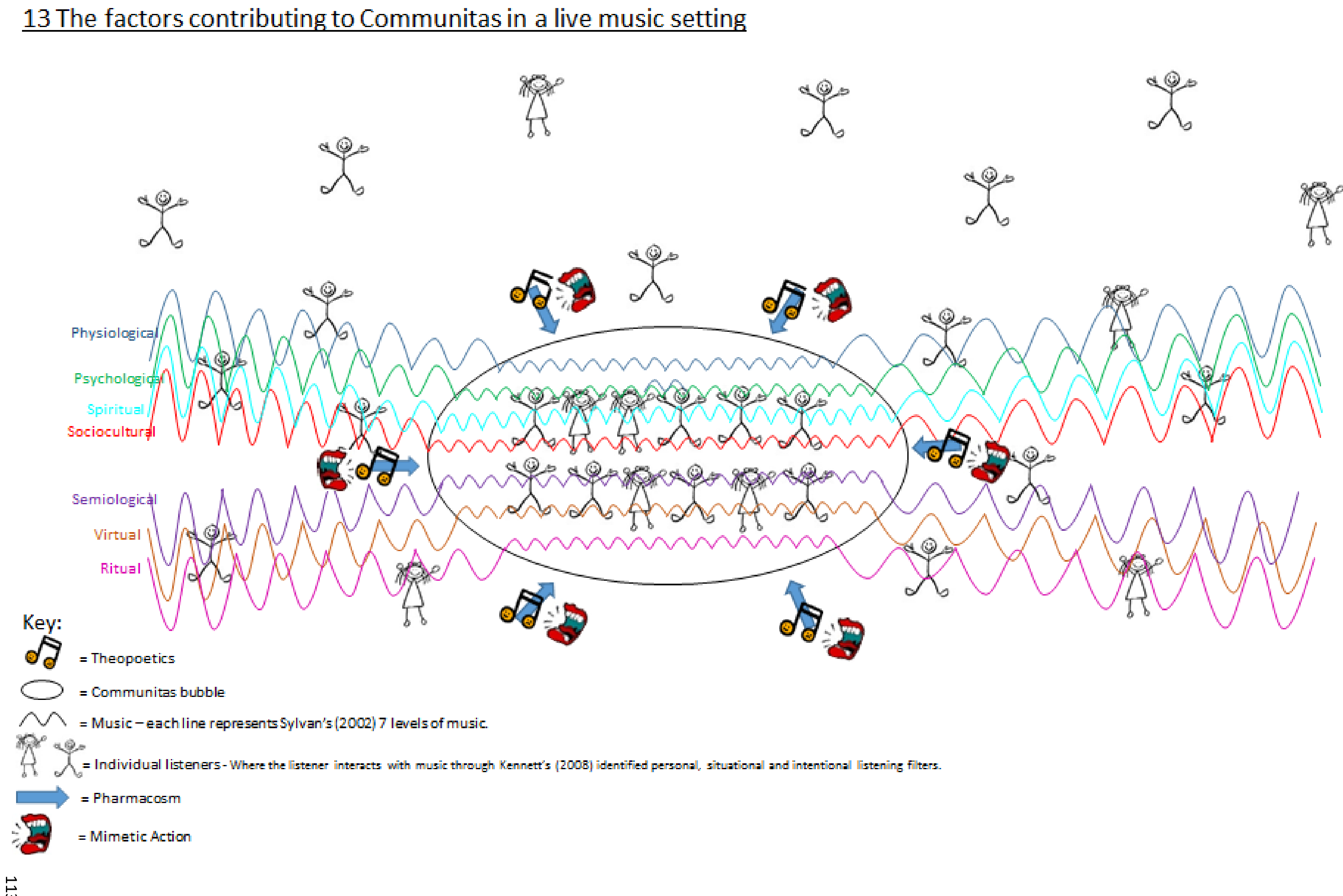
Mimetic Conjuration + Theopoetics = Pharmocosmic space = Portals of liminal (live performance) space enabling moments of Communitas.

Moments of Communitas are the ultimate goal of live performance settings:

> *'Communitas is thus a gift from liminality, the state of being betwixt and between. During this time, people find each other to be just ordinary people after all, not the anxious prestige - seeking holders of jobs and positions they often seem to be.' (Turner 2012:4)*

Achieving Communitas completely breaks down structures. It is a space where everybody is unified in the moment, it signals the arrival to a new/final destination. This is where moments of ecstasy and transformation are found in liminal space. The following diagram (image 13) illustrates the factors of consideration discussed so far in this chapter in this theoretical proposal:

13 The factors contributing to Communitas in a live music setting



113

Communitas has parallels with Bakhtin's dialogics (cited in Pearce 1994), the carnivalesque, and Gilroy's (1993) Politics of Fulfilment and Transfiguration. However, I am proposing a theory that makes tentative genealogical links to West and Central African musicoreligious practices and spiritual discourse; to make intelligible how moments of Grime Communitas have links to traditional African musicoreligious practice. Making this explicit addresses my research interest exploring Grime in relation to Black Atlantic religious discourse.

Audio Culture

Liminal (live performance) space straddles the material and immaterial. Some material aspects of musical affect are explored in the emergent field of audio culture; which addresses impacts of music and sound on the body. I include audio culture here because measurable physical, biological, physiological and psychological aspects are crucial in obtaining the ultimate goal of Communitas. The body is manipulated in material ways.

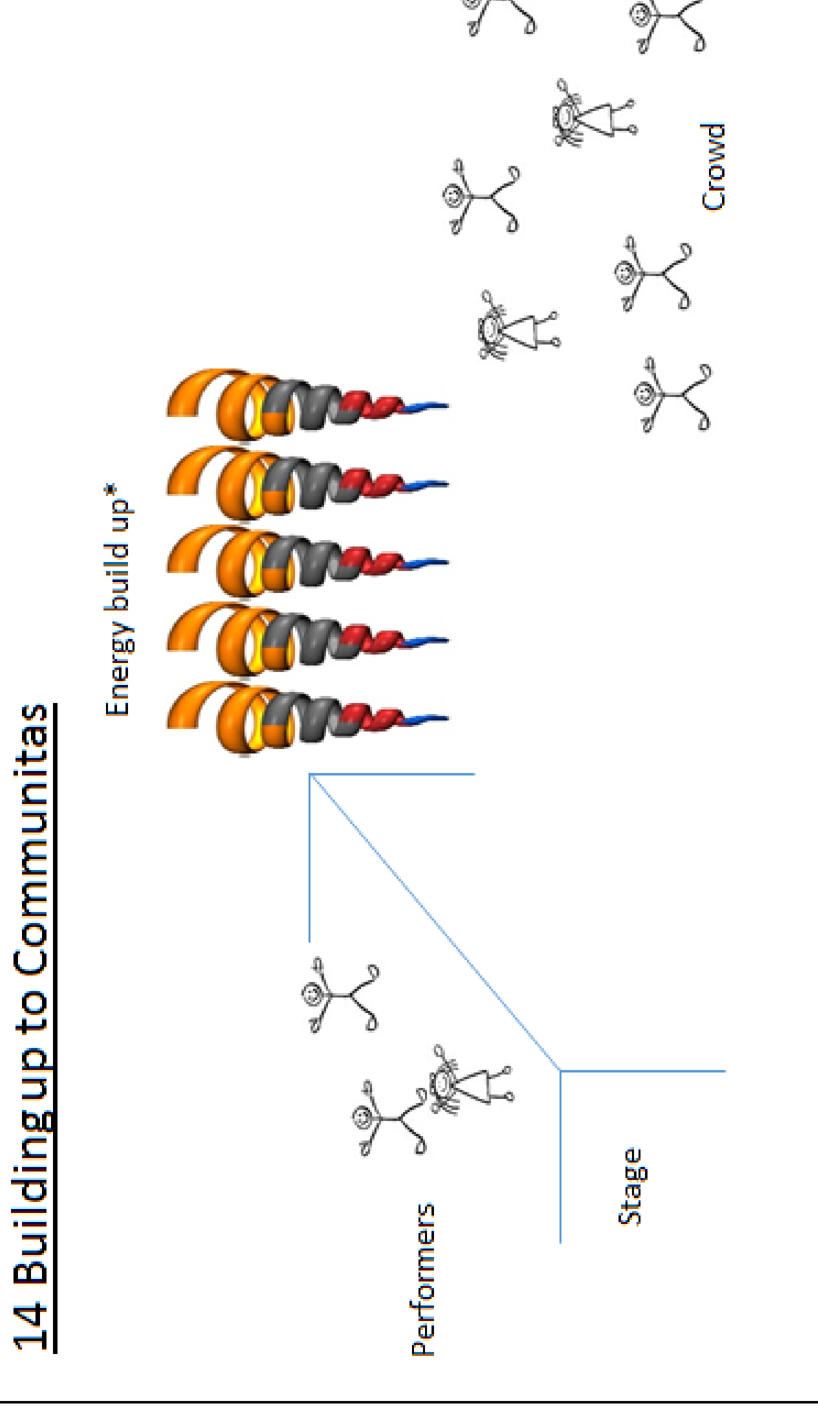
Similar to Yoruba musicoreligious sonic-movement-spirit identifying methods (outlined by Sylvan 2002 earlier in this chapter), audio culture has linked specific sonic characteristics to material biological manipulations. Eshun (1998) suggests cultural and natural processes of rhythm operate on biological, physical and psychoanalytical levels. He argues that music is received by the entire body because it is a distributed brain. McNeill (1995:7) suggests that *'rhythmic input from the muscles and voice, after gradually suffusing through the entire nervous system, may provoke echoes of the fetal condition…' (cited in Filmer 2003:94)*. Goodman (2010) implies that rhythm is a mechanism of structure, enabling the homogenisation/congruence of random and differing energies and matter. It can make individuals respond collectively as one entity (Schaefer 2003). Vibration is energy and to feel

[113] I designed this diagram from a combination of theories framing this chapter and explored in earlier sections. These include Kennett's situational listening context, Sylvan's seven layers of musical experience, Smiths conjuring culture, but also data indicating that people are simultaneously engaged in performance, in crowd response and online responses.

it is to be affected by it; bodies affect other bodies and so feelings (mood, ideology, priorities) resonate. Volume is vibrational intensity and stimulates subconscious response, it can override other sensory functions (Goodman 2010).

Within Grime live performance settings, these properties and loudness facilitate Communitas moments; usually around *The Drop* where attendees are in anticipation of and/or unexpectedly experience sonic changes in the portal of liminal (live performance) space. *The Drop* is constructed by the performer who is the vessel and navigator of the portal into liminal space. These moments happen when performers allow attendees to 'peek' into a new aspect of a portal they did not know was there. This new aspect previews the direction and destination of the journey (inside the portal), but attendees are then immediately pulled back (pull up/rewind/reload/bunback) to the pre-existing and familiar area of the portal (an earlier part of the journey), by the performer. When the performer restarts this particular part of the journey again, attendees already have a new knowledge of the portal aspects, i.e. journey and destination that they are waiting to reach. This knowledge creates a heightened sense of excitement and anticipation from the attendees.

Examining the data and the conceptual frameworks so far, Communitas in a live performance setting, is dependent on a cyclical and spiralling relationship between the performer's induced liminality (via successful portal opening and navigation), audio cultural manipulations of the body(ies) and crowd reaction. I propose this cyclical relationship is a series of spirals. When the spiral is at its tightest, i.e., the performer and crowd know they have reached the destination together, Communitas occurs - destination reached. Then performers begin to work on a new spiral to build to another moment of Communitas. The following diagram illustrates how this process works (diagram 14):


14 Building up to Communitas
Energy build up*
Crowd
Performers
Stage
Pharmocosm – conjuring culture
Liminal space portal
Energy exchange and movement
Communitas
*cycle repeated throughout the night
114

Music has a transformative effect on the body and the environment where it is played (Goodman 2010, Perkinson 2005). In a live music setting, loud Grime music triggers involuntary multi-sensory responses through the use of the fast tempo of 140 bpm[115], eight bar cyclical rhythm, low frequency and vast space, causing the body(ies) to involuntarily react and rhythmically comply.

Case Studies

I now move on to apply these theoretical proposals to examine portals of liminal (live performance) space in the case studies provided from the data. Initial analysis of tweeters, observation footage and respondent data fell into two overarching themes, A and B, that I term:

A. Energy and Movement (EM)
B. Emotion and Biology (EB)

Both of these themes, A and B, straddle material and immateriality. Initial analysis signified that there is a common language that is used amongst scene members with regard music. Upon dismantling these two overarching themes, three subthemes for each were found:

A) Energy and Movement subdivided into:

i. Explosion and Release, (ER)
ii. Implosion and Collapse, (IC)
iii. Defiant and Unyielding. (DU)

[114]This diagram comes from the theories applied to this chapter; Smith's conjuring culture, Turner's Liminal Space and Communitas, and the data showing energy exchange articulated from interviews and the observation data.

[115] Beats per minute.

References to immaterial forces outwards (explosion), inwards (implosion) or inert were consistently referred to. For tweeters, performers/performances *'went off'*, moments were *'poppin''* (ER). Paradoxically, performers/performances *'demolished'* or *'shut it down'* (IC). If described as inert (DU), performers/performances were *'Heavy' 'Hard' 'Big'*. This could be indicative of the energy and forces in the liminal (live performances) space portal. Respondents spoke about the energy of the scene itself and the Grime nights they attended in the past in this way also:

> *'…just an explosion of creative energy -- people who are just vibing off each other all at once.' Dan*

> *'…the energy was just so palpable and so undeniable…' Hattie*

> *…it was just the energy that it was delivered in really.' MindofGrime*

Tweeters and respondents' comments give reference to an immaterial sense of motion, a transfer of energy/forces during a performance or event.

The overarching theme of:

B) Emotion and Biology subdivided into:

i. Living (conscious/rational), (LCR)
ii. Dying and (DY)
iii. Liminal (unaware/irrational). (LUI)

Tweeters expressed how performers/performances were *'awesome', 'amazing'* (otherworldly) at one end of the spectrum, to *'slaying'* or *'killing it'* (death) at the other. Tweeters *'lost it'* or went *'mad'* or *'mental'* (betwixt/between). Performers/performances

were, *'lively', 'sexy'* (life), *'sick'* or *'healthy'* (health). These terms may indicate the connectedness of music to the body, or why music is explained in biological terms. It gives an indication on the affect that the moving energy has on the body and vice versa.

I used the conceptual frameworks of Sylvan (2002), Kennett (2008), Smith (1994) etc. and illustrated the ways they inform my own proposed theoretical framework. I now use this theory to explore Grime's liminal space in more detail; with respect to the two overarching themes A) and B) outlined above, using specific observation footage as case-studies and respondent data.

A) Energy and Movement (EM)

Performers use pharmacosm in a live setting. They read the crowd and navigate the direction they want the crowd to go in (in negotiation with the crowd). There is an exchange of energy that moves backwards and forwards between the source of the focus (the music, performer, stage etc.) and the crowd (image 14, Building up Communitas). Owing to the characteristics dominating Grime, it has the ability to dominate temporally and spatially, seizing control. At high volume, it has the power to radically change the soundscape through rhythmising the environment (Perkinson 2005) and sonic dominance (Goodman 2010). Sonically, Grime music blasts open a portal and facilitates anti-structure. XL recalled this power to drastically induce anti-structure and change the spatial and temporal landscape at one of his performances:

> *'…the one's playing before us was like, R'n'B, DJing nice and slow… dancing girls… high heels, champagne… some sort of posh vibe, R'n'B, sweet. Then they put us… Then the announcer said "Yeah next one NoizBoiz then the DJ puts this on [music playing]… our followers came to that party… with the NoizBoiz T-shirts. Then when the riddim came on, people were like mosh-pitting, our sort of stuff. The bouncers in the place went mad! They was like "what is this?!*

What is this!? We don't like this, this has to stop!" After three tunes they said stop. There's no more of this. Anyone with NoizBoiz T-shirt get out!' XL

Call and Response

Call and response is a crucial element in generating and maintaining energy in a live performance setting. This was evident in respondent and observation data. Importantly, call and response takes a variety of forms, enabling the energy to move backwards and forwards. Performers engage the crowd (pharmacosm) by giving the crowd an opportunity to express themselves. In observations, performers at larger events engaged the crowd by asking questions that most people could take part in: *'Who's from London? What part of London are you from? Cheer if you are from N,S,E,W London, cheer if you are over 20,30,40 or 70s, 80s 90s babies etc.* These examples illustrate the dialogic relationship between crowd and the performers, and, how energy builds through pharmacosm. Despite not being named explicitly, respondents identified call and response as a dynamic vocal element in the building of energy.

'…the whole thing is like getting a reload…That was the main part of the night…You just stood there watching, you know? Everyone's like grabbing the mic each person would do - and sometimes they'd be a bit shit. And that's not getting a reload and another time. So one word would be said. Literally, one word would be and everyone would go just absolutely mental.' Hattie

Call and response highlighted by Aaron, stressed that crowd response is a vital and standard practice in Grime:

'…there were people that was in actual sets that weren't DJs or MCs… The whole BRAP culture. Where someone had a lyric that was good. Where they were riding a tune that was hard and we have something called the 'wheel up'

or a 'reload' [mimic] bunback... You hear all these sounds like, those people that was there, in a sense, they weren't participating, they were there for those kinds of reasons to hype it up.' Aaron Roach Bridgeman

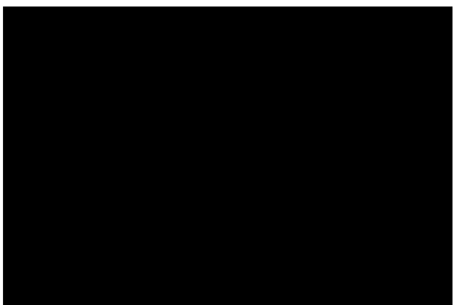
This example illustrates the crucial role that scene members play at the moment of performance and the importance of this function to *'hype it up'* or increase energy levels and encourage energy circulation. It also reiterates the embedded and participatory nature of the scene (the importance, being there and taking part in the moment).

