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"That's cool, you're a musician and you drink": Exploring entertainers' accounts

of their unique workplace relationship with alcohol

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Abstract

This qualitative research investigates the alcohol experiences of entertainers who perform within licensed premises. Previous, mainly quantitative, studies have found that entertainers, specifically musicians, are an occupational group who drink excessively. This qualitative study draws on a wider sample of entertainers to examine their accounts of drinking in the workplace and the explanations they provide for this. We conducted individual semi-structured interviews (*n*=24) with band-members, variety acts and DJs in Glasgow, Scotland. This revealed a workplace characterised by continual opportunities for often free alcohol consumption. Unlike most occupations, for entertainers 'drinking-on-the-job' was normative, expected, and sometimes encouraged by peers, the public, employers or sponsors. Entertainers also experienced performance-related incentives to drink before, during and/or after a show; including anxiety, matching their intoxication level to the audience's, and 'reward-drinking'. This qualitative research confirms the unique nature of the entertainer-alcohol link, even in comparison to that found within other leisure industry occupations. While providing some explanation as to why entertainers might drink excessively, participants' accounts also suggested potential strategies for avoiding the negative outcomes of workplace drinking.

Keywords:

Alcohol; music; media; nightlife; workplace; marketing

Highlights

- Entertainers' accounts of their relationship with alcohol is qualitatively examined

- Entertainers inhabit alcohol-saturated workplaces that foster drinking-on-the-job

- Entertainers' reasons for performance-related alcohol use are explained

- Entertainers are often paid in alcohol, given free-drinks or sponsored by brands

- Expectations about entertainers' excessive lifestyles can shape consumption

Word count: 7,647

Introduction

There is a longstanding interest in the relationships between entertainment (e.g. music) and entertainers (e.g. 'rock-stars') with alcohol and other forms of substance use. To date however, the academic literature on entertainers' associations with alcohol has mainly been quantitative and focused on celebrity. For example alcohol, often in conjunction with other drugs, has been found to be a contributory factor in the premature mortality of famous rock-musicians (Bellis et al, 2007; Hearsum, 2012; Kenny, 2014; Lebrun & Strong, 2015; Lucijanic, 2010; Talevski, 2010).

From analysing rock autobiographies, Oksanen (2012) claims the "merely drunk and drugged" rock-star "living fast and dying young" is no longer sufficient to be considered authentic, arguing that surviving addiction has replaced the 'Cult of Death' (Thompson, 1999) as a key theme in rock-culture, hardening the "transgressive side of these books [that] sells them". These autobiographies describe excessive drinking, alcohol addiction and alcohol recovery more commonly than the consumption of, and recovery from, other substances.

Bellis et al (2012) linked the early deaths of rock-stars to negative pre-fame experiences. However, Kenny (2015) notes that, in the absence of qualitative research, she can only speculate that the differences in life-expectancy experienced by music performers are a consequence of variance in the "ubiquitous presence of alcohol and other substances of addiction, irregular hours, touring, high levels of stress, performance anxiety". Given this list of risk-factors for celebrity musicians, it is notable that the alcohol experiences of non-celebrity/pre-fame, 'gigging', entertainers have

received little attention from substance use researchers. Alcohol concerns are unlikely to be restricted to the few musicians who find fame.

In addition, other entertainers who inhabit the same physical and psychosocial working environments as rock-musicians are equally likely to encounter these occupational hazards (e.g. ubiquitous alcohol and irregular hours). Certainly non-music entertainers' transgressive behaviours can garner similar levels of media interest to those of rock-stars [See, for example, the drinks-party lifestyles of celebrity comedians (e.g. Clark, 2013; Dessau, 2013; Harmer, 2013) and 'superstar-DJ's' (e.g. Byrne, 2003; Pires, 2015)]. Sulkunen (citing Taylor, 1999) compares Oksanen's (2013) rock-star autobiographies with the writings of 18th century Romantic poets (e.g. Byron, Coleridge, Keats and Robert Burns) concluding both populations inhabited a subcultural world where the "supplement" of intoxication was normative "as an expected form of transgression" (Sulkunen, 2013). Whether this expectancy of transgression by intoxication applies only to celebrities but also to lesser-known/pre-fame entertainers is not known.

Despite the absence of studies into 'gigging' entertainers, research has been conducted into the drinking practices of staff working in licensed premises and other environments where entertainers perform, for example bartenders (Tutenges et al, 2013) and holiday-guides (Hughes et al, 2004; Kelly et al, 2014) working at 'beer-tourism' destinations (Munar, 2013) such as Magaluf, Spain or Sunny Beach, Bulgaria. The role of these holiday-guides is of particular relevance here, as part of their job remit has been described as "stirring up effervescence" (Tutenges, 2011) among crowds by

encouraging drinking and 'bar-crawls'. In the UK night-time economy DJs, comperes and karaoke-presenters have been observed engaging in practices that encourage similar 'drinks-party' atmospheres within venues (Forsyth, 2009; Forsyth & Cloonan, 2008; Hadfield, 2006), although what affect this has on these entertainers is unknown.

