Impression Management in the Bottom to Middle levels of UK drug Markets. A Case Study of Kent's Coastal Towns.

George Simpson

Abstract

This thesis explores 'alternative' drug markets in Kent's coastal towns. It starts from the observation that archetypal notions of drug dealer identity (greedy, corrupt, violent) and drug market structure (hierarchical, organised) remain prevalent. Despite rich seams of qualitative research presenting drug dealers as diverse and drug markets as fluid and fragmented, the enduring nature of archetypes is demonstrated, for example, within recent narratives about exploitative, organised and profitable 'County Lines' drug markets.   Its first aim is thus to identify alternative drug markets and explore how drug dealers operate within them, and in what ways their behaviour contrasts with archetypes. Secondly, it aims to apply Goffman's (1959) theory about *presentation of self in everyday life* to enrich our understanding of how 'alternative' drug dealers self-conceptualise their behaviour and how they manage their roles within fragmented drug markets. Finally, it aims to explore whether these findings can be applied to add nuance or detail to our existing understanding of how drug markets are structured.

The research takes a case study approach, identifying three alternative markets within which to collect data. The first comprises a group of seasonal magic mushroom pickers and the fields they work within. The second concerns a group of people holding legitimate employment roles and using the 5-9 (after work hours) to engage in drug dealing activity. The third relates to a small sample of middle market brokers who operate autonomously and not as part of an organised or hierarchical structure. Within each case study, ethnographic methods are applied including shadowing of participants, rich and detailed observation of their activities, and a mixture of formal and informal interviews.

The resulting exploration of these three alternative markets reveals that they are not subject to archetypal market structures and the drug market actors active within them do not align with drug dealer archetypes. Goffman's *presentation of self in everyday life* is used effectively to uncover rich detail about the fluidity of drug market actors performing within dynamic market spaces, suggesting that drug dealer identities can be temporary, can be combined with legitimate roles, and can change over time. In final conclusion these findings are drawn upon to present an enhanced and enriched understanding of drug market structure as having more in common with a gas cloud than a hierarchical pyramid.

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Chapter one: Introduction

Before coming to university I was arrested and sentenced for intent to supply Class-A drugs. Released after a short time on remand and allowed to rebuild my life, I found my way into higher education. With a young family to support and a criminal record that acted as a barrier to employment, I enrolled on an access to higher education course seeking a route into university and a means of upskilling. After completing the Access course, I applied to the University of Kent to study Sociology and Philosophy, eventually being given the opportunity to undertake a drugs module as part of my degree programme. As I studied this area from an academic perspective, I realised that drug markets were a fertile field of research interest, and one that I had considerable existing hands on experience of.

During my undergraduate degree, I chose to focus both my philosophy and sociology dissertations on drugs, with the sociological dissertation laying the foundation for the subsequent PhD work, comprising an early explorative and very small scale study of impression management in drug markets. My dissertation supervisors encouraged me to realise that I could potentially make a useful contribution to academic literature in this field and supported me in applying for an ESRC scholarship to undertake further research in this area. On successfully receiving the scholarship I put my plans to apply for a crane driver licence on hold, and began a research methods masters. The Masters dissertation again allowed me to build towards the work completed for this thesis, this time by engaging with a small group of people picking and consuming magic mushrooms, eventually forming the rough basis for the first case study in this thesis to be built upon. With ESRC funding secured, I was able to delve deeper into my research fields and produce this subsequent PhD which investigates alternative modes of drugs supply through a dramaturgical lens.

Therefore, with access to and previous experiences of the markets I was exploring, the ethnographic research presented here has been conducted from the bottom up and utilises my positionality as a product of the cultures I am studying, ie drug markets in Kent's coastal towns. The grounding for the thesis began with a novel reflection on my own experiences as something other than the mainstream or archetypal narratives about drug markets and the actors within them. In particular, as I was undertaking my undergraduate studies, the modern 'county lines' narrative, styling even rural drug markets as controlled by sophisticated groups of organised criminals engaged in exploitation and harmful practices, came to dominate conceptualisation of drug markets in both media and at policy

level, yet contrasted sharply with my own recent experiences. This dominant county lines narrative will thus be set out below briefly, before introducing the aims of my own research on impression management in the bottom to middle levels of Kent's coastal towns as an alternative to these homogeneous archetypal drug dealer depictions that have been so effectively reimagined through county lines narratives.

County lines

The county lines model of drug market distribution has become a well documented phenomenon and has come to dominate discussions about drug markets. County lines drug dealing involves the exportation of drugs and suppliers from saturated city markets and into less competitive markets in smaller towns (Mclean et al, 2019). Often revolving around the development and deployment of profitable 'lines' or phone numbers, markets in smaller towns can be orchestrated from cities by those at the top of the organisation (Coomber and Moyle, 2018). County lines is set out as a mode of organised crime, with clear hierarchical structure where by those on the top direct their subordinates into illegal drug dealing. Due to its organised structure county lines dealing is caught up in concepts of gangs (Andell, 2019). Consequently, county lines dealing is associated with violence as a market making behaviour along with fear and coercion. Finally, more recent developments have begun to see the ways in which county lines gangs exploit children (Moyle, 2019) rather than employing them as members of their gangs. As a result, county lines dealing is presented as organised, violent gang crime that exploits vulnerable children and adults through practices like sending them to different towns and even cuckooing addresses once they get there (Stone, 2018) (Jaensch and South, 2018). Finally, these types of discussions and the language used feed into a general anxiety that the gang problem is serious and growing (Hallsworth and Young 2008) (Bacon, 2016)

Whilst it is not the intention of this research to dispute the existence of county lines dealers or deny that they are operational within Kent's coastal towns, the thesis does take issue with the dominance of the narrative which seems to imply that all drug markets are maintained by evil county lines gangs. Yet from my own experiences of recreational drug markets, a different typology of operative was more common than a 'Mr (or Mrs) big' or organised drug gang. Whilst I have encountered organised market structures, the majority of drug market operatives I encountered in my involvement in drug markets reflected more the kind of autonomous, low-profit, 'social supply' (Potter, 2009) of friends and social acquaintances. They were not organised as part of a gang, didn't resort to violence and were able to

maintain a relevant position within the supply chain without succumbing to a directive chain of command, relying instead on informal social networks.

The need for such investigations into alternative typologies of drug suppliers in Kent become more and more apparent when reading through local news sources. Local news articles at the time documented how successful police had been in raiding county lines operations (Pyman, 2018), the threats of child exploitation from London and Liverpool based gangs (Lennon, 2018), had interviews with worried parents saying how their children had been targeted (Woods, 2018) and even recounted a desperate plea by the disgraced former conservative MP Charlie Elphinke, who is now a convicted sex offender, for help to fight the county lines 'scourge' (Lennon, 2018).

My concern became that this type of reporting begins to scapegoat county lines style operations as being responsible for all drug market crime, an easy target to point to, which perhaps begins to ignore the underlying social conditions, such as poverty and social inequality (Spicer, 2021), that often underpin drug dealing behaviour. One such case stood out particularly, concerning a student at the University of Kent who a few years previously, might have been perceived as nothing more than a student facilitating the drug use of other students in the fairly prevalent setting of university, but who was now styled as a predative county lines operator, only enrolled on his course as a cover for the organised drug operation (Marsh, 2020). The ultimate stimulus for this research then was that in reality, although county lines drug dealers do not dominate all drug markets they are reported as doing just that, leaving the impression that all drugs, even at the bottom level are ultimately controlled by such gangs.

As I began to research drug markets from an academic perspective, I became increasingly aware of a general hysteria around the topic in both the media and at policy level, resulting in the idea that if we could only eradicate the county lines gangs then all the other drug-related problems will fall away (Spicer, 2021). Yet a wealth of academic research suggests that focusing only on the removal of those at the very top of organised crime networks does very little to address the day to day issues caused by illegal drugs (Klieman and Smith, 1992). At the same time, recent academic research (refs) had seemed to show that increasingly large parts of bottom level markets at least were made up of social supply networks – groups of friends supplying each other for minimal commercial recompense. This focus on the county lines narrative seemed to be reawakening the appetite to be tough on drugs,

reestablishing drug dealer archetypes and tropes, and generally creating the impression of a homogenous and dangerous drug market. It seemed then to be an important moment to conduct a project attempting to challenge this dominant narrative by looking for alternative types of market and exploring them in relation to drug dealer identity and drug market structure.

Researching alternative drug markets

Drug markets at their most basic level, like all economic markets, are driven by the basic principle of supply and demand (Bean, 2008) (Brownstein, 1996) (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001) (Potter, 2009) (Taylor and Potter, 2013). The typical customer retailer relationship is a recognisable dynamic that fuels and funds drug markets, despite their illegal status. From a socio-economic perspective, Wilson and Zambrano (in Gereffi and Korzeniewicz, 1994) describe drug markets as a classic commodity chain, involving valued commodities which have a global reach. A 'commodity chain' refers to '*a network of labour and production processes whose end result is a finished commodity*.' (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1986, p159). However, drug markets are an example of 'black markets' and thus come with considerable risk attached. Black markets are understood as illegal markets for goods and services that are otherwise price regulated, rationed, or restricted by the government (Gilman et al, 2011)*.

Within this broad definition, it becomes immediately obvious, however, that drug markets are not homogenous, in fact basic distinctions in drug markets are abundant. First of all drug markets can be identified as being either open or closed markets. On the one hand, an open drug market is open to all and can be accessed by strangers (May and Hough, 2004). On the other hand closed markets cannot be accessed by strangers and require an introduction, invitation or preexisting relationship with the supplier to gain access (May and Hough, 2004). Open markets may be theoretically accessible to all whilst closed markets may only be accessed by a select few. Furthermore the structure of drug markets are another distinguishing feature. Markets may be structured as either organised, typically in the form of a top down pyramid (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001) having a clear directive chain of command. Alternative drug market structures have been described as fluid (Dorn, 2000) and fragmented (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001) being rather messy (Dorn et al, 1992) (Paoli, 2002,

disorganised (Reuters, 1983) and decentralised (Bouchard, 2007) in reality. In addition, the types of actor who make up the market contribute towards the typology of market being described. Various modes of drug supply exist and are covered in the literature review that follows. Some of these include user dealers who supply drugs to fund their own habits (May and Hough, 2001), social suppliers (Potter, 2009) who rely on peer networks to source and sell their drugs to and from, and commercial street suppliers (Pearson, 2007) who are motivated by profits.

Furthermore, drug markets are dynamic, evolving and changing significantly over time. One recent example of this surrounds the introduction of new technologies into markets. For example the development of mobile phones saw open street markets with fixed geographical locations be replaced with advertised mobile phone numbers (May & Hough, 2004). In fact, the most modern developments in dark net crypto based markets are further evidence of the impact of technology on drug markets (Aldridge and Décary-Hétu, 2014) (Martin, 2014) (Martin and Cunliffe, 2019). Overall, these basic features of drug markets may be combined to describe the typology of a market in its most basic form. However, even with these most basic distinctions between markets, numerous combinations can be made to describe particular markets in particular times and places. This presents a fragmented nature of drug markets, with fluid and interchangeable parts somehow being pieced together.

It is precisely this fluid and fragmented nature of drug markets that is of central interest to this thesis. County lines narratives present drug dealers as homogenously organised, profit driven and exploitative, characteristics which are reflective of long-standing archetypal notions of drug dealers as greedy, morally corrupt and evil (Coomber, 2006). Potter (2009) makes a distinction between 'real dealers' who effect these archetypes, and other kinds of dealer who, for various reasons, do not. In order to understand the variety of drug market structure it is thus necessary to explore the fluidity of actors operating within all drug markets, exploring how they sculpt their identities, and whether they reject the normative verdict being a 'real dealer' label. Central to this thesis are the ideas of drift and the techniques of neutralisation set out by Matza and Sykes (1964). Drift theory attempts to explain deviancy by suggesting that, rather than being headed on one trajectory, deviants are able to drift in and out of criminal behaviour. Criminal behaviour thus does not result in a fixed identity as individuals are able to move away as well as towards deviant behaviours and environments.

Furthermore, deviants are aided in there drift by what Matza and Sykes's (1964) term techniques of neutralisation. Matza and Skyes (1964) identify five techniques of neutralisation which are; the denial of responsibility, denial of injury, denial of the victim, appeal to higher loyalties and finally, condemnation of the condemners. Taken together these five techniques of neutralisation can help unpick the process by which drug suppliers are able to neutralise their market behaviour but also what motivates them towards legitimate space performance as they drift away from markets. The ways in which fluid drug market actors are seemingly able to live with a foot in two worlds, drifting from one to the other while effectively neutralising their deviant behaviours (Matza, 1964) is also of key interest to this research. How are some drug dealers able to present socially acceptable faces (Goffman, 1959) or social insiders (Becker, 1962), indistinct from any other citizen, effectively contributing to the normalisation of supply as part of the reality of everyday life (Coomber, Moyle, South, 2016)?

Introducing my research

The fundamental aim underlying this research was to search out the kinds of drug market which challenge the archetypal conception of drug dealers and provide an alternative to the dominant county lines narrative. It uses qualitative, ethnographic methods to explore how drug dealers operate in these alternative markets, with particular emphasis on how mushroom pickers, 5-9 dealers and autonomous brokers conceptualise their own behaviour. As will be outlined in the literature review, it uses Goffman's (1959) *presentation of the self in everyday life* as a framework within which to explore and analyse drug dealer identity, with an overall desire to enhance understanding of the fluidity of actors within drug markets and, perhaps, contribute to the depth of our knowledge about the variety of ways in which drug markets can be structured.

The final thesis is made up of 3 ethnographic case studies, each comprising an individual example of an 'alternative' market. The first case study concerns seasonal magic mushroom pickers and the sites of naturally occurring liberty cap mushrooms which they frequent. It builds up a picture of an alternative type of Class-A drug dealer, who also occupies a unique market position as consumer (Reid, 2022), supplier and producer. The second focuses on 5-9 dealers, whose drug dealing behaviour is supplementary to their legitimate employment roles, family responsibilities and social networks. It explores the ways in which 5-9 dealers are able to resist homogeneous archetypal master identities

and instead resituate themselves as social insiders through legitimate space performance in work, family and social spheres. Finally, case study three depicts autonomous brokers who are active within the middle level of drug markets, occupying a position within the supply chain yet, as free market agents unbound by any directive chain of command. The final case study explores the non-violent market making behaviours of autonomous middle level brokers and seeks to highlight how middle level drug market actors are sometimes able to switch between different identities in their drug dealing activity. Each case study is explored in relation to Goffman's (1959) theory of *presentation of the self in everyday* life, providing insights on drug dealer identity and, ultimately, the fluid nature of drug market structure.

The next chapter provides a review of the relevant literature, establishing basic existing knowledge on drug markets as commodity chains, before providing an in-depth exploration of drug dealer and drug market archetypes, focusing in particular on drug dealer characteristics, violence, and drug market structure. It argues that, despite a rich seam of research depicting alternative drug markets. Dominant archetypes live on and have even been given fresh vigour by the recently emerging county lines narrative discussed above. It then introduces the research that has already explored alternative drug markets, dwelling in particular on the concept of social supply and the suggestion that drug markets, at least at the bottom level, are fluid and fragmented in nature. It also addresses existing work on drug dealer identity and what we know about how drug dealers in alternative markets resist spoiled master identities. Goffman's (1959) *presentation of the self in everyday life* is then set out and the way this research will draw on his theory is explained in detail. Finally, the main themes are drawn together to identify the merit of further research in this area and identify the research questions that guide this project.

The methodology chapter justifies the ethnographic and qualitative methods my research is based on, drawing on a brief overview of other studies using these techniques. The manner in which I identified my case studies, constructed my sample and gathered my data are then set out for each individual case study. In the final section, over-arching ethical issues are identified and discussed reflectively in relation to the nature of my research.

The findings are divided into three case studies. The first on seasonal magic mushroom pickers presents findings on the dual nature of sites of naturally occurring magic mushroom production, the

rich social experience of magic mushroom picking, the market behaviours of magic mushroom pickers, the role of landlords and the extent of law enforcement efforts. It argues that magic mushroom markets are alternative and unique because they are reluctant, occurring without human intervention or sometimes even awareness. They do not reflect the archetypal notions of Class-A sites of drug production, markets or dealer identities. Finally, the seasonal magic mushroom picker is an identity that, by its very nature, is temporary, introducing the idea that drug dealer identities are transient and can be adopted and discarded at will, or as the season dictates, and are not necessarily permanent or all-encompassing.

The second, on 5-9 dealers, builds up a detailed picture of this 'typology' of dealer as one who is firmly involved in both legitimate and illicit markets at the same time through a detailed introduction to its participants. It explores the methods by which participants are able to switch between drug dealing behaviour and legitimate employment, family responsibility and social life. It argues that the co-existence of legitimate roles with drug market activity allows participants to resist negative drug dealer identities. Ultimately, it presents a picture of participants who drift in and out of drug market opportunities, adopting different roles as the situation requires evading detection as they go.

The third moves its attention to the middle level of the drug market, and is based on interviews and ethnographic observation with 'autonomous' brokers who occupy these mid-market positions without being connected via a 'chain of command' to organised and hierarchical criminal networks. The first part provides evidence of their autonomy in terms of supply chains, market share, product and decisions about how to treat customers. Next it explores two market behaviours in detail, variable product pricing and the provision of tick, to demonstrate the ability of autonomous brokers to switch between different roles or identities in their drug market transactions, depending on who they are dealing with. Finally, it argues that autonomous brokers demonstrate how, even firmly within the illicit world, behaviour and identity of an individual actor can vary considerably depending on the situation.

The concluding chapter draws together the findings to answer my research question. It argues that my case studies have provided an effective challenge to dominant drug market archetypes. It returns to Goffman's (1959) *presentation of the self in everyday life* to suggest that facework is a useful tool for understanding the fluid nature of drug market actor identity and behaviour. Finally, it applies

findings to existing knowledge about drug market structure and presents a tentative new model for understanding this area based on a gas cloud analogy.

Chapter two: Literature Review

The literature review begins by briefly presenting illegal drug markets as commodity chains, driven by basic economic principles of supply and demand, subject to dynamic market forces, and offering lucrative opportunities for actors operating within them. This sets the scene for the presentation of four distinct substantive sections, focusing on different areas of relevance to this research. The first presents traditional models for understanding drug market structure based on three organisational tiers (Black, 2020), defined by top down control and archetypal notions of evil drug pushers (Coomber, 2006). It demonstrates the ongoing importance of externally applied drug dealer and drug market archetypes, and evidences their impact and influence on policy. The second explores research that has focused on 'alternative' representations of drug dealers, often through qualitative work centring around questions of identity. It argues that this body of work demonstrates that some drug dealers are able to resist archetypal spoiled identities and seem to operate in a more fluid or fragmented way than traditional models would suggest. It concludes that studying drug dealer identity in alternative markets can lead to a more nuanced and detailed understanding about how drug markets are structured.

The third provides an in-depth discussion and analysis of three key qualitative studies that have explored drug dealer identity in alternative markets, focusing on the strategies by which they have been able to resist archetypal spoiled identities and what this can tell us about how drug markets are structured. The fourth introduces Goffman's (1959) '*Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life'* and explains why it provides a useful framework for studying drug dealer identity. Finally, a short concluding section draws the different strands together and presents the central aims of this research.

Drugs markets as commodity chains.

Drug markets, like all economic markets, are driven by the basic principle of supply and demand (Bean, 2008) (Brownstein, 1996) (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001) (Potter, 2009) (Taylor and Potter, 2013). The typical customer retailer relationship is a recognisable dynamic that fuels and funds drug markets, despite their illegal status. From a socio-economic perspective, Wilson and Zambrano (in Gereffi and Korzeniewicz, 1994) describe, drug markets as a classic commodity chain, involving valued commodities which have a global reach. A 'commodity chain' refers to '*a network of labour and production processes whose end result is a finished commodity*.' (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1986, p159). Alternatively, global commodity chains have also been defined by Brown et al (2006, p10) as ' *a chain of nodes from raw material exploitation, primary processing, through different stages of trade, services, and manufacturing processes to final consumption and waste disposal*'. If in this analogy, the illegal drugs appear as the finished commodities, then the final consumption and waste disposal may technically be achieved by either the drug user themselves or 'successful' law enforcement agencies. Finally, these chains of nodes and networks of labour may be conceptualised as the actors and organisations who perform the various tasks involved in each of the manufacturing, transportation, or retail stages of illegal drugs markets. Therefore, from these two definitions, illegal drug markets appear to fit into the framework of commodity chains. This section will set out illegal drug markets as types of commodity markets and their relation to legitimate supply chains as; if drugs are the finished commodity, they are also a valuable commodity, which is reflected by the various estimates of drug market size and value.

The United Nations Drug Control Program (UNDCP) is the official source for estimating the value of illegal drugs markets (Reuter and Greenfield, 2001). The UNDCP promotes a supply side or top-down approach, combining data on production, amounts seized and prices in order to obtain an estimate of the overall market size (EMCDDA, 2018). In 1995, the UNDCP estimated the global turnover in drugs markets to be $400 billion (UNDCP, World Drug Report, 1997). Later they revised their methods, providing instead an estimate of global range of drug market size from $85 billion to £1000 billion (UNDCP, 1998). Later still, estimated global drug markets were revised and broken down showing the value of drug markets was estimated at US$13 bn production level, $94 bn wholesale level, and US$322bn retail (UNDCP, 2005).

Reuter and Greenfield (2001) criticised these estimates as being excessive, over cited by the media and under challenged by policy makers, instead arriving at a more conservative figure of $20 - $25 billion (for cocaine, heroin, cannabis and synthetic drugs). In addition, Wilson and Stevens (2016) note Reuters and Greenfield's estimate was similar to the global market in coffee or tea rather than UNDCP textiles comparison. Naylor (2002, p33) supported Reuter's assertion arguing that the $400 billion figure was the result of '*when the boss was desperate for a quick number before a press conference*' rather than accurate estimation. Finally, Thoumi (2005, p189) supported Naylor, delivering this scathing assessment of the UNDCP: '*it simply does not have the capability to conduct significant critical studies and to evaluate in detail the quality of the data it collects*' deeming it a comparison between *"apples and pears"* (2005, p190).

The UNDCP top down approach is not the only method for calculating the size of illicit drug markets, further complicating the issue. One such alternative approach to estimating market size focuses on demand rather than supply and may be conceptualised as a bottom-up approach, combining prevalence data with assumptions on the quantity and price data to give expenditure estimates (EMCDDA, 2018). These expenditure estimates are then used to estimate market size. The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) uses this approach, estimating in 2013 that European drug markets were worth between 20 810.2 million Euros and 30 879.6 million Euros (EMCDDA, 2018). Other examples of these bottom up approaches to estimating drug markets include: Kilmer and Pacula, (2009), Pudney et al (2006) and Casey et al (2009). Alternatively, scholars such as Legleye et al (2008) use self-reported spend data to directly obtain expenditure and then use price data to work backwards to estimate the overall value of drug markets. Therefore, measuring the exact value or size of illegal drug markets remains an issue, in part, due to the variety of methodologies used to measure illicit markets. Consequently, differences in drug market estimates are understandable. However, what is clear is that despite the differences in measurement, being either top down or bottom up, all these approaches yield results which suggest that illegal drugs markets are worth billions of dollars and remain a lucrative trade.

Drug markets are an example of black markets and thus come with considerable risk attached. Black markets are understood as; illegal markets for goods and services that are otherwise price regulated, rationed, or restricted by the government (Gilman et al, 2011)*. Reuter and Kleiman, (1986) developed an early framework which depicted price and risk as intrinsically related. In short, the more risks placed on the drug market actors via repression agencies then the higher the prices of drugs. In this way, it

was thought that supply would become unrewarding, while at the same time demand from users would be phased out due to unaffordable costs. Reuter and Kleiman (1986) note, law enforcement acts as a type of 'tax' on drug markets. Following on, Caulkins and Reuter (1998) provides a break down of four key costs that pertain to illegal drug markets being; import costs, labour costs, cost of product, and asset seizure and risk compensation. Furthermore, Boivin (2014) also highlights how drug prices increase more sharply when drugs are headed to countries where law enforcement imposes higher costs on traffickers. Overall it is suggested that; the disruption imposed by repression agencies and the approach taken by prohibition to market scarcity, may cause fluctuations in drug markets prices or price dispersion.

Price dispersion in markets refers to the same product being sold at different prices and has been documented in detail by Reuter and Caulkins (2004) in relation to heroin markets, and applied by Caulkins and Baker (2010) more widely as a defining feature across illegal drug markets (Caulkins and Baker, 2010) (Moeller and Sandberg, 2019). Boivin (2014) finds that countries with more developed economies will suffer from higher price dispersion. This is because drug markets are dynamic and subject to change, which may be due to either local or global policy changes and/or events and are not strictly limited to law enforcement interventions. For example, Kreutzmann (2007) argues that Afghan opium poppy cultivation is a good example of the relationship between local and external factors and could be later seen when the UNDCP (2019) report attributed a decline in production to local factors like drought as well as external factors like a fall in international prices. From this example, we can see that data collectors sometimes account for the dynamic factors when measuring drug markets and do not always attribute all shortages to a policy of enforced scarcity.

Overall, whilst illegal drug markets appear to form classic commodity chains, predicting or estimating their exact size and value has been set out as problematic. A competing range of methods exist for measuring drug markets, being either top down or bottom up, complicating accurate estimating. The dynamic nature of drug markets that has also been shown to confound the valuing of drug markets due to price dispersion. Events which influence drug markets have been shown as both the result of local internal factors and external global policy / events and discussed in line with price dispersion across markets. Whilst the scarcity approach of risk and reward operationalised by law enforcement has been originally discussed as a means of measuring drug market value, it has also been shown as a type of 'tax' which continuously contributes to drug market price dispersion and the problem of ascertaining the exact value of drug markets. Finally, despite the issues with estimating the exact size

and value of the global drugs markets, what is clear is that illegal drug markets remain a lucrative trade. In fact, institutions such as the UNDCP reaffirm drugs as commodities and their markets as commodity chains by using such language as '*production*', *'wholesale'* and '*retail'* to describe market structure. In short, the fiscal rewards of drug markets continue to remain high motivating actors, whist the dynamic nature of drug markets provides risk takers with an opportunity to enter lucrative drug markets.

Part one: Drug dealer and drug market archetypes

Part one of the literature review explores traditional understandings of drug market actors and drug market structure. It comprises four core sections. The first sets out drug dealer archetypes, situating their development within the context of penal populism, its relation to the war on drugs and its stigmatising effects via moral panics and media sensationalism. The second section outlines Goldstein's (1989) drugs violence nexus, exploring its shaping of archetypes. The third presents an archetypal and hierarchical understanding of drug markets via assessment of top middle and bottom level dealers , arguing that these distinctions are actually rather ambiguous. Section four assesses the impact hierarchical three tier models and archetypal folk devil conceptions of dealers have on policing practice and policy, particularly in relation to the county lines dealer, encountered in the introduction, as either a direct reflection of the drug dealing archetype or the latest reimaging of a worn and tired stereotype.

Drug dealer archetypes

Many of the archetypes explored in this chapter are connected to wider drug policy and criminal justice policy developments. Key here is the war on drugs ideology, initiated by President Nixon in 1970 and rapidly expanded under Reagan and Clinton, as well as being exported globally via UN legislation. Young drug dealers were cast as morally devoid, unempathetic, super predators (Clinton, 1994), many of whom were imprisoned as part of a net-widening (Cohen, 1985) three strikes and you're out policy. In the UK context, the war on drugs ideology combined with a growing tide of penal populism (Garland, 2021), Pratt, 2007) – broadly understood as a disillusionment with the criminal justice system amongst the general public - fuelled by sensationalist media reporting (Cohen, 1972) loops in a reflective hall of mirrors where by the first image becomes the content for the next (Manning, 1996, 2007, 2010, 2013), consequently prompting politicians to introduce ever tougher crime policies. The new Labour government, for example, under the auspices of a 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime' attitude, identified illegal drugs as responsible for about 50% of all property crime

(Blair, 1994). This led to increased sentences for minor drug possession or supply offences and cemented the portrayal of drug market actors as serious criminals.