Genealogically, call and response is rooted in chants by enslaved African singers and/or Chantwells (Leu 2010), whose role functioned much like a Griot (Ancient African storytellers), preserving history, but also relaying topical subjects to listeners or competing against one another. In the Caribbean context, Chantwells[116] often led or opened for a carnival related ceremony or celebration. In contemporary times, Chantwells are known contemporarily as Calypsonians. The function of the performer has similarities to Chantwells and Calypsonians and exemplifies a connectedness to Afrodiasporic folk practice arriving to Britain through the migration of Caribbean peoples.

The dialogic relationship between the crowd and performer(s) is always interdependent and interactive. Not all call and response was verbal, some was physical and also achieved through the use of technology, such as turntables or lighting. All methods contribute to the spiral relationship proposed (image 14, Building up Communitas). My observation footage captured performers using vocal and physical methods of call and response that I will now examine as a series of case studies. Each clip is to be watched before reading the summation and analysis:

[116] Singers/orators to Calypso music

15 VEskimoDNov2013h.MP4 Eskimo drop again[117]

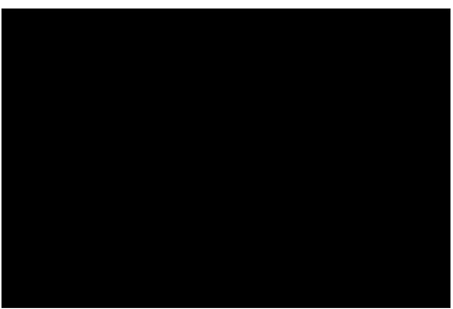


The MC is spittin' and there is call and response between the crowd and the MC. The crowd response is shouted as the MC's arm raise for emphasis along with other MCs on the stage. This gesture signals the crowd to respond on the last word of each line. The crowd responds by jumping, or head nodding with arms up. Here, the exchange of energy and power of gesture intensify, and magnify the energy circulation.

Other observation footage illustrates how technology is used to elongate the Communitas moment and bring the crowd to a new place:

[117] The stage is full with MCs, some interact privately on stage. Lead MC begins performing to crowd. All on stage in shot join in with the lead MC performing, shouting the last word of each sentence, vocally or though gesture. Crowd responds. There is call and response between the crowd and the performer. Fans raise their hands; jump and/or body bounce as they watch the stage. Videographers are on stage; they do not obstruct fans' view. Base is rumbling. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7pt5R8_zhZg

16 VSoSolidNov2013c.MP4 Ms Dynamite performance[118]

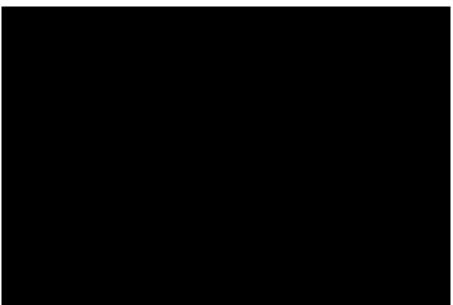


Ms Dynamite closes her performance thanking the crowd, and the crowd show their appreciation for her performance through loud cheers. As she leaves the stage, the DJ continues the heightened energy by '*wheeling'* the track and shouting "*wheeeeeel*" alongside the cheering audience before asking the crowd *'how was that for a bit of old school…?'* This dialogue extends the moment of Communitas. It controls the energy levels by keeping the crowd engaged and directing their attention to what is going to happen next. The crowd erupts simultaneously to show their appreciation. The crowd is upstanding during her performance and to show their appreciation they raise their voices and arms.

Paradoxically however, at other times silence induces call and response. Performer silence, requests energy from the crowd to which, if given, they are rewarded with increased energy from performers.

[118]Ms Dynamite closing the performance of her most commercially successful song 'Boo'. She closes with a salute to the crowd. Crowd cheers in response; they stand, clap and raise their arms. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AG68uA9SDf8

17 VSoSolidMar2013a.MP4 Smoke da Reefer[119]



This clip is an example of where the DJ removes the music for the crowd to sing along and fill the gap. He then turns the music down to interact with the crowd. Turning the music down requests energy and input from the crowd. This request gets the crowd more hyped up, before the DJ plays another song which encourages the crowd to dance more vigorously when the new song comes on. The dancing movements tends to be bouncy in nature and sway side to side or forward and backwards in a pendulum type motion. Expression of cultural capital associated with age and era, is solicited from the crowd by performers. The MC gives a rhetorical and playful challenge to the crowd, *'If you don't know this track I'm going back to Southwest (London)!'* The MC clearly knows that the vast majority of those attending will know the track. The crowd dance more vigorously to emphasise that they know the track and have cultural capital. This exchange is another example of the transfer and increasing of energy.

The proposed theory regarding the circulation of energy and its role in achieving Communitas (as illustrated in image 14, Building up Communitas), is verified in these three case studies.

[119] Three DJs are the only people on the stage behind the decks. The crowd (in the upper circle) are partially engaged. Some are standing and others are seated. Nobody in this clip is recording the happenings on electronic devices. One DJ begins to engage the crowd by asking questions to which the crowd responds. The crowd are more engaged, raising their arms and cheering in response to the DJs request to make noise. The crowd begin dancing more. The song played in Bass heavy. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=royoRjF4JCY

The Drop

Key sonic elements are necessary to transition the portal from liminality to Communitas in Grime. It includes a combination of energy exchange through call and response (image 14), heavy basslines that engulf the spatial and temporal, loudness, increased tempo- accelerando and heightened pitch. The quickest way to sonically move into a moment of Communitas is via *The Drop*. Orchestration of *The Drop* requires skill and in some cases team work reliant on *instinct* and *chemistry* as outlined by respondents earlier in this chapter.

What is The Drop?

The Drop is a pattern of sounds usually orchestrated by a DJ or a live music band to expedite the transition from liminality to Communitas: *the ultimate destination*. It increases the energy levels and gains the full attention of attendees. Sylvan's research highlights DJ techniques used to achieve this:

> *'If you want to build a peak, you bring in a sixteenth note snare roll and you change the pitch of the snare roll as it quickens and that just all of a sudden gets everyone's attention and everyone's waiting for the payoff. Then you drop out the pounding kick drum and just have one long bass note, and it's like "boom"…' (Cited in Sylvan 2002:139)*

The speed suddenly stops for a moment before a lower pitch enters usually a heavy bass line (rhythmic pattern), and this is what signifies the arrival to the new space of Communitas and attendees usually celebrate at this time with more rigorous movements, shouting, singing or dancing; everyone is engaged, structures dissolve, attention shifts to the moment and enjoyment. To illustrate *The Drop* in action, I have used observation footage to exemplify how this is executed:

18 VIMAug2013b.MP4 - Logan Sama building a drop.[120]

Here we can see Grime DJ Logan Sama building a *Drop*. In this process we can hear he starts with a slower, more the mellow Hip Hop/R'n'B track. He inserts Dub sound effects to increase the tempo and heighten the pitch of the music. He uses the stuttering voice and increases the tempo by using drum beats that progressively get faster (accelerando) in conjunction with a siren to give a sense of urgency, before seamlessly introducing a faster track from the Grime genre. This technique builds energy and pace and takes the listener forward to a new destination. The impact of this *Drop* was not profound however, primarily because the event had only just started and not many people were present. Therefore there was no significant exchange of energy between the performer and the crowd. Nonetheless, it is a clear example of how to build a *Drop*.

In MDA when listening to Ms Dynamite's (feat. Sticky's) '*Boo'*, the introduction of this song is a clear example of building a peak to insert *The Drop* which happens at the chorus. The song starts off with a lot of space and few polyrhythms that Ms Dynamite initially mimics vocally, before altering her voice to become more soft and melodic. The telephone hanging up and the dial tone signifies an end to that sonic segment. A classical music sample is added to existing polyrhythms and she adjusts her vocal style, becoming less melodic, more intense and lower in pitch with an introduction of Jamaican Patois. This process builds momentum

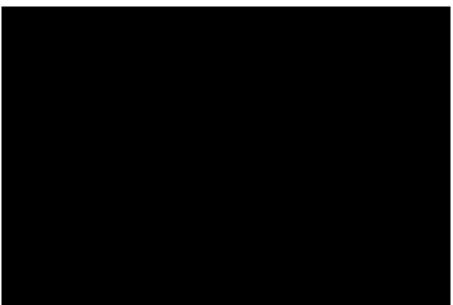
[120] DJ (Logan Sama) mixes music and builds *The Drop*. This footage shows how he is working to achieve this on CDJs. The venue had just started the event so the place was relatively empty. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLO_YOJlFOI

and gives an indication that there is a direction this song is going in - within liminal space. When Ms Dynamite mentions 'bass', it is interjected into the polyrhythm and classical mix, suggesting she has authority over the musical progression taking place and leading the listener through aspects of the portal. The bursts of bass progressively get lower in pitch and fill up more space in the lead up to the chorus. This gives an implication as to what lies ahead and continues to heighten anticipation for listeners.

There is a short time just before the chorus where the majority of the polyrhythms fall away and there is a new squeaking sound that raises in pitch and four crotchet beat (1/4 note) squelching sounds. The reintroduction of the telephone, through keypad sounds that increase in pitch, suggest a new connection is being made. The tempo of the music quickens through an illusion of accelerando by adding shorter staccato notes in quick succession (indicative of building a *Drop*). This clears the palate for the lowest pitched, most resonant bass to enter announcing arrival at the destination of Communitas. Alongside entry to Communitas, Ms Dynamite's vocal pitch lowers even further and is more intense and authoritative with the delivery of Jamaican patois and London slang. She demands complete control, authority and navigation over the liminal space and direction of the journey in the portal.

In the music video for this song, and events where I observed this song played/performed, the chorus is where the crowd go *wild*, in response to receiving the payoff they were anticipating. It is worth pointing out however, that this particular song is considered Grimy Garage (genre immediately preceding, yet heavily influencing Grime). However with Grime and its sonic composition, performer(s) are in a strong position to open portals and create liminal space (using pharmacosm), that get reloads/wheels/bunbacks. Further case studies relating to *the Drop* are explored below:

19 VEskimoDNov2013c.MP4 - crowd reaction to the Drop of Eskimo dance.[121]



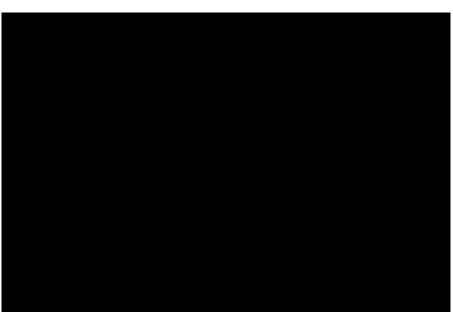
The crowd is dancing to a mellower instrumental track in a swaying motion. The DJ plays sound effects (Dub style - horn), before entering a popular Grime instrumental – *Eskimo*, on the heavy bassline *Drop*. Not knowing that this song was coming, the crowd respond becoming visibly more excited by dancing more vigorously. The crowd were shown a new aspect of the portal's liminal space and respond to this by jumping in time to the music (pogoing), raising their arms and moving with more 'gusto'. At this time, the DJ shouts over the mic, alongside the crowd. This moment of high energy is extended by the DJ playing sound effects, pulling the track back and then playing the track from the very beginning and adding sound effects. The crowd are primed and ready for *The Drop* they are anticipating and continue to dance as they now know the direction the journey is taking.

This is an example of when liminal space has been entered and performers reveal a new aspect inside the portal to hint at the destination. This excites the crowd. The performer pulls the crowd back to the familiar, older areas of the portal; however the crowd knows the new aspect is there. This primes the crowd and heightens anticipation to be returned to that new aspect again for Communitas release.

[121] Crowds' reaction to music change, the DJ mixing using his laptop. Fans are engaged facing the stage. Few people are recording. The MC paces the stage and says very little enabling the DJs music is entertaining the crowd. The mellow vibe created by the DJ is heighted by the introduction of the popular Eskibeat instrumental. The crowd are excited, the MC verbalises more to heighten the moment and lead into a reload. Rumbling bass throughout. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c0-8ThdN6Ls

The final observation case study combines a physical exchange of gesture and utterance as a form of call and response between the performers and the crowd and the sonic manipulation of *the Drop*.

20 VEskimoDNov2013g.MP4 Igloo reaction pause and reload MC hyping.[122]



The MC is spitting quickly, jumping and shouts just before the bass comes in. The crowd become more engaged when the bass comes in. The crowd respond to the performer's efforts by jumping (with raised arms). Other performers on the stage start to jump, indicating an exchange back and forth across the venue. As the crowd become more engaged the DJ wheels the song back. The MC is working with the DJ to get the crowd hyped up by shouting *'come on!'* as the song is wheeled. The crowd stop jumping and cheer; they crowd are primed to hear this song again from the beginning. As it is played this time a new song is being mixed in - the unexpectedness is acknowledged by the crowd and the MC shouts *'Don't fuck about'.* The crowd is now anticipating *The Drop*. By the MC repeating the same phrase *'Everybody knows we're OGs'* with increasing intensity and pitch, he builds energy for the anticipated *Drop*.

[122] Multiple performers are on stage and the DJ is mixing music to excite the crowd. Those on stage are also waiting for *The Drop*. Few fans are using electronic devices to record. Videographers are on stage to film the crowd. Some MCs are using their phone to film the crowd. The music is bass heavy and the crowd begin dancing. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iA4bJx8wfIM

The crowd are already primed to respond. As *The Drop* happens, the crowd begin jumping again and there is a call and response before the new unexpected track is introduced and then wheeled. This *Drop* didn't work as well on this occasion, because although the crowd were primed, they expected to hear something else (that they peeked into previously). They did not have their expectations and anticipation fulfilled and this is evidenced by declining input from the crowd.

In addition to illustrating energy circulation and sonic manipulation, this example shows the importance of intuitive collaborative working amongst performers, and the need for performers to navigate the portal and lead the crowd, ensuring that the crowd are not left behind or lost on the journey.

Communitas

Performers, manage the energy levels at events by navigating portals and leading the crowd. They use pharmacosm to open portals and maintain liminal space and punctuate it with moments of Communitas, *the ultimate destination*. Performers end on a high so that attendees leave the event feeling elated and wanting more - returning to normality transformed. This is exemplified by the next clip.

21 VSoSolidNov2013d.MP4 21 Seconds Finale[123]

This clip is the last song at a concert where attendees will end the evening on a high. So Solid left their most commercially successful song until the end. All performers showcasing that night were on the stage. The vast majority of the crowd in the seated areas were already upstanding and engaged with the performers at this point. They were dancing and/or reciting the lyrics. Popular phrases of this song were recited with action and added gestural emphasis (such as *'21 second's t - t - t')*. With the slower lyrics of Romeo and the entrance of the bassline, the crowd began to dance more. You can hear the crowds' effort in reciting Romeo's lyrics in this clip. A significant 'moment' of Communitas that closed the event on a climax is where everyone supersedes call and response to chant in unison *'Romeo Dunn!'*

At events attended, surprising the crowd with guest performances also created moments of Communitas.

Now I have applied these theories to case studies, I now explore movement, particularly the dance moves of attendees at live performance events.

[123] The end of the So Solid concert. All performers are on stage. Guests in the upper circle are upstanding and some are filming the event on their electronic devices. The lights flash rhythmically in time to the music and the lyrics being said. Some artists on the stage are interacting with each other and others are interacting with the crowd. Those behind the decks at the back of the stage are standing and observing the performers and crowd in front of them. Fans in the circle raise their arms, some doing 'Gun Fingers' and raising their arms rhythmically to the beat. Those with electronic devices remain still to capture the footage. As the lights flash rhythmically, the performers and crowd participate in the song – 21 seconds, t-t-t, before chanting in unison 'Romeo Dunn'. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42rSVxHIbuQ

Movement

Core respondents informed me that reading the crowd involved looking out for the material signs of bodily movements and vocal responses. Respondents repeatedly spoke about the energy of the music and how it made them feel or move.

In observation, when popular songs were played/performed, the attention of the crowd was focused on the music and performers; some people danced whilst seated, others stood up to dance or sing/recite the words along with the song/performer. The crowd responded almost uniformly to creations of *The Drop* and moments of Communitas. When *The Drop* occurred, many attendees, raised their arms and showed *'gun fingers'*, female dancers particularly dipped down and followed the bassline. Others raised hands and jumped in unison. *The Drop* gave permission for the body to dance, to be at play and at a fuller level of expression.