Both bartenders and resort-guides were found to exhibit higher levels of alcohol consumption compared to controls. Reasons for this included environmental and psychosocial pressures to drink at their workplace (Tutenges et al, 2013) and the greater length of time they necessarily spent in such alcohol-saturated environments (Hughes et al 2004). However the question remains as to what extent these elevated levels are a direct consequence of their job or a consequence of self-selection (i.e. where people prone to heavy drinking actively seek-out such workplaces).

This question of self-selection was raised by Plant (1977) who reviewed the post-war literature comparing 'alcoholism' levels with occupations. Among the occupations with higher alcoholism rates were "musicians", but it was unclear then whether self-selection factors or job pressures were responsible. More recently, the charity *Help Musicians UK,* conducted a survey of professional musicians which found that 45% (220 / 491) of respondents reported experiencing problems with alcohol (Help Musicians UK, 2014). Music researchers have identified entertainers as 'sensation-seekers' (Miller & Quigley, 2011) and it has been suggested that the lifestyles of gigging entertainers fosters increased alcohol use because of work-related mental health issues (Dobson, 2010; Ewens, 2016; Kenny et al, 2014; Raeburn, 1987). However the precise ways by which entertainers' drinking behaviour is shaped by their working conditions, rather than individual factors, remains unknown.

The present project attempts to fill this lacuna, by conducting qualitative interviews with a sample of gigging entertainers who perform in the pub/club scene of Glasgow, Scotland. This research intentionally goes beyond rock-musicians, to include other types of performer, DJs and variety acts (e.g. comedians) who share the same alcohol-licensed performance spaces and perhaps also similar 'transgressive expectancies'.

The current paper stems from research which was designed to explore how live entertainment is used as a marketing tool by the alcohol licensed-trade industry (Lennox & Forsyth, 2015). The entertainment and alcohol hospitality industries co-exist in the night-time economy. Entertainment is provided by pubs/clubs to attract customers, while entertainers benefit from the existence of these venues as performance spaces (Briggs, 2013; Forsyth & Cloonan, 2008; Hadfield, 2006; Homel & Tomsen, 1993). Taken together this symbiotic relationship has been termed 'drinkertainment' (Bell, 2007). However, in our research it soon became apparent that while the presence of entertainers within licensed premises might increase the public's exposure to alcohol to some extent, being on licensed premises increased entertainers' exposure to alcohol to a much greater degree.

This qualitative paper investigates gigging entertainers' relationships with alcohol; specifically asking:

- Do entertainers provide accounts of (excessive) drinking in the workplace and what explanations do they provide for this?
- From their accounts, to what extent do entertainers attribute their (excessive) drinking to self-directed factors as opposed to their working environment?

Methods

Twenty-four qualitative interviews were carried-out in late 2014 with entertainers currently working in Glasgow's pubs and nightclubs, although some toured extensively. A semi-structured interview schedule was used to explore their careers and their experiences of work-related alcohol issues. Although this focused mainly on their roles in alcohol marketing (Lennox & Forsyth, 2016) we also explored whether their own drinking was influenced by working in this sector. Participants were very talkative, perhaps being accustomed to giving recorded interviews as part of their job (several began by providing their stage-name unprompted). To ensure all points-of-interest were covered, the interview schedules included the following two questions about entertainers' drinking:-

- *What are your views on drinking while performing?*
  - ○ *Do you drink before, during, after act? Why/why not? Examples of good/bad experiences?*
- *Do you think it is easy or difficult to avoid drinking when involved in your line of work?*
  - ○ *In what way?*

Before commencing this research, ethical approval was granted by The Glasgow School *for* Business & Society, Research Ethics committee, Glasgow Caledonian University. Before interviews, participants were given an information sheet describing the study and assurances of anonymity. They were asked to provide written consent.

The consent form and information sheet were read aloud. Some demographic information was noted for sampling-frame monitoring.

Our sampling intended to include equal numbers of three broad categories of entertainers; specifically 'DJs' (*n*=8), 'Band-members' (*n*=8) and 'Variety Acts' (*n*=8). However, in practice many had performed across these categories during their performative careers, which usually began in their youth prior to entering the full-time labour market. Each DJ or Band-member varied by genre of music and venue-type, while the Variety Act category was particularly diverse; comprising two stand-up comics (one male, one female) a comedy sketch artist, an electronic performance artist, a cabaret-singer, a lounge-pianist, a karaoke-presenter and a quiz-host. Table 1 provides background information on all participants, including their employment histories (age being a proxy for experience) in both the entertainment and licensed-trade industries, the latter of which ranged from glass-collectors to a pub licensee.

- <Insert Table 1 here>

Interviews were transcribed before being analysed. Pseudonyms were used and identifying features removed from transcripts. Thematic analysis was used due to the method's flexibility to provide a detailed and complex analysis for "identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p79). To ensure complete familiarisation with the data set, interview transcripts were re-read multiple times, searching for patterns and ideas, and making notes, before conducting more formal analysis (Bryman, 2012). Data were entered into the qualitative data management software *NVivo 10*. Initial coding was broad and inclusive to avoid moving

pieces of data from their context, and to allow for multiple interpretations of ambiguous sections. The data set was worked through systematically, breaking it into broad codes linked to the research question. These were then sorted into potential overarching themes, considering how codes may combine together (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Once a set of themes had been devised, these were refined, by working back and forth between the entire data set, notes and coded extracts.