One significant consequence of these drug policy developments has been the stigmatisation of drug users and drug suppliers. A clear example being the label 'super predators' pursued in the 1990's America (Clinton, 1996). Coomber (2006) called this the 'evil pusher' narrative which can be viewed as part of a false dichotomy where by evil dealers push drugs onto naïve users (Coomber, Moyle, South, 2015). Drug dealers have therefore been cast as the villain in the war on drugs and Coomber (2006) has gone as far as to say their vilification has been comparative with that of child sex offenders. Drug dealers have been described as greedy and indifferent to the pain they cause (Murphy et al, 1990). This pain is often portrayed in images of death via overdose or violent drug market conflict (Coomber, 2010). Maloff (1984) identifies the way in which the narrative around heroin is controlled and set towards it being forced onto naïve users by evil pushers. Other assumptions accuse dealers of cutting their products with a range of poisonous substances to maximise profits, despite a lack of any evidence at all, forensic or otherwise, for such practices (Coomber, 1997) (Coomber, 2006). MacSweeney (1970) draws a distinction between the evil pusher who is not addicted and the addicted pusher, suggesting more compassion for the latter. MacDonald (2000) discusses the '*demonic*' label drug dealers have acquired. Hammersly and Reid (2002) highlight the persistence of such sensationalism as drug dealers waiting at the school gates to ensnare vulnerable young people, again despite any evidence for widespread use of such tactics.

Drug dealers are thus targeted in a number of ways with these archetypal conceptions becoming amplified by media sensationalism (Manning, 2007), as evidenced in the introduction. Consequently, drug dealers are not only folk devils (Cohen, 1972) but *the* modern contemporary folk devil (Anncrum, 2014). In the UK context, Murji (2020) highlights the death of Leah Betts in an ecstasy related incident and the hysterical coverage which helped portray this idea of evil pushers and naïve users to the public. Finally, as well as being accused of targeting naïve users and children, drug dealers as evil pushers are often vilified as Mr Bigs (Coomber, 2006) (Bean, 2008) and kingpins or conceptualised as part of some other organised criminal enterprise like a cartel, mafia or gang. Furthermore, drug policy particularly enforcement is particularly racialised leading to the social construction of the atypical dealer as racialised stereotype (Hallsworth and Young 2004) reimagining notions of the 90's super predator in today's language, furthered by links to violence and gangs discussed in the next parts. Overall, the 'real' or 'proper' drug dealers (Potter, 2009) described here are portrayed as folk devils in drug policies

or social outsider much like users (Young, 1971), in the media, and in the minds of many people. However, whilst such concepts permeate the popular policy and news narratives they are ultimately unhelpful, despite their persistence, when understanding drug markets.

Drug Market Violence

This section sets out Goldstein's (1985) drugs violence nexus which remains influential in policy formation for the ways in which it links drug markets to a range of violence and crime. Goldstein's (1985) work proposed a drugs violence nexus encompassing economic compulsion, psychopharmacological harm, and systemic violence. Systemic drug market violence is that which erupts from market disputes between drug market actors whether they be rival sellers, or seller to customer and vice versa, and is thus of primary interest to this thesis. Goldstein's (1985) conceptualisation of systemic violence draws on earlier work depicting drug market violence in Chicago (Hughes, 1977) and helps distinguish violence in relation to drug use from drug dealing and trafficking (Brownstein, 2016). Adding nuance to the concept, Goldstein et al (1989, 1992) found violence from drugs like crack and powered cocaine most likely to be related to systemic violence, but that the types of systemic violence encountered varied greatly, from disputes between dealers over territory, to robberies of vulnerable dealers or customers, to assaults by dealers collecting debt from customers, to punishment for insubordinate drug workers.

Demonstrating the ongoing relevance of Goldstein's (1985) work on systemic violence, Felson and Bonkiewicz (2011), found firearm possession to be more likely for those involved with either street level crack and powered cocaine dealing, high level traffickers and organised criminals. Connolly, (2017) also found links between systemic violence and drug markets in Ireland highlighting the way drug crime remains largely hidden due to the fear of reprisals, whilst Topalli et al (2002, p337) found that direct retaliation was a common response to market disputes as a means of maintaining *'reputation, loss recovery and enacting vengeance'.* Finally, Avdan (2019) goes as far as extending systemic drugs violence into a drug-terror nexus where by profits from drug markets fund terror groups and their violent activities. Overall, the evidence above, supports Goldstein's association between drug markets and systemic violence. In doing so, associations between systemic violence and

drug markets inevitably extend to the drug dealers who operate within these violent spaces, becoming somewhat inseparable from one another.

The role of systemic violence within drug markets cannot be denied but the degree to which violence is a predominant feature, of either drug markets or drug dealer identities can be questioned. In relation to Goldstein's presentation of drug markets as defined by systematic violence, Jaques and Wright (2008), highlight the importance of non-violent resource exchange as a social control typology, looking at peaceful resource exchange and peaceful social control, two important but often neglected areas. Reuter (2009) reviewed research into links between violence and drug trafficking, concluding in stark contrast to Goldstein's (1985) representation, that drug markets are most often peaceful, but there are times when the relationship with violent crime is observable. Furthermore, whilst Topalli et al (2002), define violence as the dominant response, they also describe alternatives to direct violence frequently being deployed.

In relation to traditional top-level markets Pearson and Hobbs, (2003) argue that the role of violence within serious crime networks is sometimes misunderstood. Towards the traditional bottom level market, Coomber and Maher (2006), found violence to be fairly rare and certainly not an inevitable consequence, with dealers often cooperating with one another, in contrast to what we might expect. Furthermore, Lum (2011) found that places with drug market activity are not necessarily violent. In fact, Johnson, (2016) found that travelling long distances for drugs corresponded to higher counts of violence rather than the traditional systemic predictors. Finally Resignato (2000), argues that empirical findings supporting a robust relationship between drug markets and violence are rare. From these studies above, we may infer that the assumed relationship between drug markets and systemic violence may not be as strong as set out by Goldstein (1985). Instead, systemic violence might be better conceived of as observable at times, rather than as having a dominant role across all drug market types. Yet still, systemic violence remains heavily attached to drug market perceptions, whatever the actual degree of violence experienced across all markets.

Goldstein's (1985) drugs violence nexus tripartite framework also highlights 'economic compulsion', as a driving factor in the relationship between drugs and violence, whereby desperate users resort to violent means, like robbery, in order to feed their habit. Seddon (2000), also emphasises the common belief within UK drug policy that drug addiction is the driver of most property crime, adding that there

is no evidence to support this deeply entrenched assumption. However, assumptions that problematic drug use is a direct cause of crime have permeated UK policy (Blair, 1994), with drug dealing condemned for its morally corrupting effect and the community harms and risks it poses to public health. May et al (2005), for example, highlight the ways in which drug sellers are cast as outsiders who prey on local communities with drug users cast as their victims. Overall, the evidence above suggests that people who use drugs in a problematic way, and the dealers who supply them are largely framed as being morally corrupt for the types of harm they enact on society via economic compulsive violence.

Goldstein's (1985) final typology of violence is framed as psychopharmacological violence. Psychopharmacological violence was initially theorised as drugs users committing violent acts due to high levels of intoxication. Goldstein (1985) alters the psychopharmacological violence in a way that addresses the negative effects of problematic drug use on user behaviours - the increased tendency for out of character violent responses, due to withdrawals, and the harms this causes family or community members. These victims could be anybody, in either home or community settings, with much of this type of violence under reported. In fact, Goldstein (1985, p147) states that; *'Psychopharmacological violence may involve drug use by either offender or victim. In other words, drug use may contribute to a person behaving violently, or it may alter a person's behaviour in such a manner as to bring about that person's violent victimization'.* Much like economic compulsion, drug dealers are portrayed as facilitating harmful drug sales for their own greed. Overall, it is suggested that psychopharmacological violence may also be used to conceptualise drug dealers as being morally corrupt beings who profit from the suffering of both drugs users and the community.

In building an archetypal conception of the drug dealer, associations with various forms of drug market violence have become embedded within the literature despite Bennett and Holloway (2009, p513) concluding that *'Goldstein's taxonomy should be refined to take into account the wide range of factors that influence the connection between drug use and crime.'*. Whilst the prevalence of violence has been shown as observable at times rather than occupying a consistently dominant role, Goldstein's concept of systematic violence remains influential when theorising drug market structure and roles. Similarly, economic compulsive and psychopharmacological violence have been discussed as stigmatizing both people who use drugs in a problematic way and the dealers who supply them, sometimes in an unfair or exaggerated manner (Bennett and Holloway, 2009). As a result, drug dealers may be conceived of as being morally corrupt for the systematic violence they use to maintain

drug markets and the economic compulsive and psychopharmacological types of violence, enacted by or against drugs users and community members, which they facilitate, promote and profiteer from via drug sales.

Hierarchical and organised drug markets

This section sets out traditional, archetypal models for understanding drug markets as depicting neat three part top down hierarchies, defined by top, middle and bottom levels, and often described as pyramids (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001). These pyramids promoted the view of a static triangle, often being presented as top down with control centralised at the top by one dominant figure or group (Bean, 2008), distributing drugs to middle and bottom levels. Variations have also been developed including Preble and Casey's (1969) six-tier system and Leitner's (2012) hierarchical clustering methodology. Lewis (1994) also adapted the hierarchy for Britain's heroin, producing a model which consisted of four levels being; importers and bulk distributors, bulk wholesalers, small scale wholesalers and apartment dealers, and retail sales and user dealers. This is demonstrated by the graphic below depicting top down hierarchies taken from the recent Uk gov report by Dame Black (2020). These top down hierarchy models are still domain in the thinking of the criminal justice policy makers and enforcement and haven't been updated in shape much since the 1980s seemingly just replacing the ethic group which sits on top to keep up with the times.
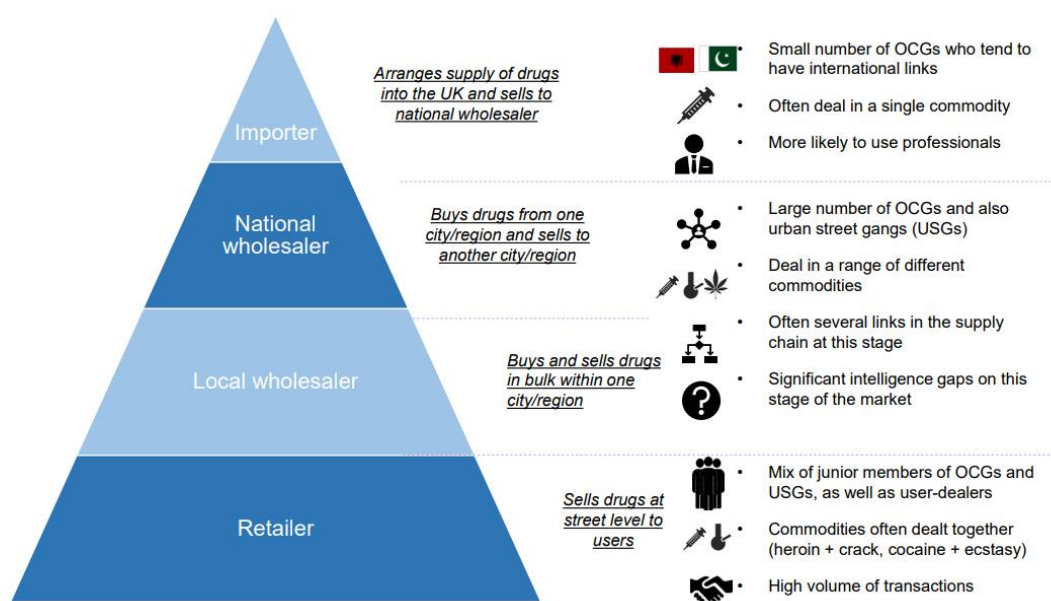
Figure one: Traditional pyramid structure of domestic drug distribution (Black, 2020, p41)

Top level drug trafficking is conceptualised as importation /exportation by large national distributors with early work from Lewis, (1989) encouraging the idea that professional criminals were becoming increasingly involved in European cocaine markets from the 1970s onwards (Bacon, 2016). They do not have to be involved in the international importation of drugs but may run a top-level market at a national level. Top level markets are heavily associated with organised crime (Bean, 2008) and violence (Goldstein, 1989). Consequently, top level markets are associated with concepts such as Cartels, Mafias , Kingpins and Drug Barons (Dorn et al, 2000) who run their empires with varying degrees of force. Here though, despite a fascination with top level markets by media and policy makers, Pearson and Hobbs (2003) note the significant lack of data on these top-level markets in the UK which limits our understanding of how they work.

Research which has successfully studied these top-level markets includes Adler and Adler's (1985) ethnographic research on top level suppliers in California, finding that assumptions around top level dealers are not always in line with archetypal concepts. Reuter and Haaga's (1989) work set out four observations of upper level dealing being: (1) drug dealers face few barriers to entry into the higher levels of the drug markets, (2) successful operation does not require the creation of a large or enduring organization, (3) it is possible to function as a high-level dealer without recourse to violence, and (4) the wholesale drug market is national rather than regional. Pearson and Hobbs (2001) found that family and kinship ties were highly significant at higher levels of drug markets. The close-knit relations between traffickers may explain Reuter and Greenfield's (2001) estimate that, globally, probably only a few hundred people hold importer roles

Alternatively, Kenney (2007), argues that rather than being a centralised cartel, the Colombian drug trade was actually characterised by a fluid social system. Furthermore, work by Natarajan and Belanger (1998), on drug trafficking groups in New York, found considerable variety of organisational types to be involved. Finally, Dorn, Levi and King's (2005) work focuses solely on upper level traffickers and cites over 300 studies yet provides such variation in defining top level dealers that the category still remains blurred (Taylor and Potter, 2013). Here then, whilst it is accepted that those controlling drug trafficking are; involved with large quantities and therefore sit within the top of the hierarchy, who these actors are and how these organisations operate around the top table is disputed with no clear and consistent understanding coming from the literature.

It follows then that middle level markets are referred to as the 'go between' (Pearson, 2001) (Murphy et al, 1990) linking the top-level suppliers with the bottom level retailers. Middle level drug dealers facilitate transactions between top and bottom level markets, breaking kilos down into ounces before supplying the bottom. Middle market supply resembles that of a wholesaler and can be very varied.

> '*Some of these individuals sit just above the retail level supplying retail level dealers who are in turn selling direct to consumers; others involve serious crime networks that control regional and cross-regional distribution systems within the UK, and transport routes that facilitate importation from the Netherlands'*. (Pearson and Hobbs (2004, p565)

This series of brokerage or wholesaler functions that middle level dealers perform mean that the middle market is a grey area where operations are likely to vary and are dynamic subject to the evolving market conditions of both importers and retailer demands. Therefore, Pearson and Hobbs (2001, p17) settle on a working definition of middle markets as '*something that happened between importation and retail supply at street level'.*

Pearson and Hobbs (2003) consistently depict the middle level as consisting of drug brokers working as free trading entrepreneurs. Again, Pearson and Hobbs (2004) make a further distinction between those who sit just above the retail level and others involved in more serious crime networks, appearing to combine both traditionally organised crime hierarchies and market fluidity within a framework for the middle level of drug markets. May and Hough (2004) document the ways in which middle level markets support retail markets and consider the relationship between the two levels. Malm and Bircher (2011) look at the structural vulnerability of the middle level of drug markets. Bushway and Reuter (2003) highlight the attractiveness for law enforcement to target middle markets. Berger et al. (2023) identify hidden mid level dealing in middle and upper class groups. Hagedorn (1994) describes adult gang members sporadically involved with profitable mid level dealing. For Pearson (2007) though, despite this work, the middle level dealers are typically misunderstood, as is the role of violence in their markets, and he argues instead that middle level dealers represent fluid free market agents in the commodity chain. Overall, the point here is that whilst middle level markets at a simple glance connect the top to the bottom level of drug markets, the exact ways in which middle level dealers do so are unclear, complex and interchangeable (Pearson, 2007). Therefore, the middle level of drug markets is perhaps the most dynamic.

The bottom level of the drug market, refers to those dealers who carry out the smallest transactions, often directly to drug consumers, acting as a retailer who supplies the demands of their customer base. By selling in smaller quantities, bottom level dealers maximise their profits by providing affordable commodities for consumers who may not have the resources or 'know how' to acquire larger amounts. At the same time, they maximise their risk, completing transactions at unpredictable times, in a range of spaces, with regular frequency. Often referred to as the street level, the bottom level retail market is the largest and estimated as the most valuable of the three levels of the drug market (UNDCP, 2020).

Studies into the bottom level drug markets are also more common than middle or top level studies, Street level markets are themselves often described as common features of poor and deprived areas (Hales and Hobbs, 2010) (Densely et al, 2020) (Lupton et al, 2002). These retail level markets have been described as chaotic by Lewis (1994). Importantly, in the current UK context, street level dealers, although low level operators, are often described as being part of organised drug dealing 'county lines' gangs, (Maclean et al , 2018) (Densley and Peterson, 2018) (Spicer et al, 2020). Overall it is suggested that organised retailers or 'commercial specialists' (Dorn et al, 1992) are prevalent in the bottom level of illegal drug markets.

Research on the bottom level of drug markets has focused on social suppliers, those who supply drugs to and through networks of friends and acquaintances. These sales are effectively to non strangers, not for profit and require a degree of trust. Social supply has been found to be wide spread, prevalent and accounts for a significant proportion of adult supply. Part two of the literature review will set social supply out in more detail. But for now studies which look at the social supply of drugs in the bottom level include but are not limited to (Parker et al, 1995) (Measham et al, 1994) (Measham, et al, 1998)(Coomber and Turnbull, 2007) (Duffy et al, 2008) (Potter, 2009). The concept social supply has also been extended to minimal commercial supply (Hough, 2003) (Moyle and Coomber, 2014) which goes beyond just sharing (Caulkins and Pacula, 2006) or selling on a not for profit basis, and extends to selling for minimal profit, perhaps to cover travel expenses. Finally, the prevalence of social suppliers has arguably led to a normalisation of this type of social supply (Chatwin and Potter, 2014) which again will be returned to later. But for now it would seem that the bottom level is at least separated into two clear and distinct suppliers from the literature being commercially orientated street vendors and social suppliers.

This section has set out the three tier pyramid structure in its simplest form being top middle and bottom. Research has been presented from each level which indicates that quantity based descriptions of dealers for their supply chain position get equivocated with a position in a drugs market hierarchy and position within a chain of command. What has been shown with the brief accounts of top middle and bottom level dealers from the existing literature is that no clear typology exists at any of the levels as there is so much variation in the actors who have been studied. Therefore, drug market actors at all levels vary widely.

The enduring application of drug market and drug dealer archetypes in policing and policy

Thus far, this part of the literature review has traced the development of archetypes within our understanding of drug markets and drug market actors, and has demonstrated their enduring dominance within policy making, media reporting and in the public consciousness. In this final section, discussion turns to considering the influence such archetypes have had, and still have , in terms of determining policing strategy and policy development, despite a lack of evidence as outlined above. It briefly explores the influence of archetypal understanding in designing police response to controlling drug markets in the UK via the Broome Report (ACPO, 1985), despite direct evidence that such a strategy might be counterproductive. The enduring nature of policing strategy and policies is demonstrated by an exploration of recent focus on County Lines style, organised and violent drug markets, bringing this section to a close

Based on a hierarchical understanding of the nature of drug markets, in the UK, the Broome report (1985) advocated a similar three tier policing response to drug markets. Regional crime squads were set up to tackle major distribution and high drug level traffickers, force drug squads focused on middle level dealers and coordinated intelligence, whilst divisional level officers would simply encounter street level dealers during their normal duties (Bean, 2008). Following publication of the Broome report, the role of organised crime governed by hierarchical actors was embedded into UK policing strategy for drug markets, cementing the idea that a 'Mr Big' sat on top of the pyramid and that arresting the Mr Bigs would cut off supply to the levels below. It was further assumed that drug markets would falter without the top players, in a similar fashion to removing the head of a snake, via

police crackdowns with increasing degrees of force. Kleiman and Smith (1990) quickly questioned the practicality of targeting Mr Big dealers who were easily replaced, causing minor inconveniences rather than widespread disruption to drug market supply. However, these concerns were ignored and the majority of police resources across the UK were directed at top and upper middle levels of the market.

The Broome report also influenced the policing of the lower levels of drug markets, with organised police crackdowns, particularly on class-A drug markets, becoming a prevalent part of a zero tolerance policy towards dealers and drug markets in an attempt to disrupt the drug market hierarchy. However, Bowling (1999) argues that 'zero tolerance policing' has been exaggerated as a success story. Police crackdowns are examples of symbolic policing i.e. being seen to be doing something rather than preventing or solving crime (Browne, 2004). Coomber, Moyle and Mahoney, (2017) argue that crackdowns on heroin and crack cocaine markets are an ongoing example of this type of symbolic policing. Coomber (2006) also suggests that whilst symbolic objectives may be achieved these may be counterproductive. For example, Bouchard and Tremblay (2005) state that targeted crackdowns, despite the perception of Class-A, organised dealers being targeted, ultimately translated to higher arrest rates for softer drug dealers and social suppliers, therefore targeting normal and ordinary people rather than 'real' or 'proper dealers' as depicted earlier. Werb et al's (2011, p87) metanalysis of drug market violence found that; '*increasing drug law enforcement is unlikely to reduce drug market violence. Instead … gun violence and high homicide rates may be an inevitable consequence of drug prohibition and that disrupting drug markets can paradoxically increase violence.*' This paradox has been corroborated by Resignato (2000) who suggests a stronger causal relationship between drug prohibition and violent crime than drug use and violence. Overall, these studies suggest that zero tolerance crackdowns may increase drug market violence rather than reduce it.

Crackdowns on drug markets were designed to restrict supply (Bacon, 2016), pushing prices up for consumers and in turn resulting in falling demand for illegal drugs, bringing the pyramid market to a standstill. However, some evidence suggests that the opposite appears to be true when looking at the effects of drug market crack downs and drug price dispersion. Caulkins and Reuter, (2010), found that despite the risk of incarceration increasing fivefold in the USA in the last 25 years, the price of cocaine and heroin have fallen substantially. Similarly, Werb et al. (2011) found that despite increased investment in law enforcement the price of drugs has fallen yet the purity has increased. Overall, these studies suggest that, zero tolerance crackdowns, do not effectively police drug markets as drug markets have continued to benefit from reduced prices and high purity levels.

Finally, the kind of early police response advocated in the Broome report, drawing on hierarchical and archetypal understandings of drug markets and drugs dealers, has resulted in another unintended consequence which rely on racial stereotypes to target drugs dealers during modern police operations. In short, police crackdowns have been guided by not only the archetypal conception of violent and organised but also as black. Gaston, (2019) found evidence of officers engaging in unjustified racial profiling in their drug enforcement efforts. Murji (2007), discusses naïve assumptions around ethnicity providing a basis or the organisation of drug distribution. In reality these stereotypes translate into higher stop and search rates (Gov, 2022) and disproportionately negative experiences at the hands of all levels of the criminal justice system for BAME communities (Lammy, 2017).

The Broome report was published nearly 40 years ago, the recent UK focus on 'County Lines' style drug dealing, outlined in the introduction, provides important evidence of the persistence of both drug dealer/market archetypes, and their application within policing strategy and policy, reinforcing the conceptualisation of drug markets as violent and the product of organised crime. Densley, Deuchar and Harding, (2020) found links between street gangs, youth violence, county lines and knife crime. Moyle (2019) also found evidence of violence and intimidation within county lines labour. Whittaker et al. (2019) document changes in gangs since Pitts (2008), citing a move from post codes to profits as motivations for street gangs who move out over saturated city markets and into smaller towns. Kurtenbach and Rauf (2019) also found violence to be a continued norm of street code. Interestingly, Moyle, (2019, p393) finds that *'despite violence and intimidation, many (dealers) saw county lines labour as preferable to other income generating activity'*, suggesting violence was both accepted and normalised as part of the work place practice in county lines. Overall, the above literature suggests that systemic violence (Goldstein, 1989) is a dominant feature of county lines dealing, for both maintaining marketplace territories, dealing with disputes and maintaining control over county lines labourers.

The structure of county lines markets reflects concepts of top down hierarchies and organised crime. The constant referral to county lines as gangs (see Densley et al 2020, Andell 2019, Whitaker et al 2019 amongst others) reinforces the conception of organised role based structures. For Densley (2014, p1), *'Gangs evolve from adolescent peer groups and In response to external threats and financial commitments, they grow into drug-distribution enterprises'*. For Densely et al (2018) these types of

county line gangs are becoming more common. Andell (2019) has looked at the divisions of labour of gangs involved in county lines distribution models concluding they conflict with recent developments in social supply policy. Finally, Spicer, Moyle and Coomber (2020, p301), looked at four different types of cuckooing (taking over homes to use for drug dealing) as an extension of county lines dealing which organised not only drug shipments and sales, but also fixed spaces from which they could operate freely;

> *Hundreds of cases of 'cuckooing' have been reported, where heroin and crack cocaine dealers associated with the so-called 'County Lines' supply methodology have taken over the homes of local residents and created outposts to facilitate their supply operations in satellite locations. Dominant narratives surrounding this practice have stressed its exploitative nature and the vulnerabilities of those involved'.*

Overall, the literature suggests that county lines dealing involves highly organised gangs, performing a number of roles, controlling national level drug distribution systems across a range of satellite properties.

County lines dealing is often reported as involving the exploitation of children. Robinson, McLean and Densley, (2019) found evidence of child exploitation by county lines gangs. Furthermore Windle, Moyle and Coomber (2020, p67) state that;

> '*Children and young people may be exploited because they represent a cheap, easily recruited workforce who can absorb the risks related to street-level sales and are considered disposable'.*

In fact, the use of children in a wide range of roles (Spicer, 2020), from drugs and weapons storage (Maclean, Robinson, Densley, 2019), to running drugs to small towns (Windle et al, 2020) to performing acts of violence (Spicer, 2019) have shown the widespread use of children by county lines gangs. Whilst early depictions of these children, showed them as offenders rather than victims Moyle (2019, p393) comments that '*contrary to popular enforcement narratives, they often became involved though constrained choice'*. Thus, children have become reframed from offenders, to victims (CPS, 2018) via reluctant participation which they are unable to escape. Changes in sentencing have targeted heads of county line gangs, who exploit children with modern slavery offences (CPS, 2018) (Stone, 2018). Overall, it is suggested that county lines dealers may be especially conceptualised as the modern archetype of drugs dealers for the ways in which their drugs enterprises exploit vulnerable adults and children.

In many ways, county lines dealers' may amount to the reconceptualization of archetypal drug dealers due to the associations with violence, gangs / organised crime and the exploitation of vulnerable adults but most importantly, children. These county lines structures reflect traditional hierarchies and seem to reproduce the systematic violence set out by Goldstein (1989). Finally, the key point here is that despite county lines dealers only making a small section of the entire drug market, the legacy of hierarchical understanding of drug markets have led county lines to be focused on as the dominant understanding of how drugs markets work in the UK and have allowed for the reimagining of old archetypes in new suits.

This part of the literature review has documented that traditional models of drug market structure are imagined in pyramid shape, consisting of a three tiered structure being top middle and bottom. Hierarchies or chains of command exist, at times, between the tiers giving off the allure that drug markets are neatly organised from the top down. Those who operate within drug markets are styled as nefarious archetypes prone to violence, led by greedy instinct and uninhibited by empathy. In response, from the 1980s onwards policing policy in the UK distinguished these real and proper dealers and helped promote the narrative of evil pushers (Coomber, 2006). Such conceptions are still embedded within current policy demonstrated by the focus on county lines dealers, whose use of children via coercive chains of command and top down organisation continue to reflect a sort of reality that drug markets are indeed hyper violent criminal under worlds who prey on the most vulnerable.