> *'The expressive character of the body is underestimated… can participate in expression of identity that go beyond the textual… Identification with and attachment to a certain place or a specific group of people is achieved by producing spaces… the felt energy that connects people to places and each other… by movements in a certain place, the feeling, the energy of that material or place is absorbed by us, and absorbs us in it. Rather than absorbed by and controlled though discourse, rather than controlled by power and ideology, the body at dance is a body at play, meaning that the power movement lies in "being able to articulate complexities of thought - with - feeling that words cannot name, let alone set forth. It is a way of accessing the world, not just a Means of achieving ends that cannot be named (Radley 1995:13)…" Pine and Kuhlke (2014: ix-x)*

Pine and Kuhlke (2014) outline that dance itself has a power of its own, producing spaces and ways of being that I suggest are experienced within liminal (live performance) space. The

coordination with other bodies within the portal enables a collective expression of identity. Connerton (1989, cited in Stanley Niaah 2010) suggests that participation in performance enables the reclamation of lost rituals through recreation, re-remembering and creating ways of being. Performance is where history can be told. The body becomes the site of the past, present and the future. The ability to dance effectively suggests a belonging to a group/collective identity (such as region, ancestry or class).

Dance provides freedom to express in the moment, the body serves more than a functional or survival role and becomes the complete expression of the immaterial and unarticulated self. Dance itself can be embedded (i.e., tied to the local and communities - Stanley Niaah 2010). Performing embodied movement serves to expand one's identity to larger than oneself. In the wider societal context of marginalisation, the Grime body at play, individually or collectively, is powerful and subversive.

> *'It's just like, you know you get lost in it… You do anything really… It's hard to explain because when you're caught up in the music you don't even know what you're doing. You could be sitting down but you're still moving your hands in some sort of way like your head.' Mind of Grime*

Delgado De Torres (n.d.) identifies that dance itself challenges the very essence of Eurocentric outlooks on what constitutes (European) 'man' and his mode of knowing and being. Eurocentric man's state of being is founded on and centred around the mind/body split. The act of dance defies this split, because dance is successfully accomplished through the mind and body working together, through the distributed brain (Eshun 1998). Core respondents who chose to play or make music with the intention for listeners to dance or move to, are giving the gift of freedom and ultimate expression. The context of the body at play is significant and subversive on Black and White working class bodies, particularly as these bodies are constructed as having no respectability (outlined in chapter six).

To explore dance in Grime genealogically, one must understand Africanised dance and movement. Welsh-Asante (cited in Stanley Niaah 2010:121) identifies seven foundations or sensibilities in African and diasporic dance. She lists these as polyrhythm, polycentrism, curvilinearity, multidimensionality, epic memory, repetition and holism. Dagan (1997, cited in Stanley Niaah 2010) identifies that Africanised dance styles favour emphasis on the beat and the natural bends in the body, along hinges (elbows and knees) and pivot joints (hips, head and torso). Africanised styles of dance are often grounded, meaning they do not prioritise lifts or points, preferring firm flat connectedness to the ground. It prioritises the bounce – made possible through bending the knees to bob up and down (Ryman 2003). To connect Grime to Black Atlantic religious/spiritual discourse, these trace movements and bodily articulations may be present. Therefore, the transcendence from identifiable movements from African musicoreligious practice or Black Atlantic folk traditions to contemporary Black British culture should be explored.

As outlined in chapter four, ethnomusicological approaches to music reveal that bass and the drum in particular are staple features of music of the African diaspora. The drumming styles accompanying Caribbean dances have been attributed to the Congo and Angolan religions of Central Africa. Gerstin (2010) found in Caribbean dance forms, such as the Kalenda, the drum signals when and how a dancer should move; such influences have been identified as originating from the Bantu peoples - originally from West Africa, that were transported to the Caribbean by the French. These dances now inform Black Atlantic folk traditions.

Sonic characteristics dominant in Grime (chapter four), traceable to Black music streams promote material responses through movement and dance. Bass, particularly at high volume can be felt. Sylvan (2002) presents the argument that different sonic characteristics in music stimulate different areas of the body, which he says loosely corresponds with the Indian system of Chakras (and again is comparable to Yoruba dance/spirit identifications). His research found that the higher the BPM (and/or frequency) the higher the chakra area that would be stimulated, and that that area of the body would be moved with more emphasis in

dance. Music with lower frequencies would produce a sensual experience (Sylvan 2002, Shabazz 2011) stimulating lower chakras and those with higher frequencies, a more out of body or spiritual one (Sylvan 2002). These propositions suggest that there is a corresponding material/immaterial link between sound and the body; something that audio culture is beginning to examine.

SK Vibemaker differentiates movements between differing musical genres. This contributes to the argument that different characteristics and frequencies generate differing material outcomes from the body and agrees with Yoruba spirit/sound identification.

> '…*it makes people screw their faces so we sometimes say sour face skanking. And I mean that you got to screw your face when you hear some of these basslines and you hear that sound, you're shaking… It's not like… House where people are shuffling, you're not going to shuffle to Grime...' SK Vibemaker*

Rhythm has significant impact on movement, the less 'poundy the beat' the increased likeliness of larger movements such as footwork as the body attempts to keep within a tempo and/or rhythmic framework. Polyrhythms allow more freedom of movement (Sylvan 2002). In fast high BPM genres like Grime and Jungle, some songs have a 'half time' element - where the bassline can be slower than the other rhythms in the track. This provides more freedom of movement, giving listeners the choice of what rhythm to follow with movement/dance. They can follow a slower rhythm across beats per bar rather than being constricted to the faster, 'poundy/punchy beats' within a bar of music.

Observation and respondent data demonstrate that men and women danced differently to Grime. Men tended to dance more rigidly, predominantly using their head, neck, arms and legs; nodding or shaking the head rigorously, their arms were more fully extended. Women danced more fluidly and sensually using their hips, waists and legs. They would alter and vary the height they danced at, by dipping down low to a stooping position, following the bassline,

and doing body rolls. Grime is a masculine sound that produces more masculine movements (and stimulates higher chakras). The music is not conducive to dancing in pairs or courtship display. Much like the outlook and ideology of the scene, Grime enables people to dance and express themselves individually, for themselves by themselves. A short passage from a core respondent highlights female dance styles to sonic characteristics in the Black music stream that Grime falls within:

> *'When I went Jamaica in '97… I spoke to him about Bogle music and he said 'You know when dem get dem tune deh, girls used to flutter up when its de top line and when de bass come in dem ah drop dungn, skank up and come back in again and come up again.' So what he was saying to me is the reaction of that - and that's '97. Three years later – Garage scene – what are they doing?… Goes down, doing all that, doing the Bogle. But there was no Reggae music, there was Garage music, they're doing a Reggae dance…Yes, so the biggest lines - so they'll be up top and The Drop will come and they'll dip down, but they're different, they're really dipping down slow, they're like following the B-line, they're not following the beats. Beats are just doing whatever they're doing but the B-line, then they're kinda coming up, doing this whole hand thing – which is Bogle! You get me? Same thing!' Anon 734*

This style of dance for women has been consistent throughout the music stream, up to and including the Grimy Garage phase. The masculinity and extremity of Grime however, imposes sonic limits and the options available for dance. This could be a reflection of the constrictive or marginal position of those from internal colonies.

At events there were a variety of movements that showed up consistently:

• <u>Head</u>

'…the instrumental's they can get you bopping your head...'

Mind of Grime

Head nodding/bopping and shaking was most noticeably done by men. Where he would nod or 'bop', his head up and down to the beat (crotchet, ¼ note), as if the head was keeping time like a metronome. He may tilt his nodding head to the side, or oscillate from side to side. If side to side, this action would follow a slower rhythm and would be a slower movement. I observed men shaking their head quickly from side to side, the head was shaken as if it were a metronome measuring quaver beats (1/8 note). Head shaking was not sustained for a long period of time whereas a head bop could be sustained throughout an entire song or several songs.

• <u>Legs</u>

The Dip or *going down low*, was done predominantly by female attendees. This is where the dancer stoops or squats down whilst dancing following the bassline of the music played before coming up again. As outlined previously by one respondent, this dance move was present in Jamaica pre 1997 in related genres in the music stream. At events, male dancers did '*body bouncing or bopping'*; a rigid movement which consists of a slight and repetitive bending of the knees in a bobbing action. This bobbling action was present in Jamaican dance in various forms for men. The most popular move being the *Bogle* (Stanley Niaah 2010)

• <u>Core</u>

Body roll/ripple consists of creating a spinal ripple (for/backward as opposed to side/side) starting with a small flick of the head backward and letting this motion ripple down the body, stopping at the hips and buttocks. This move

was done predominantly by females. Another movement I observed I call ‘posturing’, which significantly involved holding positions of the convexing or concaving the chest and shoulders, extending the arms and tilting the head sideways whilst extending the neck along one side (simultaneously reciting lyrics). This movement has been found in Rap and Hip Hop. This happened at larger concerts where the lyrics were known and attendees recited them alongside the performers, or filled in the gaps in call and response exchanges. It was mainly men that exhibited these posturing movements.

- Waist and Hips

Gyration/wining/bum flick/bubbling is another predominantly female dance where dancers wind their waists and gyrate their hips in time to the music in a circular motion, or thrust the hips and buttocks backwards and forwards. Hip rotation is a slower movement, corresponding with a semibreve (whole note). Hip thrusting tends to move at a quicker pace; crotchets (1/4 note) or minims (1/2 note). As identified by some respondents, *winin’* the waist has traces in Jamaican Dancehall music and Trinidadian wining (Gerstin 2010). It’s found in the USA as the *tootsie roll* and *freakin’*. However, this is not where this dance style originated and it is connected to other Afrodiasporic dance movements that celebrate life (Patten 2012). The movement of the hips has been linked to sexual liberation and autonomy (Bramwell 2011), independent of the male gaze. This dance practice has been intellectualised and links have been made to the Jamaican folk religious practice of Kumina (Delgado De Torres n.d.), Caribbean folk dance and the Congolese circular gyration of the hips (Gerstin 2010). Pelvis dancing has been located from Liberia to Nigeria (in musicoreligious and folk practices for example), not just in the Bakongo region.

In addition to movements observed, tweeters mentioned *skanking*. This movement is referred to in a variety of music genres and originates from Jamaican Ska Music[124], adopted by British Mods and Skinheads and appropriated by the Punk scene. There are variations of *skanking*; however all consists of jerky movements, bending forward at the hip, extending the arms and raising the knees, moving the limbs alternately in time to the music. In the Grime context, we see a dove tail between the diaspora, particularly a Jamaican influence of sonic and kinetic practices and British appropriation.

I saw *pogoing*, particularly at larger events near to stages. No tweets referred to *pogoing* by name. *Pogoing* is when a dancer jumps up and down on the spot, usually in a crowd. If there is more space however, a dancer can *pogo* and move around the dancefloor. The dancer's body remains erect and rigid, jumping with feet together, with their arms rigidly by their sides, or with one or both arms extended forward. Significantly what I have identified as pogoing is very similar to a style of Caribbean dance called *Jump-Up*[125]*.* The crowd simultaneously jump up and down, often with their arms raised, waving their arms or holding a flag. *Jump-Up* is significant across many islands in the Caribbean. It is a subgenre of Boyoun music in the French Caribbean islands of Dominica, Guadeloupe and Martinique[126]. It is also a day of celebration in Montserrat[127] to commemorate the emancipation of enslaved Africans on the island and forms the last day of the Montserrat carnival. The *Jump-Up* activity in masquerade and carnival settings predate those of *pogoing* found in Rock and Roll and Hip hop, which both can be traced back to the root of modern music in the USA - Jazz. Jazz started in New Orleans, Louisiana, a significant site where the French brought enslaved Africans to the USA and allowed them to practice their religious music and festivities openly in Congo Square (Sylvan 2003).

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[124] Walker, R., (2015).

[125] Jump-Up Definition https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/jump-up

[126] Matthew, K., (2008).

[127]Messenger, J., (1998) January 1st is Jump-Up day.

The *pogoing* style of dance can be found contemporarily at Punk, Rock and Hip Hop events and can escalate into *moshing*. *Moshing* is a group activity and is considered a more aggressive movement form (Sylvan 2003). Usually associated with genres such as Heavy Metal, people push and shove against each other. There is a lot of body contact in these event settings. Sylvan said that his participants found *moshing* a form of cathartic release. I did not observe any moshing; however one respondent mentioned *moshing* at an event where he performed and indicates this is a feature at his performances.

> *'Then when the riddim came on, people were like mosh-pitting, our sort of stuff.' XL*

Tweeters stated that they were moshing at events that I attended:

> *'Before my hair went straight from moshing so hard...' @Aim*

> *'Bruised like fuckm but totally worth it #EskimoDance' @Basitandb*

These comments suggest that moshing is a normative dance move at larger Grime events, at least amongst those included in this study.

Another specific move mentioned by tweeters, which I observed and partook in, was *'Gun fingers'* or *'2 finger skank'* - this is when a dancer gestures with their hands, using them to imitate a handgun. All variations of this movement involve the clenched fist with the extension of the index finger solely, or the index and middle finger together. This gesture can be extended either forwards or upwards as if pointing towards a target. The extended finger(s) act as the barrel of the gun. The middle finger is sometimes slightly bent at the knuckle to imitate the trigger finger. If not forming part of the clenched hand, the thumb acts as the hammer of the gun and is pointed directly upwards perpendicular to the hand or bent forward at the knuckle. This hand formation in all its variants resembles the shape of a hand

gun. Arms are usually extended (fully or bent at the elbow) whilst the *'Gun fingers'* gesture is performed, and the arms are moved rhythmically to the music, usually on crotchet beats (1/4 note). Alternatively the elbows are bent and held into the sides of the torso with the rotational movements coming from the pivoting elbows and wrists. This enables rhythmic moving of the forearms and hands whilst holding *gun fingers*. The movement coming from the elbows are at a slower pace than the movement coming from the wrists which are more inclined to correspond with crotchet beats in a song. The arms closer to the torso is an incorporation of the Jamaican *Bogle* dance (Stanley Niaah 2010) outlined earlier. Gun fingers can be pumped back and forth or raised and lowered in time to the music from the elbows or shoulders. I observed both men and women doing variations of *'Gun fingers'*.

Stanley Niaah (2010) suggests that some movements can have sociocultural and anatomical scripts. In relation to *'Gun fingers',* there is a possibility the dance could be an embodiment of gun related crime and violence (both real and/or imagined) associated with the scene. However, it should not be assumed that *'Gun fingers'* is associated with violence, as it can be pointing to a target in the sonic landscape, or an indication of focus, particularly as this dance is found in other genres of music in the Black music stream and informs Black Public Sphere sensibilities.

These dance moves were the most evident forms of 'play' that were self-reported and observed, some of which provided release or summoned the body to respond. Page (2005) uses examples of instructive participatory lyrics in Calypso, Dancehall and Soca songs to illustrate that songs enable the performance of cultural capital and identity and creates insiders and outsiders around dance (and gesture). Although not instructional through verbal articulations within the songs played in my observations (particularly at larger events), the sonic characteristics themselves (sometimes with performers prompting e.g.

VSoSolidMar2013a.MP4 Smoke da Reefer[128]) enables attendees to feel and play in the music. Through playful challenge, they are invited to embody 'a knowing' through body articulation, whether by *dipping* to the bassline or collectively *pogoing*. This can be interpreted as performing identity. The sameness and connectivity though call and response, is also an identity performance.

Finally, the dances observed at these events rarely involved male and female interaction. The music provided space to play, bond friendships and express masculinity and femininity – but not courtship. In the British context, there is reference made to religion and religious outlook lyrically, however there does not appear to be any overt established form of religious practice or ritual orchestrated through dance. This gives insight to gender relations and suggests that there is a level of disconnectedness between men and women. It also suggests that overt faith may be spoken about publically, but not expressed in a physical embodied capacity.

Paradoxically however, there were also attendees at some events, particularly smaller events, who came and stood - and just observed the stage performance, even whilst others were dancing. I observed men standing with arms folded, feet hip width apart facing the stage observing what was happening. At larger events, the extremes between attendees hanging around the periphery of the venue, those more concerned with dancing and those focusing their attention and interacting with performers on the stage were more apparent.

Ryman (2010) points out that the physiology and physicality of the human body limits the way a body can move. She goes on to suggest that the footwork found in the Ukrainian *Corsack Step* can also be found in folk Jamaican *Jonkunnu*, a religious Afrodiasporic dance

[128] The footage shows three DJs are the only people on the stage behind the decks. The crowd (in the upper circle) are partially engaged. Some are standing and others are seated. Nobody in this clip is recording the happenings on electronic devices. One DJ begins to engage the crowd by asking questions to which the crowd responds. The crowd are more engaged, raising their arms and cheering in response to the DJs request to make noise. The crowd begin dancing more. The song played in Bass heavy.

practice. She argues that moves cannot be African derived per se, however the music itself and the way it elicits physical movement are central to signifying culture and identity. Applied to the Grime context, I would argue that whist I have identified some movements and made links predominantly to the Caribbean (and USA) or specific tribes and regions in West and Central Africa, those that I have been able to do so explicitly, are a method of performing identity within a Black music stream and Black Public Sphere. Over time, physical movements have transcended their ritual purpose (Carbonero 2010) and have become 'creolised' to become their own (non-tribe/region specific) African derived practices. With migration to Britain predominantly since the Windrush, the Black music stream and its related dances (understood in the Black Public Sphere) have received new transcendence in the British context, but include continual renewal through direct (familial) and indirect (social/media) connections to continental Africa, the Caribbean, Canada and the USA (Reynolds 2006, 2007, Beckford 2006, Gilroy 1993 – outlined in chapter six).