FINDINGS

Overview

Four main themes were apparent in entertainers' accounts of their relationship with alcohol, all of which encouraged workplace drinking. Firstly, participants reported constant exposure to alcohol and drinks marketing in their workplace. Secondly, performance–related psychological incentives/stressors encouraged drinking before, during and after shows. Thirdly, 'free-drinks' were often viewed as a 'perk-of-the-job', provided by venue managers, fans, peers, and alcohol industry sponsors. Finally, participants reported a social expectation that entertainers should drink, and this could be a barrier to those attempting to reduce their workplace consumption. All of these elements intensified as occupational success increased.

1) 'Break the rules' – "going to the discotek, getting high & getting wrecked": Entertainers workplace exposure to alcohol

We specifically recruited entertainers who worked in pubs and clubs. However, all participants reported that performing in alcohol-orientated environments was normative, regardless of venue-type, extending across festivals, theatres and arenas. Events with

no formal bar (e.g. street-fairs/fetes, in civic buildings or church halls) tended to either be 'Bring Your Own Bottle' or involve 'complimentary drinks'. It was also clear that entertainers differed from other staff in licensed premises (e.g. bartenders, security or managers) as they were allowed to consume alcohol while working, as illustrated in the following accounts by 'Jenny' (a stand-up comic) and 'Tony' (a DJ).

"I am an actor as well. As an actor that would be like 'Oh my God you'll never work again' if you are seen drinking alcohol before a show. As a comedian, some people see it actually as their prop. They go on[stage] with a pint." ('Jenny')

"I remember going back to the bar[tendering] after being in this mad environment [DJing] where … you can chat to lots of girls at work you know and it's all having a drink and dancing. It just being great fun and then going back to the bar and then I just remember being like (sighs) you know, this is, I'd much rather be doing the other stuff. [DJing and partying]" ('Tony')

As indicated in the latter part of 'Tony's' account, a drinks-party lifestyle could be considered a 'perk' of the pub/club entertainers job, one where they got paid to spend time drinking with like-minded peers.

"I would insist on having a few drinks when I used to play at [residency club]. It was just so easy getting into their frame of mind. …it was all like-minded people, like-aged people who I drank [with], I never stayed sober in there." ('Mike')

"[Residency pub] is just full of steamers [drunks] and usually I'm one of them."
('Bobby')

One moderating factor was the type of gigs played. At certain events (e.g. weddings), participants viewed themselves as the hired professional entertainment, and their behaviour was constrained by this drinking context.

"Weddings are a bit different. … If you drink you get too relaxed, so you don't want to get too relaxed, but have a couple of pints absolutely fine at the weddings, whereas at the pub gigs as long as you can stand up, [it] doesn't matter" ('Damon')

Another constraining factor was the type of entertainment participants' shows involved. Although some felt they could perform equally well whether or not they were drinking (e.g. vocalists), others were physically unable to drink onstage because their act involved playing instruments, or they needed to keep reasonably "compos mentis" ('Simon' and 'James') because their act required them to improvise (e.g. dealing with hecklers/critics) or required technical proficiency. Despite these constraints, the more bookings an entertainer was successful in securing (e.g. residencies or tours), the more frequently they would encounter workplace drinking opportunities, which if taken, could increase tolerance to alcohol. By contrast, failure to secure bookings reduced drinking opportunities.

"I work [DJ], you know, almost every night of the week, 5 or 6 nights a week, have done for years and it's a bad idea because if you drink you drink too much,

but in terms of performance and ability to do your job it's fine for me. I think I've been doing it long enough it doesn't impede me." ('Noel')

"Necessarily in that environment you are spending time in pubs, in licensed premises, a reasonable amount of the time. And depending on how often you do it. I mean now I probably only gig once a month or once every two months. So it's not like I'm spending all my time there but you're, I guess if you are spending a lot of time there then it probably would be difficult [not to drink]" ('James')

As 'James' suggests, an obvious risk from more frequently appearing at licensed premises is that alcohol could be more "difficult" to avoid, becoming habit forming and/or impeding performance.

"Since I've done stand-up comedy I've kind of, I usually can drink a good bit more than I did… I did do the 'Sober for October' and that didn't last very long, well two days, because then I did a gig and I felt a little bit on edge and I just needed a pint to relax." ('Sean')

"I think I've gone from never touching a drink before a gig, but that's because I didn't drink at all, to yeah definitely… I've definitely, I've done everything, every level of being way too pished [drunk] to play" ('Jarvis')

Similarly, the longer participants remained on licensed premises (i.e. at their workplace) on a single occasion the more likely 'drinking-on-the-job' could become a pastime (e.g. when setting-up, during intermissions or support-acts).

"All four of us do like a drink and stuff, but if we've set-up and we're hanging about then yeah we'll probably have a drink and that will probably happen tonight. If we go down at 6 o'clock or like 7 o'clock and get set up by half past 7 we've got half an hour to have a pint before we go on… …there will be times I've had 3 or 4 pints in the whole 3 and a half hour set." ('Alex')

"Doing things like this sober can actually be really hard. … I love playing the music, and I love sharing that experience but, if you're there for 4 hours, you know, it's just a way to pass the time isn't it? Like just have a bit of a drink as I say, and just feel as if you are part of the evening." ('Zoe')

More successful acts tended to be on-premises longest, especially headliners, facing the greatest challenges in refraining from drinking before going onstage.