Yet arguments have always persisted from early on that such understandings of drug markets fall into two false dichotomies. Firstly all drug markets are structured in neat top down hierarchies, with Reuters (1983) arguing against this since the 80s calling for new and dynamic ways of understanding markets. Secondly, that evil drug dealers prey on naïve users, pushing addictive substances onto them and lining their own pockets no matter the human cost. Pockets of research countering this narrative have emerged, providing alternative depictions of drug dealers and drug markets. Part two of the literature review will thus explore these alternative understandings of drug supply within the existing literature.

Part two: Alternative depictions of drug markets and drug dealers

This part of the literature review begins by briefly outlining social suppliers as a long-standing, widely accepted alternative depiction to archetypal dealers, instead presenting a drug dealer identity based around supply along friendship networks, not significantly influenced by profit and, sometimes, operating within normalised environments resulting in blurred boundaries (Chatwin and Potter, 2014) whereby drug markets form in alternative arenas of transaction or through sub cultural lens (Young, 1971). The second section seeks to demonstrate how applying alternative depictions of drug dealers that contrast starkly with the 'real' or 'proper' drug dealer identities outlined in part one, can lead to more nuanced understanding of drug market structures resulting in typologies and models which provide a fluid and fragmented picture, countering the hierarchical and organised drug market archetype.

Introducing Social Supply as a counterpoint to drug dealer archetypes

Recent interest in social supply stems from a more long-standing depiction within drug market research of an alternative counterpoint to the archetypal drug dealer – the user dealer who sells drugs in order to fund their own drug use (May and Hough, 2001). User dealers' drug consumption patterns may range from recreational through to addiction and should not be limited to the latter. This may involve either consuming profits or using profits from one drug revenue to fund a habit in another. User dealers are even accepted by policy makers and their addiction is a significant mitigating factor in sentencing user supply based offences (Sentencing Guidelines, 2012). User dealers have been depicted in every kind of drug market including cannabis users or cultivators (see (Potter, 2006) (Potter, 2009) (Hough et al, 2003) (Parker et al, 1998) amongst others) and party drugs, like ecstasy (Murphy et al, 1990) (Moore and Miles, 2004) (Ward, 2010) (Measham et al, 2001).

Drawing on the user dealer depiction as somewhat immune to the application of the usual drug dealer archetype, research has more recently become interested in documenting the social supply of illegal drugs along networks of friends and acquaintances, often on a not for profit basis. Dorn et al, (1992), had described these networks as '*mutual societies'.* Parker's (et al 1995) (et al, 1998) (2005) various studies showed repeatedly that the supply of drugs amongst young people was predominantly

between chains of friends and acquaintances who 'sort' each other out. The act of 'sorting' drugs or facilitating drug sales in some sort of 'broker role' has been commonly reported between friends and acquaintances in numerous studies (Measham et al, 2001) (Parker, 2000) (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001) (Murphy et al, 2005) where participation at times amounts to little more than '*go-betweens'* (Murphy et al 1990) (Coomber and Turnbull, 2007). Preference for these social networks when purchasing drugs has been found repeatedly as they come with a number of benefits including; convenient cost effective acquisition (Measham et al, 2001) (Moyle, 2014), ritual enjoyment from group purchases (Ward, 2010), reduced risk by removing interactions with proper drugs dealers (Potter, 2009) (Coomber and Turnbull, 2007) and decreasing the chances of fake, falsely labelled or low quality products (Murphy et al, 2005) (Jacinto et al, 2008).

Overall, modes of social supply over accessing traditional street dealers (Aldridge et al, 2011), (Coomber and Moyle, 2013), relates to the perceived reduction in risk when acquiring recreational drugs in a safer manner from friends which allows for real, or archetypal, dealers to be avoided (Parker et al, 1998) (Measham et al, 2001) (Potter, 2009) acting as a '*structural buffer'* by utilising trustworthy people (Coomber and Turnbull, 2007) putting a '*physical and social distance'* between themselves and the *'criminal world'* (Parker, 2005). Therefore, social supply takes place in '*arenas of transaction'* (Coomber and Turnbull, 2007), often condoned in '*semi private social space'* (Parker, 2005) which are not extensions of conventionally understood drug markets. Finally, these social supply transactions are not always motivated by profit (Taylor and Potter, 2013) and may often involve giving drugs away for free or sharing reciprocally with peers (Young, 1971) (Belackova and Vaccaro, 2013) (Coomber et al, 2016) (Hathaway et al, 2018) (Murphy et al., 2005). Social supply may extend to minimal commercial supply (Hough et al, 2003) (Coomber and Moyle, 2013) in order to cover costs or seek minimal reparations for their effort in 'sorting' (Measham et al, 2001).

Research on social supply spans both soft and hard drugs markets, but the majority has focused on cannabis (Parker et al, 1998) (Hough et al, 2003) (Duffy et al, 2008). Parker's (1998) assessment of normalisation showed how the majority of young people accessed cannabis via social networks. Duffy's (2008) study of three urban and rural areas again showed how young people acquire cannabis from peer networks leading Coomber and Turnbull (2007) to state that the vast majority of young people acquire cannabis in this way. The study of social supply and cannabis is well established in the existing literature and can be seen in a range of studies (see (Natarajan and Hough, 2000) (Caulkins and Pacula, 2006) (Scott et al, 2017). Research extends to the cultivation of cannabis (Hough et al,

2003) (Potter, 2006) (Potter, 2009) (Potter et al, 2016) (Bone, Potter, Klein, 2018) based on self-supply, sharing and which may include minimal commercial sales (Hough et al, 2003) when selling part of the crop (Barrett et al, 2012) (Decorte et al, 2011) to cover costs of production (Potter, 2006).

However, social supply is not limited to cannabis networks but also a persistent feature of other drug markets. Social supply has been documented in the supply of a range of substances including; cocaine (Murphy et al, 1990) (Shearer et al, 2005), ketamine (Joe-Laider and Hunt, 2008) and ecstasy markets (Murphy et al, 2005) (Ward, 2010) (Measham et al, 2001) (Bright and Sutherland, 2016). These findings are especially true in relation to dance / festival type events (Aldridge et al, 2011) (Parker et al, 2002) (Measham et al, 2001) (Ward, 2010), whilst South's (2004) study of heavy recreational drug users found that their drug trading is generally as a *'friend of a friend'.* Finally, Potter and Osiniagova (2013) found that whilst social supply did not dominate hard drugs markets, '*elements existed'*, amongst newer users which ultimately fell away once patterns of problematic drug use had been established. Overall the above literature demonstrates the presences of elements of social supply in a plethora of soft and hard drugs markets.

Research on social supply typically focuses on young people (Blum, 1970), (Parker et al, 1998) who are not generally a good match for the archetypal 'real' dealer characteristics described in the previous section. Atkyns and Hanneman (1974) investigate middle class social suppliers. Studies by Parker et al (1995)(1998)(2002), Hough et al (2003), Duffy et al (2008) and Coomber and Turnbull (2007) all focus on young people's cannabis networks. Korf et al's (2008) international study of teen dealers found most respondents were selling drugs to friends and acquaintances**.** University students have also been subject to social supply studies with Moyle and Coomber (2019, p642) categorising university as a '*risk environment'* whereby '*university students transition into regular drug use and 'social supply'*. Patton (2018) also highlights the drift risk whilst at university whilst Mohamed and Fritsvold (2009) study '*Dorm Room Dealers'* at college. In addition Bennett and Holloway's (2019) study of students showed about half had only ever acquired drugs from friends, whilst over one-third had supplied drugs, concluding that university may be a 'hybrid market'.

Despite the focus on young people, the appetite for social supply is not limited to young drug users and was found to be the preference of the more difficult to research population of over 40s drug users (Moxon and Waters, 2019). Pearson (2001), studied adult networks of recreational users in London

finding they still utilised social networks to access drugs. Finally, research with adult recreational drug users generally shows they find social supply attractive due to its low risk nature (Murphy et al, 1990) (Sales and Murphy, 2007) (Jacinto et al, 2008). Overall the literature currently shows that social supply networks are not limited to youth friendship groups and extend into older demographic drugs markets.

Social supply is a global phenomenon and has been documented in many countries. Hakkarainen and Perälä (2016) document social supply and cannabis cultivation in Finland. Vlaemynck (2014)(2016) has studied cannabis markets in Belgium and emphasised the importance of personal networks. Joe-Laider and Hunt's (2008) work on ketamine comes from Hong Kong. Hathaway et al (2018) documented social supply networks for cannabis amongst Canadian university students. Nicholas (2008), looked at not-for-profit dealing via social networks in Australia. Other studies into social supply in Australia include Willis (2008) and Lenton (et al, 2016) on cannabis, Hulme (et al, 2019) on pharmaceutical drugs or Duff (2005) for poly party drugs. From their study on adults in Frankfurt Germany, Werse (2008, p106) concludes that '*friends and acquaintances account for most of the actual sales of hashish and marijuana'.* Ugwu and Dumbili (2020) have explored reciprocal sharing of cannabis in Nigeria. Wilkins et al (2018) compared cannabis cultivation in New Zealand and Israel finding social supply to be important in both contexts. In Norway, Hammersvik (2016) studies the notion of 'helping friends' in relation to cannabis cultivation with a dramaturgical approach to 'flexing' the resulting social capital. Furthermore several multinational comparative studies have been conducted which highlight the role of social supply with examples including; Potter et al (2016) Werse et al (2019), Skliamis and Korf (2022) and Vuolo and Matias (2022). Finally, Coomber et al (2018) draws on work from; Australia, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, New Zealand, England and Wales, and the United States, finding that social supply consistently exists as a distinct feature of drug markets across these locations, although responses by policy makers range from soft to strict with the definition between nations ambiguous. Overall the above evidence suggests that social supply is an established part of global drug market literature but not yet consistently reflected in global policy unilaterally.

The research described thus far suggests that social supply is prevalent amongst drug markets often being the preference for both retail customers and suppliers, yielding greater protection for both parties, as social supply acts as a buffer for both actors whom either seek some distance between real drug markets or 'real' drug dealer labels. May and Bhardwa (In Brownstein, 2016, p418-419), argue that '*common sense discussion tends to oversimplify their nature and exaggerate the difference418-*

9s and social distance between buyers and sellers of drugs', which social supply helps address. As Coomber and Turnbull (2007, p845) state, social dealing creates its own typology of dealing *which 'delineates from proper dealing'*. However, an important critique is provided by Potter (2009) who highlights the difficulties in defining 'friends' and 'acquaintances' and the issues this grey area creates in a legal sense when assessing the relationships between customer and supplier. Despite this grey area, the UK has recently adapted sentencing guidelines to incorporate social supply as a mitigating factor (Moyle et al, 2013).

As discussed in part one, a variety of factors - including penal populism, tough government policy based on the premise that drugs are a significant cause of crime, and the kind of policing advocated in the Broome report - resulted in a failure to distinguish between different types of drug dealing offence, instead adopting a one size fits all approach to dealers (Moyle et al, 2013). Minor offenders faced significant sentences (Tonry, 2012) which were criticized as being disproportionate (Lynch, 1997) to the point a new report was commissioned as prison populations were, in part, being driven by new laws targeting drugs offenders. The Police Foundation report (2000) or Runciman report (2002), which followed it, showed how social suppliers are '*sufficiently different in intent, motivation and harm to be treated as a separate offence in law to commercial supply'* (Moyle et al, 2013, p553).

Despite the clarity of these recommendations, and the growing body of academic evidence described above, the Home Office Select Committee (2002) refused to acknowledge lesser criminal culpability for sharing and not for profit supply offences. It wasn't until ten years later that the sentencing guidelines (Sentencing Council, 2012, p12) introduced a mode of 'lesser supply' which is distinctly different from commercial supply or street dealing described in the guidelines as; '*if own operation, absence of any financial gain, for example joint purchase for no profit, or sharing minimal quantity between peers on non-commercial basis'.* However, whilst the guidelines around lesser supply allude to a number of definitions and key principles of social supply, there is still no official recognition of the term itself (Coomber & Moyle, 2014).

Drawing together the evidence presented in this section, it seems likely that social dealing itself is a typology of drug dealing which fragments our understanding of drug markets. Social suppliers are not a good match with the archetypal drug dealer outlined in part one, presenting instead as largely benign associates trusted to perform an illegal favour for another. Social supply also supports a dynamic

representation of drug markets - social supply is built on fluid and flexible opportunities to perform dealer roles as and when it suits potential drug market actors and often for social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) rewards rather than economic gains. Trust and friendship between social suppliers and customers yields greater protection, and in some cases is perhaps as valued as the profitability of the transaction (Potter, 2009). These social suppliers are not a homogenous group. Nor are they necessarily criminogenic. Yet still, social supply is a clearly distinguishable typology of drug dealing which complicates traditional understandings of drug markets (Coomber et al, 2013) because it presents a more fluid idea of drug dealer identity and a more fragmented picture of drug market structure than allowed for within the traditional hierarchical models and archetypes framing our understanding of drug market structure. In fact, due to the prevalence of social supply in drug market structures social supply may be becoming increasingly normalised.

The normalisation of drug use was set out (Parker et al, 1995) as part of a framework suggesting that drug use by youths was no longer seen as an unusual activity, but rather part of normalised leisure time, partially condoned in semi-private spaces, with users now coming from a diverse range of social backgrounds. This was opposed to earlier work which depicted drugs users as deviant outsiders (Becker, 1963), often belonging to subcultural groups (Hebdige, 1979). According to the normalisation thesis, increased availability of recreational drugs corresponded with an uptake in young people trying drugs and, in some cases, developing regular patterns of use, with those not partaking having at least some knowledge of recreational substances often gained from friends with first-hand experiences (Parker et al, 1998). A substantial body of research corroborating the normalisation thesis was developed over a period of time and includes; Measham et al (1994, Measham et al (1998) Parker et al (1995) Parker et al (1998) Parker et al (2002) Williams and Parker, (2001). The concept of normalisation evolved over this time from a '*crude beginning*' (Parker et al, 2002), critiqued for being exaggerated (Shiner and Newburn, 1996) and oversimplified (Shildrick, 2002), into a more nuanced process whereby recreational drug was increasingly accommodated and consequently incorporated into the cultural mainstream and does not have to be a process of 'absolutes' (Aldridge et al, 2011). This more general process for the theory, styling drugs as part of the reality of 'everyday life' (South, 1999), has become relatively widely accepted amongst researchers, even those critical of its early beginnings (Measham and Shiner, 2009).

With relevance to the concept of social supply discussed above, and this thesis more widely, Coomber (2004) predicted that if drug use was undergoing a normalisation process then we should expect the

role of the supplier to also become more normalised, arguing that this is especially true for social supply between friends and acquaintances, as drifting into social supplier roles would become more accepted in particular friendship groups. The argument for the normalisation of supply is fleshed out by Chatwin and Potter (2014) who describe a blurring of the boundaries between use and supply, and Coomber Moyle and South (2015, p256) who refer to social supply as the 'other side' of the history of normalisation, in which they highlight the persistent appearance of social suppliers throughout drug market research, putting forward a frame work for the normalisation of social supply as an '*adjunct to the relative normalisation of drug use'*. The normalisation of social supply is also not a process of general absolutes (Aldridge et al, 2011) but rather site and exchange specific.

Arguments for the normalisation of social supply have been situated within a body normalisation of recreational drugs use. Normalised social supply may in part be seen as part of the consumption ritual of recreational drugs use. Alternatively, not only has recreational drug use become normalised but also social supply. Therefore the normalisation of social supply is presented here as the degree to which social supply has become entrenched into some drug market structures as social supply itself has been found by numerous pieces of research, set out above in social supply, to be overwhelming prevalent. Consequently, the normalisation of social supply demonstrates how established the typology of social supplier is in the literature. These social suppliers, who may be both prevalent and increasingly normalised are not explained by the traditional models set out in part one and come to fragment our understanding of the top down pyramid (Black, 2020) .

Introducing fragmented and fluid drug markets as counterpoints to hierarchical archetype

The sections above briefly outlined existing research on social supply and explored its relationship to the normalisation of drugs, providing evidence that social supply entails, at least to some extent, the normalisation of some drug supply and some drug suppliers, and thus presents a need for alternative models of drug market structure which allow for more fragmented, disorganised and fluid interpretation. This final section focuses on the problem social supply and normalisation of supply present for the rigid, hierarchical and archetypal understandings of drug dealers and drug market structure outlined in part one. It draws on a small but persistent body of existing drug market research, to argue that drug markets can in fact be disorganised (Reuter, 1983), messy (Dorn et al, 1992), (Paoli, 2002), fragmented (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001) and fluid (Dorn, 2000), rather than a neat top down

pyramid (Bean, 2008), which tends to provide 'a conceptual framework that is "*too neat*" to explain the "*messy reality*" of drug markets (Johnson et al., 1992: p. 71).

Pearson and Hobbs acknowledge the fragmentation of the drug market concluding that;

 'The picture is rather like a large jigsaw – but a jigsaw in which each particular piece comes from a different set.' (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001, p72)

On way to understand this analogy is to infer this mixture of puzzle pieces is made up from three different sets being; the top, middle and bottom levels of drug markets and it is just a case of picking out each piece and putting it back together with in its correct set, which may be understood as 'simple yet neat' top down structure. In this interpretation, there is potential for the jigsaw to still somewhat fit together, bar some missing jigsaw pieces, rather than remaining a mishmash of entirely different sets. Yet, the picture suggested by Pearson also seems to allow for the complexity of drug market fragmentation. Rather than a simplified top, middle, and bottom neatly organised from the top down, based on quantities alone, the jigsaw analogy allows us to imagine the wide range of drug market roles as the individual pieces of the three puzzles/levels of drug markets. Thus, understanding these drug markets roles as fragmentated parts, which need putting back together, enables a better understanding of drug market structure. Overall, the idea of fragmented drug markets does not necessarily dismiss quantity-based drug market structures but rather accounts for the wide variation in relations between actors and the variety of roles and individuals who perform them. As a result, the perception of a simple quantity-based drug market structure allows us to makes sense of the abstract messy reality of the many fragmented roles which make up each level.

Unfortunately, a problem persists with the jigsaw analogy. Whilst categorising combinations of drug market structure and modes of supply into numerous individual pieces, at some stage they must all be put back together in order to reveal the drug market in its entirety. Here then the problem of a jigsaw is that all the pieces must precisely be put back together in one particular way. A corner piece will always be a corner piece. In short there is no room for manoeuvre and all of the drug market fragments must eventually still align neatly for the analogy to work. They cannot overlap.

Dorn (2005 et al), acknowledged the difficulties in accurately representing the fluid nature of British drug markets, developing 7 categories of drug market actors which are;

1. *Trading Charities – enterprises involved in the drug business because of ideological commitments to drugs with profit a second motive*

2. *Mutual Societies – friendship networks of user dealers who support each other and sell or exchange in a reciprocal fashion*

3. *Sideliners – 'licit' business trade that begins to trade drugs as a side hustle*

4. *Criminal Diversifiers – existing criminal enterprise that diversify to include drugs*

5. *Opportunistic Irregulars – individual or groups who get involved in a variety of activities in the 'irregular economy' including drugs*

6. *Retail Specialists- enterprises with a manager employing people in a variety of specialised roles to distribute drugs (street dealing)*

7. *State Sponsored Traders – enterprises that result from collaboration with law enforcement*.

Aware of the issues of trying to capture dynamic fluid actors as '*static'* typologies Dorn et al, (1992, px) state;

 'at the end of this research we find such a typology less satisfactory since it cannot represent the fluid picture of the drug market'.

Still, Dorn et al (1992) produce a nuanced working classification of drug dealer types, based on values, motivations and market organisation / structure. This type of holistic approach to drug market fragment classification allows for some fluidity in developing umbrella typologies similarly to that of social supplier, user dealer or retail specialist (Dorn et al, 1992) into which various actors can be loosely placed at certain times. These are not fixed labels but rather loose categories actors can dip in and out of depending on the situation. Thus drug suppliers may overlap between categories complicating our understanding of drug markets due to the complexities of the fluid picture. On their own these 'static' typologies simply further fragment our understanding of drug markets creating more puzzle pieces rather than revealing the overall picture. Instead these drug dealer typologies must to be understood dynamically, as moving parts easily switched between, or simply as fluid.

When applied to drug markets fluidity implies that these fragmented parts of drug markets retain some loose connections rather than direct rigid links to each other. In relation to fluidity amongst drug dealer typology, black markets are dynamic spaces which typically present anyone willing to gamble

on a game of risk and reward with an opportunity, with drug markets attracting a wide range of actors across a flexible time period. Typically this has been explained in terms of economic gain from the perspective of rational actors (Calkins and McCoun, 2003). However, drug markets are themselves fragmented by a vast array of fluid individuals who might now perform a range of drug supply roles across their lifetime based on a multitude of motivations as has been set out above via social supply (Potter, 2009).

Drug market fluidity is established within the existing literature and blurs the constantly mutating picture (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001). Natarajan and Hough (2000) suggest that there is little data linking top level dealers with bottom level street dealers. Pearson and Hobbs (2001) also dismiss this idea of a top down control and suggest instead that most dealers are independent traders whilst Reuter (2001) says that dealers are unlikely to have one fixed supplier. Therefore the idea that drug markets are fluid and disorganised is well represented within the literature and has been documented as a common theme by Adler (1993), Coomber (2006) Dorn et al (1992) Pearson (2007) and Pearson and Hobbs (2001). This disorganisation is a product of drug dealer fluidity. The ability for dealers to drop into and out of roles and perform certain market behaviours when it suits them makes such dealers hard to track and for Pearson (2004) was like trying to put your finger on a moving part. This notion is similar to Dorn et al's (1992) assertion that typologies are problematic because they are static and cannot account for fluidity properly. Furthermore when looking at the normalisation of social supply by fluid actors there is a continued blurring of boundaries (Chatwin and Potter, 2014). This has led to Reuter (2001) (2013) calling for a need for dynamic models for understanding disorganised drug markets. Overall, the point here is that, drug markets are fluid, retaining loose connections between its numerous dynamic parts which might be imagined as the different fragments of drug markets

This part of the literature review has elaborated the social supplier, operating along networks of friends and not significantly motivated by profit, as a powerful counterpoint to the archetypal drug dealer outlined in part one. A small but persistent body of research has demonstrated the scope that research around this alternative depiction of drug dealers has on impacting our understanding of the dynamic, fragmented, and sometimes normalised nature of drug markets in contrast to the hierarchical and organised pyramid outlined in part one. This three-tier system relies on the idea of a centralised top controlling everything underneath, breeding a false assumption that drug markets are strictly controlled from the top down and should be understood only in terms of supply chains within commodity markets (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001).

Whilst it is not denied that there are certainly cases of top down hierarchical drug markets and retail specialists, as was seen in part one with county lines (Densely et al, 2018) (Spicer, 2020), the point here is that pyramid structures and 'evil pusher' narratives are not as useful when attempting to explain all bottom and middle level markets.. Overall then it is suggested that the vast array of dealer typologies fragment our understanding of markets and can only be made sense of or pieced back together by approaching these static typologies as fluid and dynamic complex characters and provide a clear challenge to the idea of a homogeneous drug dealer identity.   Coomber (2006) has invited people to resituate the drug dealer in our understanding away from evil archetypes and towards fluid actors. By approaching silences or gaps in our knowledge (Bacchi, 2009) we can add to our understanding of how fluid drug dealers move between legitimate and illicit drug markets, their ability to maintain market positions by social networks of friends and acquaintances and how they are able to maintain seemingly opposite position all at once as the current ' *homogenisation of the drug dealer and drug market is neither accurate nor helpful'* (Coomber, 2010, p10)

Part three: The role of identity and how drug dealers in alternative markets resist archetypal labels

Identity has already been a key focus of this literature review. Part one outlines the ways in which drugs dealers' identities are perceived externally when they are labelled and stereotyped as evil pushers. Part two demonstrates how research that pays attention to how drug dealers self-identify has resulted in more nuanced typologies and labels for understanding a diverse range of dealing behaviours. Yet these are just labels and the more we add the further we fragment our understanding of drug markets paradoxically confusing the idea further the more we investigate and label the parts. It concludes by suggesting that it is through studying drug dealer identities, and refining or moving away from typologies, that we can learn more about fluidity within drug markets. Of particular interest are the processes by which two opposing roles such as drug dealer and trusted friend can be held simultaneously. After briefly connecting with wider literature on drug dealer identity, this third part provides an in-depth exploration of three key studies conducted in alternative markets and with identity and self-conceptualisation as a focus. The discussion draws out what can be learnt from these kind of studies and how findings can be applied to questions about drug market structure.

In early work on drug dealer identity, Becker (1963) portrayed drug market actors as going against the norms and values of the times, cast as outsiders for their involvement in deviant behaviours and participation in subcultural groupings after experiencing status frustration (Cohen, 1955) reflecting their alternative values. Over time and fuelled by media sensationalism and moral panics (Cohen, 1972), drug user/supplier labels became heavily stigmatised (Coomber, 2006). Goffman (1963) described these negative labels as leading to 'spoiled identities' which are often adopted as 'master identities'. While Parker et al's (1998) normalisation theory has offered some opportunity for drug users to resist these labels, drug suppliers have remained heavily stigmatised. Of key interest here is evidence that those involved in the supply of drugs sometimes avoid stigmatisation as a criminal or deviant by creating their own alternative identities, and that by researching these self-portrayals, much can be learnt about drug market structure.

Resistance to spoiled dealer identities has been apparent in various research (Murphy et al, 1990) (Jacinto et al, 2008) (Coomber, Moyle and South, 2016) (Adler, 1983) (Moyle, 2013) (Mcphee, 2012). A common strategy is for drug market actors to make a distinction between their own behaviour and 'real' dealing, as defined by the archetypes set out in part one. The work of Matza & Sykes (1964) is key here. They describe these kind of processes as 'techniques of neutralisation', a way of alleviating the guilt felt after performing a criminal act, and argue that many people 'drift' into and away from deviant behaviour at different stages of their lives, putting them in *'limbo between convention and crime'* (1964, p28). Of central importance to this research, which aims to explore drug dealer identity and what it can tell us about drug market structure, is their assertion that delinquents are not so different from non-delinquents. Several studies have taken up this theme with regard to drug suppliers. In what follows three studies will be explored in depth to draw out central themes of importance: Murphy et al's (1990) work on cocaine markets; Jacinto et al's (2008)research with ecstasy suppliers; and Coomber, Moyle and South's (2016) suggestion that the concept of normalisation can sometimes be extended to the supply of drugs.

Murphy et al (1990) conducted research with 80 former cocaine sellers who had sold cocaine steadily for a year, but had now stopped. Participants were middle to upper class cocaine dealers who have legitimate jobs, sell powdered cocaine rather than crack rocks and who sell in private settings to avoid the typical environment of street vendors, and thus represented an alternative depiction of cocaine

dealers to dominant archetypes. Central to Murphy et al's (1990s) argument is their belief that the sample were indistinguishable, to the uninformed observer, from more law-abiding populations. The majority had either part or full time employment and their justifications for selling cocaine were laden with middle class values of supporting children while paying off expensive rent or mortgages. The use to which profits were put also reflected normal middle class aspirations with child care, car payments and room redecoration provided as examples. Finally, Murphy et al (1990) found, when not dealing cocaine, their participants were engaged in 'mainstream' activities, for example leading the local girl scouts group.   These findings are not reflective of drug dealer archetypes, suggesting an interest in homemaking and family life rather than control and power. These examples show dealers who do not suffer from spoiled identities, aren't known to the police, are not engaged with violence and do not meet the profile to come on the polices radar.