Technology in Liminal Space

A newer feature to consider now in the processes of liminal (live performance) space portals and Communitas is the democratisation of technology. Exploration of technological use in this context will push debates forward in sociology of religion and audio cultural fields. It has introduced a new dynamic of the spectacle vs the organic experience of being led by performer(s) on a journey. As liminality and Communitas are dependent on energy exchange, the spectacle interferes with this exchange as it detracts from being in the moment. It reduces one from being immersed in multiple realms (Sylvan 2002, image 13, Factors contributing to Communitas), to documenting it in (flattened) 2D. At larger events, attendees filmed what was happening on their phones or tablets; they were focused on filming the event and therefore were not engaged in the moment. They were standing still in order to take a clear recording. Whilst this may enable future nomadic engagement (for viewers over the internet), and enable those not present to access the happenings in that particular liminal (live performance) space, the attendee present is not fully engaged. I found in order to film

segments for this project, I disconnected from the moment of enjoyment. Technology hindered my ability to dance and be in the moment. I also felt disconnected from live performance when performers focussed solely on the videographers' cameras on the stage with them at smaller venues.

Performers at smaller events were performing directly to videographers for internet and terrestrial TV channels, creating a disconnect between performers and the crowd. With the focus of the performer directed towards the videographer, the desire to use pharmacosm diminishes and no portal or liminal (live performance) space opens. There is no desire to lead attendees and this is reflected in the stoic material responses from the generally masculine audience. I found videographers filming performers at these events invasive. This disconnect is evidenced by the case study below.

22 VMnBNov2013b.MP4 performance to cameras[129]

Crowd members are not dancing or moving much to the music. They were spectators as the videographers are on the stage with the MCs and obscuring the view. Videographers are very close to the performer(s). When the DJ wheeled the music, the crowd did not respond much

[129] Footage shows MCs performing to videographers. The crowd on the pub floor are watching. The performers are under heavy lighting and silhouettes of fans can be seen in the clip. At one stage the videographer interacts with an MC who has already performed. The MCs are passing the mic after spitting their bars – this is not a cypher or competitive MC situation. MCs are standing around. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3u-fPMYXX2w

as the energy circulation (image 14) was intercepted by the focus and centrality of the cameras.

At smaller events, MCs appeared more engaged with attendees OFF stage, mingling amongst the crowds and taking pictures in some cases. This indicates that the previous work or lyricism of the performers may be of more importance to attendees than going on a journey. Male attendees may view the performer as a relatable person, an organic intellectual, or simply seek to observe the lyrical skills of the performer in person. In addition, in the male dominated smaller venues, it may be considered effeminate to dance too much - something I did not explore in this project.

At larger events, there was a press pit where videographers were situated and performers were able to engage with the crowd and cameras without compromising connection with either. Technology and capturing liminal space is an area of further development for future research.

In this section, I explored A) Energy, Movement and Kinesis in live performance settings and how technological democratisation affects this for attendees at events. In the remainder of this chapter, I explore B) Emotion and Biology (mind and body).

B) Emotion and Biology (EB) (affective investment)

From the onset, there were themes in the emotional responses from tweeters in relation to events I attended that were about:

- Fans gearing up to attend an event,
- Fans experiencing the event ‘in the moment’
- Reminiscing about the event the next day and

- Those that did/could not attend.

Tweets were about anticipation and excitement for the forthcoming event(s), particularly for larger more mainstream events. Others tweeted their disappointment in not going. However, there were a handful of tweeters who expressed happiness at not attending. Their approach focussed on class based and racially coded safety and criminality stereotypes (chapters five and six).

There were tweets about the music being the soundtrack to attendees' lives, and references to school/teenage years/Garage days. Listening to these songs took some attendees back in time to relive their youth to when they first encountered the songs. In addition to triggering memories, tweets referred to seeing familiar faces, *'bumping into'* people from their youth, particularly at larger events. This indicates that music does in fact have the capability to unify bodies spatially and temporally, but also within a moment/era in time, reinforcing the concept of SFT. This could indicate that the portal operates independently of conventional time and is constant, irrespective of when it is accessed. This suggests, therein lies the truth that people congregate and can be brought back into contact with each other again regardless how much time has passed; an absolute truth.

Tweets suggest music can organise people in physical space (i.e., the material through immaterial means). This gives insight into one way in which audio culture works on sociological, biological and psychological levels and the importance of personal, situational and intentional (Kennett 2008) contexts in ascertaining how personal meanings are formed and how one affectively invests immaterially. Attending such events is an expression of cultural capital, soundscapes etc., immaterial and material knowledges of the Black Public Sphere and internal colonies that join people to physical space and time.

''Music is timeless. It can talk you anywhere, to any feeling; any memory! #10yearsago #sosolid #goodluck #tonight @DJSOLLIE @AshleyWalters82 (Artist)

With both MDA and observation, I was aware that some songs took me back in time. With songs I had completely forgotten about until the point of hearing them again, I was able to remember the melodies and in some cases the words; I surprised myself at this and this element is a testament to music's ability to operate on levels below consciousness and access a constant and timeless portal of liminal space.

Tweeters expressed an unawareness of their physicality in the moment of live performance. They documented their physical ailments resulting from the events attended: lost voices, ringing ears, tiredness the next day, hurting feet etc.

'Was dancing n singing so hard, I forgot bout my busted knees!!!!! #sosolid' @thatPetiteG

Tweets expressed a willingness to truant from school and/or not go to work because of an event. There were tweets declaring that irrespective of negative repercussions of attending, it was worth it. One respondent recalled the fun he had as a youngster at a live music event. He stayed to enjoy it knowing that there would be negative consequences:

'Knowing that my curfew to be home is 11:30 but my mum will come outside this rave and embarrass me!' Anon 867

Much like tweets of this ilk, this respondent still stayed out and was willing to face the negative consequences afterwards. Likewise, at an event, I observed a White woman throwing up in one of the toilet cubicles. She appeared to be somewhat embarrassed that she was throwing up. Her friends told her not to worry and that she deserved to have a good

time and get drunk because she has three kids and doesn't have as much time to go out and have fun anymore. The data reinforces that the prospect of being in, or returning to, the constant and timeless portal of liminal space, facilitates anti-structure and immersion in the moment. It suggests one will return from the journey different and therefore has a powerful pull, despite any possible negative impacts upon their return.

Respondents referred to extreme cases where the portal altered behaviour, giving a sense that one can lose complete control inside liminal space portals. Although these will not be explored in depth here, I feel they are significant and should be documented. They illustrate the importance performers have on leading, navigating and controlling the journey. Three examples below are examples of the powerful effects of pharmacosm, liminal space and Communitas.

> *'…everyone was going mad for it… It smashed up carnival, people are shaking the trees…' Dexplicit*

> *'…he went all around the country like making people mad in the live like Grime shows. To the point where… people would take out their gun and start firing it in the air when they heard his lyrics. It was crazy.' Anon513*

> *'…it still invokes a lot of excitement within me… if I'm in the street, I have to be really careful. I just want to like shout out all of the lyrics.' Hattie*

I do not want to place complete responsibility for crowd actions on performers. This would only serve to reinforce the actions of 696 (chapter five). As outlined by respondents (chapter five), individual responsibility is key, as are influences of wider societal contexts that impact on Grime specifically and Ag&S marginalised fans i.e. Black and White working class youth.

The music and performer are access points into portals that amalgamate the energies and soundscapes of the familiar or the strange, with diaspora force (Gilroy 1993). The portal manipulates materially, (body) and immaterially (energy). It is a constant timeless liminal space for identity celebration and expression, and the place where the SFT for those in internal colonies are created, worshipped and validated. Simultaneously it provides a unique constellation of the Black Atlantic experience in the British context, a free space to purge, express their identities, existence, directly drawing from and feeding back into the Black Public Sphere.

Chapter summary

In this chapter, I explored the '*power*' of Grime music. I explored this in relation to individual listening - how respondents made sense of Grime when first hearing it. I explored how core respondents made music individually and collaboratively. I did this with reference to Kennett's (2008) framework on listening. I established that the data had sporadic references to organised religion, but my research would focus on the music itself (the sonic elements, performance etc.) and the liminal experience of live performance. I introduced the idea of the immaterial portal and the bonds (material and immaterial) that a portal creates. I explored how respondents prepared for performance, finding that respondents often emptied themselves, materially or immaterially (going to toilet, releasing nervous energy) to be effective navigators.

Using Smith (1994), Sylvan (2002) and Kennett (2008) as conceptual frameworks guiding this chapter, I proposed:

1. Music = physiological + psychological + sociocultural + semiological + virtual + ritual (Immaterial). (Sylvan 2002)

2. Individual listening = personal + situational + institutional + audio culture = emotional and physical response (Material). (Kennett 2008)

3. Theopoetics = individual or team working + personal experience or fantasy + intention of anticipated effect. (Smith 1994)

4. Pharmacosm[130] = mimetic conjuration + theopoetics = Liminal portal space. This is where the performers then become the navigators. (Smith 1994)

5. Communitas[131] = people/group + structure removal + successfully navigated and controlled pharmacosm, destination reached or new aspect of portal being shown (image 13 is an illustration of how Communitas is achieved.)

Once I had constructed my theory in consideration of these frameworks (image 13), I applied it to case studies in both physical (footage) and online (Twitter) observation. I then analysed tweets and respondent data to explore self-reported experiences of live performance. Tweets fell into to two overarching themes, A and B, both with three subsections:

A) Energy and Movement (Atmosphere/external/movement/action)

- Explosion and release (ER)
- Implosion and collapse (IC)
- Defiant and unyielding (DU)

[130] In live performance settings.

[131] In live performance settings.

B) Emotion and Biology (Personal/internal/Emotion)

- Living (LCR)
- Dying (DY)
- Liminal (LUI)

Both A and B formed connection between the immaterial and material - the immaterial generated material and measurable responses. The materiality of *'Quantum modulation affects mood rather than just trying to manipulate attention' (Goodman 2010:144).* Music manipulated the mind and body. Grime's sonic properties are effective at doing this quickly. The music enables a higher level of expression and provides freedom for the body at play (if not conforming to ideals of hyper masculinity). This can be cathartic and assist with purging emotion, as can reciting lyrics. Relatability of lyrics also contribute to a sense of identity and validation.

In this chapter, I examined popular dance movements observed, tweeted about and reported by respondents; finding that men and women dance differently to the music, for example men moved more rigidly. This may be an effect of the high BPM[132] also coupled with the lack of sensuality associated with femininity. In addition, it may also be related to performing masculinity according to internal colony and Black Public Sphere norms.

Live performance can be linked into sociology of religion frameworks, as it provides meaning for attendees. Live performance, its portals, liminal space and Communitas is an example of how the religious/spiritual presents, in what appears cultural. It can enhance an attendee's sense of purpose, meaning and community in their lives. I propose Grime's key sonic characteristics form part of fans' and performers' SFT (chapter four). It marks out the sonic priorities, soundscapes, fantasies, social norms and emotions for a collective of people in a particular era of time and significantly, validates them. It helps them make sense of their lives,

[132] Beats per minute.

world and existence, much like Mbiti's (1991) proposition of the purpose of Africanised religion and the role of materiality and immateriality in it.

This research found that whilst the music triggered memories for listeners, it also operated to physically bring listeners back into close proximity to each other, implying that the SFT is a constant and ultimate marker of collective existence, with the potential to bring the material and immaterial together. It also shows one's desire to become submerged/engulfed in their own SFT and disengage from the current marginalising social structures (anti-structure/transcendence) imposed on people from internal colonies.

In live performance, the energy inside a portal into liminal space is a constructed and controlled soundscape, navigated by performers. It enables bodies to play, be taken on a journey and have material existence validated in an alternative ontology. Using movement as text, I explored the embodiment of Grime and how this relates to Black Atlantic religious discourse genealogically. Many movements observed are linkable to Caribbean and US folk/religious traditions, particularly relating to enslaved Africans under French control. Data revealed particular sounds stimulate particular movements, much like Yoruba musicoreligious understandings of music and movement.

Data and data collection showed that technology can interfere with liminal space and Communitas engagement. Simultaneously, online spaces provide an alternative space where people can offload, articulate their feelings and display their experiences, achievements and values. I would argue that online spaces such as Twitter are more like a repository rather than a portal as there is no journey. This aspect of technological use should be further investigated.

Live performance at smaller events is unmitigated by the (commercial) industry, and the performer(s) have direct access to the attendees (before and after performance), even if the portal and journey aspects are lacking. This suggests attendees may be seeking something different in these locations (camaraderie and male bonding space). Now that I have examined

the *power* of music, materially and immaterially, contemporarily and ancestrally, I will move on to conclude this project. *Is Grime hallowed?*

Conclusion - RWD

This interdisciplinary project carved out a new narrative that centred marginal voices challenging British mainstream perceptions and understandings of Grime. In doing so, it contributed to a range of scholarly debates across fields, including musical subcultures and subalternity. Using Foucault's (1997) definition of genealogy as an instrumental framework to this piece, I brought together the substantive issues of music, 'race' and subalternity that intersect Grime. Significantly however, I took this further to explore the religious/spiritual, and how this links with religious/spiritual practices and perspectives across the Black Atlantic and West/Central African musicoreligious practice, by incorporating Hall's (1978) internal colonies and Baker's (1996) Black Public Sphere.

This concluding chapter endeavours to evaluate the effectiveness of the research methods chosen and to summate the data chapter findings, before explicitly answering the original research questions outlined in the introduction and chapter three. The research questions enable the overarching project question *'Hallowed be Thy Grime?'* to be answered. Before closing this chapter, suggestions for future research will be offered.

Research Methods – reflections

The methods employed in this project, supported and facilitated the possibility of experimental Musicological Discourse Analysis (MDA). This method used building blocks from popular music studies, ethnomusicology and audio culture. This aspect of the analytical framework mapped onto what respondents said about the music, what was witnessed at events and lyrical/sonic content. This particular method enabled an increasingly holistic view in understanding what music did for scene members and what were musical points of significance. MDA facilitates an analysis ranging from movement, lyrics/sonics, respondent feedback and online comments, each as text. Significantly, MDA enabled the possibility to

find what Sylvan (2002) refers to as the sociocultural norms within a group's collective understanding of music – a baseline to work from. In the context of this project, it facilitated an entry point into the Black Public Sphere and internal London colonies, but also into the ways, roots and routes, cultural practices and embodiment reveal themselves in the present locational context.

Interviews and observation both assisted in creating this baseline by enabling in-depth exploration of the music. Significantly, the triangulation within this method minimises respondent bias by acquiring feedback on the music from multiple people who did not feel they had to alter their expression (physically or online) because a researcher was present. MDA provides both depth and breadth. MDA foregrounds the musicological elements of music that are largely lost in sociology or cultural studies. This combined method and genealogy concept, facilitated the contextualisation of Grime; by identifying the genres of music, institutions and practices that have influenced its aesthetic.

Lena's (2012) AgSIT model served as an additional complementary overarching framework shaping all data chapters. It made exploring Grime's musical, social and cultural developments possible teleologically, to garner an understanding of its expansion (both within its subcultural context and with reference to its reception by mainstream Britain), and to ascertain its values, spaces and politics (chapter five); demography (chapter six); Africanised religious/spiritual and/or folk practices (chapter seven); and connectedness to the Black Public Sphere and internal colonies.

Mbiti's (1991) framework enabled cultural practice to be examined in spiritual contexts, through the use of tangible and intangible. It enables genealogical links to be made with overt religious practice from folk traditions to contemporary culture. It also provided a framework through which to explore how fans made sense of their existence, the world and the transformative and affirmative possibilities found in Grime. The overarching frameworks used for this piece were best suited to the nature of this project. They are arguably

Afrocentric in approach, given that they seek to understand marginal existence through understanding the past. These genealogical/teleological/discourse analytic approaches enables holistic exploration and understanding of a marginalised subject, peoples and their cultural production.

Data Chapter Arguments

Chapter four illustrated that Grime has ancestral diasporic links to music, culture and practice. It provides a sense of identity for Black youth who participate and have an understanding of classed based oppression for White working class youth (Bramwell 2015b). Paying homage to those who have gone before (ancestors) is an African religious principle (Mbiti 1991). Grime draws from familiar sonic and cultural practices common to music from the Black Atlantic (Gilroy 1993) and Black music streams (Lena 2012). Grime's genealogy (i.e. the history, journey of music streams and musical families) is intimately linked to cultural elements that inform its musical conventions, sociocultural norms, practice and institutions (drawn from the Black Public Sphere).

Grime inflects the Black Public Sphere's trajectory with contemporary cultural and locational aspects. It provides a space for pride in one's material reality, knowledge and a subcultural space to just be. It contributes towards affective investments and identity formation, the development of personal meaning and collective connections, across racial and ethnic boundaries within internal colonies. The music itself is a metalanguage that communicates with the present whilst dialoguing with the past. It is a SFT[133]. Grime communicates a specific existence (i.e. London colonial realities, pastimes, comedy and aspirations but also disorientation, fear and dread) in an uncertain and ever changing social environment. MDA (and other ethnographic techniques employed here) enable the examination of genre to

[133] Sonic Footprint Timestamp

reveal that it captures the constellation of history, the contemporary and societal, intersectionality and demography. Loudly, Grime validates existence through historically familiar cultural practices, drawing from and feeding back into the Black Public Sphere and celebrating internal colonial existence. This process is musical, but given the social nature of genre and the material upliftment experienced by subcultural members, Grime *IS* Hallowed.