"If we were doing too well I got stressed so I would drink sometimes before a gig, and sometimes it would be ok and sometimes it wouldn't. If a gig was a bit undersold or I was waiting to see how the crowd was going to go, I'd be a bit kind of nervy drinking, but if I knew a gig had sold-out I would try to remain more sober so that I didn't fuck it up." ('Jarvis')

As indicated in 'Jarvis's' account of decision-making about drinking at gigs, psychosocial factors (e.g. nervousness and perceptions of audiences) also impacted on entertainers' performance-related drinking. These will be explored in the next section

2) 'Doing it' – "we're staying all night, we never slow down": Entertainers' incentives to drink at shows

Alongside extended access to alcohol, psychosocial factors also encouraged some entertainers to drink. This performance-related alcohol use fell into three temporally motivated categories: 'pre-show', 'on-show' and 'after-show' drinking. 'Pre-show' drinking was primarily a form of self-medication against 'stage fright', a form of performance-related anxiety (e.g. "settle my nerves a wee [little] bit" 'Zoe'; "relax a little bit" 'James'; "sort of relaxes you a bit" 'Mark'; "Alcohol is a great confidence booster" 'Ian'). This confidence-building drinking was most apparent before an important gig (e.g. a new residency) and again was constrained by contextual expectancies (e.g. time of day) and the level of technical proficiency required.

"I'm happy enough to drink beforehand. It helps. I've kinda got really bad anxiety so it helps to calm me down especially when it's a particular event that I'm really nervous about playing. …the only time I wouldn't drink would be a day-time set and I wasn't wanting to be getting on it [partying]." ('Sara')

"Maybe have one or possibly two [drinks] so that you just kind of feel a bit more confident going up on-show, it's almost like little, you know, suit of armour … With DJing as well normally I would drink beforehand, [but] obviously you've got to work equipment and stuff like that so you can't really get to the point of being kind of really drunk, you know, but yeah (laughs) I've just always drunk [drank] before DJing or being in the band!" ('Heather')

Thus the goal of 'pre-show' drinking was titrating level of intoxication to overcome inhibitions but not to a level that risked impeding their ability to perform ("an optimum level" 'Heather'). Once onstage the second set of psychosocial factors which encouraged performance-related drinking became salient. Like 'pre-show drinking', 'on-show' drinking was partly rooted in self-medication to counter performance–related anxiety (e.g. "you relax into it" 'Alex'; "You loosen up" 'Noel'; One pint just relaxed you" 'Sean'), but in addition, some participants felt it was easier to 'read' and react to the crowd if they too were intoxicated ("you're on a par with people in the room" 'Noel'; "you get in the zone" 'Mike'). As with drinking to counter nerves, this required careful titration.

"I dare say most people have said there's a kind of golden point where you've just had just enough to drink that you're going to enjoy it more and you're not going to spoil it. DJing, I tend to enjoy it much more if I've had a good few drinks admittedly. I find it just much easier to read a crowd." ('Jarvis')

"Maybe one or two drinks and then I'm like, my nerves are settled, I feel that I can identify .. with the people on the dance floor because if they're a bit on [intoxicated] and I'm, like, a wee bit on then I can still be like 'OK cool, if I was in their shoes then I would appreciate this song, I would be doing this'" ('Zoe')

Conversely, 'reading the crowd' also involved noting when an audience were more sober and moderating use accordingly.

"If I turned up at [residency pub] and I had had a couple of drinks at 5 o'clock that would be two drinks ahead of the audience which wouldn't be good. …That was

one of my rules for a while, I would stay one drink behind the most sober person." ('Bobby')

The third form of performance-related psychosocial alcohol use was 'after-show' drinking. Unlike 'pre' or 'on-show' drinking, this was not constrained by the time-of-the-day or the need to remain 'compos mentis'. For some this represented the start of their performance-related drinking, for others a less inhibited continuation of the session.

"[onstage] I've had about 2 or 3 pints and just try and level it off at that you know. It's usually afterward that I'll go and have a drink and that [partying]." ('Damon')

"Personally wouldn't drink before it. I drink enough after it. I like to drink after it because if it goes badly I can get drunk. If it goes well I can get drunk." ('Steve')

As 'Steve' implies, 'after-show' drinking occurred for various reasons; including 'reward-drinking', to 'comedown' from anxiety or the 'adrenaline-rush' of performing, for social-cohesion and networking-drinking with like-minded peers, or simply because once off-stage alcohol was easier to access.

"when you have finished your gig, especially headliners that come last, then they tank [binge] the drink because there's only so much time left so they'll drink quite quickly" ('Jenny')

"Everyone drinks more, myself included, generally performers included. I'm not a confident performer… I am still a ball of nerves even if I have a drink, which I

usually do if I am gigging, but it's so ingrained you know, if I picture sitting up onstage or standing onstage with a guitar playing to people I imagine there's a wee pint there for when I come off." ('Ian')

"I would have a drink after the show because you are vibed-up and can't get to sleep. So sometimes there's the comedown drinking, and sometimes also just with the guys and you shoot the breeze and sit up and drink till 5 in the morning, just that tour lifestyle." ('Frank')

As 'Frank' suggest, as well as the obvious alcohol drivers inherent to frequenting licensed venues, more subtle factors associated with entertainer lifestyle could also encourage workplace drinking.