When looking at the motivations for cocaine sales, Murphy et al (1990) found that their participants were able to utilise the blurred morality of drug use and sales, especially within the confines of their own subcultural groupings. Consequently, they highlight the ways in which the deviant and conventional worlds may overlap without any actual line ever being crossed. Amongst participants, for example, frequent personal drug use was common and did little to interfere with other legitimate aspects of the participants' lives, rarely being seen as deviant. A move into drug sales didn't seem like a significant amplification of their deviancy, suggesting a process of many small steps rather than one big leap. As a result, Murphy et al (1990) argue that many of their participants had drifted into dealing. They didn't have to break with the legitimate world, or adopt an entirely new set of values, but rather drifted gradually into sales subtly transforming from user to supplier.

Murphy et al (1990) used these findings about cocaine dealer identities to build on Matza and Sykes's (1964) drift theory, suggesting five routes by which to drift into cocaine markets: becoming a go between for friends only later realising the profit opportunity; stash dealers who sell to reduce the costs of their own cocaine use; the connoisseur who desires specific products and buys in whole sale to secure them; apprenticeships or trainee style relationships where novices learn the ropes to take over part or all of the business ; and finally those who expand existing illegal drug product lines to sell cocaine. They also applied their findings to add nuance to cocaine market structures, identifying eight distinct levels: smugglers; kilo/pound dealers; parts of kilos/pounds dealers; ounce dealers; part ounce dealers; gram dealers; part gram dealers; and crack dealers. Significantly, participants were able to operate in a highly fluid manner, drifting in and out of the various levels of the drug market over

weeks or months or even traversing levels across a single day, and often appearing to be led by customer demands rather than their own conscious business decisions.

Some more detailed examples serve here to further illuminate this key point about subconscious drift. For example, Murphy et al (1990) describe the go between who has a group of friends who are frequent users of cocaine, but is also connected to cocaine suppliers. Over the months and years, more and more time is spent going between the suppliers and social group, with very little conscious thought about becoming a cocaine dealer. The drift is gradual and happens a little more with each request. In another scenario, stash dealers drift into dealing led by their own habits as initial cost reductions stemming from small acts of supply are quickly displaced by higher volumes of cocaine use and the need to expand supply practices to maintain personal use. 'Connoisseurs' begin by buying their preferred cocaine in bulk and thus become a potential source of quality assured cocaine to their friends and acquaintances. Without careful attention, a gradual increase in purchases can occur as the potential pool of friends to sell to grows. Apprentices learn the ropes, often not from conscious desire but as the close intimate associates (e.g. partners) of existing suppliers, sometimes stepping into the role themselves when the relationship breaks down or the associate removes themselves from the market. Finally, people already involved in the supply of other illegal drugs may start to supply cocaine if existing customers express a demand for it.

In sum, Murphy et al (1990) use data gathered from an 'alternative' population of middle-class, legitimately employed cocaine suppliers to demonstrate their failure to conform to archetypal stereotypes. By focusing on their participants' rejection of spoiled identity labels, Murphy et al (1990) are able to discern several pathways via which people can 'drift' into drug supplying roles without adopting master drug dealing identities, often inspired more by customer demand than their own conscious choice. An in-depth understanding of identity also allows Murphy et al (1990) to make more nuanced inferences about drug market structure, identifying at least eight key levels, and, crucially, describing the tendency for these kind of actors to drift between them rather than being bound by their hierarchical structure or rigid categorisations.

Nearly twenty years later, Jacinto et al (2008) expanded on these ideas by researching people selling ecstasy in private settings across different levels of the market in the San Francisco bay area, finding, like Murphy et al (1990), that the majority of the sample, regardless of the level at which they were

operating or the extent to which they were profiting, did not make a conscious decision to become drug dealers.

> *Each of the interviewees … viewed themselves as unceremoniously moving into Ecstasy sales because of demand for the drug from their friends and acquaintances, whether they had never sold drugs before or were already established dealers or were profit-motivated.'* (Jacinto et al ,2008, p428)

Jacinto et al (2008) divided their sample into three groups: people who had drifted into dealing by socially supplying their friends; those who had already supplied other drugs and responded to increasing existing customer demand for ecstasy; and people who were motivated primarily by an opportunity to make a profit. Identity as a real drug dealer was of key interest to the study, with those operating as social suppliers to friends least likely to adopt this master identity and those motivated by profit most likely.

Probing the idea of drug dealer identity, Jacinto et al (2008) asked their sample what characteristics, from their perspective, were suggestive of a 'real' dealer. Examples included: someone who moves large quantities; instances where drug sales are the main source of income, relied upon for 'consistent cashflow'; those who maintain stock or a 'stash', or who reinvest profits into further products. The consistency with which deals were made and the setting in which they happened, were also flagged as being important. Real dealers occupied public spaces rather than private spaces. Finally, Jacinto et al (2008) found that the realisation of a 'real' dealer identity was often dependent on a particularly big event, highlighting both violent occurrences and larger escapades such as smuggling, as examples for some participants.

Jacinto et al's (2008) study found significant resistance from their sample when asked if they themselves identified as drug dealers with only a quarter (24%) accepting this label, mainly drawn from those who described their levels of supply as high. Despite some low level dealers earning up to £3000 a week and some mid level dealers up to £25000 a week, many participants did not identify with the archetypal drug dealer label.

> '*There was no significant difference in the dealer identity process among the low level and medium level sellers' whilst h*igher level sellers found dealer identity inevitable'. (Jacinto et al, 2008, p431)

Finally, because a vast majority of the sample didn't identify as real dealers, an important finding was that many of these dealers didn't take any major precautions or deploy many techniques to evade detection by law enforcement.

Jacinto et al (2008) found that lower and middle level dealers used techniques of neutralisation (Matza & Sykes, 1964) to resist dealer identities, mainly due to the stigmas attached. Some would describe in detail how they differed from stereotypical depictions of drug dealers. Others were able to resist drug dealer identities because they had other legitimate roles and jobs. Other reasons included not making enough money from ecstasy supply to be considered a real dealer, or that their customer base consisted of friends and non-strangers. Rather than seeing themselves as drug dealers, they suggested alternative, less loaded labels such as broker, enabler, recreational users, facilitator and middlemen. Interestingly, participants were able to resist deviant dealer identities, in part, because they kept their deviancy hidden under the cover of legitimate roles, like lawful employment. The relationships between user and supplier as both friends and customers were found to further complicate the process of drift from user to distributor. Overall, then Jacinto et al (2008) provide important detail about the techniques of neutralisation used to resist 'real' drug dealer identities and confirm the importance of drift.

Coomber et al (2016) draw on their own sample of people involved in social supply of drugs to their friends, as well as earlier work, to describe these kind of drug dealer identities, based on drift and underpinned by techniques of neutralisation, as indicative of an extension of normalisation to include some supply activities. They start with the proposition that social supply is now widespread and varied, adding groups of friends who take it in turns to supply drugs to each other and people who give drugs as gifts to the list of categories. Over time, as people slowly drift into drug dealing activity, supply becomes a normalised aspect of drug use, part of the ritual as it were, with the added step of procuring the drugs for everyone's enjoyment before consuming them, and embedded within cultures of reciprocity. This creates 'micro sites' of supply within which drug exchanges are normalised.

> *'behaviour occurring in liminal spaces where normalisation of drug use is accepted and where, in micro-sites of friendship and close social networks, social supply is normalised, accepted and – according to the rules of friendship – may even be expected.' (Coomber et al, 2016, p260)*

Coomber et al (2016) argue that this process of normalisation decreases the distance required to drift into dealing activities as mastery of the illicit occurs from a process of small steps premised on

familiarity and allowing their participants to perform the ongoing mental gymnastics required to resist negative drug dealer identities.

The gifting and sharing of drugs may be a particularly important concept for interrogating the manner in which people drift into dealing roles without taking on spoiled master identities. All of Coomber et al's (2016) participants reported experiencing both gifting and being gifted drugs on some occasions. This reciprocal aspect of drug supply is comparable to the sharing of non-illegal items such as tobacco or make up, and helps to present the behaviour as socially normal within some circles. In terms of identity, the study foregrounds the importance of 'belonging', via shared experience, relationships based on trust, and reciprocal drug related favours. Within micro-sites of normalised drug supply, therefore, friendship plays a key role and archetypal roles are easier to resist.

Collectively, the findings of the studies reported on here in depth demonstrate how explorations of drug dealer identity within alternative markets can provide a more nuanced and detailed understanding of drug market structure.. They suggest that many middle and bottom level drug suppliers are able to resist self-conceptualising as real drug dealers and do not adopt spoiled master identities, instead building from their other legitimate occupations. These studies in particular are indicative of a wider suggestion (Parker et al, 1998) (Pearson and Hobbs, 2004) (Coomber and Turnbull, 2007) (Potter, 2009) that some drug dealers are able to avoid drug market archetypes and spoiled master identities by drifting into drug supply and employing techniques of neutralisation. Friendship, belonging, reciprocity and co-existing legitimate roles are all important factors in resisting the archetypal labels. By choosing 'alternative' drug markets, such as Murphy et al's (1990) middle-class cocaine dealers or Coomber et al's (2016) social suppliers, as sites of research, more can be learnt about how drug dealer identities are constructed and resisted. Findings point to a fluidity by which some dealers are able to break the hierarchical chains and drift between drug market roles and demonstrate their application to existing models of drug market structure, fragmenting established knowledge and adding nuance and detail.

The studies explored above are part of a small but important body of literature focusing on atypical drug markets, fore fronting the study of identity, and contributing to our more detailed understanding of drug markets. They, and others like them, have created an alternative model for understanding drug markets as fluid and fragmented, but there is much still to be learnt from ongoing efforts to

'*resituate the drug dealer*' (Coomber, 2006) in light of new research, particularly around how some dealers are able to engage in drug supply alongside legitimate roles, avoiding the spoiled master identity of drug supplier and countering the archetype. The final section of this literature review will argue that Goffman's (1959) theory of 'Presentation of the self in Everyday Life' is the ideal framework within which to explore the drug dealer as occupier of legitimate and illegitimate roles.

Part four: Goffman and the presentation of self in everyday life

Goffman (1959) developed a theory about impression management, explaining how individuals, and teams of individuals, craft and maintain perceptions of their identity by adopting different 'faces' for different audiences. For Goffman, individuals were likely to play many different parts in daily life. Their identities were not fixed but fluid, and could adapt to a variety of situations in a number of different ways. Ultimately, Goffman settles on the concept of face work, whereby individuals wear a series of different masks or faces depending on which audience they are performing for as a defining theme of his theory of *presentation of the self in everyday life*. Therefore, Goffman's face work and the art of impression management presents a useful framework within which to explore fluidity in drug dealer identities and, specifically, the way drug dealers move between both legitimate and illegitimate roles, and operate at different levels of the market. Below, Goffman's *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* will be set out in more detail, divided into sections on individual and team performances, and discussed in relation to drug dealer identity. As a result this section will demonstrate why Goffman's concept of impression management and face work is suitable for studying drug dealer identity.

Performances and Impression Management

Goffman (1959) encourages us to view all activity which is engaged in by individuals and observable by others, particularly where the aim is to have some influence on the observer(s), as a 'performance'. Individuals engaged in such activity for specific audiences can thus be thought of as 'playing a part'.

> *'When an individual plays a part he implicitly requests his observers to take seriously the impression that is fostered before them. They are asked to believe that the character they see*

actually possesses the attributes he appears to possess, that the task he performs will have the consequences that are implicitly claimed for it, and that, in general, matters are what they appear to be. In line with this, there is the popular view that the individual offers his performance and puts on his show ' for the benefit of other people.' (Goffman, 1959, p28).

Goffman, however, critiques such an assumption by exploring individuals' self-conceptualisation of their performances, questioning the degree to which they believe their own impression.

It will be convenient to begin a consideration of performances by turning the question around and looking at the individual's own belief in the impression of reality that he attempts to engender in those among whom he finds himself'. (Goffman, 1959, p28)

He distinguishes between performers taken in by their own act, believing the *'impression of reality they stage is real reality'* (1959, p28), and those who provide more cynical performances, consciously designed in some way to create a particular impression on the specific audience. This concept of self-conceptualisation is a useful starting point for applying Goffman's ideas about identity and impression management to drug market actors. To what extent is the self-perception of some drug dealers that they are not 'real' dealers something that they truly believe, and what strategies do they employ to convince themselves and others that they are different?

In some situations, regular or 'default' performances are given using *'expressive equipment of a standard kind intentionally or unwittingly employed by the individual during his performance' (p32).* Goffman terms performances of this type as 'front stage' and argues they create a 'face' we '*most intimately identify with the performer himself and that we naturally expect will follow the performer wherever he goes' (p14).* This front stage or regular face is signified by key aspects of 'personal front': *'insignia of office or rank; clothing; sex, age, and racial characteristics; size and looks; posture; speech patterns; facial expressions; bodily gestures; and the like' (1959, p34).* Some, like ethnicity, are *'fixed' (p34),* and do not vary over time for the individual in different situations, whilst others are *'transitionary' (p34),* like facial expressions and can change mid performance. Set and setting are key here as regular, natural performances are most easily given when in familiar environments and delivered to audiences with which the performer feels comfortable.

Goffman also emphasises the importance of appearance and manner (1959, p34)*.* Appearance is defined by Goffman as *'stimuli which function at the time to tell us of the performer's social statuses' (p34)* which indicate the individuals 'temporary ritual state' indicating what activity, like work or

leisure, they might be performing or what stage in their life cycle they might be in. Manner is referred to by Goffman as; *'those stimuli which function at the time to warn us of the interaction role the performer will expect to play in the on-coming situation' (p35).* Goffman uses the example of an aggressive manner, to indicate someone taking verbal direction of the performance, versus a meek manner, where an individual may present themselves as apologetic and look to follow the lead of others, to show how manner may change performances in the moment. Finally, whilst Goffman says it is possible for appearance and manner to be out of tune, there is likely cohesion between them as there is a relation between setting, appearance and manner. Quite simply, individuals may prepare for performances in particular settings by dressing and acting in what they deem as suitable ways. Collectively, Goffman refers to this relation as social front, which is draped in generality and abstracts, inviting audiences to make sense of the similarities they see before them. Different routines will have similar fronts where they are performed by the same individual, as their social front becomes institutionalised within them.

Finally, Goffman adds that because social fronts are well established within collective consciousness and are largely recognisable, when an individual tries an unestablished task within their society or they try to reframe the way in which a current task is viewed. then they are likely to find many well established social fronts to choose from. Therefore Goffman argues that the individual doesn't necessarily have to create a new front, but instead faces the problem of choosing the appropriate front to frame their task.

In the case of this research, the ways in which drug dealers apply existing fronts to the task of drug dealing, in an attempt to condone it to either themselves or various audiences, is worthy of further investigation. What was set out in part one around evil pushers and archetypal conceptions of drug dealers may be understood, from the perspective of Goffman, as an institutionalized collective representation of what drug dealers ought to appear and act like. 'Alternative' drug dealers explored in part two could be viewed as adopting alternative established social fronts to reframe their drug dealing behaviours via what others have termed as 'techniques of neutralisation' (Matza and Sykes, 1964). Therefore, the ways in which drug dealers control the impressions they give off to their audiences are also of interest. To what extent are they indistinguishable, as Murphy et al (1990) found, from other non-participating citizens and do they consciously adopt strategies to appear so?

When an individual uses a 'personal front' to create a specific effect on an audience, Goffman describes it as 'dramatic realisation': an *'individual typically infuses his activity with signs which dramatically highlight and portray confirmatory facts that might otherwise remain unapparent or obscure' (p40).* To be successful, this dramatic realisation should be able to be effected even at split second notice. In doing so, the individual must divert significant energy away from the task in hand, directing it instead to dramatizing the personal front or adopting the right face. Maintaining a degree of 'separation' from one's audience is key here. Goffman refers to this as an 'invisible cost', as the 'separated' audience can't see or comprehend the background work that has gone into a performance. Dramatic realisation can thus be thought of as an attempt to make background invisible costs visible to an audience. Of key interest here is to explore the extent to which drug dealers try to dramatize their illegal work, as opposed to keeping it invisible, and to understand what the invisible costs are where drug dealers have a foot in both legitimate and illegitimate worlds.

Goffman argues that, through a process of 'ideal representation', a performer will look *to 'incorporate and exemplify accredited social normative values more so than his behaviour does'* and *'reaffirm the moral values of the community'* (1959, p45). Once this idealisation becomes accepted by audiences as part of the real reality, the expressive bias will lead to a celebration of that individual. Successful idealisation can thus result in successful social performances. Skilful performers will use *'poise and proficiency' (1959, p56) to* give their audiences a sense that their ideal performances reflect longstanding values. Where an individual aims to reflect the ideal standards or morals of the community then they will have to either forgo or conceal actions that go against these ideal standards. Any less than ideal behaviour will be done in secret, enabling an individual to both *'forgo his cake and still eat it'* (1959, p50), but this can require some considerable effort on the behalf of the performer. Goffman provides two key strategies for maintaining ideal status performances: for performers to provide the impression that the personal front they are dramatizing is their only or most essential one; or for performers to create the impression that this personal front or performance is unique only to this specific audience, and therefore something special that should be valued.

These aspects of Goffman's work, around engaging in less than ideal activity while maintaining an impression of ideal status, are of key interest to a study on 'alternative' drug market actors who must engage in this kind of impression management on a regular basis. The work discussed in detail in the previous section demonstrates that some drug suppliers present themselves in stark contrast to archetypes, as 'ideal' dealers perhaps. Goffman's work illuminates the clash between ideal

performances and secret drug dealing behaviours. The question of to what extent drug dealers use audience separation as a tool to maintain normalised identities, is also of interest here.

Another aspect of performances that Goffman highlights is the possibility that they will be misinterpreted by an audience, particularly where an audience is already sceptical. This disrupts the performance and can result in a loss of face for the performer. Thus successful performance requires the upkeep of the correct impression in the moment of performance. Those who have many different performances in their repertoire, often needing to switch between faces while hiding less than ideal behaviour, are particularly at risk of losing face in this way. The consequences can be significant: *'a false impression maintained by an individual in any one of his routines may be a threat to the whole relationship or role of which the routine is only one part' (1959, p71).* To prevent this from happening is primarily achieved by maintaining some sort of social distance between performer and audience, creating a sense of awe or mystery about their persona. Applying this part of Goffman's impression management theory to drug market actors might shed light on how they manage moving fluidly between different performances, and what happens when they struggle to maintain the correct personal front.

Ultimately, Goffman believes that types of behaviour are split between *'the real, sincere or honest performance and the false one that thorough fabrications assemble'* (1959, p76). We tend to see real performance as the product of something unintentional rather than a manufactured practised or rehearsed product, and those who frequently engage in intentionally false behaviour as 'conmen'. Thus the dichotomy Goffman points to in relation to reality and contrivance require the skills of performance to either create sincere reflections of the real reality or intentional falsehoods to delude audiences. Sincerity is key to producing convincing performances, but does not depend on true belief in an individual's own performance. For Goffman, sincerity can be successfully conveyed by skilled performers, as part of an impression management strategy: *'performers may be sincere, or insincere, but sincerely convinced of their own sincerity is not necessary for its convincing performance' (1959, p77).* Therefore, performances could be carried off successfully with complete dishonesty if the performance was interpreted by the audience as sincere – a process which Goffman likens to learning a part of the stage.

Based on the evidence presented here, Goffman's dramaturgical framework appears to hold potential value to further explore the identity and self-perceptions of drug market actors who see themselves as counter to the archetypes. A focus on impression management for different audiences will add depth to our understanding of how they use techniques of neutralisation (Matza & Sykes, 1964), or engage in mental gymnastics (Coomber et al, 2016), to move fluidly between legitimate and illegitimate roles, and across different levels of the drug market. It also has the potential to understand the processes by which they reject spoiled master identities and the extent to which they sincerely believe their own counter-archetypal performances to be the real reality.

Team performances

> *'A team, then, may be defined as a set of individuals whose intimate cooperation is required if a given projected definition of a situation is to be maintained. A team is a grouping not in relation to social structure or social origin but rather in relation to an interaction or series of interactions in which the relevant definition of the situation is maintained' (Goffman, 1959, p108).*

Goffman didn't only consider performances in the case of individuals but at times as part of a wider '*troupe or cast*' (1959, p83). He rejects the assumption that all performances are a direct representation of an individual's characteristics and instead shows, with reference to bureaucratic roles, how a performance may reflect the characteristics of the task rather than the individual performing the task. Even where the personal front employed by a single performer does not allow them to create the desired impression, it is possible to achieve it as part of a wider group of performers engaging in a particular routine. While individual performers may perform different roles, all members must subscribe to and project the same definition of the situation. Overall then, Goffman arrives at the concept of teams to refer to '*a set of individuals staging a single routine*' (1959, p85) and allows us to conceive of performances based on cooperation and involving more than one person.

Goffman also states that the concept of teams allows us to contemplate performers who have in effect become their own audiences, eventually concealing the false facts from their own perceptions as an audience member. In doing so, Goffman states that the performer engages in an act of self-delusion which is both intricate and constantly occurring (1959, p87). Goffman calls this 'self distantiation' where by a person starts to feel estranged from their own self (1959, p87). Individual performances

may begin to replicate team values and a performer may turn into their own audience or may imagine an audience (1959, p87) and so adapt their behaviour.

Teams depend on trust and are mutually dependent. Any team member has the power to give the performance away and is forced to rely on the good conduct of other members. This in turn creates mutual dependencies between team members which cut across structural social divides and encourage cohesion against the establishment. Interestingly, Goffman states that because team members perform a particular front together they cannot maintain the same impression before one another. This is because they are seen as being 'in the know' (1959, p88). Goffman refers to this as the *'privilege of familiarity'* (1959, p88). In contrast to Matza & Sykes' (1964) concept of drift, this process is not gradual but will be extended immediately upon an individual being granted access to a team. Overall teammates are *'bonded by reciprocal dependence and reciprocal familiarity'* (Goffman, 1959, p88).

Team membership may reduce the autonomy of the individual over performances and restrict their views to a *'thinly veiled party line'* (1959, p91). Goffman does state that team mates need not be unanimous in the entirety and may secretly hold private reservations and resistance to how the situation ended up being defined (1959, p92). However this loss of autonomy over the definition of the situation is compensated via *'team loyalty'* (1959, p91) providing the individual with support from team mates. Still there may be disagreements between team mates which are to be publicly avoided if they are to evade embarrassing themselves by losing face. The best way to avoid such public disagreements is to wait for an official stance to be agreed between team mates before publicly announcing one. If a teammate makes a mistake in performance, Goffman states other members must resist the urge to punish them in the moment and effectively cover up for them to save the performance as a whole. Ultimately, for Goffman, selecting team mates is about selecting other individuals you can trust.

Goffman also considers the ways in which certain team members are given the ability to command and direct the performance and situation definition with the degree of control varying between teams. Team performance have two key functions that must be fulfilled and if there is a director they will likely perform both of these functions. First the director must bring back into line any member who threatens the performance of the team and sanction them if necessary. Secondly, the director of the

team may allocate certain roles to each member and the face they must employ to achieve their part of the performance.   The director of the team ensures that the show goes on. As a result the other team members hold the director in higher esteem whilst the audience may perceive the director as the *'star of the show' (*p104) also holding them in higher esteem then the rest of the performers.

The concept of teams is useful for understanding drug dealer identity as membership of groups has been shown in the literature to impact the typology of drug dealer. In part one team mates are theorised as members of criminal organisations and county lines gangs (Spicer, 2020) (Densely et al 2018). In part two drug suppliers identity was discussed as socially belonging to drug using networks and adopting a social supplier face / mask as a process of gradual drift (Potter, 2009). Here then Goffman's concept of team performances should not be confused with gang participation as Goffman rejects such coercive power structures as team performances. Interestingly Goffman describes a process of instant loyalty on team entry rather than the gradual process described in drifting into social supply. Finally, the concept of teams allows us to explore whether alternative drug market actors are part of teams and , if so, who their members are. Assessing where drug suppliers select their closest team mates from could reveal important information about their identity.

Goffman splits the performance region, like the areas of a theatre, into the front and back stages. Goffman defines the front stage as '*the place where the performance is given' (1959, p110)*. The back stage region is referred to by Goffman as *'a place, relative to the performance, where the fostered impression is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course'* (1959, p114) where the performance is prepared and serves to '*construct the entire illusion'* (1959, p114). The backstage also gives the performers a chance to run through and weed out any expressions which may give the show away. The backstage is ideally separated away from the final performance region, yet is close enough to the front that an ally may provide support or a moment of 'relaxation' by taking over briefly.

Importantly, Goffman states that the back stage is off limits to non-team members and shouldn't be accessible to members of the audience. This is because vital information is shared between members which would put audience members in the know and disrupt the performance, threatening the team with embarrassment. As a result the entire back region is kept hidden or secret from the audience and Goffman views this as an '*important part of impression management'* which may act as a buffer or '*process of control'* (1959, p115). However, there may be issues in finding suitable backstage areas

that are entirely cut off from any prying audiences referring to these as '*back stage difficulties' (*1959, 122). Still given the right degree of privacy a back stage may be established via *'backstage style'* (1959, p130) anywhere with enough social distance.

Finally, Goffman acknowledges some issues with the conception of the front and back stages. Firstly, it is not always clear whether an area is a front or back stage region. This is because for Goffman, there are times when different situations will require different settings for front and backstage performances. Therefore the front stage may in another performance find more suitable ground as the backstage area and vice versa. Secondly Goffman beginnings to theorise out a third region, being a residual region, namely all other places other than the front and back regions' (1959, p135) which Goffman calls the *'outside'*. Those outside the establishment are for Goffman called 'outsiders', and may stumble into a performance that was not prepared for them and may have disrupting effects on performance should they gain access to either the front or back stage.

In conclusion, Goffman states that

> '*the most interesting times to observe impression management is the moment when a performer leaves the backstage and enters a place the audience can be found or when he returns therefrom, for at these moments one can detect a wonderful putting on and taking off of characters, p123'.*

It would be useful to catch drug dealers via observations in these 'wonderful' moments when they move between front and back stages or prepare to move between licit and illicit worlds. Techniques of neutralisation (Matza & Sykes, 1964) could perhaps be investigated as types of front stage performance which are carefully prepared in the background as drug dealers reframe their illegal behaviour.

Performers must ensure that *the 'audience must not acquire destructive information'* (1959, p14). Particularly within teams of performers, many secrets are held between members, outside knowledge of which can threaten performances. For example, performers must conceal information incompatible with their group image ('dark secrets') and can also create a sense of bonding through shared information ('inside secrets'). This kind of hidden information puts the team at risk from 'informers' – someone who pretends to be a member of the team, is allowed to come backstage to gather

destructive information, and then openly or secretly sells out the show to the audience. To mitigate against this, Goffman introduces the concept of peace offerings, defined as the extension of good will to colleagues, offering the example of retailers offering discounted goods to their customers. Both individuals and teams use peace offerings to extend goodwill towards colleagues and audiences in order to maintain '*the continuance of peaceful and orderly interactions'* (159, p173). Thus, Goffman theorises peace offerings as a type of '*bribe' (1959, p161)* sometimes used by performers to ensure successful performances

Dramaturgical loyalty is essential for successful team performance as individuals must not betray the secrets of other members between performances for their own gain (1959, p 207). Instead, the groups must develop a sense of loyalty as part of a '*complete social community'* (1959, p 209) providing moral support to one another. Dramaturgical discipline is also required for the successful team performance and relies upon each member playing their own part in aid of the cause. Dramaturgical circumspection, the ability to know how and when to act and to be able to adapt to new information, allows teams to prepare for *'contingencies in advance and exploit opportunities that remain'* (1959, p 212). The dramaturgically circumspect performer will exercise prudence even when they are away from the performance region by successfully '*handling the relaxation of appearance'* (1959, p220), not accidentally letting their guard down when 'off duty'. Again, there is relevance here for a study of drug market actors, identity and drug market structure. How do drug dealers make use of secrets and guard against infiltration by informants? What information do drug dealers reveal and conceal, and to whom? Do they make use of peace offerings? When working as part of a team, do they display dramaturgical loyalty, discipline and circumspection?