Exploration in chapter five revealed Ag&S[134] Grime provides members freedom in 'informal' spaces and processes (material and immaterial). These were often *taken opportunities* for marginalised youth to experiment and exhibit their talents and perspectives. Musically and socially, Grime illustrates innovation, experimentation, creativity in accordance with *Merton's (1957) Deviance Typography* (image 9, chapter five), but also elements of conformity. Participation provided a sense of hope and value for marginalised core members and fans (Lena 2012, image 10, chapter five). The significance of music as a source of expression in oppressive systems, makes it comparable to other genres of music in the Black Atlantic. The reduced opportunities for upward mobility, gentrification of poorer areas, mainstream fear of young people and the subsequent social capital gained through strategic essentialism, all have a role to play in Grime and may be comparable to the social and political challenges that led to Hip Hop's emergence in Post-Industrial USA (Rose 1994), or the function of Lovers Rock in Britain (Shabazz 2011). Grime is another variation of the changing same - the Long Shadow (Weheliye 2005) objecting in the face of Eurocentric normalcy, i.e. the projection of civility or utopia. This project revealed the processes to maintain this façade are alive and well in the politics surrounding Grime (chapter five).

Grime provided a method for core respondents to find meaning and purpose in their daily lives, and, in some cases improve their material realities within oppressive capitalistic structures designed to quarantine colonial residents. The opportunities, careers, respect and economic reward that partaking in Grime afforded respondents, one can argue fulfils

[134] Avant garde and Scene based

Runciman (1966) and Merton (1957) models for social advancement. It makes apparent Grime's *hallowed* function in social and economic contexts, but also in terms of cultural capital and self-esteem.

'…*there was a real pride within a lot of the Grime MCs' Hattie*

Fans and core members became cultural agents and drivers of both scene and aesthetic. This contributed to the Black Public Sphere and generated validation amongst peers. Grime created British Punk-like energy, which created *hallowed* spaces of understanding and communality among fans in the internal colonies. Paradoxically however, informal use of technological development threatened authenticity and the *sacredness* of the Black Public Sphere and it sociocultural norms.

In the context of demography, chapter six revealed that, for Black youth, Grime is both *hallowed AND* not. Despite Grime music's ability to empower members, provide livelihoods and influence im/materiality, it is not shielded from interference, dispossessive practices and low intensity terror, colonisation and reorganisation (Columbusphere) rooted in imperialism and patriarchy. This was interrogated under hooks' (1992) *eating the other,* Garner's (2007) *Introduction to Whiteness* and an exploration of the philia/phobia binary. The interference of oppressive regimes internalised by the group and manifests in horizontal violence intraracially for Black respondents along the intersectional strands of colourism and gender. It is damaging to the psyche and prohibits cultural practice and continuity. The interference with the material and immaterial alters how marginalised peoples make sense of their existence. Using Mbiti's framework for Africa religion, it becomes apparent that interference tampers with their cultural and spiritual practice. Grime is a male dominated scene and young men vie for the alpha position for themselves or their crew. White men and women in embedded Grime lose respectable whiteness, become masculinised and culture bearing. Women are given very few opportunities to enter and/or centre themselves. To achieve agency, women masculinise themselves.

Gender and sexuality are areas worth looking into in more depth in future research. Homosexuality and femininity are constructed as oppositional to masculinity. They were often conflated and used lyrically to indicate inferiority (applied as derogatory terms). So whilst this space is *hallowed* and provides a sense of identity and belonging for some, it does this at the exclusion of others. Thus it recreates the oppressive practices currently operational in British society that this group seek to avoid. Varying degrees of homophobia, colourism and sexism are prevalent within the scene. Those may have ideological links to genres and practices preceding Grime and this is also another area of future research; how does ideology shape genre, sound and music streams? What are the genealogical links?

Chapter seven revealed the *hallowed* nature of Communitas and the significance of synchronicity with other people, energies, emotions and biological responses during live performance. This is where Mbiti's Africanised religious concept comes to the fore to illustrate that cultural practice is spiritual in live performance settings. Using audio culture, sociology of religion and anthropological concepts, this chapter elucidates that there is something immaterial and emotive which happens in liminal (live performance) space that produces material responses. Some responses are traceable ancestrally, within the Black Atlantic. Much like Griots and Chantwells, core members are valuable to opening, navigating and leading one to a *hallowed* and communal experience of Communitas. Core respondents made music to purge their emotions and were competent in predicting fans' responses to music they made. They also had collective vision when working collaboratively.

> *'…Those who make songs and those who consume songs are well attuned to potentially spiritual or religious sounds and messages communicated by popular music. This attunement is not simply thematic, but operates at the kinaesthetic and auditory levels of sound and soundscape.' (McClure 2011:5)*

Before performances, performers would empty themselves and respond accordingly to crowd energy. This has parallels with Yoruba practices of making oneself available as a vessel

for possession by deities (not a case I am not arguing here). Performers navigate attendees through the portal into liminal (live performance) space. In the actual moment of the music, nobody is excluded, all involved are taken along to reach the destination. In Judeo-Christological frameworks, my proposed theory relating to the performer/crowd relationship could be comparable to Moses parting the sea leading the Hebrews safely to a new destination; or a shepherd - a protector of sheep whose flock follow him for reasons of safety.

Navigating liminal space, the performer's actions and choices adhere well to Smith's (1994) Afrodiasporic exploration of religion using the tools available to heal or harm intended recipient(s). The music itself also links to Gaskin's (2016) Cosmogram and the use of the circular (sonic) to express and revisit the past, and the journey of the human soul (chapter one). Significantly, both Smith (1994) and Gaskin's (2016) religious/spiritual interpretation are linked genealogically to the Bakongo/Kongo/Congo region.

The energy inside a portal of liminal (live performance) space, forms a constructed and controlled soundscape that enables bodies to play, be taken on a journey and have material existence, related sensibilities and knowledges validated. Embodiment of music in this space present as a performance of identity, and in some cases, generate movements with links to Afrodiasporic musicoreligious practice and/or Black Atlantic folk cultures. This space enables direct connection to (immaterial) diaspora force (Gilroy 1993), the current locational realities, sensibilities and articulation of Black Public Sphere knowledges. Portals of liminal (live performance) space and Communitas access a constant, independent of conventional time. It accesses a SFT that has material and immaterial impact. Data evidences that this immaterially generates affective investments and later triggers memories; materially it operates to physically bring attendees back into close proximity to each other in live performance settings. Collective participation in meaning making through alternative communication, gesture, dance, sonics etc., invites a space of equality through dissolving hierarchies and creating anti-structure (Turner 2012).

Now the chapter findings and arguments have been summated, I use these findings to answer the specific research questions outlined in the introduction of this thesis.

Research questions – The Answers

1. What are the musical, technological and social influences on Grime and its development?

Informality, innovation and alternative; ARE the approaches and sensibilities that significantly influenced the musical, technological and social development on Grime (chapter five). This outlook is central to DIY subcultures. Ingenuity, the draw of capitalism and monetary reward, the desire to achieve on one's own terms, validate oneself, their peers and heritage are all key influences (adhering to Runciman 1966 and Merton 1957) that speak to the realities of people forging a path to economic security from subalternity. This outlook and lived experience are represented through the sounds, lyrical delivery, distribution and circulation techniques employed within the subculture. Technological advances and democratisation had a unique effect on Grime in ways earlier DIY genres had never experienced. These advancements facilitated cultural agency and produced auteurs, through accessing games consoles, mobile phones, computers and (pirated) software. These advancements enabled multiple and democratised input into the Black Public Sphere. Technological democratisation is paradoxical however. It created easy access to the immaterial, which is considered both good and bad with regard to authenticity (chapter five) and also relating to capturing live performance (chapter seven). The musical influences of Grime were most closely related to musical families of the Black music stream, i.e. Jungle, Garage, Grimy Garage, Hip Hop and Bashment. Bass, space and speed are key features to the music, in addition to its cyclical nature. Grime's influences were the 'complex simplicity' found in music (chapter four). The

specificity of Grime and its Sonic Footprint Timestamp (SFT) were also closely linked to NILA[135] and SLSA[136] (chapter four).

2. What do 'Grime' culture's origins tell us about Black (/inner-city) subaltern existence in London at the turn of the 21st century?

Critique (Foucault 1997) shows that Grime's origins give insight in into the continued and sustained inequality prevalent in British society and the devastating effects of gentrification on internal colonies. Britain still feeds on its own. Music is one of the least expensive ways to produce art and is nurtured in internal colonies. This is a consistent factor with Black musics created in the West, where race and class oppression is found - a trait of modernity. Sonic properties of Grime demonstrate gentrification, fast change, and post-industrialism (SLSA). Grime AgSIT[137] (Lena 2012, image 6) development illustrates that subaltern existence is food for mainstream Britain. It feeds on the material realities of colonial residents through exploitative structural economic, social, educational systems AND immaterially through consuming, reorganising cultural production and knowledges, contaminating them with projections of an imagined other (Columbusphere) (chapter six).

Grime's origins illustrate that culture, religion/spirituality (through an African diasporic lens) and Gwaltney's (cited in Kelley 2004 - that's the joint) idea of Black ways of doing things to navigate structural inequalities, is still prevalent and integral to one's knowledge of the world and manoeuvrability in relation to it. It aligns with Mbiti's (1991) proposition that culture and Africanised practice are flexible enough to survive oppressive systems (chapter one) e.g. religion, folk, culture. Under oppressive systems small gestures create momentary breaks. They absorb oppressive systems and traditions and convert them into something new

[135] Narrative Insight Lyrical Analysis

[136] Sonic Locational Soundscape Analysis

[137] Avant garde, Scene, Industry, Traditional lifecycle.

(Perkinson 2005), but still traceable genealogically. Grime speaks to resilience, innovation and ingenuity, perseverance and demanding visibility. The desire to reconfigure the body and reality/constellation through the use of music still exists. Technology enables more possibility and powerful techniques of portal entry (chapter seven). Grime speaks to the power of the Black Public Sphere as a source of alternative ontology and a space to be, to know. It also shows us that poverty is problematised and orchestrated by the mainstream licensing policies, e.g. NEETs, irrespective of innovative attempts by colonial residents to navigate this (chapter five). The desire to be heard, accepted and validated is universal.

3. What role does Grime's subcultural contestations and coalescences play in constituting communal and personal identifications, fan practices and affective investments?

Musical collectivism is a crucial feature, a timestamp creation to document the lived experience of young people at the turn of the 21st century (SFT) (chapter four). The timestamp is material and immaterial. It generates affective investments, brings people back together in physical space and brings fans back to the memories and emotions of when the song was first encountered (chapter seven). If forgotten, it imprints in the subconscious, and is reactivated upon hearing again. From its marginal position, Grime is crucial for collective identity, knowledge and understanding of a world perspective (chapters four to seven). It contests the marginal position that those in the internal colonies have been allocated, and embraces itself on its own terms. Alternative and subterranean techniques and knowledges facilitate ways of being, adhering to Black Public Sphere ontology. The Black Public Sphere is a point of reference through which colonial residents communicate with other colonial residents and members of the diaspora to generate new forms of positive self-regard. Problematically, this can be done by oppressing differing intersectional strata of internal others.

Grime, coalescing around moments of collectively, provides the opportunity to perform identity through dance (chapter seven), or drawing on cultural capital available (chapters four

to six), to create and maintain institutions recognisable within the Black Public Sphere and/or British society.

Affective investment is rooted in familiar or foreign soundscapes (chapter six, seven), interest in or celebration of diaspora and/or internal colony cultures and practice, and a sense of Britishness denied by the mainstream (chapter four). Grime enables the creation of friendships, material and immaterial. Fan practices lead to careers and investments in peers, competition, and innovative rejection of some elements of mainstream British expectations (chapter five).

4. In what ways and to what extent do lyrical references, symbolic discourses, sonic characteristics and/or performative dimensions of Grime constitute subversive or normative meaning making with respect to politics, religion/spirituality and social relations of race, class and gender?

Grime makes hidden Britain visible. Symbolism works to deconstruct the rigidness and implicitness of Whiteness with Britishness and depicts alternative British narratives with regard to race and class in particular. The sonic extremity reflects the soundscapes of the colonies (chapter four). Despite no clear ideology or political agenda such as British Punk's anti-establishment/royal/Thatcherism stance, I still argue that Grime is political. The music itself *IS* political, it is subversive and resistive to mainstream constraints and unapologetically so (chapter five). Grime seeks to validate its communities and the materiality of the embedded lived experience hidden from dominant narratives of Britain and Britishness. It seeks to make itself visible through innovative informal guerrilla tactics that are increasingly difficult to police owing to technological democratisation. It dares to speak out on its own terms. Whilst seeking economic security, Ag&S Grime does not aspire to capitalist ideas of expensive material possessions, but for core members' economic autonomy. This ideological standpoint illustrates the need for basic security in a society designed for colonies to fail.

Ag&S Grime openly rejected the champagne lifestyle, preferring to speak for themselves to themselves.

The dominant sonic characteristics of Grime and their ability to manipulate the physiology and physicality of the body, have the *power* to momentarily override political structures and reconfigure the constellation of the body (chapter seven). Grime is a mechanism that has roots in African religious/spiritual and Africanised folk practice that connect time, space and Diaspora Force (chapter four, seven). Through Sonic Dominance, the biological constellation is altered to promote self-actualisation, oneness and euphoria. This project elucidated the *power* of music and how the material body and immaterial portal, created through sound and community, operate in the moment and the importance of the performer's role within it (chapter seven).

Whilst the music validates class realities and celebrates Black British identity, gender and sexuality inequalities are accepted and normalised. Colourism also informs masculinity. These factors imply a degree of fragility for the construction of masculinity. Therefore, in the context of Grime, the search for meaning, power, subversion and transfiguration is dependent on the oppression (real or imagined), of other marginalised groups making aspects of the genre problematic (chapter five). Questions still remain around gender, sexuality and colourism that need to be explored in future research. Paradoxically however, Grime also enables multicultural bonding, at least at superficial levels, and a class consciousness and could operate as a bridge to deeper understandings of aspects of class based and racial issues (chapter five, six).

Hallowed be thy Grime?

Yes… and… no…

The theme of materiality and immateriality, the dualistic approach in Afrodiasporic religious and spiritual understanding, is central to the idea of oneness and wholeness of the universe (Mbiti 1991). The data mirrored this. It revealed a very material and embedded scene, grounded in both the realities of internal colony life, but also informed by the knowledges and sensibilities informing the Black Public Sphere. Both aspects are of crucial importance to the full understanding of the scene.

In the moment of live performance where subcultural practices coalesce, *Energy and Movement* and *Emotion and Biology* (chapter seven) facilitate the linking of the material and immaterial in liminal space, and, connect to the Diaspora Force present in the Black Public Sphere. Even outside of the moment, daily practice and application of knowledge can provide identity and meaning (chapter five). This illustrates the spirituality in everyday practices and perspectives, and also at the moment of music engagement.

Ag&S Grime music, participation and cultural practice *ARE* unmitigated truth and sensibility, expressing both the material and immaterial realities of the colonies, their perspectives, sensibilities, knowledges, soundscapes and sound habitat. Within its marginalised position, the force of its immaterial sonic design is used to hijack spaces, bodies and mood, its power (at high volumes) to be felt vibrating inside the material body. It provides a sense of agency and identity, locationally and ancestrally.

Through portals, Grime validates the existence of those in the colonies marginalised by the mainstream. It provides freedom to play, feel and to express oneself in ways words cannot and society does not permit (chapter five, seven). Liminal space is like a porous filter or membrane that connects the material body and colonies, with the immaterial Black Public Sphere and Diaspora Force to create intra-diasporic and intra-colonial dialogue. Here, is where individuals operating in these physical spaces, knowledges, sensibilities and practices, find meaning. Subterranean and alternate communicative techniques, manual and technological, enable internal colony residents to communicate with each other through the

Black Public Sphere and their own economies of knowledge, capital and meaning (chapter five).

These processes and spaces contribute and continue to build immaterial and alternative knowledge, epistemology and ontology that are VALIDATED independent of mainstream British society. It sustains the *Long Shadow* (Weheliye 2005) refusing to go quietly (Perkinson 2005). Grime is both resistance AND not resistance. It is resistance in response to mainstream structural intervention by remaining fluid and informal (chapter five). Paradoxically, it is not resistive because it does not care considerably about, or overly seek acceptance from the mainstream, until it intersects with capitalist structures (chapter six).

Ag&S Grime's vastness of space, bass, fast tempo and lyrics scream internal colony existence - lost in vastness (space) but determined to be heard (agency, boasting), eerily alone in space, but consumed by claustrophobic fear and dread (bass). The potency of the bass and urgency of the lyrics, in particular, are physically and emotionally pushed to the fore for transmission. Syncopated rhythm is resistance, disorientation, challenging the dominant beat, hitting the off-beat to introduce uncertainty (chapter four), reflecting the informal routes and innovation used to navigate material realities in uncertain and ever changing social environments (chapter five). Percussive sounds, firmly rooted in African diasporic musical practice, provide energy, competition to rhythm, propelling a forward motion. It includes call and response and dance; all serve to resist, play, feel, BE, express and articulate, individually and/or collectively (chapter seven).

Grime is problematic. Grime is a truth that connects to the Black Public Sphere, it enables intra-diasporic, intra-colonial conversations, global/locational conversations and the possibility of more fluid identities, connectedness and solidarity (Rose 1994, Gilroy 2003, 1992, Weheliye 2005, Ingram 2010 – cited in Goodman, George 1999, Sullivan 2013 Goodman 2010) mainly in relation to nation and location (chapter six).