3) 'Boom clap' – "the beat goes on": Entertainment rewarded with free-drinks

The party lifestyle associated with the entertainment industry was attractive for some participants; more success meant more bookings and more opportunities to drink. As entertainers' careers progressed, they also increased their networks of peers, fans and others who might offer free-drinks.

"People keep offering you drinks, particularly if you are playing, and I think if your band-mates are also drinking it's quite difficult you know to say 'oh no'" ('Beth')

"The DJ definitely gets a lot more respect if you call it, street-cred image, and [venue location] the owner absolutely loves me. She's always feeding me drink, everything's on the house" ('Dave')

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Alcohol could be provided as 'payment-in-kind' from venue managers, particularly at residencies.

> "If I brought five musicians they would get twenty quid [£20] each and five pints at the bar. You're in for an hour so you can hang-on and have those afterwards, you don't have to neck [swallow] five pints in an hour. That tended to be the set-up." ('Ian')

> "We've got this monthly residency and the manager actively gives us alcohol. … I think from her point-of-view [she] likes a drink whereas [manager] in [pub] playing tonight is tee-total, so I think she's just like 'ah if I get a couple of drinks in them they'll play better and all that stuff'" ('Alex')

As 'Alex' implies, alcohol could also be provided by managers in the belief that 'pre-show' or 'on-show' drinking would improve performances through 'rational disinhibition', effectively encouraging drinking-on-the job.

> "The manager actually wanted the DJs to have a few drinks because he knew it would bring out the best in them, you know, a bit of 'Dutch courage' for the microphone." ('Dave')

> "It's actively encouraged. You get as much free-alcohol as you can consume but only during the hours that you play. It's a curious situation because you're kind of forced then to try and get drunk before you stop [working]… plus, they bring you

shots, they set them on fire, you have to drink them and 'cheers' the crowd. Every time you 'cheers' the crowd at least 10 people buy a shot and its 6 quid [£6] a shot." ('Lee')

As 'Lee' suggests, 'on-show' drinking was literally that and entertainers could be employed to encourage audiences into consuming alcohol by 'stirring up effervescence' in ways not dissimilar to Mediterranean resort-guides (e.g. 'Mike' reported Glasgow's nightlife as "like being in Magaluf").

"I think if all these steaming [drunk] people saw a DJ that was on the same level as them, just a little bit of steaming when I say a little bit I mean pretty much pure [very] steaming ..dancing to the tunes the same way they were dancing. I think if punters [customers] see that then it rubs off on them." ('Mike')

"You got paid in booze.. they were encouraging you to look like you were drinking to keep people drinking because they were like 'well, look if the DJ is having so much fun and she's drinking and she's having a great time, then you should stay and you should drink and you should be having a great time'." ('Zoe')

As 'Zoe' suggests venue managers wanted it to "look like" their entertainers were drinking. This marketing technique extended to *what* it looked like they were drinking.

"They [craft-brewery pub] did a lot of things to kind of get out their own brand.... I guess with us like drinking their ales [onstage] ..then it's obviously cheaper for them to do that, but at the same time it is advertising their ale I guess to people

and so subliminally maybe people are seeing the band drinking their ale and thinking 'oh I'll have what they're drinking'." ('Damon')

The craft-ales 'Damon' describes were more than just payment-in-kind; this 'on-show' drinking involved subtle advertising of the brand that was effectively sponsoring the band. In this set-up participants had to pay to drink anything else and were not allowed to bring alternative beverages on-stage unless they looked like the advertised brand. Other participants had more direct experiences of alcohol industry sponsorship and the free-drinks this provided.

"During the [Edinburgh] Festival, I mean when I was younger, God you could go to parties and there would be drink there and it's all free because it's [drinks industry] sponsored so you just get drunk you know and I suppose, in a way, that's the way to do it is to get friendly with folk [network-drinking]." ('Jenny')

"[Prestigious EDM festival] 2008, 2009 sponsored by [spirits brand]. Obviously it [spirits brand] was everywhere (laughs). … The booze companies generally don't approach you directly, they get someone else to get DJs in to do it and they're great fun, they pay really well, you get tonnes of free-booze from them" ('Simon')

As their level of success rose, entertainers were able to negotiate their own terms for free-alcohol, including as part of a 'rider' (i.e. a set of requests or demands made before a performance) brought to them by venues, sponsors or hired 'roadies'.

"I know people who .. DJ and they have a real problem with drinking because it is offered to DJs as a means to pay them or to keep them happy and, again, at certain events that I've done you get a rider, so we're not talking like one or two pints, we're talking like a case of beer." ('Zoe')

"[Folk festival] was just 3 days of boozing and playing. Personally I didn't stop most of the time that I was there… …they laid on free booze for us as well. We got tokens and stuff and we felt compelled to use them up. But pretty much we had booze back in the yurt we were staying in as well so, you know, when we weren't up at the pub we had booze back there. I just didn't want the hangover to set in after the first night they were there. We had a job to do." ('Alex')

'Alex's' experience highlights how having no home to go to after performing (i.e. to escape this alcohol-saturated workplace environment) whether at festivals or on tour, though representing occupational success, also increased drinking opportunities.