Stigma Management as a type of Impression Management

This section of the literature review will set out Goffman's book; '*Stigma, Essays on the Spoiled Identity'* (1963) so that the main features may be drawn upon if needed in analysis to supplement the techniques learnt from the Presentation of Self (1959). Stigma will be set out as an important part of impression management and related to the above chapter on Goffman's dramaturgy in the presentation of self. Goffman argues that stigma conceals a *'double perspective'* (1963, p11) where the stigmatised individual must consider whether or not their hidden differentness is known or whether they must assume it is not immediately known or perceivable. From this Goffman sets out that stigma requires performance, to negate and navigate and to avoid for what he terms crudely the '*normal*' (1963, p16) or unstigmatized.

Goffman gives three categories of stigma being; Physical, '*blemishes of individual character'* (1963, p16) and finally stigmas of '*race, nation and religion'* (1963, p16) and all share the same sociological feature being one of these traits may cause stigmatisation through possessing what Goffman describes as '*an undesired differentness from what we had anticipated'* (1963, p16-17) and are therefore assumed to be '*not quite human'* (1963, p18) and are consequently discriminated against which effectively reduces their life chances. In doing so Goffman argues we construct '*stigma theory'* (1963, p18) that justifies or explains the inferiority or '*rationalises animosity'* (1963, p18) against the stigmatised individuals or groups. Finally these types of stigmas are for Goffman '*enabled by the idea that members of a social group will strongly support judgements that do not apply to them'* (1963, p18) and effectively discriminate groups other than theirs.

Whilst it is possible for individuals to be stigmatised it is also possible for individuals to resist stigmatised labels or identities. Goffman states that '*it seems possible for an individual to fail to live up to what we effectively demand of him, and yet be relatively untouched by this failure; insulated by his alienation, protected by identity beliefs of his own, he feels that he is a full-fledged normal human being, and that we are the ones who are not quite human. He bears a stigma but does not seem to be impressed or repentant about doing so'* (p19). Therefore, whilst stigmas may be applied from the outside by 'normals' they may be resisted and negated and replaced with alternative identities formed by the individual. On the one hand they may be a stigmatised person but on the other hand they may feel like a '*normal person, a human being like anyone else, a person, therefore, who deserves a fair chance and a fair break'* (p19).

Still for Goffman not all stigmas may be resisted and there may be a perception that stigmatised people will not be met on '*equal grounds'* (p11) by non stigmatised groups '*whatever they profess'* (p11). Furthermore because stigmatised people incorporate standards of wider society to navigate social situations, Goffman believes them to be susceptible to adopting, '*even for just a moment'* (p20), to adopting the stigma and agreeing with his perceived failings and can result in shame. In extreme cases this can result in '*self-hate and self-derogation'* (p20) when faced with perceived normal or even ones reflection in the '*mirror*' (p20). Acceptance then of self and by others is central for Goffman's understanding of stigma and its role in impression management.

Responding to Stigma

There are numerous ways in which a stigmatised person can respond to the situation. In some cases Goffman argues it may be possible to correct their failing, to change their behaviour, their environment or even their physical appearance, with in extreme cases '*plastic surgery'* (p22). Alternatively they might devote time in private to practising a skill or perfecting a shortcoming ready

for public performance (p23). Finally, Goffman states that a stigmatised person may use this stigmas for '*secondary gains*' or as an '*excuse for ill success that has come there way for other reasons*' and is put forward as ' *a reasonable escape from competition*' but also as '*protection from social responsibility* (p24). Perhaps this leads to general anxiety for the '*ordinary faces*' whom do not have a '*handicap*' to lean on (p25). Alternatively Goffman states that stigmatised people may rise to the trials and tribulations finding value in overcoming such experiences (p25). Therefore Goffman roughly outlines a range of ways in which stigmatised individuals may resist, rise to or succumb to stigma. Key to determining the outcome of stigma are interactions and Goffman is primarily concerned with '*mixed contacts*' (p27), particularly in the moment social situations when the stigmatised and 'the normal' come together to interact whether in face to face conversation or by 'mere co presence of an unfocused gathering' (p27).

One solution is simply for contact with stigmatised people to be reduced to a minimum by arranging there life to avoid them and in turn stigmatised people arranging there life to avoid the perceived normal (p27). We might imagine as examples drug users and dealers meeting down quiet alleyways away from the prying eyes of the public whilst members of the public might in turn take alternative routes and avoid such alleyway spaces associated with drug use. Generally it is expected that the stigmatised will have to take more effort to avoid naturally being shut off from more spaces. Finally, Goffman argues that because there is a tendency for stigma to spread from an individual to their close connections, not only are such interactions avoided, relations with stigmatised people are often '*terminated*' (p53).

In mixed contacts where avoidance is not possible Goffman states that stigmatised people suffer from being '*unsure*' about how they will be identified by audiences and received in public performance (p29) and therefore don't know exactly what the audience are really thinking off them (p30). As a result, stigmatised peoples minor accomplishments will be patronized and heralded as 'remarkable' (p31). Responses in these situations range from '*defensive cowering*' (p34) or '*hostile bravado*' racing '*from one to the other*' (p35) which for Goffman demonstrates the ways '*ordinary face-to-face interaction can run wild*' (p35). Finally, stigmatised people are more likely to be able to navigate mixed contact interactions simply because they face them more often whereas Goffman argues non stigmatised people will likely '*experience uneasiness*' (p37) when interacting with the stigmatised person, misunderstanding them in turn reading offensiveness into their behaviour (p54). However, Goffman argues that knowledge of the stigma is key to spoiling social identity and the revelation of a secret stigma could effectively cut them off from society '*so that he stands a discredited person facing an unaccepting world*' (p38).

Information Control

Knowledge of the stigma may lead to sympathetic others, normally those who share the same stigma. Goffman provides an examples of Alcoholics Anonymous for the way the group comes together and provides a new way of life for members (p44). Becoming a member of such a group or category of stigmatised people may lead to coming into contact more often with other members and even for Goffman increase the likelihood of forming a relationship with them as a result (p43). Within these groups, representatives are tasked with softening public opinion towards the group, performing as speakers whilst providing examples of '*living models' (p45)* and '*heroes of adjustment'* (p45) that demonstrate that members of their stigmatised group '*can be a good person'* (p45). Further, every time someone from the stigmatised group 'makes a spectacle of themselves' either by breaking the law or winning a prize the group becomes accessible to the public through mass medias who will either transfer credit or further stigmatise the group in a '*world of publicized heroes and villains'* (49). Finally, beyond recruiting the public, Goffman identifies '*wise persons'* (p52) or sympathetic 'normal' who are aware of the secret stigma, yet are accepting of it and so the stigmatised person no longer feels shame in their presence. Therefore, stigmatised individuals may find sympathy from groups with shared stigma, public opinion through champion speakers or sympathetic 'normal' who are wise to yet accepting of the stigmatising feature.

Goffman states that people are socialized to their stigma in different ways and come to learn about it at different stages of their 'moral careers' (p55). In the first phase of socialisation, the identity beliefs of wider society are learnt about and processed as normal generating the '*general idea of what it would be like to possess a particular stigma'* (p55). Next the individual comes to realise they possess a particular stigma and are already aware of the consequences of possessing a stigma. These two initial phases of learning about stigma and learning you suffer from a stigma form an important interplay and the timing of such interactions impact the ways in which moral careers form and take different patterns. Goffman makes four distinctions between moral career patterns. The first is referred to as an 'inborn stigma' which the individual becomes socialised to as disadvantageous and Goffman provides an example of an orphan who comes to learn what parents are but also they lack the experience of them (p56). The second pattern of stigma socialisation Goffman pints to involves an individual being insulated from their stigma by a protective family or community bubble that shields them from the conceptions of wider society '*encapsulating the child'* (p56) until the point in life where's a domestic circle is out grown and can no longer protect them from overarching stigmas like race or class when navigating larger institutions like school. The third pattern of stigma socialisation involves learning of your stigma later in life, potentially only realising later on they have always been stigmatised but just weren't aware resulting in either acceptance or self or radical reorganisation or

self-disapproval (p58). Finally, Goffman considers people who are initially socialised within a stigmatised group and come to learn a second way of life consequently leading to post-stigma acquaintances seeing them as faulty whilst pre-stigma acquaintances may not extend the same familiar full acceptance as before (p60).

Overall, whatever the pattern for learning about ones stigma, for Goffman the outcome is similar and leads to increased contact with others with shared stigma and feed into the formation of sympathetic groups discussed earlier. In some cases where by learned stigma comes through an individual admission to an institution like a prison, the stigma is transmitted onto them and leads to this prolonged intimate contact with members of this stigmatised group and may struggle with some ambivalence finding attributes within, say other prisoners, that they find '*difficult to associate with themselves'* (P62). Furthermore, Goffman argues that there will be 'affiliation cycles' (p64) where the induvial accepts his membership for special opportunities yet may come to reject them later despite participating once. And it is these shifts between participation and belief that are central for the formation of an individual moral career and important for navigating stigma (p64). Finally, it is through these shifting beliefs and practises that the stigmatised individual is able to retrospective review his experiences and set on *'his own kind of normal'* (p65).

Social Identity and Personal Identification

For Goffman the resulting stigma can be traced to a *'discrepancy between an individual's actual social identity and his virtual one' (p69)* and it is not so much about managing tension between the two but rather managing the information available about a stigma with Goffman considering the issue by stating '*to display or not to display; to tell or not to tell; to let on or not to let on; to lie or not to lie; and in each case, to whom, how, when, and where'* (p70). Like impression management (1958) stigma management and the successful performance in mixed contact interactions rest heavily on controls of social information.

Social information relevant for stigma has certain properties and for Goffman is about characteristics which covey information through bodily expression' or immediate presence being reflexive and often embodied within signs during performance. Some of these signs are conveyed through symbols, which carry meaning and tells us something about the individual without them speaking (p71). Symbols come in different types and can roughly be reduced by Goffman to prestige symbols, stigma symbols and disidentifies (p74) and may support or discredit performances displaying again an overlap with impression management. Symbols then may be used as markers in performance in a variety of ways during stigma management. Whilst medals may invoke prestige handcuffs or needle marks might invoke stigmatised responses yet it is still possible for the same symbol to have different meanings for

different groups (p75). Therefore, the reliability of the information signs and symbols carry varies (p76).

However, not all stigmas are clearly visible through signs or symbols and the issue of visibility in central to stigma management (p77). How well the stigmatised person adapts and the means of communicating the stigma they possess rest on the information controls they exert during performances and the absence of clear and obvious symbols is an obvious route to stigma management. Visibility is a crucial factor then as it measures what can be told about an individual's social identity during their 'daily round' (p78). Furthermore, this routinely available information forms the base for deciding what action to take about his perceived stigma, to disclose or not disclose, to adapt and own it, or to cower or defend with hostile bravado (p). Goffman also states that visibility needs to be distinguished from *'the known-about-ness of the attribute, its obtrusiveness, and its perceived focus'* amounting to prior information or knowledge of the stigma, how much this knowledge of the stigma intrudes into interactions and the focus it draws from audiences (p81). Finally then, there is an assumption that the public will generally be engaged as an audience and not just bystanders and means the '*decoding capacity of the audience'* (p81) needs to be understood in relation to visibility in stigma management.

Goffman describes stigma management as an '*offshoot of stereotyping or profiling'* (p82) and builds on informational control and the visibility of that information by considering how these two factors contribute to stigmatised peoples personal identity which Goffman splits in virtual identity and actual social identity (p82). Goffman states that to understanding the interactions of identity it may be better to think of '*structures where contact is stabilised'* including '*the neighbourhood, the workplace and the domestic scene'.* By looking at particular stable spheres of interaction like family work and social life, as this paper intends to do, the influence personal identity construction has on stigmatised people. Influence on an individual may rest on what Goffman calls a '*positive mark'* or '*identity peg'* resemble a *'uniqueness'* or special place within a '*kinship network'* (p88) or team (Goffman, 1958). Interestingly, facts known about an individual making up his personal identity will be true for some and unknown for others and adds to the ways in which they may be distinguished from others (p89). Finally, Goffman points to a core being or central aspect that distinguishes the individual not only from others but also '*others most like him'* (p89). It is these unique combination of life histories that help build personal identities and allow audiences to build either positive perceptions or stigmatised responses during interactions. Therefore, whilst information and visibility are key to stigma management it is the way they contribute to sculpting personal identity and the perceived responses to its performance. Finally, Goffman adds that despite the continuous records of entangled social and biographical facts

amounting to a unique identity, this unique identity '*can and does play a structured, routine, standardized role in social organization despite of its one-of-a-kind quality'* (p90).

A further distinction is made between personal identities and biographies. Whilst social identities are many and may feed into a biography, we can only have one biography as we are only one body over time. There are many roles and life stages across a moral career that may contribute to an identity. But these over time in a reflective ongoing process are captured by and reorganised into a continuous biography which an induvial becomes anchored to (p97). An individuals biographical life can be sustained '*in the minds of his intimates or in the personnel files of an organization'* (p97). As a result a biography acts as a way of connecting the various information about an individual as a means of discerning the true facts. Interestingly, even when a stigma might appear on ones biography, the ability to sustain different self's, or faces, if managed well with audience separation can lead to reasonably claiming ' *to no longer be something they was'* (p98). Consequently, personal identity is not necessarily to the combinations of social attributes an individual does or does not have but rather what informational controls they can exert over say their biography.

Overall, the construction of a personal identification requires the use of social identity and any other information that can be associated with an individual. Being able to identify an individual personally acts as a type of memory device for organising information (p101). Discovery of a secret failing or past criminal behaviour risks prejudice from the current situation but also future interactions in established relationships through damaged reputations. Consequently, '*the stigma and the effort to conceal it or remedy it become "fixed" as part of personal identity'* (p102). Therefore, Goffman argues that in an attempt to preserve our personal identifiers and social identities, we are mor likely to wear a '*masks*', or change faces, when engaging in what might be considered deviant or *'improper'* behaviour (p102). Finally then, personal identity helps break up the world for the individual into those who have a personal identity marker for the individual and those who don't, the unknowing or strangers who have no access to their biography (p103).

The '*cognitive recognition'* or '*placing'* of an individual by audiences distinguishes the perceived social or personal identity is being performed. So again here how much informational control an individual can exert over the process is key to which identity will undergo cognitive recognition. When an induvial interacts with an institution it inevitably leads to a change in biography and some informational control are beyond the individuals control and in the hands of '*functionaries*' (p108). This is especially true for say the criminal who engages with law enforcement institutions and who story is re told to the public by the mass medias (p109). Yet individuals will be anchored to and bound by biographies and the social identities that make up their personal identification during interaction with people from

different spheres. Goffman gives an example of relationships as employees and parents as two roles that are performed different yet recognisable and known about in either environment. So whilst they might not be easily performed simultaneously, the previous knowledge of the roles as personal identifiers in the individual biography mean it is possible to have what Goffman calls '*courtesy introductions'* (p112). These courtesy introductions make us aware that individuals have other roles other than the ones known to us to other kinds of persons. Therefore these courtesy introductions Also hold an induvial to their biography which is '*recognisable across stages even if understood through different meanings in their social and personal identities to different people'* (p112).

The revelation of secrets or the failure to control information may lead to a damaged social or personal identity and requires being passed off for successful performance of stigma management. A number of approaches are available, to publicly disclosing the stigma and owning it, with Goffman pointing towards ex-convicts. The revelation of a secret may lead to engagement with different environments being places that are forbidden and now out of bounds due to the stigma, civil places where people of there kind are tolerated and finally back places where stigmatised people do not need to conceal or feel shame due to their secret being revealed (p124-125). In cases of out of bounds environments, the stigmatised person can opt for what Goffman calls a '*showdown*' and confront the secret head on as false (p129). Therefore, control of identity information has a special bearing on relationships. But interestingly the more time spent in relationships the more time for '*discrediting information'* to emerge seeing as they appear largely dependent on the exchange of '*appropriate inmate facts'* about one another to form underling trust (p131).

Still various techniques of information control are outlined by Goffman for successful stigma management. The first simple way is to restrict the use of symbols or outward identifiers with stigmatised behaviour or groups and Goffman points to needle marks on drug addicts as a symbol that is often covered up in stigma management (p140). These symbols or personal markers may be hard to escape if established by an institution who will hold discrediting information on them for the foreseeable future, for example a criminal record (p142). One way of passing the stigmas revelation may be to blame its occurrence on another feature, one less stigmatised like their upbringing being out of their hands situating it at times to simple bad luck they bare a particular curse. Maintaining physical distance and restricting the tendency they come into contact with those who use stigmatised personal identity is another strategy (p150). But more interestingly is the use of audience separation where by the stigmatised person divides the world up into '*large group to whom he tells nothing, and a small group to whom he tells all and upon whose help he then relies'* (p144). Finally, these above strategies amount to learning to 'pass' and for Goffman mark a turning point in a moral career eventually coming to feel they are above passing, accepting themselves and may no longer feel the

need to hide and amounts to the final most mature stage in ones moral career for Goffman arriving in what he calls a final '*state of grace'* (p153). Whether or not drug dealers are ever able to arrive at this final state of grace and come to terms with a stigmatised persona of neutralise it away will guide this dramaturgical analysis of drug markets.

Alternatively to passing the an individual can learn to '*cover'* the stigma and 'restrict displays of failings' (p155). By learning about how the stigma intrudes into interactions, the stigmatised induvial can learn to negate the stigma by avoiding certain behaviours, spaces or actions and adapt their interactions in ways that might have previously been taken for granted (p156). How one is being received by audiences is what Goffman calls ego identity, being the concern with ones own perception. If '*the concept of social identity allowed us to consider stigmatization'*, and the '*concept of personal identity allowed us to consider the role of information control in stigma management'*, then '*the idea of ego identity allows us to consider what the individual may feel about stigma and its management'* (p159). Thus covering becomes a way of reducing tension in the ego identity. Such covering attempts may lead to 'phantom acceptance' (p180) where by acceptance is feigned by 'normals' who are careful not to 'overreach with full acceptance' (p181). Yet this phantom acceptance is a balancing act and is easily undone if either group fully takes up the offer of the other, with the offer being more a cover than a full blown invitation to step out the shadows. As a result, '*the stigmatized individual thus finds himself in an arena of detailed argument and discussion concerning what he ought to think of himself, that is, his ego identity'* (p184).

Normal Deviants and Social Deviants

 It is not just the stigmatised but also 'normals' who susceptible to having secrets revealed and their identities spoiled and so must still at times perform precariously during interaction abiding by general social norms (p187). Yet the existence of generally agreeable social norms provide another layer of conformance and an applied assumption that '*one should know ones place'* (p187). Therefore there is not just the issue of the identity information visibility or obtrusiveness but also an '*important etiquette of face to face communication'* (p189). Failure to perform these renders even the normals susceptible to poor stigma management and face loss let alone stigmatised people already shut of these social norms learning instead how to pass or cover their way through interactions. Therefore, passing and covering amount to a special form of impression management that '*exert strategic control over the image'* of personal identity and biography (p190).

Whilst stigmatised people and 'normals' have been split by Goffman, he comes to consider the normal deviant stating that '*the role of normal and the role of stigmatized are parts of the same complex, cuts from the same standard cloth'* (p191). In considering the normal deviant Goffman suggests that

complex social identities will have normalised and deviant parts to their construction. They are essentially '*two headed*' (p196) rather than singular version of either normal or deviant but change and adapt depending on the environment and extent they are exposed in that environment by the person they are interacting with.

It may therefore be possible to change from stigmatised to a normalised status which is the presumed preferred direction yet this may be difficult to psychologically sustain due to the pressures involved in passing and covering (p194). Yet over a life course an individual 'is able to play both parts in the normal deviant drama (p194). In setting social norms '*inhabitants have in a way compromised themselves; they have set themselves up to be proven the fool*' (p198) and are therefore susceptible to playing both roles at some phase over there life time. As a result Goffman concludes that the stigmatised and the normal '*are not persons but rather perspectives*' which are generated in social situation during mixed contacts and come to be influenced by the visibility of information on offer in the moment (p201).

Finally Goffman sets of the social deviant as someone who refuses to accept their place in society yet still be temporarily accepted if their rebellious actions remain within the confines of the community and thus not attaching stigma to the wider group (p206). These social deviants do not adhere to group norms and there is perhaps some overlap with the subcultural lens set out in the earlier part of this lit review (Young, 1970). Goffman makes a further distinction between in group deviant, relating to class or race which may be overarching blameless yet unavoidable and social deviants who are deviant outside their group, with drug addicts, users and suppliers constituting good examples (p209). Still there are times where stigma may be caused by ones relation or group membership being either inborn ingroup or through participatory action as a social deviant.

This study aims to employ the techniques of stigma management, set out above, to analyse participants drug market behaviours attempting to capture these mixed contact interactions and the ways in which they manage their impressions to avoid stigmas. Information, the viability of this information and the controls they exert over its release will be assessed for the ways in which dealers management of secrets in particular spheres during particular performances enables them to switch between the perspectives of the normal and the deviant. Whether or not dealers entirely hide their deviant market behaviours remains to be seen and if they do not entirely hide yet do not fully disclose it to everyone then a degree of stigma management becomes apparent and therefore a useful tool of analysis when applying the concepts of passing or covering to neutralise (Matza, 1964) their market performances. Therefore, stigma management will be used as a tool to supplement the dramaturgical analysis of the data. This is because stigma management is a type of impression management and there is bound to be some overlap.

Suitability for this research

In essence, Goffman's (1959) '*Presentation of self in Everyday Life' and 'Stigma, Essays on the Spoiled Identity' (1963)*, conceptualises social interactions as a series of performances, and argues that individuals will play many parts over the course of their day to day lives. Depending on set (who they are with), setting (where they are), and audience (who they are performing to) individuals will adopt different faces or masks. While there may well be an essential or core part to their identity, there is also a fluidity, allowing for different actions in different circumstances, thus creating opportunities for overt impression management. Sometimes, individuals may come together as teams with shared agendas, collaborating in a performance to project a specific identity. It thus provides a promising framework for exploring issues of interest identified throughout this literature review, particularly around how 'alternative' drug dealers self conceptualise themselves, the extent to which they are able to adopt legitimate and illegitimate faces, and how they navigate and contribute to the complexities of fragmented drug market structure.

Goffman's (1959) theory of *presentation of self in everyday life* is, of course, not without its criticisms. Most notably, in later reflections Goffman (1974) himself turned on his own analogy stating that the theatre metaphor his dramaturgical analysis is built on is an inadequate literal description of social interactions, which are too complex to be captured in this way. In addition, Ryan (1978) asks how seriously we should take the metaphor, criticising the dramaturgical approach for not answering, for example, questions around motivation and goal oriented behaviour. These criticisms around motivation and goal oriented behaviours are also highlighted by Giddens (1984). Furthermore, MacIntyre (1969) adds that Goffman's dramaturgical approach liquidates the individual into a set of roles, with Miller (1984) adding that dramaturgy ends up making assumptive claims about the intentions of actors and lacks clear ability to analyse their moral commitments.

Despite these criticisms, Goffman's theatre analogy was, in his own words, not intended to be taken entirely literally, but rather as a stepping stone in the wider development of dramaturgy (Manning, 1988). The value in Goffman's dramaturgical approach, whilst not providing an entirely comprehensive description of social interactions lies in the ways in which it highlights an obvious truth - that in life we are all capable of playing different roles. In this way, Goffman's focus on the often

overlooked everyday interactions and the importance placed on the micro level of sociology remains important. Furthermore, concepts of team behaviours and the spatial distinction between front and back stages remain influential. Thus Manning (1988) argues that the use of dramaturgical analysis and the theatre metaphor remains useful as a *springboard* for theorising despite any limitations. Finally then, through this concept of springboarding, and despite his earlier criticisms, Giddens (1991) went on to develop theories of social interaction around fluid multifaceted individuals, reminiscent of the dramaturgical work Goffman presents in *presentation of self in everyday life.*

Finally, the use of dramaturgy to study drugs is not entirely new and has been attempted in a variety of sub topics within drug studies. Neale et al, (2011) and Anderson (2014) invoke dramaturgy when discussing drug treatment programs. Jacobs (1992) (1993) applies dramaturgical theory to infiltration techniques deployed by undercover police agents in drug markets. Sugiura (2013) used Goffman's work to look at online sales of medicine. Hathaway et al (2018), apply Goffman's understanding of collective construction of reality when looking at social supply amongst student dealers in Canada. Gunnarsson and Törrönen (2022) apply dramaturgical performance to heavy recreational users' ability to maintain normal working life. Blackman and Bradley (2017) apply Goffman's concept of a spoiled identity when looking at new psychoactive substance use. Finally, Furst (1999) applies Goffman's dramaturgical explanations to interactions of middle women in drug markets. From these examples, the application of dramaturgy to drug studies is well established. Therefore, the use of presentation of self and dramaturgical analysis is justified, as Manning (1981, p54)says, as a '*springboard*' for the theoretical contributions this paper makes, being a loose guide rather than strict companion in the findings that follow. The final part of this chapter will briefly draw together the information presented so far, and explain how this study will seek to apply Goffman's (1959) '*Presentation of Self in Everyday Life'* to researching drug market actors involved in alternative drug markets.

The Art of Impression Management in Drug Markets

The drug dealer archetypes outlined in part one are indicative of a spoiled master identity for those who are engaged in drug market activity. Despite an increasing amount of research evidencing the existence of counters to these archetypes, evidence suggests that they are still expounded by the media, influential in policy making, and forefront in the minds of the general public. This part of the

literature review also demonstrated how archetypes about drug dealer identity feed into fixed understandings of drug market characteristics (e.g. violent and organised) and drug market structure (e.g. hierarchical, static). Its purpose was to explore these archetypes, evidence their ongoing influence, and demonstrate their impact on how we understand drug market structure.

In part two a rich seam of research depicting 'alternative' representations of drug dealers, as counter to the archetypes and operating in more normalised environments, was presented. It was able to demonstrate that research of this type has made important contributions to our understanding of drug markets, by adding nuanced detail to our categorisation of drug dealer identities. Crucially, it evidenced the ways in which application of these findings contribute to different models for understanding drug market structure, hinting at a much more fluid and fragmented environment than archetypes suggest. It thus concluded with the idea that there is still much to be learnt about drug market structure and that research with drug dealers operating in 'alternative' markets is a fruitful way to enhance our understanding in this area.

The third part further evidenced this conclusion by scrutinising three studies of drug dealers operating in 'alternative' markets, employing qualitative methods and taking a central interest in how drug dealers self-conceptualise their own behaviour. The drug dealers featured in this kind of research were aware of the archetypes, but were able to reject them by using 'techniques of neutralisation' (Matza & Sykes, 1964). Findings here confirmed the importance of understanding pathways into drug dealing behaviour, concluding it can be more of a 'drift' than a conscious business choice, and the existence of environments within which drug supply has become normalised. They revealed areas of key interest around how 'alternative' drug dealers manage their legitimate and illegitimate roles, and how they navigate complex drug market structures without becoming part of an organised hierarchy. In sum, it demonstrated that focusing on drug dealer identity and self-conceptualisation is a useful method by which to understand fluidity and fragmentation within drug markets, and thus provide us with more in-depth knowledge of their structure.