This project illustrates how the religious/spiritual can be found in subcultural practice and enhances fans' sense of purpose, meaning and community in their lives. Grime's SFT, marks out the sonic priorities, soundscapes, fantasies, social norms and emotions for a collective of people in a particular era of time that is inserted into the Black Public Sphere and become part of its Diaspora Force going forward.

Reflections and Future Research?

This research project opened up a series of questions and ideas that could not be fully explored here. As a result, in addition to suggestions throughout this project, I propose future areas of research that would assist in driving important work forward in Blackness in Britain, but also debates in subalternity and subcultural practice.

Technology

The data found that online spaces provide a neutral space where people can offload and articulate their feelings, display achievements, seek validation and support. I propose spaces such as Twitter are more like a repository rather than a portal, as there is no journey or destination to reach. Online spaces and the impact of the internet is still a relatively new area of study and more research could be done into the 'portal' like nature of online spaces, to explore how they document subcultural practice and scene development.

The examination of technology in Grime revealed it facilitated informality and accessibility to safe or validating spaces within formal/structural oppressive systems (chapter five). However, in the context of documentation for displaying cultures (live performance), it disconnects from the communal liminal space necessary to achieve Communitas and thus, the *hallowed* experience (chapter seven). The impact of capturing image or footage for the purpose of displaying cultures online vs the materiality of the embeddedness of (Grime or)

being in the moment, is another area of consideration as people move from the experiential to the perceptive, from unmitigated enjoyment to mitigated consideration of how it appears for others. This raises questions about image management and how one curates their content online to present their best selves. It also suggests technology can easily capture the episteme of the eye and the ear, and future advancements may eventually progress to capture the experiential. Technology (democratised) is currently still unable to capture the fullness of experientially, requiring the person capturing the moment to disengage from the moment itself to make it suitable for technological capabilities and platforms.

Also of interest would be the experience of those viewing uploaded materials such as footage of a Grime event on social media. How does this new nomadic and immaterial connection to others operate in DIY subcultures? How do these affect human interaction and experience in real time? This project outlined how the internet operated in Ag&S Grime (chapter five), however the ability to capture footage presently has not been examined in the context of subcultural practice.

Technological democratisation alters who controls narrative. It reduces the need or possibility for an authority. How does this impact marginalised subcultural practice and what challenges does it present around authenticity? How has technological democratisation impacted subcultural practice compared to cultures previously? How does this retroactively impact on subcultures that previously did not have the internet or democratised technology? These examples engage the possibilities of technological immateriality on subcultural practice. More widely however, these areas of exploration are contributions to Black and general uses in the emergent digital humanities field.

This project presented men as those most engaged with technology. Women, and their uses of technology in music subcultural practice specifically, constitute an area worthy of further investigation. This can be investigated on grounds of gender, but also intersectionally, such as gender and race for example.

Blackness

The African British experience need more exploration. By African British, I refer to the immediate descendants of continental Africans who migrated to Britain since World War II. This is an under-researched area that has had implications for this project. The primary study of Black people in Britain since the Windrush is in the field of sociology. It overwhelmingly focuses on those who themselves, their parents and/or grandparents came to Britain from the Caribbean, or examines the impact of African-Caribbean or African-American influence on Black Britishness or British culture. This may reflect that the Caribbean had the largest population of African descended peoples arriving in Britain during the Windrush migratory period starting in 1948. Owing to Jamaicans being the largest group of Afrodiasporic peoples coming to Britain immediately after the Windrush, research tended to focus on Jamaicans in particular; their musical and linguistic influence (chapter two, six). In addition, Jamaican culture was sometimes appropriated by other Afrodiasporic youth in Britain obscuring the focus on other Black nationalities.

Over time the demographic make-up of diasporic peoples in Britain has changed. Nigerians are now the largest African descended group in Britain (Census 2011)[138]. Over the last decade in music subcultures, this is reflected in the increase in popularity of Afrobeat, Tribal and Funky House. It further exemplifies Haynes' (2013) point that musical sensibilities travel with people. Continental Africans have traditionally been researched under anthropology and Africans residing in Britain largely ignored sociologically. Whilst doing this project, I found difficulties obtaining research on African British youth, i.e. Black youth with West African parents or grandparents as opposed to Caribbean ones. Research into the (West) African British experience since the Windrush is desperately needed. Other African regions such as Congo, Kenya, Somalia, and other islands in the Caribbean would also make significant contributions. Covering these demographics, particularly for youth, would be a significant

[138] Office for National Statistics (2015).

contribution to Black British studies and British history, as people of African descent residing in Britain are not a monolithic group.

Extending this idea further, debates have taken place about the African diaspora, particularly African-Americans and people of African-Caribbean ancestry, appropriating continental African culture[139]. I argue that appropriating from source is an impossibility, and believe the cross conversational dialogue amongst the diaspora contributes to the Black Public Sphere and its material manifestations. However, if this line of arguments of intra-diasporic appropriation is to be seriously considered, it raises questions of appropriation in relation to African British artists being the most commercially successful Grime artists in number, when the use of music streams and genres informing Grime are more closely linked to the Caribbean and USA. Can this be considered cultural appropriation? Research into these ideas of intra-cultural appropriation may be a possibility of exploration, as can exploration of the nuances of ancestral routes and roots to Black Britishness.

Race

Whilst I have proposed contributions to Black British Studies specifically, other ethnicities' involvement in Grime should be explored. London's internal colonies are not exclusively Black and White. They are multi-cultural and multi-ethnic, therefore, consumption of Grime music reflects this. It may be useful to consider Asian or other European nationals not categorised as White Anglo-Saxon in Grime and their involvement (avoiding utopic and integrationalist approaches), particularly as Grime is enjoyed in continental Europe, the Americas and Japan.

[139] Gene, Z. (2015) and Jouelzy, (2015).

Gender

Gender is a substantial area of study to interrogate with reference to Grime specifically, and subalternity and music subcultural practice more generally. As outlined in this chapter, Grime is *hallowed*… for some. It is not intersectional. However, this is not to argue that young men should not have safe or exclusive spaces for themselves. Misogyny is still an issue within the scene. It is used to construct masculinity and has negative consequences in real terms for both young men and women (chapter six).

As outlined previously, I had to make conscious efforts to include women when soliciting interviews. Grime illustrates that Black women are internal others. In wider society Black women are also silent. Policies such as those identifying NEETs[140] target young working class men; education focuses on Black or White working class boys. Research on Grime Femcees and producers should be further explored. Owing to circulating in a Black and feminised space, my cousin's hair salon, I met a femcee unexpectedly by happenstance at the very end of this research project. By that point in the project, I was already resigned to the fact that I would not have any femcees in my research as I was no longer interviewing. No respondents could name a female Grime producer, I was unable to find any. The exploration of women in Grime and their relationship to music, within a male dominated industry is worthy of study. This would contribute to women and gender fields of study, particularly where it intersects race as womanism, and youth studies as girlhoods. Black women in Britain and youth practice in particular are unchartered areas; these voices are particularly silenced.

Femininity and colourism in youth cultures is also an area of exploration. Black women/girls and notions of femininity is an area worthy of study, particularly when examining the overwhelming data of racialised gender uncovered in this research project. Finally, as outlined and speculated upon in chapter six, White women entering Black male spaces and

[140] Not in Education, Employment or Training.

Black women largely avoiding these spaces is another area worthy of study, particularly when evaluating the colourist and racialised ways women in the scene are presented and represented.

Extending this research further, what is *hallowed* for women? Is there a genre of music which enables euphoria, transcendence and oneness for black women/girls in Britain or is it found in alternative subcultural practices, such as YouTube?

Dance and Performing Arts

This research explored music and movement. Future research on class, masculinity and dance in British musical subcultural practice would be an important area of study. Do notions of Blackness and working classness interfere with the male body at play? Do these constructs interfere with the achievement of *Hallowedness* and performance of identity? Whilst continuities with some feminised dance moves were linked to the Caribbean, USA and Afrodiasporic musicoreligious and folk practices, men observed tended to have smaller or more rigid movements. Is this related to British reservedness? Given the importance placed on the alpha male in Grime ideology, which implies power and control, control over one's bodily movements may be of significance and could contribute to advancing debates forward in psychology, gender studies, music and performance arts disciplines, and understandings of limited/popularised Blackness. This project also propels the debate forward in line with migratory patterns and how they inform dance and expression of identity.

Sexuality

In my interviews, with the exception of one respondent who referred to their husband, discussions around sexuality did not occur. I did not notice anything in tweets. However, I was not looking explicitly for this. Overt hetero-normative relationships featured in observational settings (chapter six) and featured in some MDA songs. As a result of

heteronormativity constructed as 'normal' in dominant discourse, it did not present extensively in my data and was for the most part overlooked. This is a weakness in my research. As an intersectional element of study, there should be research into sexuality and Grime. In MDA, one reference to homophobia surfaced. Is the incident of homophobia an ideological offshoot from antecedent genres of Dancehall and Hip Hop (which I stress are not entirely homophobic in nature)? How do these ideologies fit with more 'sexually inclusive' but 'racially restrictive' antecedent genres such as Electronic and Experimental music? Do race, racism, colonialism and slavery play a part in sexualised music ideology formation? Ideologies and music genealogies could be an additional area of study and consideration in the construction of genre. This could be an important push in sexuality, queer, LGTBQIA musicology, sociology of music and youth studies.

Disability

I did not explore disability. This is another weakness in my research. Madness (mental disability) was a theme on Twitter and in respondent data with reference to losing mental capacity or altered mental state in relation to the '*power*' of music (chapter seven). Wiley asserted he is not mad when challenging racism (chapter six). This speaks to the double consciousness and internal dialogue racism can inflict INSIDE the Black body, and, whilst not a disability elucidates the psychological impact racism can have. Interference in one's cultural practice by external forces is damaging to the psyche (chapter six).

I did not look explicitly for disability in tweets and therefore may have overlooked specific references to it. In MDA, there was a reference to allowing the music get inside the brain. Madness was generally presented as a positive thing, a reflection of the *power* of the music in these scenarios.

The only place physical disability surfaced was in MDA. It was expressed as an opponent being wheelchair bound as a result of wilful harm exacted by the MC spittin' on the track. This was

used primarily to assert alpha male status and uncovers ideas relating to disability, violence and masculinity. This could be another area of study, pushing the debate forward in disability, gender and youth studies.

Methods and Theories

Methodologically, theories proposed here should be tested to analyse other genres of music for consistency. MDA[141], informed by NILA[142], SLSA[143], im/material and Communitas[144]/portal, as methodological approach, should be employed for musical analysis to advance debates and provide new ways to interrogate the sonic and social properties of music in sociology and cultural studies. MDA would assist with music elicitation (Allett 2012) and help to pinpoint specific sonic components and additional factors that draw emotion from fans. MDA would assist in providing a universal framework to explore the sonic and related social practices in these disciplines.

To test MDA effectiveness, focus groups would enable discussion and interaction about a genre in more measured and quantifiable terms. Significantly MDA examines genre within its sociocultural context and therefore could guide a focus group to ensure everybody is speaking the same 'language'.

All research conducted in this project was uni-directional and involved a power dynamic with me as the researcher. This, in some contexts, can be a weakness. This method and theories proposed contribute to social science, cultural studies, humanities and media studies fields.

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[141] Musicological Discourse Analysis

[142] Narrative Insight Lyrical Analysis

[143] Sonic Locational Soundscape Analysis

[144] The breaking down of structures, where everybody is unified in the moment. The final destination inside the liminal space portal.

Above all, they present an alternative outlook rooted in Afrocentrism and provides a space to develop language to discuss and articulate music and cultural practice in new ways.

Policy

This research enters debates related to government policies and legislation regarding Black and working class British youth. It challenges the very idea of what constitutes NEETs. It highlights the racism and classism surrounding government policies and initiatives relating to the promotion of British cultural industries and night-time economies (chapter five). MPs consider creative and cultural industries crucial to the British economy and have been promoting them as integral to British economic growth since New Labour[145]. Simultaneously, the government criminalise the cultural practices of Black and colonial groups, stifling their economic potential and cultural chance. This is another area of important investigation and expansion.

The data touched on the international impact of Grime, where it is celebrated and enjoyed (e.g. Japan, Netherlands, and USA). Continuing the theme of genealogy - going forward, I want to map and examine in a postdoctoral project, Grime's global impact. This will highlight and make intelligible the opportunities missed by the British government with regard to capitalising on the cultural industries it purports to support; and to find ways for these cultural products to benefit internal colonies, Black Public Sphere and Britain economically and culturally.

Drops Mic

[145] Flew, T. (2012).

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Appendix

i. Playlist of selected songs
ii. Playlist of observation footage
iii. Lyrics for selected MDA songs
  a. Ms - Dynamite Boo
  b. Wiley - Its Wiley (Showa Eski)
  c. Dizzee Rascal - I Luv U
  d. Lethal Bizzle – Pow
iv. Information Leaflet
v. Consent Form
vi. Semi-Structured Interview Questionnaire
vii. Twitter Samples
viii. Event Samples
ix. Sample of thematic analysis – mind map
x. Glossary of Abbreviations
xi. Endnotes

Playlists

i. MDA Selected songs - https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1sdDFLh_rXdAyPRCItP3RxRH-VdbtOz0

ii. Observation footage - https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1sdDFLh_rXcE7FTtJASPgUkWIC6T-ZOD

MDA Lyrics

iii.a

http://www.justsomelyrics.com/1507934/ms-dynamite-boo-lyrics.html
Accessed 04/04/2015
Amended by me

Boo – Ms Dynamite

Ms Dynamite inside the place, Listen' to the Dynamite...
Ms Dynamite inside the place,... with ah Sticky.
And you know, And you know we gonna get the crowd hype
And you know, And you know we gonna get the crowd hype
And you know, And you know we gonna get the crowd hyper....
h h hyper..hy hy hyper. inside the place
hyper.. inside the place hy hy hyper
And we tell them...

We tell dem,

Get ah wid de wid de get ah with the drum,
Get ah wid de wid de get ah with the drum,
why fight an' galang, like you nah want some.
Let my lyrical tongue be your medicine. X2

Feel the bad gal bass,
Feel the bad gal bass injection.
Dis some Dj wid da boom selection,
This one's psychotic it should be sectioned.
It's the range, insane when we feel no pain,
Excuse while I get into your brain.
Let tha bass a vibrate them veins,
It'll fuck you up like it was cocaine, Cause-ah,
Dib ah Dee da Dy-Na-Mi-Tee to get the people get dem ah lively...

Chorus
And dem ah shout Booo inna you head,
Lyrical shot, get pop bwoi spread.
Gotta give you su'umb' dat everybody dread mek the gunman run an come cause I said. X2

Getta widda little bitta base and drum,
You know yah, so fuck da borah fuck da gun.
Becoz back in da day woz all about fun.
Takin ya bak on ma lyrical tongue, my only weapon.
Fuck powder fuck pills, a thrill, no cost don't kill
Cyan' stan still, I'm a lick ya wid a vibe that you can feel.

Becuz it's not about ah dem bad attitudes, and it's not about da bad vibes,
No matta who you are and no matta wat ya do,
You can get sum of our natural high.

it's not about dem bad attitudes, and it's not about da bad vibes,
No matta who you are, (and no matta) wat ya do...

An' mi no care wot ya crave, No dogs allowed in a de rave.
So certain breddahs must behave
And boy Please, Sort dem, fuckaries,
About ya grab breas' and batty and wonder why,
She gets wen ya so grabby grabby,
Tel him flea, if he step direspectfully (it's he)
Had enuff,
Tellin us, tellin me, tellin me, tell him flea.

Tho sum gyals think dem to nice,
Dey stan up innna place,
Demma pay big price.
dance what?!, When demma cold like ice.
Try screw but she bout as scary az spice,
Man inna venue demma 2 rah rah,
Wen dey wanna get it at a pu-na-na.
An I'm like cha, Coz dem blah blah,
Not interest, mi not a rah rah rah, rah rahtid,
Bumba bumba clart it
Gedda wid da rhythm, nah get me started.
Me nah cum fi vex, me just wanna rave, (rave)
Nah fuss nah fuss ta fight ah.
Girlfrend 'top, ya noise its not right ah.
Letting off ta every breddah in sight ah.
I don't mean ta b impolite a.
bit its like ya begga beggin'
Fi ah press tonight....

Listen to the dynamite,
Listen to the dynamite,
Listen to the dynamite, inside the place,
Its not about about tha violence
Not about the, drugs...
It's just about, about the love...
Love for the music, Love for the base...
There's no need...
For all this badness in the place.

Dib ah Dee da Dy-Na-Mi-Tee to get the people get dem ah lively BOOO

iii.b

Read more: Wiley - From The Drop Lyrics | MetroLyrics

http://www.metrolyrics.com/from-the-drop-lyrics-wiley.html accessed 04/04/2015
Amended lyrically to the version I am using.