"You are on the road, on your own, and sometimes it ["binge drinking"] is easier." ('Jenny')

"On one early tour... we had a lot of momentum really quickly and it was like this is going too fast, you know, we are still in the back of a wee van and we've just been on [top UK pop TV show] and now we are playing here, and I didn't take it very well, I was really stressed and so I got really drunk one gig and it was terrible!" ('Jarvis')

This account of getting 'really drunk' while touring at a time of career 'momentum' suggests that drinking opportunities and psychosocial incentives to (mis)use alcohol may increase with entertainers' occupational success. The next section will explore whether participants felt the image of the successful entertainer (e.g. 'rock-star') created an expectancy of excessive drinking.

4) 'Just like we're famous' – "we act so shameless, come on let's lose control": The expectancy that entertainers drink

Given that more successful entertainers were likely to spend more time on licensed premises, experience more psychosocial incentives to drink and have increased access to (free) alcohol, it was noteworthy that some participants reported that their (or their peers') consumption was influenced by the persona of successful entertainers.

> "[My band's vocalist] he drinks a lot and every time he plays he drinks to the point where usually he can't stand up at the end of the night ….He thinks he's Mick Jagger, he thinks he's a bit of a Jim Morrison, aging rock-star" ('Damon')

Other participants were clear that the intoxicated behaviour of famous entertainers was not something they aspired to, with some doubting that celebrities who portrayed a drunkard image lived-up to their stage personas.

> "I met loads and loads of famous comedians who were arseholes [idiots] when they were pished. Honestly, people that I had always respected I hated" ('Jenny')

"I've seen people do stand-up steaming and it's mostly been shite [bad]. They might have thought it went well but, you know, they've looked at Dylan Moran or Doug Stanhope I feel, and kind of went 'that's cool. I'm going to do that'...I bet they aren't blootered [drunk]. I bet they're really good at having two drinks... …these guys are characters, they've made a persona ...if they got drunk everyday they wouldn't be able to write ...but I think people look up to them and go 'oh, I'm going to get steaming'" ('Steve')

Participants also admitted to being intoxicated while performing themselves. Many drinking 'war-stories' were offered as examples of how the ubiquitous presence of alcohol at their place of work had affected their own performances (e.g. fighting with audiences, smashed equipment, arguments over who drinks the rider, forgetting lyrics, passing-out mid-show, and being too hungover to play). However, as 'Jarvis' suggests below such destructive behaviour did not necessarily always harm their image.

"My worst offence was getting so drunk before a gig …and my mic stand just kept revolving… …so I went 'fuck this', flung it off the stage ..and one of the door [security] guys just came up and totally threw me up against the wall, correctly.. There was the legend going about the [scene] that apparently I'd held some door guy up against a wall and it was like 'no, it was the other way around'." ('Jarvis')

When participants felt that alcohol was negatively impacting on performances they would attempt to modify their consumption. Reasons for this decision included; to safeguard bookings (e.g. "you would probably get sacked", 'Dave'), a sense of duty to audiences (e.g. "that's really disrespectful to people that have paid", 'Jarvis'), to achieve

personal goals (e.g. "you should always be nervous before you do a gig", 'Steve') or because they regarded their job as a profession.

> "DJing is a proper job, you know, you don't get drunk really on any other job so you have to have a sense of responsibility for yourself." ('Mark')

> "I don't DJ as well when I'm drinking, just as I don't drive as well when I'm drunk." ('Simon')

Health concerns about alcohol were less of a motivation for behavioural change than how drinking impacted on performance, although some reported negative short-term (e.g. dehydration) and longer-term (e.g. weight-gain) consequences.

> "They [venue managers] don't care musically. They just look at the bar and go 'we took 10 grand [£10,000] in an hour tonight so well done'. … We are alcohol salesmen so they'll like sporadically, and not as sporadically as I would like, bring us unusual [drinks] ..Last season I found I put on 2 stone, my liver was in bits like, I would try my best to go to the gym but .. you can't avoid it" ('Lee')

> "I started getting really dehydrated and just feeling terrible ..so I sort of made the conscious decision that I actually would not just drink anything and then I started driving. I sort of volunteered .. so that kind of meant I had an excuse almost to say right 'oh no sorry I'm driving' you know?" ('Damon')

Like 'Damon', several participants mentioned driving as a strategy to reduce drinking, as this was a plausible 'excuse' accepted by peers. However more successful entertainers had 'roadies' to transport both them and their alcohol supply.

> "Funnily enough I've now got the advantage of our gigs are so low level that I tend to drive the gear, drive the band, so I just, probably just through a set of circumstances now not being able to afford to pay somebody [roadies], I don't really drink until after like after the car is parked up and all the gear is back in. But yeah, I think I would find it impossible if I didn't, if I was physically allowed to drink before a gig I would find it impossible to not at least have a couple." ('Jarvis')

This need for a 'reason' to avoid alcohol was indicative of a culture in which gigging entertainers were expected to drink by audiences, peers and management. In this alcohol-saturated workplace, consumption of non-alcoholic beverages was met with disbelief. One participant ('Damon') reported successfully evading alcohol use by pretending the bottle of water he needed to avoid dehydration was "straight vodka". Others were less successful in securing non-alcoholic refreshments.