Finally, part four provided a detailed outline of some of the key features of Goffman's (1959) theory of '*Presentation of Self in Everyday Life'*, suggesting that it provides a valuable framework within which to study drug dealer identity. Goffman's ideas that social interactions are performances, and that individuals can play many different parts or wear many different faces, can be applied to researching

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how some drug dealers are able to adopt both legitimate and illegitimate roles. As demonstrated in this section, there is much of interest around the extent to which alternative drug dealers are intentionally performing a counter to the archetype, how they manage and maintain contrary faces, what strategies they actively employ to navigate between their different roles, and what role trust, friendship and belonging play in their interactions.

Drawing these threads together, it is the intention of this thesis to conduct such a study. It aims to seek out drug dealers operating in alternative markets, and use qualitative methods to explore how they self-conceptualise their own behaviour. Using Goffman's '*Presentation of Self in Everyday Life'*, it will interrogate the methods by which they separate themselves from archetypal spoiled identities, and extrapolate what this tells us about the fluidity with which they operate within drug market structures. Finally, it will apply key findings to existing models for understanding drug market structure, aiming to add nuance and detail to established knowledge. It's three central research questions are thus:

1. How do drug dealers operate in 'alternative' markets and in what ways does their behaviour contrast with existing archetypes?
2. What can an application of Goffman's (1959) *presentation of self in everyday life* tell us about how 'alternative' drug dealers self-conceptualise their behaviour and how they manage fluid roles within fragmented drug markets?
3. How can the findings be applied to add nuance or detail to our existing understanding of drug market structure?

The research will take an ethnographic approach, exploring drug dealer identity and impact on drug market structure in three different 'alternative' market settings: 'seasonal magic mushroom pickers'; '5-9 dealers' with legitimate roles engaging in drug markets on a part time or supplementary basis; and 'autonomous brokers' operating at higher levels of the drug market, but without attachment to hierarchical or organised criminal structures. The application of ethnographic techniques and justification for case studies will be provided in the next chapter.

Chapter three: Methodology

This chapter will set out the methodology for the project, which utilised ethnographic techniques of data collection, including in-depth qualitative interviews and re-interviews. It will first set out literature which justifies ethnographic and qualitative approaches. After justifying an ethnographic approach to drug studies, researcher positionality and the case study approach will be introduced. The sampling and methods of investigation for the three case studies (seasonal mushroom pickers, 5-9 dealers and autonomous brokers), will be thoroughly explained. Finally, it will reflect on the ethical issues posed by this type of ethnographic research into drug markets such as positionality, the transparency of observations, investigating illegal behaviour, maintaining participant anonymity and researcher safety and boundaries.

Justifying the ethnographic and qualitative approach

This section will justify using qualitative ethnographic methods when studying drug markets. It begins by outlining what is meant by qualitative ethnography before setting out a variety of methods that make up this approach. Next the ways in which ethnographic methods have been used to explore a range of drug topics, from use to markets, will be explored. In doing so it will be shown that there is already an established rich tradition of investigating drug markets and the actors who inhabit them via these methods. Various studies will be briefly outlined highlighting the variety in approach when deploying ethnographic methods to study drug topics. Therefore, by drawing on the pre-existing literature of qualitative studies that use ethnographic methods to study drug markets, the grounds for the justification for deploying similar methods in my study to explore drug dealer identity will have a solid foundation.

Qualitative methods are used to investigate the deeper meanings of research participants' experiences and behaviours and involve collecting non numerical data, which may come in the form of written text, video or audio data (Hammersley, 2006). Ethnographic methods are a type of qualitative approach that can deploy a variety of techniques to achieve data collection (Atkinson et al, 2007). Some of the methods available to ethnographers include interviews, participant observation and document analysis (Geertz, 1973). From these choices the study has utilised semi structured

interviews and participant observation (Hobbs, 2001). Interviews involve the development of in depth conversations that allow for the extraction of rich data about how beliefs and experiences shape participants' behaviours and world views. Participant observations amount to prolonged immersive periods of observation where by the researcher watches their participants in their natural environment and can be either structured, recording particular behaviours, or unstructured where by the researcher observes how events unfold.

Ethnographic methods such as interviews and participant observation have a number of benefits (Hammersley, 2006). Interviews are a valuable instrument and can be deployed to extract rich oral life histories, experiences on a particular time / event and are also a valuable follow up tool to further probe interesting responses or observations. Participant observations are valuable because they enable researchers to explore their chosen fields through the lens of their participants, in an attempt to capture the everyday lived reality as it unfolds around them (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1993). Furthermore, these methods may be triangulated to cross reference reports with observations and vice versa. First of all, they allow for an in depth understanding of a specific group or culture. In turn this enables the in depth exploration of the complex problems faced by the specific groups and cultures studied by the researcher.

Furthermore, ethnographic methods are useful in accessing hidden or hard to reach groups to study whilst immersion allows for rapport to be built with these groups (Faugier and Sargeant, 1997). Therefore, by gaining rich in depth understanding of hard to reach populations, ethnographic methods can contribute to more effective design of social policy that targets these groups with the tailored support they need or at the vey least highlight the need for alternative policy with these specific cultures or hard to reach populations (Hammersley, 2006). Consequently, ethnographic methods contribute not only to the development of innovative policy but may also develop entirely new ways for understanding human behaviour that could not be achieved with quantitative methods (Mosse, 2004). Overall then, it has been suggested above that qualitative ethnographic methods are a valuable technique of data collection for researchers looking to exact in depth data about their participants' lives, the spaces they occupy, the roles they perform and the beliefs and experiences that drive their behaviour.

Of course ethnographic methods are not without their limitations. In more general terms, the use of ethnographic methods is time consuming and costly. As a result, ethnographic methods typically use smaller samples than quantitative studies (Coffey, 1999). Consequently ethnographic methods are limited to micro sites of study and therefore the results of ethnographic research cannot be easily extrapolated or generalised to larger populations. Instead they provide rich data about small pockets of people in particular times and spaces rather than provide data on society as a whole (Coffey, 1999). They also present specific issues which must be addressed, namely presence, transparency, ethnocentrism, methodogenesis and informants (Stoddart, 1986). Presence refers to the ways in which a researcher may disturb the natural environment they are investigating simply by being there. Transparency concerns the extent to which people observed by the researcher are reminded of the research intent (Contreras, 2019). The problem of ethnocentrism involves the imposing of the researcher's own interpretation of the sites they are observing rather than reflecting the participant's own cultural values (Hammersley, 2006). Methodogenesis refers to the creation of new techniques of data collection; ethnographies often employ experimental forms of observations (Stoddart, 1986), often at the edge of criminological interaction (Ferrel and Hamms, 2016), and thus may generate tantalising data outside of the immediate topic of research. Finally the problem of informants refers to the issue with using people familiar with the culture or research site to access or even guide a study, allowing them significant influence over its development (Wacquant , 2016).

Despite these problems, reflexivity provides a possible solution and is defined by Olmos-Vega et al (2022, p241) as;

'as a set of continuous, collaborative, and multifaceted practices through which researchers self-consciously critique, appraise, and evaluate how their subjectivity and context influence the research processes',

Therefore what follows in this chapter is a reflexive account of the methodology deployed in this study of impression management in the bottom to middle level drug markets in Kent's coastal towns. Overall, then despite ethnography coming with its own set of methodological issues, reflexivity provides a robust tool for reflecting on the ways in which the researchers own positionality and practise may lead to biases in the interpretation and reporting.

An immersive ethnographic approach is well suited to my research which aims to explore 'alternative' drug markets, using Goffman's *presentation of self in everyday life* framework to draw out rich understanding about drug dealer identity and, by extension, drug market structure. Goffman (1989, p125). himself describes immersive ethnography as:

> '*subjecting yourself, your own body and your own personality, and your own social situation, to the set of contingencies that play upon a set of individuals, so that you can physically and ecologically penetrate their circle of response to their social situation, or their work situation, or their ethic situation'.* (Goffman, 1989, p125).

Drawing on this as a guide, I aimed to emulate many of the studies elaborated on in the previous chapter and use qualitative ethnographic methods to understand my research populations and the people operating in alternative drug markets. In fact, the use of ethnographic methods in the study of both deviancy and drugs in particular has a long tradition I aimed to follow. Some studies that used ethnography to study deviancy and drugs in particular will be set out below demonstrating that ethnographic methods, despite their associated problems, are invaluable research tools producing valuable insight along the way.

More generally, in the study of crime and deviancy, ethnographic methods have been deployed to study a range of actors and crimes. Incardi (1977) used ethnographic methods to study professional pick pockets. Hobbs (2001) gives an ethnographic account of an active burglary. Cromwell and Olson (1991) also studied burglaries via an ethnographic analysis. Zaatut (2023) highlights the increasing ways ethnography is being used to study immigration and crime. Winlow (1999) used ethnographic methods to study masculinity and violence in the north eastern criminal market place. Carlen (1988) investigated the relationship between crime and poverty amongst 39 women via ethnographic oral histories. Illan (2007) used ethnographic methods to explore youth crime in inner city Dublin. Yates (2004) also uses ethnographic methods to study youth crime amongst working class communities. Varse et al (2022) show how ethnography can be used to study organised crime along with Hobbs (2001). Rahman (2019) investigates homicides through ethnographic narratives in the organised criminal underworld. Miller and Gaines (1997) looked at workplace scamming in the food retail industry. Hagan (1993) looked at the relationship between crime and unemployment via ethnographic methods whilst Fagan and Freedman (1999) also used ethnographic research to look at the relation between crime and wages. Breuil et al (2011) have used ethnographic narratives to assess human trafficking. Hall, Winlow and Ancrum (2013) explored criminal identities through ethnographic fieldwork. Gooch (2019) used ethnographic methods to explore juvenile prison violence in England.

Ferrell (2016) used immersive ethnography to study graffiti. Finally, more recently, ethnographic methods are being used to explore cyber crime (Gibbs and Hall, 2021). Overall, the above evidence suggests that ethnographic methods can and have been deployed to study a range of crimes and have a long tradition in criminological investigation.

More specifically, ethnographic methods have been used to study drug markets (Ritter, 2006). Adler (1993) used ethnographic methods to gain access and insight into upper level drugs traffickers. Curtis (2000) use ethnography to differentiate between different types of markets in Manhattan. Contreras (2009) studied drug market robberies via ethnographic methods. Syvertsen et al (2016) explored Kenyan drug markets ethnographically. Betsos et al (2021) looked at drug checking behaviours by drug sellers. Marsh (2019) investigated drug market violence in Ireland. Moore (2004) uses ethnography to go beyond subcultural explanations when looking at drug market behaviours. Hoffer et al (2009) studied local heroin markets ethnographically. Fergurson (2017) uses online ethnography to study dark net drug market transactions whilst Potter (2017) acknowledges the value in blending online and offline ethnographies of cannabis cultivators. Furthermore Kowalski et al (2019) studied crypto drug markets ethnographically whilst Demant et al (2021) investigated clear web social media markets in Nordic countries. Spicer (2021) used ethnography to study cuckooing within county lines organisations. Crewe (2006) investigated prison drug markets. Pearson investigated markets via an ethnography of recreational users in inner city London. Ward (2010) utilised her own connections to conduct an immersive investigation of the rave scene in London. Salinas (2014) also used ethnographic methods to investigate a group of dealers for his PhD work. Murphy et al (2019) used ethnography to investigate the ways in which drug markets are embedded in communities. Jacinto et al (2008) looked at ecstasy suppliers through an ethnographic lens and the ways in which they resist dealer identities. Briggs (2013) looks at drug markets in Ibiza whilst Turner (2019) also deploys an immersive ethnography to investigate holiday workers' participation in the nighttime drug market economy. Overall then the above evidence suggests that ethnographic methods have a rich tradition and are well suited to investigating a range of drug markets from organised high level traffickers, to violent street dealers to more nuanced social suppliers and even tourist type workers. In doing so ethnographic methods allow for the differences in markets and actors to become clear and are therefore well suited to this PhD study which aims to investigate alternative understandings to drug markets.

Identifying 'alternative' drug markets and conducting the case studies

It is important to acknowledge my positionality at the start of this process. I am a product of the cultures I study (Hobbs, 2001) and before my journey into academia I was arrested and sentenced for intent to supply class-a drugs. At the time I was 18 and had become immersed within a network of heavy recreational drug use maintained largely by a peer group of social suppliers. Adventures are expensive when you're younger and consequently I drifted into supply behaviours to continue to fund my expeditions. Seemingly never ending, the revenue generated from my market behaviours was enabled by a readily available market of peers and spent just as quickly on nights out and trips away with them. After my arrest I drifted away from drug markets, got my consumption under control and started a quest into upskilling via an undergraduate degree whilst raising a young family. Despite the move away from markets, the bonds I had formed since my early teenage years immersed within the scene did not automatically disintegrate. Therefore, when beginning this study I had already established contacts from my past that could be drawn upon as gate keepers who could provide access back into a world I had largely left behind. Personal biography and my positionality as a previous dealer proved invaluable when beginning this study and helped override any concerns raised in the previous section around ethnocentrism.

In general the samples for each case study snowballed from established contact with these gatekeepers (Atkinson and Flint, 2001). Therefore in all three case studies my positionality as a product of the cultures I was attempting to study, being seaside town drug markets in Kent, provided a way into markets and access to either active offenders or trusted gate keepers. Furthermore before this PhD my research for my undergraduate and master dissertations was also conducted on drug markets. Consequently the undergraduate provided the opportunity to begin sounding out and reconnecting with my gate keepers long before the PhD began and in a similar sense the Masters dissertation laid the foundation for the first case study in this PhD. Therefore these earlier works extended my existing networks further simply through doing those pieces of work.

The use of gatekeepers and informants can be criticised as a weakness of ethnographic research (Stoddart, 1986) with researchers seemingly leaning too heavily on one or two particular gate keepers skewing results and building unintentional bias into studies. However, the use of gate keepers and informants has also proved invaluable in accessing sites of observations and participants. For this study, the process of identifying gate keepers largely drew on personal contacts I had made in the

past. Gate keepers were initially approached with questions around ' who is still doing bits?'. i.e. who is still active in the markets I had left behind long ago. Whether or not they still saw them was a decent follow up question and often met with: 'I'm seeing them soon why don't you come along?'. In some cases these were reintroductions to people I hadn't seen for a while and from there the gate keepers' presence wasn't necessary. Typically tapping up people who used to either use or sell drugs was the first port of call. In some cases, like Gary, the attempt to find a gate keeper resulted in the direct recruitment of him as a participant when it became apparent he met the criteria for autonomous broker after initially acting as a mushrooming gate keeper. In this sense the sample snowballed on an as and when directive when prospective participants were sometimes stumbled across just from hanging out with particular gate keepers. There was not a deliberate directive for recruitment and it is fair to say by deploying gatekeepers some participants drifted into the study. As a result the sampling procedure for each case study differed slightly yet shared in common this snowballing aspect from gatekeepers. Finally, the specifics of each sampling procedure and the ways in which it relied on my positionality for access will be set out in more detail below as each case study's methodology is unpacked.

Using my existing contacts and networks I thus identified three 'alternative' markets suitable for exploring both drug dealer identity and drug market structure through the perspective of Goffman's *presentation of self in everyday life.* The first comprises a small community of seasonal magic mushroom pickers and the fields they forage from. The second case study focuses on a group of suppliers who have legitimate jobs or roles and organise their drug dealing activity around these commitments: the 5-9 suppliers. The third concerns a group of middle level dealers, trading in larger quantities of illegal substances, but operating independently and outside of any hierarchical chains of command: the autonomous brokers. While I have presented the findings as three separate case studies representing three sperate 'alternative' drug markets, in reality the research was much more messy (Dorn et al, 1992), with several research participants fitting into more than one of the markets as will become apparent below.

Case Study one; Seasonal Mushroom Pickers

My gatekeepers were able to provide me with access to a small community of seasonal magic mushroom pickers and the naturally producing magic mushroom sites they frequented. My established connection with the gatekeepers allowed me to achieve a snowball sample of 10 key informants for this case study, gradually recruiting more pickers into my research over time. These 10 key informants were all active mushroom pickers, rather than those with previous experience, allowing for direct ethnographic observations as well as interviews. The final sample included 8 men and 2 women. The relatively small sample meant that I could achieve prolonged engagement with the same group to build trust and rapport over time, securing repeat interviews, being able to make longitudinal ethnographic observations, and facilitating the opportunity to ask questions as and when they arose in the field. As I became a familiar face at chosen fieldwork sites, I was also able to make contact with a wider range of picker groups who informed my research in a more peripheral way.

My gatekeepers and key informants also helped me to identify 5 distinct fieldwork sites frequented by magic mushroom pickers in general, and my community of pickers in particular. All were located in rural countryside locations and freely accessible by public bridle paths. These 5 sites are described in more detail in the mushroom case study chapter and were visited repeatedly during mushroom season across 3 years, allowing me plenty of opportunity to observe participants in their natural picking environments.

As I was introduced to potential key informants and once I had gained some degree of trust and rapport with them, I conducted initial background interviews. Interviews would last for about an hour and were semi structured around topics including; their present experience as active pickers, their previous experience and knowledge of sites in the local area and their willingness to be observed in the field. The approach to interviews was semi structured so that more sensitive topics like knowledge of and access to picking sites could be slowly built up to. Interviewees were happy to talk about their wider mushrooming experiences and these provided a good route in to talk about active sites. Therefore a loose structure allowed interviews to build up from previous mushroom experiences to active picking and ultimately either an offer to come along or a direct ask if the interview seemed to be flowing well.

Interviews were largely conducted in a relaxed manner and participants began by recounting their first time picking experiences, gradually building up to more risky revelations about their involvement in selling mushrooms. Of key interest to me as a researcher was the unique position mushroom pickers occupied within the drug market as producer, supplier and consumer all rolled into one. These initial interviews were perhaps the most formal part of this study and resulted in the final selection of 10 suitable participants who met the criteria and would be observed picking mushrooms. Initial interviews also proved valuable for laying the foundations for the ethnographic observations.

Naturally producing mushroom sites proved ideal for direct ethnographic observations. The 5 sites were chosen under the criteria that they produced liberty cap mushrooms, were visited by my sample and were accessible by public bridle path. These sites were frequently visited during mushroom season. Trips to the research sites could be split into two categories; observations with participants and observations on my own. Observations with participants weren't conducted on any particular day but rather by tagging along as and when pickers were going to sites. After establishing the sample, regular contact was maintained and participants kept me in the loop as to when they were going and I could come along. Observations would last as long as participants were in the fields. In some cases observations continued after the field and followed how pickers processed their mushrooms. Typically pickers were on site for 3 to 5 hours. Pickers also fitted picking in and around their other commitments and either week day mornings or weekends were preferable slots.

The problem of presence was overcome largely by masquerading as a picker myself. Whilst my key informants were aware of my research, not every picker encountered on every occasion was aware. Rather than disturb the natural setting I didn't immediately alert these other pickers to my observations fearing scaring them off site and allowed my gate keeper and/or key informants to take the lead in revealing the nature of my work at an opportune moment. I took care not to engage in significant conversation with pickers until I had been properly introduced.

Whilst I did not pick any mushrooms myself I frequently walked around the fields with my participants as they picked patches. These periods of observation revealed the meticulous and often laborious nature of picking from the ground up. There is also something quite captivating in wandering around searching almost for treasure hidden in the grass. Observations at picker sites were accompanied by informal field interviewing in relation to site knowledge and mushrooming practices – for example

tapping spore heads to encourage patch regrowth or leaving the roots and smallest specimens in a patch for the good of the field.   Over time, observations became structured around the codes of practice that governed pickers' presence in the field. I was able to observe their interactions with other people like dog walkers or landowners, as well as other groups of pickers with whom they would share site knowledge, compare hauls and engage in general conversation. Interactions with landowners were sporadic and happened in the moment on odd occasions. These types of interactions with landowners couldn't be planned for and proved the suitability of ethnographic methods that may capture moments in time if fully immersed.

Finally some observations were conducted by myself. Attempting to gauge the research site through the lens of a picker, I set out on expeditions at the start of seasons to look for signs mushroom season was starting using the knowledge I had learnt from my gate keepers. These investigations would follow the bridle paths along the routes research sites were situated. On one particular occasion the heavens opened and I was washed out from my route returning home cold and wet and having had a first hand experience of the ways in which nature dictates the picking conditions. Another time whilst moving into a site, I was chased by a horse whilst overly busy scouring the floor looking for signs of mushrooms amongst the drops of morning dew in a field round the back of a church. On a few of these walks, I would spot other people in fields in the distance wandering around and making the distinctive picker crouch every now and then, further confirming it was about time to recommence data collection.

Ethnographic methods were well suited for this case study as they allowed for direct observations of mushroom pickers in their natural environments. The use of interviews beforehand provided the background context into participants' experiences picking but also the wider cultures of mushrooming and helped direct early observations. Early ethnographic observations were loosely structured around the participants' mushroom collecting practises but soon evolved due to the introduction of new audiences members and began to centre on the interactions they had with my participants. Ethnographic observations allowed for on the spot in the moment interactions with other pickers, land owners and members of the general public. Fieldnotes were usually recorded as text directly into my phone to further allow me to blend into the field. Finally, triangulating interview responses with direct observations of field sites and informal field interviews, provided an opportunity to view participant responses through their own lens, at ground level. Established trust with known pickers overcame problems of presence with participants comfortable to perform risky illegal behaviours in front of the researcher, technically being concerned with the production of Class-A drugs.

Case study two: 5-9 dealers

My recruitment to the sample of participants in the 5-9 dealers case study was more piecemeal. . Some participants were already known to me, others were suggested by friends of mine who use drugs, and in some cases participation was facilitated by my gatekeepers. A relatively small sample of 7 was achieved for 5-9 dealers, ideal as observations were made over prolonged periods of time and included their performance in both markets and legitimate spaces such as work, family or social settings. Relationships with pre-existing contacts were easily rekindled over discussions of my new life raising children and attending university. Generally, former contacts were intrigued about my Ph.D. and it was relatively easy from there to introduce the nature of my research and gently feel my way to raising the possibility of participating in the case study.

Not everybody I initially approached was a suitable candidate for participation. I seemed to increasingly find after a few early observation periods that a potential participant fitted the case of a user dealer more than anything else. In one particular case, early observations were promising, yet over a short period of time evidence of a devastating addiction was revealed. Observations ceased in this case and generally a criteria was added that non-functioning or addicted user dealers whose sole occupation became supporting their habit would be excluded from the study. There is considerable literature already on user dealers and they did not seem to fit with the 'alternative' market I had identified.

The sampling procedure for the 5-9 suppliers became a job of slimming down a wider earlier sample into those participants who could be observed over prolonged periods of time over several years. Participants had to meet the main criteria which were having a legitimate job and being involved with the supply of drugs. Access to observation sites in family and social settings was preferable but not immediately demanded from the sample in the early stages. Instead, access to these sensitive sites would often result from an invitation as the study progressed and trust was built with the remaining participants. In the case of Roy, who appeared towards the end of the data collection period, access to these spaces was not achieved, but his routine of engaging in drug markets after work revealed enough to include him into reflections on 5-9 suppliers. There were many others identified who met the base criteria and were explored early on, but could not be tracked for prolonged periods and were eventually discarded from the sample. Whilst some earlier members could be more easily tracked,

others fell away and became overly busy with their legitimate lives. For example, Adam who had participated for a while, but then had children and was left with little time for much else and it felt increasingly unfair to disturb him.

As with the first case study, initial interviews were used to gain an understanding of participants' backgrounds and suitability to the 5-9 dealers study. These interviews probed the participants' routes into markets, market activity, and how they organised their markets. From these responses it became apparent that market activity was organised around everyday life and had a supplementary rather than occupational role. Instead participants reported participation in legitimate spaces like work family and social life. These early findings helped shape observations which, whilst obviously looking at market behaviour, became more and more structured around legitimate space performance. Whilst market behaviour was important, the exact amounts times and money made became less important and were not the focal point of observations for 5-9 suppliers. This is because the act of distributing drugs is itself rather mundane and revealed little about the ways in which 5-9 suppliers sculpt their identity. Over a prolonged period of time, these sensitive sites of observations and legitimate space performance became unlocked through immersing into the everyday lives of participants. Social occasions like games nights and sports events would be attended upon invite, family zones were accessed under invite during periods of observation, with participants keen to show the lives they had been working towards, displaying their motivations for maintaining work focused lives. Finally work spaces were more easily accessed with some participants than others, with work vans and trips to sites observing the ways in which participants conducted legitimate performances with customers and colleagues. Over time these types of observations became more central to the understanding of 5-9 suppliers and their core identities.

Observations with 5-9 suppliers in the early stages at least were typically, unsurprisingly, in the 5-9 hours trying to catch the after work period when they were active. Whilst 5-9 suppliers has been used as play on words for 9-5 working, not all participants had strictly 9-5 jobs and so observation periods varied somewhat. In some cases participants had child care commitments and were not always available at set times every week. Observation periods would then be more set in the moment. If I hadn't seen a participant for a while for observation or heard from them via text, I would text them to check in. An everyday life commitment that had come up would often be revealed, and that would serve as a useful way of unpacking what they had been up to. These types of informal check ins helped maintain a relationship with participants and build rapport over time.

Checking in was easily followed up by a call to arms to the café and a proper catch up over breakfast. Cafes in themselves are hubs of local activity and provided another informal site to catch participants in unprepared in the moment interactions with people they weren't prepared for. Similar interactions were caught in pubs. Sharing and the reciprocal exchange of small gifts like breakfasts or pints over time help unlock natural relationships, whilst insisting on paying every time or allowing them to pay every time disrupts the power balance, with respect tied to taking ones turn. Whilst there is a fine balance between hassling a participant or hounding them into observations, checking in and checking back forms a valuable practice for the reciprocal sharing it enables whilst immersing into participants' everyday lives.

The approach seemed well suited to the case study. Initial interviews provided a hint about the value placed on legitimate roles and status by participants and suggested new avenues for ethnographic observations to sit alongside observations of direct market behaviours. The use of direct participant observations over prolonged periods with 5 participants proved invaluable for being able to catch them in moments that confirmed or conflicted with their own reports. The ethnographic approach also allowed for flexible adaptations to the focus of observations and the move to new legitimate spaces of observations. This approach allowed for the everyday life of the 5-9 supplier to unfold around the researcher naturally rather than a strict fixation on just deviant market spaces.

Case study three: Autonomous brokers

The final case study, engaging with the middle level of the drug market, was the most ambitious and took the longest time to emerge and then to establish. I was looking for participants that were concerned with the supply of larger quantities of drugs but who were free agents, acting outside of any organised chain of command. The sample for autonomous brokers was again small in size and aimed to observe the ways in which participants maintain markets without resorting to coercion or violence. Unlike 5-9 suppliers, for this case study, observations were structured much more firmly around market behaviours, and so the ability to consistently shadow participants during their rounds was important for sample selection. In the case of Gary, who would frequently disappear on an adventure to another town usually in the summer seasons, contact could be lost for a while before

emerging to pick up his line where he left off supplying and contact would be resumed. Indeed, this ability to drop in and out of his middle market position in the supply chain displayed the type of fluidity within drug markets that I aimed to capture in this study, and so intermittent interaction with some of these brokers didn't prove to be an issue.

The small final sample of 4 was drawn from a number different routes. One member of the sample was drawn from my own contacts, and also featured in the magic mushrooms case study. Another was recruited after an introduction from one of the participants in the 5-9 dealers case study. Finally the last two members, Oscar and Jeremy were first encountered as part of the 5-9 dealers case study as it became apparent over time that they were concerned with larger quantities of drugs and fitted the definition of both case studies (a point which will be elaborated significantly in the conclusion of this thesis). In fact, Gary was also first recruited as a mushroom picker and after the season ended, emerged as an autonomous broker concerned with the heavy supply of other drugs.