Its Wiley (Showa Eski) - Wiley

Yeah Showa Eski
(Prodigal)

Most of them wait for the drop
Not me I'm in straight from the top
Wiley the Showa Eski them
Names are gone ring the bells and the off
I don't need syrup, I ain't got a cough
Wanna box, got eight in the loft
I should be on the TV much more
I know I got a face, what's what

It's a must to elevate and take that shot
If I score then I'm gonna be at the top spot
My flow, top notch
My lyrics, top notch
Might see me and I ain't got a watch
And I don't fear no one, I ain't gotta watch
Watch what? Test who?
I ain't part of a bulletproof vest crew
'Cause I walk with God, die when my time's up
Single file everybody, line up
Turn a new page, get righteous
I'm giving out Zip Files like a virus
I wanna thank them fans
That knew I had very good plans
Had tons of music album ready
But the label they didn't understand

I'm on another label, gave me control
I play it like a game in a console
I'm talented, how could you not know
I got a super kryptonite flow
But back to the bars that I wanna hear
Playing at the back of the car
We already know that's not for the chart
But it's what I done back at the start
And I still flow smart

Chorus
Its Wiley, Showa Eski
And none ah dem bwois cyan tes' me

Its Wiley Nobody left me
Cause I'm up with the best yeah I told dem X2

You got a problem, view your opinion
Might a be a hater, check all the symptoms
If I'm getting bigger in the game
Them man are slacking, why the hell should I bring them?
It's my kingdom, what are you thinkin'
Link a lot of girls so that's what I'm thinkin'
Run up on the stage drop one hook
Where's My Brother get a reload, that's what I'm thinking'
I'm the in thing, ask anyone who
Is in tune to the music I do
Give me a distinction, I raise the level up
High, believe me even you don't want to
I move ghost like Olu and Dimples
Keepin' it plain and simple
For the urban scene, I'm a symbol
Prove you can do it, money, jingle

Paper - chasing, in a a car racing
One of them big boys sets with the bass in
In a meeting bring the briefcase in
Full of dough like Puffy and Mase and
A little while back when Bad Boy ruled
Thirty-one years I've already been schooled
I didn't wanna end up in beef but my name's already been called

Chorus x2

Back to the bars that I like
Radio Rinse FM on a Sunday
People listen to Kiss on a Monday
Radio one every day not one day
One day I wanna strike light lightening
With a couple hits that are frightening
Im an odd watch like a breitling
Grime on the earth that's my ting
Don't bother hyping.

Im in a good mood semi one
Cause I didn't beg it from anyone
Let my talent talk ask anyone
Buy a big house for the fam like Jerry done
Pickney fe run round house like Kelly done
Ooh top shot the A3 like Terry done
Christmas ah come New vibe is a merry one
Everybody drunk yo look what the henny done
Cark up eyes red look at what the berry done

Berry done a lot for the mic ask anyone

Pineapple juice with Sherry wine
Cause I wanna learn to sing like Gerry done
Hang in the ends like Christine and terry done
no ends could you bar me
Can't make me bread like a sarnie
No yo,
'Cause I'm out in the club
With the gyaldem looking punani

Go to the straight to the zoot or the Bamboo Club
In my new garms from Armani
I'm a cool guy, R1, R6
Won't see man wingin' on a Harley
But you will see man in Trenchtown
Puffing on the high grade, visit the yard of Bob Marley
Old Volkswagen, all empty
Tell them the Father God sent me
I went from a Uno to a Bentley
I'm a hustler, haters resent me
I tell the soundboy, please don't tempt me
Your lyrical mind is empty

Chorus x2

Yeah Showa Eski

iii.c

http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/dizzeerascal/iluvu.html
Edited by me April 2015

"I Luv U" – Dizzee Rascal

I luv u u u
I Luv u u u
I luv u u u
u u
I I I...I..I..
I I Luv Luv Luv u u u

I Luv Luv Luv Luv u u u

[Dizzee Rascal:]
Yo If that girl know's where you stay thats poor
some whore banging on your door what for
pregnant? what're you talking about me for
fifteen, she's underage thats raw
and against law 5 years or more
now she wants a score and half of a draw
that's some kind of threat that you can't ignore
that whore got you pinned down to the floor
but its your own fault you said three magic words (i love you)
when thats the one for the birds
when you said that she forgot other boys
its over you better start buying the toys
there was no intention of her being wife
now she knows this that she's ending your life
its a real shame you got hacked by the whores
its a real shame that kid probably aint yours

[CHORUS]
[Dizzee Rascal:]
That girl' some bitch ya know
she keep calling my phone
she dont leave me alone
she just moan and groan
she just keep ringin me at home
these days i dont answer my phone

[Girl:]
That boy' some prick you kna'
all up in my hair
thinks that i care
keeps following me here
keeps following me there
these days i cant go no where

[Dizzee Rascal:]
alright, she's a bad girl ima boss doe
captain rusko with a crossbow
she came she got picked off yo
nah its not a love ting, get lost hoe
dizzy rascal come down like snow
with freezing cold flows like moscow
dumb hoe, get me upset, guns blow
bitch, you're not ready for skid row
bleap know dizzy rascal dig row
big feet feel the force of my big toe
i got no chaps, no chains not much doe
get juiced but you dont get love though
dont slap or you might get a co-co
jambo coming through like rambo
love ting takes two like tango
but she aint my wifey she can go

chorus

[Girl:]
Aint that your girl
[Dizzee:]
Nah it aint my girl
[Girl:]
I swear that's your girl
[Dizzee:]
Course it aint my girl
[Girl:]
She got juiced up
[Dizzee:]
oh well
[Girl:]
She got chat up
[Dizzee:]
oh well!

I swear thats your man
[Girl:]
I aint got no man
[Dizzee:]
You was with that man
[Girl:]
He was just ANY man
[Dizzee:]
He got hotted up
[Girl:]
oh well
[Dizzee:]
He got whacked up
[Girl:]

oh well!

[CHORUS]

[Dizzee Rascal:]
listen, i like your girl so you better look after your girl
or i might just take your girl and make your girl my girl
switch your girl with michelle
switch michelle with chantelle
play chantelle with shennele
lyrical clientelle but i aint a bow cat, i dont like the smell
im gonna go through a shell and make a boy feel unwell

that girl's from school, that girl's from college
that girl gives brains, that girl gives knowledge
that girl gives head, that girl gives shines
that girl gives bj's at all times
she looks decent, she looks fine
but dont talk about wifey she's not mine
she got battried, 6 in a line, believe me thats not a good sign

[CHORUS]

iii.d

http://www.lyriczz.com/lyrics/lethal-bizzle/16370-pow/
date accessed 04/04/2015 (edited by me)

POW – Lethal Bizzle

OooooOW
OooooOW
It's Lethal Da Bizzle Records
OooooOW
OooooOW
YEAH
It's Lethal Da Bizzle Records
OooooOW
YEAH UH
It's Lethal Da Bizzle Records uh
2004
YEAH
YEAH

Chorus
POW yea im lethal da b
POW if u don't know about me
POW better ask someone quickly
coz POW
yea im POW
yeaow POW

POW yea im lethal da b
POW if u don't know about me
POW better ask someone quickly
coz POW
yea im POW
yeaow POW

[FUMMIN]
What?! What?!
you're barking up the wrong tree
the spotlights on me
style of the fuma
howl with da moon
how u gonna bust if there's no room
wha its da style of da fume
get the dough
and move style with da fume
know I stab
right in da tune
dough involed im right in da mood

[D DOUBLE E]

ooooooh oooh
im da riddim im onnn
spit da lyric bang onnn
fit d riddim bang onnn
why your lyrics dem ah just drag onnnnnn
its me d kids are mad onnnn
when I clap mike u no its flame onnnn
[FEDE]
better get d game onnnn
2 get d game better cum n bring it onnnnnn

[NAPPA]
I'll crack your skull
leave u fucked up in da wheel chair
if u
try 2 chat this evil brer

and again

I'll crack your skull
leave u fucked up in da wheel chair
if u
try 2 chat this evil brer

Chorus

[JAMAKABI]
rude bwoy fi just seckle
don't let jamakabi ga draw fi d metal
not d gun
me draw for d belt buckle
I mek a bigga boy feel say im likkle
just swing my belt roun like a nun chukal
bus' your head n mek you blood start trickle
1 more lick
fi mek d pussy hole tumble
great d bredah with a fis' full ah knucle

[NEEKO]
kila kila
real real
niggas know d deal deal
don't care how u feel
I wil b cocking back my steel
strait
bullets bullets
run run
fire fire
bun
if u don't like killa killa N**ga
u can suck your mom

[FLOW DAN]
We start bun ah mc
more fire bun a batty boy mc
pik up mic and wan' distrispect me
man a gah step ina him face with my new nikies
16 bar
16 star
16 noob shot in a ya raas
right at the top
Dem ah little small raas
better high grade me ah bun
dem bwoi ah bun grass

Chorus

[Ozzie B]
me have a thing called desert eagle
mek me think evil
n waan fi kill people
yo
secon gun is a take nice
u cut a lie
me a gan take ya life fool
u wna cum n bare u tool
dat not da right tool
thats just any tool
alrite prik what it gonna be
come wid da money
u don't really want to beef

[FORCER]
any way
I told u already we nah play
spray da swag mc right away
his chatin ****
bout his got a AK
armhouse come down
n bwoy runs away
its 2 double 0 4
niggas don't play
streets all mine
make it false I will spray
u sound so gay
im gona call you fake
don't care your crew
bun dem any day

[DEMON]
you don't wanna bring armshouse
ill bring armshouse to your mums house

and you don't wanna bring no beef
bring some beef and loose some teeth

and again

you don't wanna bring armhouse
ill bring armshouse to your mams house
and you don't wanna bring no beef
bring some beef and loose some teeth

Chorus

[LETHAL B]
POWWW POWWW

OooooW

It's Lethal Da Bizzle Records

DA BIZZLE
(yeah) 2004
(yeah) EAST LONDONS FINEST

YEAAAAAH
YEAH

YOU NEED 2 KNOW

Fieldwork Information Leaflet

vi.

ATTENTION – GRIME MCs, GRIME PRODUCERS, GRIME FANS, GRIME BLOGGERS/REPORTERS ETC.

I am seeking interviewees, for research on the significance and impact of Grime music. If you are a Grime MC, performer, producer, promoter, or have participated in the Grime music scene and/or a Grime music lover, I would be very pleased if you would agree to be interviewed.

About Me

I am a PhD student researching the Grime music scene and I am interviewing Grime MCs**, Producers Grime Fans, Grime bloggers/reporters etc. as** part of my **research to find out what led to Grime's emergence, public reaction to it and its importance for members in the Grime scene. .** My research highlights youth experience, particularly in major/inner cities, in the UK over the last decade (approx.) and I want to explore how Grime music and subculture reflects these experiences.

About the Interviews

The interview will be about your involvement in the Grime, past and present- if you are still involved in the scene or if you have gone on to do other things. I Interviews will take place at your convenience either in person or if you prefer by Skype. Interviews are likely to take between 60 – 90 minutes, but can be a shorter singular session or split into two or three shorter sessions according to your preference. Interviews will be recorded (audio only) and interviewees will receive copies of the audio and transcript. You can also request that audio recording is not used – and I will simply take notes of the conversation.

Confidentiality

Your responses to interview questions will be anonymised, with names changed to pseudonyms unless you request otherwise. Any material quoted will use a pseudonym and other identifying details will also be anonymised. You may withdraw your consent to participate in this research at any time. You may also request (either at the time or later, retroactively) that particular portions of the interview not be quoted or referred to.

If you have questions about this research, you can contact me: Monique Charles, Doctoral Researcher, Neake81@gmail.com, 07*** *** *** @Neake81. You may also contact the faculty member supervising my research: Prof. Deborah Lynn Steinberg, Department of Sociology, University of Warwick, Coventry. Email: ******@warwick.ac.uk

Thanks,

Monique

WARWICK

Consent form

Please Initial Box

1. I have read and understand the information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason. ☐

3. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded. ☐

Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

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v.

Semi Structured Interview Questionnaire

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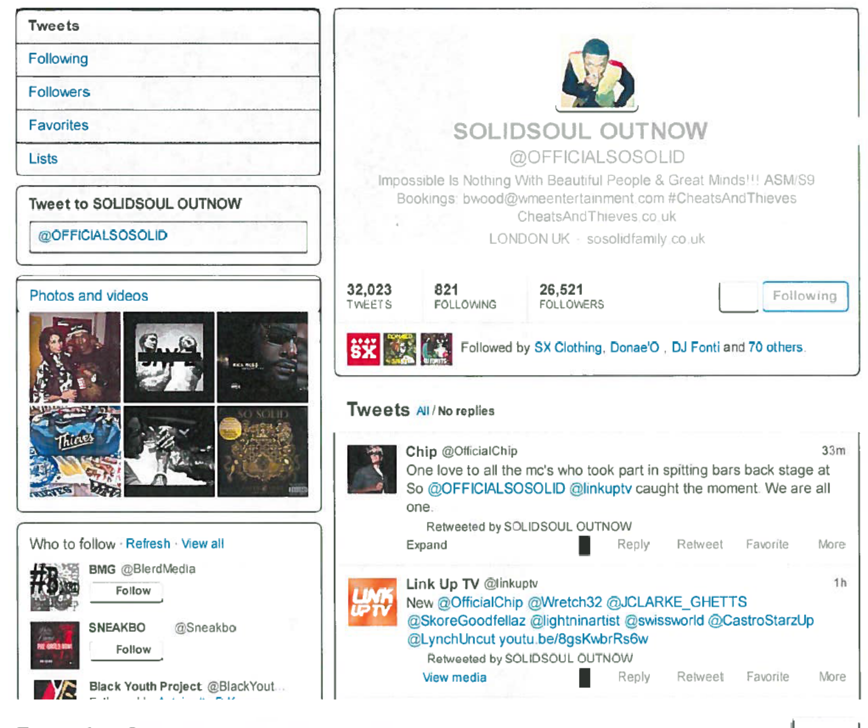
These questions have to address the Sonic/musical (inc. genealogy, technology, lyrics, intention), the social (inc. friendships, public reaction, growth of genre and subalternity), gender, race and the ecstatic.

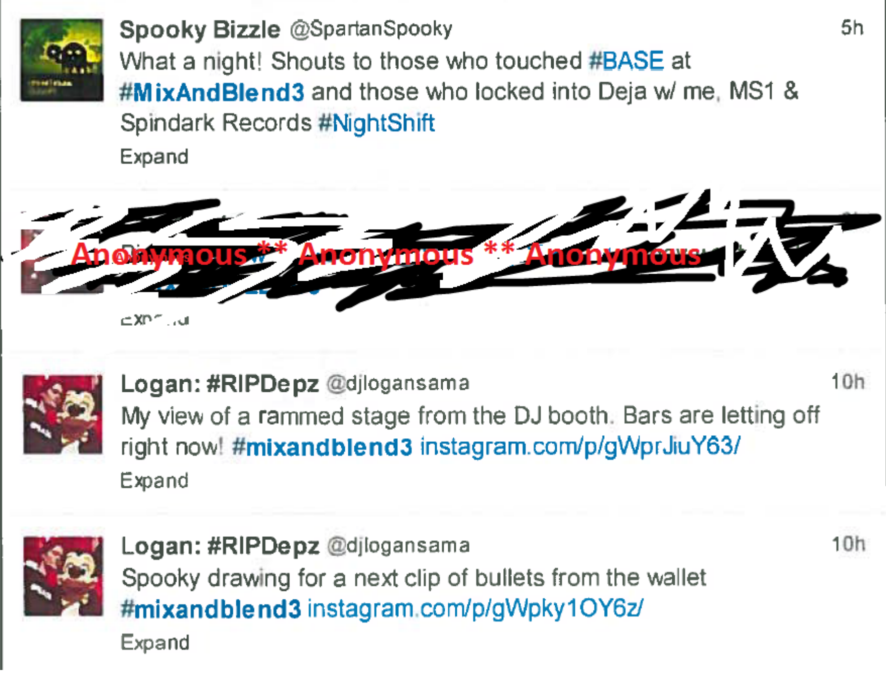
1. Did your involvement in Grime give you a career?
2. Tell me about you're involvement in Grime?
3. What is/was its appeal to you?
4. Tell me about yourself?
5. What was it like growing up at the time Grime emerged?
6. Who/What are your musical influences?
7. What prompted you to get involved in music?
8. Did you promote your music? If so how did you do this?
9. What was your experience of education especially in secondary school, your teenage years, friendships?
10. How did/do you feel about mainstream media portrayal of Grime (and young people)? Politicians/Religious Groups.
11. Did you find challenges promoting your work?
12. Did you see it as work?
13. What was growing up in your neighbourhood like?
14. Where you part of a crew or a collective? How did these friendships develop?
15. What was the race/gender breakdown of the collective?
16. What is the race/gender breakdown of the scene?
17. What inspires you?
18. What things are important to you?
19. What things were important to you starting out - have these changed?
20. Did you have any expectations for Grime (for yourself within it, for the scene in general)? Was it just a hobby?
21. What have you gone on to do since becoming Grime MC?
22. What equipment/instruments did you use when making music?
23. Where did/do you make music?
24. How important was MC battling?
25. Sound clashes - were there any?
26. Was representing yourself/crew/area-location an important factor in your MCing/music?
27. Do women and young girls show any interest in being part of the Grime scene? Why do you think that? Has this changed over time?
28. What sort of things did you MC about, (was there a feeling or message you wanted to evoke in music? Did that even occur to you?)
29. How did you approach music making and lyrical content?
30. What did making music do for you personally?
31. Is there anything you would like to add?
32. Where/who showed the biggest interest in the music you were making?
33. What did you want to be when you grew up?
34. What in your journey so far in your musical career brought you the most joy or happiness?
35. Were there venues or social places you could showcase your music?
36. Were/are there other Grime artists that you were inspired by or whose work you really enjoyed?
37. What is the best part of performing?