> "Sometimes you are offered a free-drink .. and they're always "Water, is that all that you want" always every time and when you ask for water people never give you it because they forget" ('Jenny')

> "Here in Glasgow it's really difficult like, if you want to play like a late-night gig.. you don't have many places like a coffee-shop to go and play.. For a period I was

not drinking so you feel like .. an outsider because you would go and what would you do? .. I didn't really want to drink and everyone in the venue is like quite drunk and .. people come up to the artist 'ah come on, have a drink'." ('Beth')

Those like 'Beth' who had toured internationally could be left feeling like an 'outsider' in the Glasgow scene, because of the absence of non-licensed venues locally. This combined with the expectancy that 'the artist' should consume alcohol while on such premises presented a barrier to entertainers attempting to moderate their drinking.

"it [performing and drinking] was all part and parcel of the same thing. I think that has had an impact on me now, not necessarily negative but you know, you're not allowed to cut down on your alcohol intake." ('Ian')

'Ian's' comment about entertainers not being "allowed to cut down" their alcohol intake was echoed by 'Jenny' who was the only participant who had stopped drinking completely. She felt it was not possible to drink moderately given the pressures of these alcohol-orientated working environments.

"I certainly found that when I did drink I was never as good because I wasn't on the ball so I stopped before a gig then after because of the adrenalin you just get drunk, that kind of mix. But I would say half and half. I find actually that a lot of comedians are either tee-total or really heavy drinkers. It seems to be one or the other." ('Jenny')

Another participant, 'Frank' had successfully moderated his performance-related drinking. He felt that this was possible because of the type of venues which he now played, which were less alcohol-orientated than those of his fellow entertainers.

"It's easier for me because as I say the [art-house] venues ..will make you a coffee, and they'll make you a.. a cup of tea, because those spaces generally have that kind of a mixed-economy going on and … the ethos it's not as wrapped up in 'where's the booze'." [later] "You know we've [entertainers] absolutely swallowed that [alcohol association] hook, line and sinker, and now it just seems to be obligatory, and its reinforced by bands getting riders, and its reinforced by spaces .. where the proximity to the bar is more what people are worried about than their proximity to the stage." ('Frank')

Thus, other than in the rare exceptions described by 'Frank', alcohol and live entertainment were seen as co-existing in the same spaces reinforced by a common set of consumption expectancies.

"In these kind of pub environments you are very much expected to be drinking as a band-member, you know, and most of the other band-members did have a drink ..and in that environment everyone is drinking and it's very much alcohol and music, it's very much part of it" ('Damon')

"If my formative years had not been so pub heavy and music heavy I don't know that I would drink the amount that I do now. In fact I wager that I wouldn't. I think

it would reinforce me for so long that 'that's cool, you're a musician and you drink' ('Ian')

Discussion

Our research found that entertainers experience an unusually high exposure to alcohol, even compared to others employed in licensed premises (e.g. Bartenders) because of the expectation that they will drink while working. The participants in this sample often struggled to think of any occasion when they had performed in venues where alcohol was not available (at least to them). Many had never played to an entirely sober audience, and some claimed never to have performed when entirely sober themselves. McCreanor et al (2008) argue that neoliberal ideology in many countries (which favours alcohol industry policies based on market forces and individual responsibility) has led to the increased availability of alcohol and alcohol marketing, creating 'intoxigenic environments' where drinking to intoxication is the norm. Our findings suggest that these entertainers inhabited particularly intoxigenic working environments, resembling those previously found by research into beer-tourism destinations (e.g. Magaluf, Spain, see Briggs, 2013; Hughes et al, 2011; Karen et al, 2009).

These intoxigenic working environments were accentuated by psychosocial aspects of their job, in which alcohol was used to self-medicate, or otherwise facilitate, improved performances. Previous research investigating relationships between performance-related anxiety and alcohol use among musicians has been far from conclusive (Chesky & Hipple, 1997; Fehm, & Schmidt, 2006; Wesner et al, 1990). However these studies

were not conducted in Glasgow which participants reported was devoid of alcohol-free performance spaces.

It was also apparent from our findings that entertainers' exposure to alcohol increased in tandem with their career progression. This was the case for all four risk factors we identified: Firstly, to get their career started, participants reported seeking out licensed premises as these were the only performance spaces available. Success, in the form of more gigs, invariably meant spending more time in alcohol-saturated environments with more drinking opportunities. Secondly, performing at more prestigious events could involve heightened psychological incentives to drink, including anxiety (e.g. performance-related or fears about failing to sell-out a venue) and the intention to consume sufficient alcohol to be on a par with the audience (i.e. for headlining acts, who performed latest at night, this meant matching crowds at their maximum intoxication). Thirdly, the more successful entertainers became, the more likely they were to be provided with free-alcohol; beginning with free-drinks from venues as 'payment-in-kind', through to commanding a free-bar or 'rider' from venues as a precondition of agreeing to perform, to ultimately the possibility of drinks industry sponsorship where visible brand endorsement drinking would be encouraged. Finally, self-image and social expectations surrounding how successful entertainers were thought to behave, could reinforce participants' drinking, even when their alcohol consumption began to negatively impact on performances.