As with previous case studies, preliminary interviews were used to identify brokers who were autonomous and not part of any organised group. These interviews started lightly and then moved into market behaviours, how they control their markets, the rules they set, how they maintain their position and how they see their own position in the supply chain.   Observations for this case study were focused on market making behaviour and so the majority of observations focused on time brokers spent in markets. Therefore observations aimed to shadow brokers during the times they were conducting business, either dropping off products or collecting cash. A process of informal on the spot interviewing became more useful than long sat down separate interviews, being able to catch and unpack relationships after deals were done and we were driving about to the next location.

Finally, there was significant sample crossover for autonomous brokers and two participants came from case study two. The extended time period spent with these two during 5-9 dealer observations revealed they had a dual role in serving middle market demands with larger quantities of supply. More importantly the rapport already built allowed for these more risky larger deals to be probed and investigated more easily and participants would be more open about the size of their operations once trust had been built.

Ethnographic methods were well suited to studying autonomous brokers and the majority of these observations focused on the ways in which autonomous brokers manage their markets through non violent or coercive means. Observations could be structured around interview responses and allowed targeted behaviours around credit markets and price strategies to emerge as core market making behaviours. Finally, the use of ethnographic methods helped reveal the ways in which autonomous brokers differentiate themselves from stereotypical archetypes associated with markets and resist these homogenous master identities by neutralising their own market practices. In turn the use of prolonged ethnographic exploration allowed for in depth extraction around the ways in which those involved in the supply of larger quantities of drugs still exert free will over the markets they control.

Ethics

Prior to commencement of the research, ethical approval was obtained from the University of Kent ethics board. Several reapplications had to be made as the research period extended and Covid restrictions came and went. In a project of this nature, there have been many ethical issues to work through and continuously reflect on and be aware of. In practice, ethical issues did not disappear once ethical approval had been obtained, but remained a constant feature of discussions with my supervisors and ongoing revisions as necessary. In this final section of the methodology, various ethical issues are discussed encompassing: anonymity and confidentiality; informed consent and the overt/covert nature of observations; the particular issues of researching your friends and acquaintances; asking about and observing illegal behaviours; researcher safety and boundaries; and attempting to conduct research during the Covid 19 pandemic.

Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity of the respondents, confidentiality of their responses and security of the collected data were key in this project. As all participants were heavily engaged in illegal behaviour, extreme care was taken to ensure that nobody's identity would be revealed at any point, in either recordings or transcriptions. Participants were asked to choose their own pseudonym at the beginning of the research, and were asked to avoid using anybody's real name in any recorded interviews. When this occasionally happened, names were edited out of transcriptions and recordings were deleted. On transcription, I also took great care to edit out any personal details that could potentially be identifying. Ethnographic fieldnotes were also constructed carefully to avoid revealing names, locations or other

personal details that could potentially lead to identification of any nature. In the write ups of the case studies, care has been taken to further obscure identity by making small changes to key details, for example what kind of pet someone had, which sport they were involved in playing, or which specific legitimate roles they played. Locations such as towns, addresses and, in the mushrooms case study, fields were also anonymised, described only at the general level (e.g. a Kent coastal town) or by tweaking key details (e.g. pylon field). Finally, although many of my participants were known to each other I also took great care never to discuss one of my participants with another or reveal anything about their clients or market behaviours.

Any recordings were made on an encrypted Dictaphone and then immediately transferred to an encrypted external hard drive and deleted. I quickly transcribed them myself to avoid the need for any third parties to have access to the research, and then deleted the audio recordings as the voices of participants may have been identifying. Informal fieldnotes and ethnographic observations were typed into the notes folder of my phone and then typed up fully on my return and deleted from my phone. All data relating to the project was stored in password protected files on the encrypted hard drive.

Informed consent and overt/covert nature of observations

Key gatekeepers who were approached initially and already well known to me were told at the outset about my research intentions. Others who ended up, over time, becoming key informants or participants to the research were gradually introduced to the nature of my intentions. Once we had been introduced and I had been vouched for by either the gate keeper or another existing participant, I began to explain the nature of my interest, slowly building up to the full extent of my research, rather than revealing it all at once in an overwhelming manner. Prior to any formal interviews or informal observations being conducted with participants or potential participants I made sure they were provided with an information sheet outlining the aims of my research and the methods I planned to use, as well as the rights of any participants and the steps I would take to protect their identities and manage the data. Once participants had had the chance to read through this document and digest the information, we met for a discussion and they had a chance to ask me questions about it. Finally, prior to the initial interviews I formally reminded them of their rights, including the right to withdraw from the study at any time and for me to delete any existing data I had in connection to them, and took verbal consent of their willingness to participate in the study.

Particularly within the first magic mushrooms case study, I would often come across other people engaged in the activity I was interested in, but not part of the main study. In these cases I would either avoid interacting with them, or ask for an introduction from one of my key informants and assistance in letting them know my purpose in the field before engaging in any conversation that was of interest to my research. In these cases, no recordings or extensive observations were made, but these informal conversations sometimes provided general background context within my ethnographic fieldnotes. In 5-9 dealers and autonomous brokers, clients were occasionally encountered briefly as they called at participants' houses or on the rare occasions I accompanied participants as they made their rounds. In these cases, I took care to make no interaction with the clients and the nature of my presence was not revealed as it could have been harmful to all parties. Telephone conversations with my participants were also occasionally overhead, although only from the participant's side. I made no notes about clients, but occasionally I would discuss the transaction or interaction afterwards with my participant to reveal elements of their market behaviours, and I did draw on these field discussions in my analysis of the data.

Finally, it was necessary to conduct some observations covertly, especially in spaces with audience members who weren't involved in drug markets. This was especially true when observing 5-9 dealers in legitimate work, family and social spaces. Essentially, if as a researcher I blurted out the nature of my research in these legitimate spaces, harm could have been caused to participants if all audience members were not aware of their drug market behaviour. Fearing unmasking participants in inappropriate spaces simply to announce the transparency of my study I did not alert audience members to my researcher status. In some cases, especially earlier on in the study, participants would sometimes announce the nature of my work to audience members and provide me with an introduction into the space we had entered. However, these became less and less as time progressed and the nature of my work appeared to fall into the background of the participants' minds. Therefore, whilst the study was initially transparent it drifted naturally into covert observations as I was able to successfully immerse myself into the background of these interactions.

The degree to which observations are overt or covert may reduce the problem of presence. Entirely overt observations may change the ways in which people behave during periods of observations, attempting to cultivate alternative researcher pleasing performances, or to cover up and hide some

other behaviour or beliefs. The use of semi-covert (for example through key informed gate keepers) or covert observations to solve the problem of presence itself gives rise to another ethical issue being consent. Duncombe and Jessop (2002) argue that if semi-covert or covert observations occur in the participants' natural environment, are in the interests of furthering (social) scientific knowledge, and bring about no harm to the observed, then they can be justifiable and may be offered as a solution to the problem of presence.

Transparency and the problem of presence are intrinsically linked to one another (Atkinson and Flint, 2007). Ward (2008) reflects on these two issues with a possible solution for prolonged engagement in the field, suggesting that whilst early on in the study with participants she had been transparent but as time went on it didn't seem beneficial to keep reminding them they were being observed, leading to some to forget and essentially become unaware they were being recorded. In a similar manner, whilst I was initially transparent with potential sample members and those subsequently recruited for the study, like Ward (2008), I did not constantly remind participants that it was an observation period. In doing so, observations over time became more and more covert as participants seemingly forgot that they were part of a study as the years progressed. In doing so a trade off between transparency and the problem of presence was inevitable. Reawakening participants to the exact nature of the study could have produced forced or false performance that detracted from the natural performances or participants. Once the research period had finished and my write up was underway, I made sure that I discussed again with each of my participants the nature of my research and the observations I had made, ensuring they were still happy to proceed as participants and be included in the write up. Finally, once the findings chapters were written up in draft form, I allowed one or two particularly trusted and/more interested participants from each case study to have a read through and confirm that they were happy with the way they were represented and the kind of information that was included.

Note on whiteness of sample

The sample for these case studies suffers from a racial and gender bias and is therefore skewed. The sample is predominantly made up of white males, with only mushroom pickers featuring any female participation in the data reporting. It is acknowledged here then that the data may be skewed in the sense it cannot be widely extrapolated to all permanent drug dealer interaction or the ways in which they manage impressions and stigmas. However, the lack of racial diversity within the sample is explained by the predominantly white sea town areas that were studied on for this paper. He local dealers I encountered were predominantly white and male and I did not go out of my way to recruit people based on their race or gender but rather on what was immediately available to me in the area.

The paper then does not focus to much in data collection on gender or race differences, yet there are some leanings on race which have been reflected on in the concluding chapter.

Researching your friends

I had existing (or recently existing) personal relationships with most of the magic mushroom picking participants, and some of the participants in both of the other case studies. Other participants, while not existing members of my immediate social network, moved in the same circles and we quickly found we had several mutual acquaintances in common. Reflecting on the ways in which the sample was achieved some relevant points present themselves. The use of already established contacts from past experiences has provided access to hard to reach populations, in this case drug suppliers. The use of personal biography has at times been deployed as a means of building trust with both participants and gate keepers. As touched upon earlier, the use of such informants or gatekeepers may skew research leading to some sample members being leaned on too heavily. Drawing on peer networks, past associations and even friendships more generally to gain access to sites and participants may overcome this issue as reflected on by (Ward, 2008), who finds this type of access useful. Like Ward (2008), I found using gatekeepers but also wider friendship networks as a less disruptive means of investigating groups who largely felt I was already a member and so slipped into the background. The use of friendship networks to gain access to market activity, as well as relying on informal interviewing as much as possible, helped me to capture supply behaviours in their natural environment (Fountain, 1993).

However, Ditton (1977) cautions that the use of friendship networks can also lead to ethical issues. Duncombe and Jessop (2002), for example, raise the issue of 'faked friendship' whereby researchers work hard to build rapport within the research population, but with the primary purpose of their own gain in terms of extracting high quality data.   Secondly they comment that the use of friendship networks in research may leave the participant powerless, unable to withdraw consent or being coaxed into giving answers they were not comfortable with. Overall then, the use of friendship networks is caught up with ethical concerns about the power relations between researcher and participant.

Ward (2008) suggests that these concerns can be mitigated by the use of genuine friends within the scene, allowing for immersive ethnography and high quality data extraction without engaging in 'faked friendship'. In this research, the use of existing and genuine friendship networks has provided access to a hard to reach research population and facilitated the extraction of high quality data from participants.   Drawing on pre-existing friendships with gatekeepers and some key informants has helped to mitigate ethical concerns about faked friendship. Furthermore, by no means all of the participants were directly known to me before the study began. Therefore, this study relied on a mix of my own network and the introductions it provided to unknown participants.

Looking back as this project has ended, I can see that over time I became friendly with these new and previously unknown participants, and am likely to keep in contact with most of them now the project has finished. I have tried to be mindful of this throughout the research process, looking out for inbuilt bias towards the ways I have presented my participants and the narratives I have constructed around my observation of their lives. I have also reflected on the impact the research has had on me in terms of reintroducing me to an expanding group of people actively engaged in offending who I had, in some ways, intended to move away from. It is important to acknowledge these limitations and reflections. Ultimately, however, like ward (2008) I am convinced that the use of immersive research techniques within existing and newly created friendship networks is valuable in terms of both access to hard to reach populations and the rich quality of data generated.

Asking about and observing illegal behaviour

This study was concerned with drug market behaviours, namely supply, and therefore it was necessary to ask questions about illegal behaviour and in fact went further and directly observed illegal drug supply. The challenge then of this research was to build enough trust in order to access deviant market behaviours. Here personal biography was used to help establish that initial trust with some participants recruited through gate keepers but also for establishing trust with those initial gate keepers.

My positionality as a product of the cultures I study and my experiences of supplying drugs and being sentenced to prison for it helped build initial trust with potential participants. By starting from the footing that I had experienced the worst possible outcome of drug supply – being in prison and the

denial of one's freedom - helped lay the foundation that participant safety and anonymity was of paramount concern. Having experienced the inside of a cell I was able to reaffirm that it was never my intention to contribute towards sending another person there through sloppy researcher practices or worse a desire to put the study before the participants, advancing my own name at a cost to their prospective freedoms.

Personal biography also help lay the foundations for relaxed discussion with participants as the admittance that you have once been involved in the same deviant behaviour, being drug supply, reduces the barriers to responses and levels the playing field a bit by removing a fear of judgement. As a researcher I was not interested in judging the deviant behaviour but rather understanding it. Fear of judgement around deviant behaviour could lead to participants closing themselves off and not discussing drug supply. Therefore an amount of honesty into my own background as a researcher proved valuable in unlocking responses around participants' own deviant behaviour.

There are three limitations to this approach though which will be set out below briefly. Firstly, by revealing you are somewhat in the know, or have some preexisting understanding of drug supply in the area, participants would sometimes end a description of an incident or relationship or market organisation with the phrase 'you know what I mean'. And whilst at times I did know what they meant or could catch their drift, it became important to probe slightly further, and push for a more direct response of what it actually meant in their own words, in case my interpretation, despite my positionality, became skewed by my own bias. Secondly, in using personal biographies to introduce the study and recruit participants, there became a concern that participants may be looking to give me the answers I was looking for rather than it unfolding naturally. However to counter this I did not reveal the exact nature of the study, being around the construction of and resistance to identity and allowed them to believe it was simply about market behaviour and the quantities they were dealing in. Finally, the risk of using personal biography as an introduction to the study and means of recruiting participants was that some potential participants may not have taken me seriously. In this sense whilst I had some experience of drug supply and a brief stint in prison for it, I was not ever a major drug supplier and some potential participants may have rejected my experiences as insignificant. Therefore, the use of personal biography within the earlier stages of this study proved valuable for asking about drug supply behaviour but still had to be carefully managed.

This study involved direct observations of illegal behaviour and was primarily concerned with drug supply. I was successful in observing drug supply throughout my study and this perhaps posed some ethical issues. I had observed drugs being picked up, dropped off, deals being prepared and the collection of money. Before embarking on the research I had reflected on this issue and acknowledged that there would be times when the safety of another overrode the importance of my research, necessitating researcher intervention (Turner, 2019), for example in my research if dealers were observed supplying or intending to supply to children, or were observed engaging in or preparing to engage in acts of violence. These situations were fully discussed with participants and potential participants prior to research commencing. In the event it was not necessary to make any interventions of this nature. Participants appeared to enact their own moral codes into markets, largely sold recreational drugs to non-problematic users, and enacted their own age restrictions. Finally, the study was concerned with drug supply, the researcher reminded the participants that what they did with their money, if they flushed it through the system should not be discussed and any issues around money laundering were not discussed or observed as this study was not concerned with those practices and the researcher did not want to be placed in an awkward position in being obliged to report such crimes.

Researcher safety and 'boundaries'

Briefly on researcher safety, whilst I observed illegal behaviour, I did not participate in illegal supply behaviours. The researcher was sometimes present for drug supply and market making behaviours, but did not in any way contribute towards the operation. I did not handle drugs, hold them during market rounds, prepare them for sale or engage with the product in any other meaningful way. As the researcher already has a significant charge for intent to supply on their record, handling any products and leaving finger prints on them would have been a significant risk.

This was especially important as suppliers for 5-9 and autonomous brokers were directly shadowed as they were doing the rounds and could have been pulled over at any time. In such cases, the researcher's finger prints on drug parcels would have become difficult to explain and awkward in the sense that to explain my prints on drug parcels and to deny any involvement would have required the revelation that I was observing the drug dealer, consequently grassing them up to save my own skin. Instead by not handling products, in the potential case that we were pulled over and the drugs

discovered, I could feasibly deny any knowledge that they were there, fairly denying any involvement without outing my participant.

Oscar in particular was aware of my desire not to handle drugs and at times turned this reluctance into a game. On arriving at his place before the start of the rounds he would attempt to throw a large heavily wrapped parcel my way, with little warning other than the shout 'think fast' trying to get me to instinctively catch it. The nature of this was light hearted and I would either move out of the way or tap it back with my foot mid air if I had caught it in enough time. 'Nearly got you that time' would be crackled back at me. From this sense a reluctance to handle the parcels didn't have to be a jarring experience but was met with understanding and light hearted game play from some of the participants. Participants involved in other substances than weed were especially understanding of the reluctance to handle parcels that weren't yours and it was even received by participants as a good practice and helped display I wasn't entirely naïve when stepping into markets as I wasn't prepared to take risks that weren't mine.

Observations in general took place in familiar settings or public spaces and the researcher was not active in dangerous spaces like crack dens that are often attached to conceptualisations of drug markets. However, when doing the rounds with 5-9 and autonomous brokers, a heightened sense of anxiety was present during earlier observations, due to the reimmersion into deviant spaces that had nearly cost me my freedom. It was hard to escape early anxiety being in a car with drugs in again and the potential need to explain away the situation should the worst happen, the car be pulled over and arrests made. However, over time these worries fell away, the reality of the 5-9 dealers and autonomous brokers dipping in and out of various 'safe' spaces, largely being customers' homes rather than back end alleyways, seemingly having legitimate reasons to stop where we did, if anyone ever asked. Supervisors were informed before these types of observations would occur just in case anything went wrong.

Finally, only on one particular incident was there a direct threat to the safety of the researcher. During the early phases of this study when I was recruiting participants I was with one prospective sample member who got into a very heated argument in the street. On the way back to my house to discuss the study and their suitably a car swerved across the road and towards us, very nearly hitting the prospective participant. Out of the car jumped a large aggressive man and it was clear the two men

had some history between them. An argument ensued in the street and it felt like it was about to escalate further before he returned to the car and went on his way. The prospective sample member turned and said 'you cant always escape your past even if you try'. This participant did not make the final study as they emigrated in the end, unable to get that fresh start they craved in their home town. Despite the heightened sense of danger in this experience, observations never again entailed anything else of this nature, and it was the only time the researcher was concerned for their safety when that car swerved towards us across the road as from the outside looking in, I appeared to be an associate rather than a researcher and could have been targeted by any violence should the situation have escalated further.

Researching under Covid

Finally, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic interrupted data collection during this study, necessitating special considerations for conducting research during this period. During periods of lockdown, direct contact with research participants was not possible and consequently ethnographic observations were not made. During these periods, checking in was deployed to maintain contact with participants. This could be achieved with a phone call. In fact, some participants would prefer to use face time on occasions which helped build on the personal rapport being developed. Participants were still actively supling drugs in this time and it was important to maintain contact during these periods where face to face contact was limited. Because of the restrictions on meeting, direct observations of market behaviour became impossible as, not only would they have been a breach of lockdown and University of Kent researcher guidelines, riding along in the car would have drawn attention that we were at the vey least breaking covid restrictions, inviting unwanted attention and proving any lurking law enforcement with a reason to pull us over.

As restrictions eased and you were allowed to meet in public for walks in small groups, observations gradually restarted, first with the mushroom pickers and then in other case studies with the rounds being done on foot in the local area, with customers also keen to stretch their legs. Once restrictions had been fully lifted observations could return to their natural state with the covid 19 restrictions no longer acting as an extra risk of detection. Social distancing measures were adopted where appropriate/possible. If the researcher or participants were feeling unwell, observations and interviews were rescheduled. Finally, if participants displayed symptoms (ie persistent cough) observations or interviews would be terminated.

Thematic analysis of data

The data for the three case studies has been analysed using thematic analysis, described by Benner (1985) and Leininger (1985) as being useful in finding common meanings. Thematic analysis has been used to identify patterns in the behaviours of participants (Aronson, 1994) and my findings have been grouped together into various themes set out in each case study. By using thematic analysis to draw out themes an overarching narrative can be built into each case study (Torress, 2022). Furthermore, thematic analysis allows for the synthesising of personas or characters to tell the narrative story that emerges from the patterns in the findings (White and Devitt, 2021). Finally, thematic analysis has been chosen for its preferential flexibility which seemed well suited for documenting dynamic fluid actors and their performance inside and outside of drug markets (Willig and Rodgers, 2017). In fact, the use of thematic analyse through a loose lens of dramaturgy helped draw out narratives in each of the case studies and justifies the use of the *presentation of self in everyday life* (Goffman, 1959) as a *springboard* into interpreting findings (Manning, 1981).

The process of finding patterns in the data was more straight forward with case study one on magic mushrooms pickers. This is because case study one has clear distinct research sites, namely the various rural spaces direct observations took place in. Different themes emerged naturally from these spaces, centring around the spaces themselves, the pickers' behaviour within them, and their interactions with various other users of the space. Concepts from Goffman's (1959) *presentation of self in everyday life* helped loosely guide the grouping of data. For example the concept of teams was easily applied to groups of pickers, whilst dog walkers could be viewed as audiences or outsiders. From these patterns of behaviour when interacting with different actors, narratives around wider picker cultures, codes of picker conduct and reluctant drug producers were also developed around the concept of a liminal drug production site.

5-9 dealers thematic patterns emerged around the different legitimate spaces they were active in. Behaviours in family, work, and social spaces, as well as drug markets were used as themes in the analysis of the data. Patterns emerged that showed 5-9 dealers to be active in legitimate spaces and suggested that their performances within legitimate spaces were important for the ways in which they were able to resist homogenous drug dealer identities. Whilst early observations focused on drug market behaviour, ongoing thematic analysis revealed that 5-9 dealers market behaviour was organised around these legitimate space commitments, not the other way around. Several of

Goffman's (1959) concepts naturally emerged as being relevant here, for example teams, peace offerings and audience tact. Furthermore, Goffman's face work (1959) became an important springboard viewing work, family, social and market performance as distinct faces of the 5-9 dealer. Therefore, a narrative emerged around drug market performance as being supplementary rather than occupational. Finally, the thematic approach developed a narrative around 5-9 supply as a distinct alternative mode of drug supply that begins to delineate from real / proper dealing (Coomber, 2006).

A thematic analysis of anonymous broker data was used to find patterns in the ways in which they make and maintain their market positions. Particular behaviours like variable price structures and credit markets, or tick, emerged as areas of focus and allowed for different faces to be drawn out through thematic analysis. Autonomous brokers were found to be flexible and deployed different market making behaviour depending on the customer. Furthermore, the ways in which autonomous brokers resolve market conflicts, for example on unpaid tick, helped draw out a pattern of non-violent conflict resolution. These types of non-violent market resolution, implied team membership but also contributed to identity creation and archetypal resistance as autonomous brokers enforced their own moral codes within their own markets. The types of bonds that underpinned these relationships were important for drawing out a narrative around multi faced suppliers with two distinct faces in particular emerging: benevolent and entrepreneurial. In fact, some findings indicated the likelihood of hidden faces (Goffman, 1959) which have also been reflected on. The importance of the brokers' autonomy became a central theme for analysis because of the ways in which it enabled flexible market making behaviour. As a result, a narrative was developed around autonomous brokers being free market agents within illicit commodity chains and they were presented as distinct from directive chains of command within organised gangs or criminal enterprises.

Finally, the patterns that emerged from the three case studies, being alternative typologies of fluid drug dealers that challenge the concept of an homogenous archetypical drug dealer identity, often put forward as the evil pusher (Coomber, 2006), were used to develop a final narrative or conclusion being the gas cloud analogy of drug market structure. Each case study may then be viewed itself as part of a wider pattern of alternative fluid drug market structures. Therefore, these conceptions have been combined into a final concluding analogy of drug market structure as a gas cloud, seeking to add to the narrative of fluid drug markets and actors that perform in them.

Chapter four: Magic Mushroom Pickers: seasonal faces in liminal spaces

This first case study sets out to explore drug dealer archetypes and identity in relation to a neglected Class-A drug market revolving around naturally occurring magic mushrooms. Magic mushrooms are most commonly consumed for the Psilocybin within them, a psychoactive chemical which can cause mild hallucinations, laughter, anxiety and paranoia (Riley and Blackman, 2008). The liberty cap mushroom is the most common type of psilocybin mushroom which grows naturally, without human intervention, on grassland throughout the UK. It is small in size with a small pointed cap and purple skirt. Foraging for mushrooms requires skill identifying the correct types as magic mushroom producing sites contain a variety of other non-psychedelic mushrooms, of which some, are edible (Lewis-Stempel, 2012), whilst others, like the death cap are poisonous (Lawton and Bhraonain, 2013).

In the UK, magic mushrooms are a Class A drug and were originally scheduled under the 1971 Drugs Misuse Act and deemed to be one of the most dangerous illegal substances thus subjected to the harshest punishments. Recently, Nutt et al (2010) have found magic mushrooms to be one of the least harmful psychoactive substances, although this has not had any impact on UK law. Magic mushrooms have been used around the world, often historically and for ritualistic purposes (Walsh, 2016). In the UK they became popular amongst youth cultures during the 70s (Pollock, 1975). Use peaked in the mid 2000s at about 1.7% of young people aged between 16 and 24 as a loophole in the law meant that the sale of fresh, unprepared mushrooms was not technically prohibited (Roe, 2005). This loophole was closed in 2005 and, since then, use declined considerably to about 0.5% of young people (16-24) (Walsh, 2016), although there have been reports of recent increases (Winstock et al, 2021; Hillier, 2019), perhaps due to a revival of interest in the therapeutic benefit of psychedelics (Nutt et al., 2020).

This chapter begins by providing some information on case study specific methods and introducing the sample. Findings are presented around 5 key themes: the unique nature of sites of magic mushroom production; the social experience of magic mushroom picking; the market behaviours of magic mushroom pickers; the attitude of landowners; and the involvement ot law enforcement. Drawing on evidence from my ethnographic research across three years, it ultimately argues that sites of naturally occurring magic mushroom production are liminal spaces, betwixt and between legality,

and can be described as 'reluctant', unlike other sites of Class-A drug production. Despite being involved in a Class-A drug market, magic mushroom pickers to act as a counterpoint to the archetypal drug dealers explored in the literature review. Finally, applying Goffman's *presentation of self in everyday life* to the data analysis, the magic mushroom picker identity can be viewed as a seasonal or temporary face rather than a master identity.

Case study specific methods

The research drawn upon in this chapter took place over three years, starting in 2018 with the main thrust of the data collection and continuing with follow up interviews and field visits in 2019 and 2020. Although there are many types of magic mushroom, of primary interest here was the Liberty Cap. Psilocybin Semilanceata known as Liberty caps, bloom seasonally from September to November, making access restricted by and dependent upon the weather and time of year. Although, magic mushrooms can be harvested from manmade equipment (Aşıcıoğlu et al, 2014), this case study is **only** interested in naturally growing magic mushrooms in outdoor spaces. This study deployed ethnographic methods and relied on two instruments: participant observation (PO) and formal interviews with a sample of 10 magic mushroom pickers. These methods have been fully described in the methodology chapter: the sections below will cover specific techniques deployed within this case study in more depth which differ from the other two case studies.

Five distinct sites were chosen for fieldwork and observations, and are described fully later in this chapter. The criteria for selection was fields/areas with generally good public access where magic mushrooms were in evidence and which were frequented by mushroom pickers during the main season. Ownership of these sites varied, but all were privately-owned spaces. The owners of these private spaces included farmers, small business owners, a school and the Ministry of defence. While some appeared to be restricted to the public, all proved fairly accessible via public bridle paths. While observing responses by landowners to trespassing pickers is of interest to this study, I made the decision to abandon sites when the group was approached by landowners with trespassing complaints. In cases of encounters with landowners, when no such complaints were made, observations continued. In cases where trespassing was an issue, observations were still made of how this initial conflict was resolved. All sites were abandoned if asked to by the landowner. Finally, risks to the researcher have

been minimised whilst observing illegal behaviours by strictly not engaging directly in these picking activities. As a result, no illegal materials have been handled by the researcher in this project.

The goal of the participant observation was to observe pickers foraging in order to understand the peculiarities of the labour and the site of mushroom (drug) production. Knowing where magic mushrooms grow is a substantial obstacle, but relying on the knowledge of a gatekeeper, I was able to collect data from 5 magic mushroom production sites (fields) across Kent's countryside. The sites were initially visited between 10.30am and 5pm during 'mushroom season', that is September and November 2018. Research sites were revisited in the same seasonal period each year between 2019-2020. If pickers were present, observations lasted for 3-4 hours. In the case of solo visits, less time was spent, however these cases proved rare as most observations began accompanied by a member of the mushroom picker sample.