38. How do you feel when you perform?
39. LOTM did you ever attend this of similar style battles?
40. What equipment did you use to make music?
41. Where there particular sounds you wanted to use?
42. How did you promote your music?
43. Do you believe social media and pirate radio for important for Grime music? Why?
44. Did you write lyrics down?
45. Did you practice them regularly?
46. Where did you make music?
47. Was it a collective effort in music making?
48. When performing, how did you hype the crowd?
49. Did you have a preparation technique before a gig performance?
50. Did 696 affect your performance opportunities or income?
51. Were your friendships important in music making?

Twitter Samples

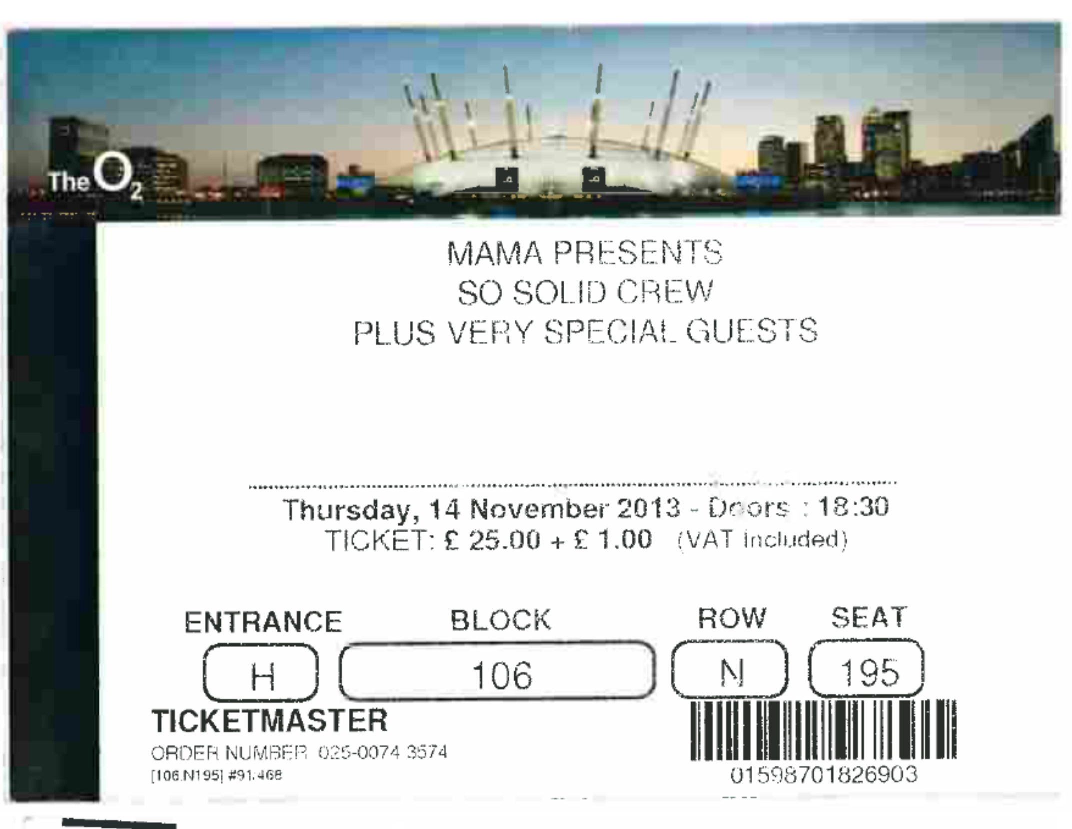
vii.





Event Samples

viii.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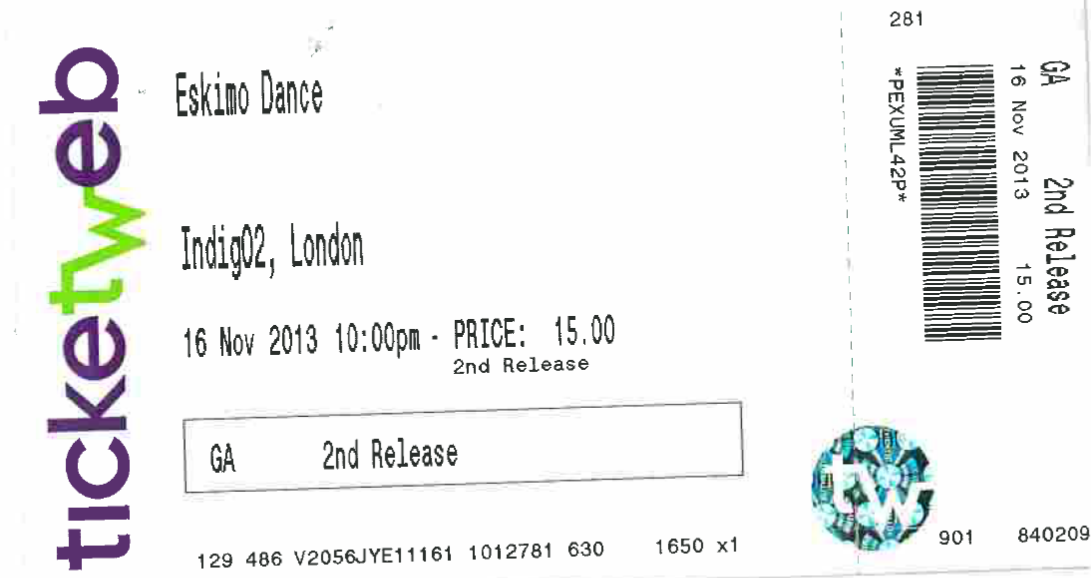
ticketweb
Eskimo Dance
Indig02, London
16 Nov 2013 10:00pm - PRICE: 15.00
2nd Release
GA 2nd Release
129 486 V2056JYE11161 1012781 630 1650 x1
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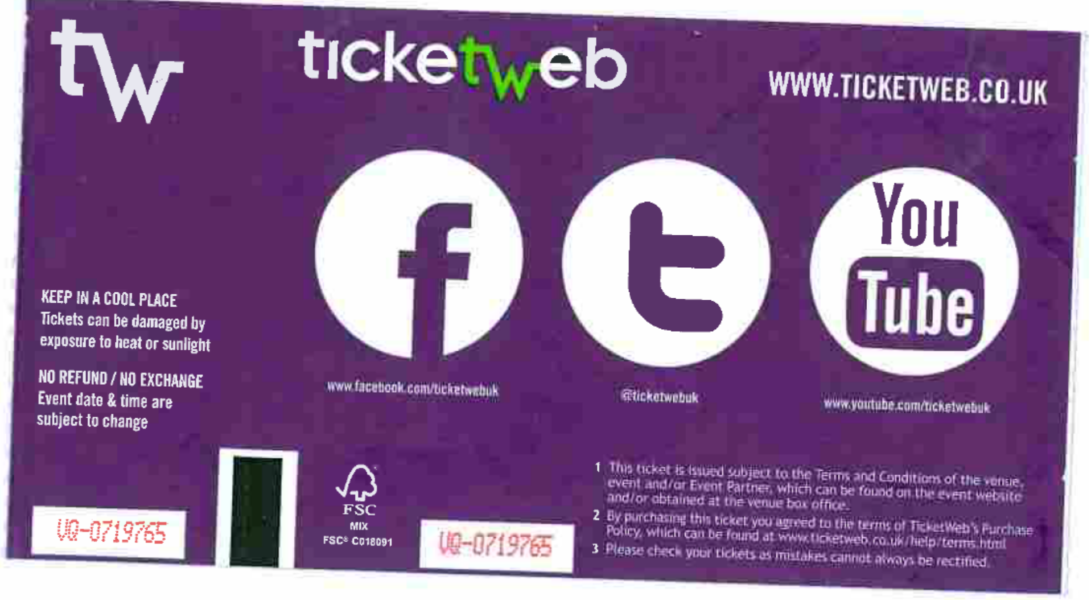
PEXUML42P
16 Nov 2013 15.00
GA 2nd Release
901 840209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1 This ticket is issued subject to the Terms and Conditions of the venue, event and/or Event Partner, which can be found on the event website and/or obtained at the venue box office.
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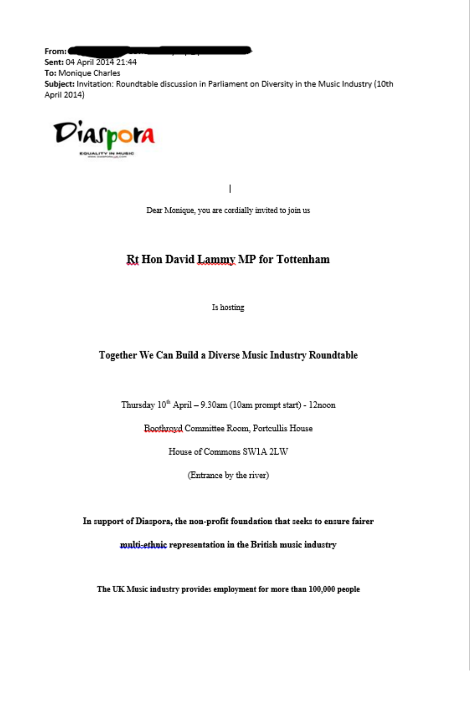
3 Please check your tickets as mistakes cannot always be rectified.



From:
Sent: 04 April 2014 21:44
To: Monique Charles
Subject: Invitation: Roundtable discussion in Parliament on Diversity in the Music Industry (10th April 2014)

Dear Monique, you are cordially invited to join us

Rt Hon David Lammy MP for Tottenham

Is hosting

Together We Can Build a Diverse Music Industry Roundtable

Thursday 10th April – 9.30am (10am prompt start) - 12noon

Boothroyd Committee Room, Portcullis House

House of Commons SW1A 2LW

(Entrance by the river)

In support of Diaspora, the non-profit foundation that seeks to ensure fairer multi-ethnic representation in the British music industry

The UK Music industry provides employment for more than 100,000 people

and generates £3.8billion a year, 95.7% of its workforce is white.*

This is an increase of 3.7% compared to the last research carried out in 2011.

At the current rate of change will there be any BAME representation in the music industry by 2020?

We present the business case to reiterate the importance of an inclusive music industry workforce, a self perpetuating economy of diverse businesses in this sector and unveil recommendations that can impact change.

Admittance by invitation only. Invitation is non transferable.

Please allow 15 minutes for security checks - entrance via Portcullis House Visitors Reception

RSVP to [redacted] no later than Tuesday 8th April

Source: (*Creative & Cultural Skills; Music-Impact and Foot 2012-13*) *

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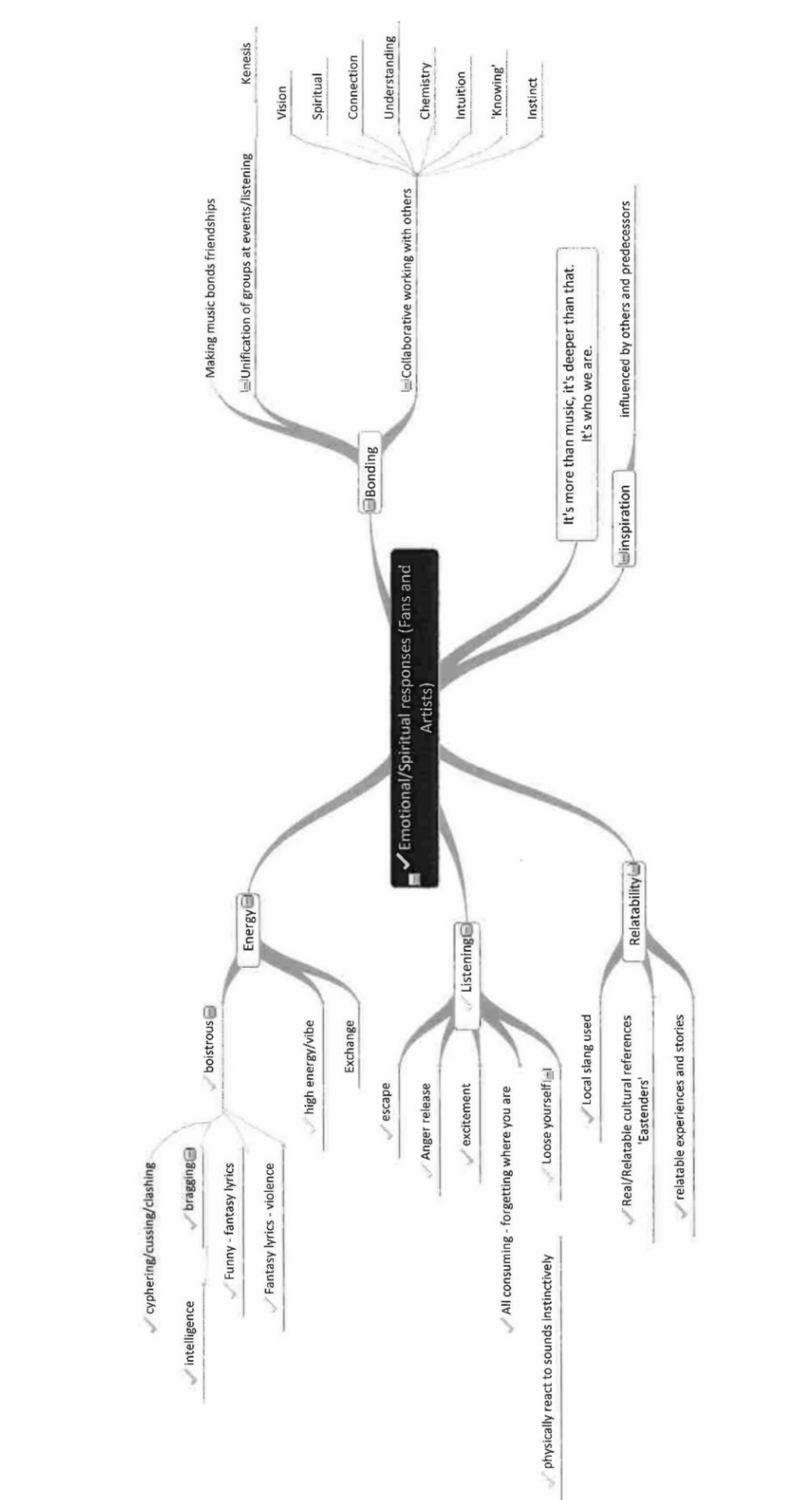
Sample of Thematic Analysis - Mind Map (from data)

ix.



Glossary of Abbreviations

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Ag&S – Avant garde and Scene based

AgSIT – Teleological genre life cycle

BPM – Beats per minute

Femcee – Female MC

MC – Master of Ceremonies

NILA – Narrative Insight Lyrical Analysis

PPICS – Private, Public, Informal Community and Semi-Public Spaces

SFT – Sonic Footprint Timestamp

SLSA – Sonic Locational Soundscape Analysis

SYOD – Silent yet overt dismemberment

WWII – World War II

696 - Metropolitan Police Risk Assessment Form 696

Endnotes

xi.

[i] The discipline of race is a sub field within sociology and is only explicitly addressed there. I used the keyword search function on national search engines for British undergraduate and postgraduate courses online; Hotcourses in 2013 and again on the rebranded WhatUni in 2016 to gain insight into the development of knowledge in the academy relating to Black Studies. Keyword search 'Black' for undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Britain (Hotcourses 2013, WhatUni 2016), found an upcoming Black Studies Course at Birmingham City University in 2017/8 and one existing postgraduate course at Goldsmiths on Black British Writing. This is the addition of one course in three years. Three undergraduate courses included 'Africa' in the title. The thirteen postgraduate courses on 'Africa' surrounded development, religion, and art, and in some cases were conflated with Asia. There were twenty one undergraduate courses with 'African' in the title, the majority of which focused on politics, development or anthropology; an increase of one course in three years. The twenty three postgraduate courses that included 'African studies', overwhelmingly related to health and environment, not the people. There were eighteen undergraduate courses on African Studies. There has never been a course on African American Studies. Forty three postgraduate and twenty five undergraduate courses included 'British' in the title, none of which explored elements of race. There were five postgraduate courses on 'Caribbean', these focused on literature and one conflated the Caribbean with Latin America. There has never been an undergraduate course on Caribbean Studies. There were no undergraduate courses on 'race' and four postgraduate courses, one of which was about race cars and the remainder about identity, resistance and culture; a reduction of one course in three years. Two postgraduate courses on 'Ethnic' and these were in relation to conflict; a reduction of six courses. Nothing ethnic at undergraduate level. No undergraduate courses on 'Ethnicity' and three postgraduate courses on ethnicity spanning culture and diaspora, identity, language and education and multiculturalism. Key words such as African in these cases avoided the study of the people in any context. Over the course of three years, courses on race, ethnicity or ethnic reduced in number.

[ii] Most undergraduate and postgraduate music courses available in Britain (Hotcourses 2013, WhatUni[32] 2016), are located in Music Departments. Course content is principally on either Classical/Western music or World Music. Music therapy and psychology are other areas of academic study. Ethnomusicology is taught four in institutions. Since conducting the initial search in 2013, it appears that many courses are moving over from ethnomusicology to musicology, as the numbers of musicology courses have increased and ethnomusicology has decreased. Popular music, the music business and music production and performance are expansive, with over one thousand courses at undergraduate level and over three hundred postgraduate courses.

[iii] Consulting Ethos (the British Library database of all PhD theses in Britain) for Black British music, there were six listings under UK Hip Hop and three on UK Rap, three listings for Drum 'n' Bass, one on Jungle, one for UK Reggae/Dancehall and three for Grime. Some of these theses overlapped into more than one category and did not necessarily focus on the music itself. There was nothing on Lovers Rock or Garage music.