Despite these factors encouraging increased consumption, our entertainers did moderate their drinking in certain situations. Some entertainers tailored their drinking to suit the context, while others felt it was 'professional' to curtail their drinking. For

example, at certain gigs (e.g. weddings) entertainers stated it was advisable to act professionally to fulfil important obligations, especially when they were being paid well, regardless of alcohol's availability or audience intoxication level. Similarly, entertainers drank less during daytime gigs, matching their consumption with that of their audience at these. While some participants needed an acceptable excuse (such as driving) to reduce or eliminate their performance-related drinking, others accomplished this out of a sense of professionalism, although this could mean deferring intoxication until after the show (i.e. reward-drinking for performing soberly).

These accounts indicate that gigging entertainers' performance-related drinking is modifiable and suggest some potential strategies for reducing negative outcomes. Firstly, the intoxigenic environment of shows could be reduced by holding gigs earlier in the evening and/or in venues where alternatives to alcohol are available (the 'mixed economy' suggested). The provision of more alcohol-free performance spaces might reduce entertainers' consumption (e.g. the temptation to self-medicate). However this could also reduce attendances and profits (e.g. our participants invariably equated alcohol-free shows with gigs for those too young to drink and who consequently spent less). In addition, some policy-makers may equate unlicensed venues with drug use or other unregulated behaviour (Carey 1997; Collin, 1997; Frith et al, 2013). Nevertheless, it was clear from our data that more sober audiences encourage more sober performances.

Secondly, payment of entertainers 'in-kind' with alcohol and the expectation that they should fulfil a 'drinks-party' marketing role by engaging in conspicuous consumption could be discouraged. Being given free-drinks was seen as a perk-of-the-job by some

participants, many of whom worked irregularly and were low-waged. Audiences also offered free-drinks because they expected entertainers to drink alcohol. The expectancy that successful entertainers were drinkers was also mentioned by participants (although not all felt this image was justified). Venues paying entertainers with alcohol and drafting them into 'on-show' drinks-party marketing would seem to perpetuate images of entertainers characterised by transgressive intoxication (Oksanen, 2012).

Entertainers seldom work for the venues they perform in, and it has been reported that they can be treated with "complete disdain" by licensed premises' managers in comparison to regular staff such as bartenders (Simpson, 2015). This also raises the question of who has a 'duty of care' for entertainers who might experience difficulties with alcohol. Musicians' representative organisations are concerned about their members' working conditions and such bodies represent a potential avenue for gigging entertainers to access help and information. For example the UK Musician's Union's 'Music Education' resource website includes information alerting members to alcohol-related issues such as those raised here, including impaired performance and tolerance (Musicians Union, 2015). Several participants had undergone formal tertiary education in Music or Drama (see Table 1) and this may be another avenue by which entertainers can be alerted to the alcohol issues which they may face soon after graduation (e.g. the irregular financial or marketing demands of the drinks hospitality industry). One participant in our study was a university teacher who made a point of giving students such information in a performing arts course (e.g. advising driving to gigs).

Our participants had learned the pitfalls of performance-related alcohol use through often difficult personal experience. As we only recruited current entertainers, we can

only speculate about whether former entertainers drink excessively, or indeed whether alcohol curtails careers. Some pointers may be found in the research investigating the impact of alcohol use on sportspersons, which has found this to be the case (Green et al, 2014; Jones, 2014; Palmer, 2015). The association between sportspersons and alcohol would appear to parallel that of entertainers to some extent, with increased levels of hazardous drinking being found amongst elite or professional players (Green et al, 2014; O'Brien et al, 2005; O'Farrell et al, 2010). Reasons for sportspersons' excessive drinking include some, but by no means all, of the factors reported by our entertainers, including performance-related stress and social-cohesion or reward-drinking (O'Brien et al, 2007). However sportspersons' idols were not expected to drink heavily (O'Brien et al, 2010), sport does not involve drinking alcohol while playing, and most competitions are not held within licensed premises late at night.

Although our data were rich in depth, our sample was relatively small, limited to one city and did not include all types of performers or genres. Future qualitative investigation could go beyond the pub/club scene to research other entertainers; such as TV/radio presenters, thespians and orchestra members. This might help to unravel the relative contributions of lifestyle factors (e.g. expectancies and performance-related pressure) from the intoxigenic environment of pubs/clubs. In addition, further quantitative research could explore new issues raised by our participants (e.g. are entertainers either teetotal or heavy drinkers?). This could involve measuring the drinking patterns of entertainers, via drinking diaries or standardised screening tools, such as AUDIT (Babor et al, 2001), allowing comparisons to be made with other populations. Finally, given the high profile of drug use amongst famous musicians and celebrities (e.g. Furek, 2008; Herman,

2008; Shapiro 1999 & 2003), a qualitative investigation of entertainers' relationship with other substances would be a logical next step for this research.

In conclusion this research confirmed the unique relationship between gigging entertainers and drinking in the workplace, which was more intense than that found among others working in the night-time economy (e.g. bartenders) or other leisure professionals (e.g. sportspersons). Although participants discussed the 'party lifestyle' as an attraction of this occupation (i.e. self-selection), their accounts were filled with descriptions of alcohol-saturated working environments, performance-related psycho-social incentives to drink, and societal expectations of excessive consumption held by their employers as well as the public. This research suggests that workplace factors are critically important in shaping drinking practices.

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