Much of the empirical work was made possible by established trust, stemming from a shared history, with central members of a local magic mushroom picking population. Overtime, my sample snowballed to comprise a core of 10 key informants. The majority of my ethnographic fieldwork was based around shadowing them on picking trips, observing their behaviours and engaging in informal field interviews. I usually stayed low profile if other pickers were present, blending into the deviant spaces, but occasionally, under the direction of my gatekeepers, struck up conversation with other pickers outside my main group, taking care to introduce my research intentions. While a familiar face to many, I also encountered unknown people in the field. Staying low profile, to not interrupt the natural behaviour in the observed space (Burgess, 1982), flowed naturally from my gate keeper's behaviour as he began picking mushrooms upon arrival at each site. As such the gate keeper's behaviour allowed me to blend into the deviant space entirely unnoticed and navigate my role as a researcher. Finally, more formal semi-structured interviews were conducted several times with each of my 10 key informants.

Introducing Participants

The final sample of 10 key informants included 8 males and 2 females. All were in their twenties. All participants were white British people, perhaps indicative of my own immediate social circle. Most members of the sample had legitimate jobs and had to slot picking in and around these commitments. The types of jobs held by pickers ranged from skilled blue and white collar jobs, including chefs, tradesmen and professional officer workers. Others had part time jobs or were unemployed and were able to frequent the fields more regularly.

Dan was a bohemian man living alone in his van, fairly well educated and did not hold a fixed work role, instead performing odd jobs when the opportunity arose. He went on several magic mushroom picking expeditions as a teenager and continued to do so during the research period. Whilst interested in the liberty cap mushroom, he also hunted for other psychedelic mushrooms, like the fly agaric, but also edible wild mushrooms and other foraged goods. He proved to be an incredibly knowledgeable gate keeper who provided lots of interesting information on not only the magic mushrooms but the countryside itself. He went picking 3 or 4 times a week as either part of a group or alone whilst walking the dogs. Dan picked mushrooms for personal consumption only and was not interested in maintaining a mushroom market. He occasionally used drugs recreationally but such adventures were dependent on set and setting. He does not appear in other chapters and is confined to Magic mushroom observations.

Gary lived in a shared house, was well educated and worked in the music industry. He first went picking as a teenager and had continued the practice regularly since. He was only interested in liberty cap mushrooms. He was my second key gate keeper who provided knowledge of 2 research sites. Gary went picking once or twice a week throughout the season. He will reappear in the third case study as someone who occupies an autonomous broker role. He used a wide range of drug recreationally, and was a social butterfly who made use of these connections to maintain small drug markets of regular clients.

Ian had no fixed address, drifting between the family home, his partner's house and a variety of sofas which he surfed. He was a regular magic mushroom picker and went picking as much as possible, depending on the weather. He happily picked alone but was equally as happy to share the experience

with his friends. He did not have a job and so throughout the season, magic mushroom picking provided a small yet consistent stream of income. Ian picked mushrooms for his own consumption, yet was the sample member most motivated by the cash rewards picking labour brings. He used a number of drugs recreationally and maintained these habits through drug market roles.

Gail lived with her partner, was well educated and worked a full time professional job. She first went mushroom picking in her early 20s and tried to go at least a couple of times in the season. Only interested in liberty caps for personal consumption, she had no interest selling mushrooms or much interest in drug market roles other than as a customer. She typically went picking as part of a group enjoying the social aspect of the experience over the drug collection labour. She enjoyed other recreational drugs. She does not appear in latter case studies as her drug market activity was limited to magic mushroom picking.

Terry lived with his flatmate, was well educated and had a full time job in the arts. He started picking for the first time around the start of my research and was very enthusiastic about finding new spots. He had consumed mushrooms prior to these picking experiences and used drug recreationally from time to time. He was only interested in mushrooms for consumption but sometimes sold to friends, if and only if, they planned on doing the mushrooms together. He does not appear in the two other case studies and is limited to appearing in this case study only.

Janet lived at home with her family, was sporadically employed and had a basic education. She went mushroom picking as regularly as possible during the season and had been picking since she was an early teen. She was concerned with picking mushrooms both to consume and also to sell to known clients. She did not harbour aspirations of a large drug market but used mushroom revenues to support her stop start employment situation. She used drugs recreationally and was a regular member of the 'party scene'. She does not appear in the other case studies and is limited to magic mushroom investigations.

Keith lived at home with his family and worked intermittingly as an artist. He was a regular picker with excellent site knowledge who provided tips to 2 research sites. He had been a regular picker since an early teen and picked for his own consumption. Resistant to most other recreational drugs, he allowed

mushroom on the menu due to their natural production which he interpreted as meaning they were safer than man made chemicals. He did not do other drugs recreationally preferring to focus on his artistic pursuits. He does not appear in latter case studies and was observable only in the mushroom fields.

Dave lived alone, was educated and worked in the care sector. He was a regular picker and started going picking with groups of friends in his teens. He did not pick alone and would only go with a group on a day out. He did not pick early in the morning but was happy to brave the rain. He was the most willing to engage with the floor level and could often be found front crawling through the fields at his own pace. He was a recreational cannabis user and does not appear in later case studies.

Oscar lived with his partner, was educated and worked in the building sector. He was new to picking and was more interested in the day out then the drugs collection. He occasionally smoked cannabis recreationally. Although not really interested in mushrooms, Oscar reappears in both 5-9 and benevolent broker case studies.

John lived with his partner and children. He was a skilled tradesman who worked in the building sector. He was a regular picker when he was a teenager but had little time during my research to pick around family and work life. He came if, and only if, the weekend plans permitted and was the least observed picker in the field. He appear to have little interest in picking large amounts of mushrooms but rather preferred the social nature of outings. This participant reappears later in 5-9 dealers but is still worth a mention here.

Findings

This section will outline findings which have been grouped into five key categories. The first section explores the dual nature of mushroom production sites and the ways in which they contradict current perceptions of Class-A drug production sites. The second describes the rich social experience of magic mushroom picking. The third, disputes the idea that all drug market operatives act as economically driven rational agents, instead revealing mushroom pickers as unique irregular operatives who fulfil producer, supplier and distributor roles within their own small markets. The fourth starts with the idea

that drug production is unwanted and risky to landowners who should be motivated into deterring action before presenting findings which show landowners as invisible agents who generally choose not to exercise their authority The final section starts with the premise that local law enforcement should be highly concerned with magic mushroom production sites, revealing that, in practice, magic mushroom production sites are not prioritised in the same ways as other drugs production sites despite their strong legal classification.

Combined, these five themes demonstrate that the reality of mushroom picking is very different to public and legal perspectives on Class-A drugs, and that the magic mushroom picker 'identity' does not match well with archetypal notions of Class- A drug dealers. The concluding section draws on the concept of 'face work' from Goffman's (1959) *presentation of self in everyday life'*, to demonstrate that the magic mushroom picker is one seasonal face which does not necessarily result in deviancy amplification. It further argues that seasonal magic mushroom picking is a form of 'reluctant' drug market, not able to support commercial enterprises or sustain organised criminal networks.

Exploring The Dual Nature of Mushroom Production Sites: sheep fields as class-A drugs production sites

As discussed above and in the methodology, ethnographic fieldwork for this case study centred around 5 distinct sites – fields known to my key informants to be regular sites of naturally occurring magic mushroom 'production'. In this first section of the findings, I draw on extensive fieldwork notes to produce rich, thick descriptions of the research sites, before arguing that they are distinct from other sites of Class-A drug production.

Site 1 – Sheep Fields

Site one was a couple of sheep fields located between two villages. Access to the edge of the site was provided via a public bridle path, although the path did not allow access to the field itself The research site was composed of 2 smaller fields which were separated by fencing. In between the fence was a paddock gate, allowing the resident sheep to access either field. The sheep were a fairly large flock made up of older and younger sheep. The sheep did not really like the presence of the pickers and did their best to move away from the areas they were in. The pickers themselves seemed uninterested in

the sheep and there appeared to be an unspoken agreement between the two parties to keep themselves to themselves.

In field one, a large tree sat towards the bottom end. At the very bottom a small hedge line separated the field from the country lanes, where occasionally you caught a glimpse of passing cars and tractors. The field was also littered with troughs and other odd bits of farming equipment. Towards the top of the field, it began to slope upwards until it met the top fence, where, in close proximity, lay research site 2 – the MOD fields. Whilst the left of the field ran parallel with field 2, the right hand side and much of the top end were enveloped by dense woodland. In field two, the land was relatively flat and the grass had been well grazed by the sheep. It was short and preferable for picking. In the short grass, tracks or well walked footpaths could be picked out and these were followed by pickers in some hope they might yield fruitful patches of mushrooms. On the left of the field was a small tree line which separated the field from the bridle path, frequented by occasional dog walkers and the odd tractor. These fields reportedly once a upon a time had a high yield of mushrooms. However, they were perhaps the site which was most well-known amongst pickers and, over time, high picker traffic may have reduced the yield.

Site 2 – MOD fields

Fields belonging to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) are common in the Kent countryside. They are often clearly marked with signs, commonly with large MOD lettering on the paddocked gates. Several MOD sites were visited during observations, however, only one of these sites was returned to by all members of the study due to its history of high mushroom yield, and thus was chosen as a research site to focus on. This particular MOD field, was located in close proximity to site 1, being separated only by a narrow bridle path. In fact, it was not uncommon to find the sheep from site 1, in the MOD field, indicating either some sort of land access arrangement between the MOD and other landowners, or a blatant disregard for land ownership on the part of the sheep.

The field was small in comparison to site 1, and was an elongated rectangular shape. The field sloped sharply, ascending from the paddock gate on the edge of the bridle path towards the top of the field which was fenced in. The field itself was flanked by thick woodland either side and overlooked by another small field and large farm house at the top. The overlooking farmhouse, resembled almost a watchtower, leaving the field feeling more open than the enclosed fields of site 1. The field for the

most part felt less well kept then the fields in site 1 and was clearly grazed less by the sheep. For the most part, Site 2 was overgrown which made picking conditions more difficult. Littered with thistles and thick long patches of grass, liberty caps were more elusive in these conditions.

Site 3 – Horse Paddocks

Site 3 was comprised of an area of mixed use fields around a village pub and church. Field one was situated directly behind the small church. To access this field a small path must be followed from the church grounds. On one side of the path was a crop field, which appeared to be in use and worked by the land owner. The other side of the courtyard church path was lined with trees every few feet, with the small paddock field behind. In this field lived a large brown horse who sported a red and green striped coat and who was seemingly unbothered by the presence of pickers. The church itself was very small and totally surrounded by a small graveyard, with field one located behind. Field one was a small rectangular shape, bordering the church grounds and flanked by two small horse paddocks. The grass was fairly short, which made for good conditions for picking and the field itself was fairly secluded from the road. Despite being overlooked by the church, church goers appeared rarely and pickers were left relatively undisturbed, sheltered by the shadow of the church.

Field two of this research site, was adjacent to the church and field one, sharing a boarder with both. Field 2 was another small horse paddock, which was located on a public bridle path. Whilst access to this field was permitted, its full time residents - a large horse and her foal - were not so pleased to encounter picker parties. The large horse patrolled this field and followed pickers who entered, especially if they strayed too close to her foal. In fact, whilst initially investigating this site, I was chased out of this field by the horse and only just made it over the fence safely into field one. Finally, field 3 of this area could be reached by following on the bridle path from field 2. The borders of this final field were somewhat abstract and hard to pin down. The three fields have been grouped together into one research site because they interconnect and magic mushrooms can be found within all of them.

Site 4 – Leisure site

Site 4 is a large field used as a leisure site encompassing several different activities which I will not name to preserve anonymity for the landowner. The site was actively in use throughout the week for legitimate leisure pursuits, yet yielded large amounts of mushrooms in the season. During picking

expeditions, the landowner was often present along with dog walkers who were passing through and other people who had specifically come to use the leisure facilities. The field ran parallel to another MOD field (not the one described in site 2) and had a small woodland at its other edge. There was parking available at the front, whilst the entrance to the site lay on a road effectively meaning that the whole field was visible from the roadside. There was thus little cover for would be pickers and this was the field where participants were most likely to interact with non-pickers also using the field, albeit for different purposes. Overall, this was a popular site due to its high yield, but was perhaps the most high risk in terms of visibility and busyness.

Site 5 – Pylon field

Site 5 was a field which was distinguished by its location on a steep hill with a large pylon situated at the summit. Precise ownership of the field was ambiguous, and a bridle path led straight to it.   The presence of the pylon indicated that some telecommunications company had a vested interest in, at least, the top of the field. Site five was situated fairly far along the bridle and was immediately surrounded by fields, which were divided either by fencing or thick hedges. From the top of site 5, panoramic views were on offer of the wider areas around the site, many of which were enveloped by woodland. From this vantage point, small country roads between some of the fields could be glimpsed in the distance. Ultimately, however, site 5 was by far the most secluded research site. As a result, general traffic in the field was low, and whilst other pickers were not entirely uncommon in the research site they were certainly much rarer than in the other sites.

These ethnographic site descriptions point to a striking duality in nature of the research sites. Year round, they offer a home to farm animals, training sites for the MOD, pleasant locations for dog walkers and picknickers, and areas where leisure activities can be pursued. Naturally occurring magic mushrooms change the status of fields on a seasonal basis, transforming them into sites of Class-A drug production. In contrast, however, to many other places where Class A drugs are produced, magic mushroom production is seasonal and depends entirely on natural forces such as the time of the year and the weather – there is very little humans can do to actively cultivate mushrooms. Mushroom production is thus part of a natural process instead of an industrialised one. Unlike other forms of illegal drugs production, there is no human influence in the production of magic mushrooms, as there is be with cannabis farms or opium fields, but rather it is a naturally occurring phenomenon.

Furthermore, these sites are not hidden, illicit spaces where covertness is key to successful production. They are out there in the open as they have legitimate purposes, such as sheep herding and crop farming. These 'drug producing' sites are easily accessible for everyone through public bridle paths and lack large man-made obstacles to the field. In fact, the fields are populated with a variety of non-picking (non-drug related) actors, such as farmers, children, dog walkers, landowners, participants in leisure activities and sometimes campers. They are situated off bridle paths or located close to local pubs and churches. They are not owned by organised crime cartels or any sort of illegal actor. Instead the owners are legitimate actors being public institutions or private owners including the Ministry of Defence, farmers and churches.

Overall, these magic mushroom research sites are spaces which have a dual or liminal nature. Despite their varying legitimate purposes throughout the year, these mushroom sites seasonally produce mushrooms and attract deviant actors whose combined presence transforms them into Class-A drug production sites. There is no active encouragement of mushroom production to be observed.   The everyday uses of the research sites, combined with the idea of legitimate ownership, therefore leads me to suggest that these magic mushroom production sites can be thought of as 'reluctant'

Picking a Class A Drug: magic mushroom picking as a rich social experience

Turning to look at the magic mushroom pickers activity, pickers were observed deriving rich social experiences from their picking activities. For example, magic mushroom pickers were observed combining their picking activities with other social pursuits. One magic mushroom picker, encountered informally in the field, was observed foraging a variety of edible mushrooms in addition to the illicit crop. When I asked about them, the picker replied, 'they're for my dinner'. In another site, younger pickers were observed to have set up a campsite and appeared to be there for the evening. Pickers were observed taking frequent breaks, at which time they converge into small groups interacting with one another whilst eating lunch or smoking cannabis. The in-depth interviews revealed that the pleasures of picking proved deeper than simply just finding free drugs. Although, the mushrooms were observed as the overriding reason for being at research sites, other pleasures were derived from the experience such as increased exercise, contact with green spaces or forest bathing *(Shrin Yoku* being the Japanese art of forest bathing*)* (Payne & Delphinus, 2019), but most importantly the activity became a social event.

''like at the start of the season, you don't really know when they (mushrooms) are actually going to be there (fields). There's always a day at the start when you don't really get any. But you're just up in the countryside blazing [smoking weed] and that so it 'aint all bad. I go up there with my mates as well so you're not just lost and empty handed. We have a nice day. Obviously, you'd rather go and get loads of mushies but not knowing if you're going to find them kinda makes it exciting.''
(Gail, interview)

Access to and knowledge of mushroom production sites was also derived from social connections, reported by participants as being passed down through word of mouth between local populations. First picking experiences had generally come in the samples' early teens and these first ventures were always accompanied by an experienced picker. Interestingly, all respondents recounted pleasant first experiences of mushroom production sites. In turn, participants reported also passing down the knowledge they had acquired with all but 2 of the sample saying they had, in turn, taken someone picking for the first time. Therefore, the way pickers described their visits to mushroom production sites had more in common with descriptions of rich social experiences occurring amongst friends instead of a step in a criminal career.

''I went with my mate, whose mate took him, whose brother took him whose mate probably took him. You always need a guide until you become the guide'' *(Terry, informal interview note)*

Responses also indicated that mushroom pickers do not generally come into conflict with one another over territorial issues, but rather opt for a co-operative relationship whilst working in production sites. Interviews revealed that rather than competing, pickers are happy to share production sites with one another as mushrooms are usually abundant and sustainable. Strangers are rarely regarded as rivals whilst competition amongst friends is light-hearted and trivial. However, some of the participants reported that overcrowding in some fields had resulted in poor yields and led them to seek out new production sites, whose locations they guarded with a degree of secrecy.

"you share a spot with a mate, then they share it with someone else. Next thing you know there's bare [lots of] other heads [people] in your field. You can tell when people have been through it before you too. There's paths in the grass and you can just tell they've already been hit up. But like, what you going to do, be like oi mate can you fuck off? It 'aint my field is it at the end of the day? The mushees are fair game" *(Gary, interview note)*

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As a result, the ways in which knowledge of production sites is shared can be selective. Despite this none of the participants reported ever directly conflicting with another picker for invasion of a site, nor were future conflicts thought likely. In fact, none of the participants had witnessed conflicts between pickers or heard of any violent incidences, nor were these types of picker conflicts observed on site. Overall, the presence of other pickers was generally reported as a positive by participants as either reassurance that you were in the right place or the field was at low risk from law enforcement.

''When you see the guy in the distance crouch down, you know he is safe. He's here for the same reason as you'' *(Gail, Informal interview note)*

Although pickers were observed foraging apart from one another, leaving deliberate space between each other's patches, their paths inevitably sometimes crossed. In these cases pickers were observed stopping briefly to talk to one another. Pickers could be seen pointing towards different areas of the field or making gestures at times to other areas of the countryside. These observations of interactions amongst pickers were frequent. It was observed that pickers appear to co-operate with one another sharing knowledge of research sites as well as items such as storage bags, smoking paraphernalia including cannabis. In fact, the leisure site was discovered by my group due to a tip from a cooperative picker they encountered at another site. This demonstrates pickers who are not known to each other do not act as rivals or opponents in the field but rather as allies in what become shared acts of deviance.

Ironically rather than conflict or competition causing difficulties for mushroom pickers, the cooperative nature of picker culture itself contributeing to the decline of mushroom production sites. Some sites visited in 2018, produced little or no mushrooms in later years. We might imagine this as a similar environmental issue to over fishing. Here though, it is the pickers' non-conflicting and cooperating culture which, in part, becomes self-defeating as knowledge of mushroom sites becomes more widely known, picker traffic increases and mushroom yields decrease.

Magic mushroom picking: market behaviours

Stereotypes outlined in the literature review suggest that typical Class-A drug markets are extremely profitable, have high risks and are largely occupied by archetypal, economically driven, rational agents who are prepared to act ruthlessly to ensure their market roles. Mushroom pickers, however, were observed as acting in opposition to these stereotypes, sitting outside of the archetypal hierarchies of

drug supply whilst operating uniquely as producers, suppliers and distributors of their own small scale social street markets. In spite of this market viability, the reality of market scalability was found to reduce pickers to social suppliers at most.

As a first point, magic mushroom picking proved to be hard work! In practice, magic mushroom picking was primarily observed as a foraging activity. Field observations suggested that magic mushroom picking shared many similarities with traditional agricultural work: foraging practices appeared archaic and laborious. Pickers were observed for extended periods painstakingly combing research sites for evidence of mushrooms. To aid their approach they sometimes used simple equipment such as gardening kneel mats and gloves. The only other types of specialised equipment on show were storage containers which ranged from carrier bags to airtight pots. Approaches to mushroom picking varied between pickers, from upright undirected roaming to meticulous ground level searches, similar to a forensic sweep, with those engaged in the latter often standing to stretch out their backs at regular intervals. Whether taking either approach, mushroom pickers are required to frequently stoop down to collect up the mushrooms. These frequent movements towards the floor were a useful means of identifying pickers in research sites and helped distinguish them from other countryside actors. Whilst the majority appeared well dressed for windy fields, donning wellingtons and weatherproof jackets, some over prepared pickers were observed removing layers during sunny intervals, happily leaving their possessions unguarded in a space full of mobile operatives.

Rather than providing a full time income or being prioritised, picking was reported as coming second to any legitimate roles such as work or family responsibilities that pickers had to complete. In fact, of the sample only two participants, Gary and John, had regular contact with alternative drugs markets and none of the sample had been charged for any violent offences. In contrast all participants, bar one, reported employment in at least a part time role, with four holding full time roles. However, participants were found to still regularly engage in picking activities, although the frequency varied. As such, picking was found to be an activity that was fitted into at least semi-legitimate routines. Consequently, in relation to Goffman's work (1959) the magic mushroom picker 'face' was selectively worn as and when required and was easily forced into the back stage by legitimate role commitments. As a result, the seasonal magic mushroom picking was mainly restricted by individual lifestyles and role commitments rather than prohibition by the state. In fact, these lifestyle restrictions on picking were reported as the second biggest restriction bar the seasonal weather. Therefore, reports suggest

that; pickers with the most free time engaged with the fields more regularly, being more of a spontaneous activity than part of a larger criminal career.

Magic mushroom pickers appeared to be most commonly motivated to satisfy their own consumption needs. Both key informants and pickers I encountered in the field were asked about what they planned to do with their hauls. Answers usually related to consuming, either via direct ingestion or by brewing mushroom teas. When probed about excess, common answers included drying and storing for either sale or consumption out of season. In fact, an excess of mushrooms was a rare occurrence. Rather, the length of time spent in the field was often dictated by what quantities were required for the intended purposes. Once these individualised goals had been reached, pickers appeared satisfied enough to leave, even after only a few hours. Equally, the majority of the key informants (6) reported only going picking 2-4 times per season. Of the others, two went more than 5 but fewer then 10 times per season, whilst the final two maximised picking opportunities and went several times each week until the season was over. Interviews suggested that those maximising picking opportunities did so for supply purposes whilst less frequent pickers went as and when was needed for consumption.

Furthermore, unlike other class A drug markets, magic mushroom picking was not especially profitable. The average response for time spent in one session picking was 4-6 hours. Participants estimated that 1000 mushrooms could take anywhere from 3-8 hours depending on the field and skill. Whilst 1000 mushrooms may seem like a lot, at best it has a value of £100 and is therefore not as economically rewarding as other Class-A drug markets. Therefore, magic mushroom foraging is neither economically driven nor motivated in the same ways as are typical of a capitalist enterprise as pickers do not strictly act as rational economic agents, maximising foraging hours, but rather take a leisurely 'as and when' approach to mushroom production.

''I try and get at least 500 every time. Makes it worth the trip. You probably won't do all 500 unless there's a few of you. You're covered for a while. Nothing worse than wandering around for 4, 5 hours and only getting 50. ' (John, Informal Interview note)

In addition, attitudes to processing wet mushrooms which would be required if an excess were picked, were found to be lackadaisical with many unconsumed unprocessed mushroom reported as going to waste. Thus, participants reported that mushrooms are processed as soon as they have been returned from a field, if at all. The most common method of drying mushrooms was revealed to be simply laying

them out onto newspaper. In fact, participants favoured liberty caps as they are processed easily unlike fly agaric mushrooms which require extensive preparation before consumption. That being said, participants still reported issues with drying and storing mushrooms from time to time as seen by the quote below.

''discovering a bag of wet shrooms you forgot about in the boot of your car, maggots rolling around in there, hell.'' (Dan, informal interview note)

Even where the most developed methods of processing were encountered, such as dried mushrooms being ground down into jars of honey, operations resembled that of a farm shop rather than the specially equipped drugs labs usually associated with Class-A drugs. Overall, mushroom pickers' approach to processing foraged mushrooms lacked professionalism and did not appear to be particularly economically driven like typical illicit drugs markets which appear as capitalist enterprises.

Magic mushroom pickers hold a unique position as producers, suppliers and consumers in their own markets. The scale of these handpicked mushroom markets cannot support large commercial markets year round, instead presenting niche opportunities for social supply Interviews revealed that all respondents had supplied mushrooms in some way, usually by providing them to their friends for shared consumption. These exchanges were done for minimal economic capital, swapped for cannabis, or given away for free. The increased status derived from being able to supply mushrooms to friends was more of a motivator then making profit.

'They'd be at work all day, I'd head up there grab what we needed. You want to be the guy bringing the party. Especially when you're younger and haven't got much money. The guy dishing out a bag of free trips is obviously a legend.''   (Ian, Informal interview note)

A majority (7) of participants had supplied mushrooms for others to consume in their absence at some time in the past. In these cases, money was the most likely exchange. Reasons for such exchanges included having too many to consume, having had enough of consumption , and needing the money. However, in most cases these sales were made to people known to the participant and did not amount to commercial sales to strangers.

These types of sales were found to be likely one offs rather than maintained over the season. In such cases, the opportunity for a quick profit was desired over the development of a mushroom market. All respondents confirmed that they would probably supply mushrooms if they had an excess stock,

the gains were worth it and the risk was minimised through a trusted consumer. It should also be noted that some participants reported that they had reluctantly sold mushrooms after being pressured into a sale by a friend. Therefore even in cases where profit is easily attainable, some pickers may still be reluctant to engage with even social markets. Overall, examples of small-scale social supply were found to be common practice amongst pickers for one reason or another despite the irregular nature of demand.

''With any shroom picker, I think they're mostly in it for a free trip I am sure. But I can imagine that they probably sell some of them. But you know, not for very much money, not for like particular like capital gains, just as a little financial booster man. I can't imagine anyone making more than maybe £100 off a hard day's work In the fields. It's not the worst wage I suppose.' (Terry, interview response)

Regular mushroom suppliers estimated picking yield between £100 - £500 per week depending on the intensity of picking and local mushroom demand. However, only 3 respondents confirmed regularly using the mushroom season as a means of making sustained income over the season. Interviews revealed that the price of mushrooms varied depending on their state, with £10 translating to about 100 wet mushrooms or 1g of dried, processed mushrooms, with this price increasing out of season as liberty caps become increasingly rare on local markets towards the summer. Sales of dried mushrooms were preferred whilst sales of wet mushrooms were found to be either picked to order or opportunistic unplanned sales. Some respondents indicated that having stored mushrooms ready for the festival season was preferable, yet only one had managed to hold onto dried mushrooms until the summer season and was reluctant to part with them once they had reached that stage. In fact, the latest sale reported by my participants was estimated around new year's eve.

'After new year's they're all gone. Either someone got the last few or I fancied doing them myself. The dream is always to hold onto them for festival season. I'd probably make way more. But it never happens, I need the money at the time for stuff, so I sell them and just say I'll pick more.' (Keith, informal interview note)

Demand for mushrooms largely came from local users. However, one respondent detailed mushroom supply to friends in the North, facilitated by the postal service. Respondents did not actively promote their mushroom markets, but rather supplied people known to them. Respondents said they were unlikely to sell mushrooms to a stranger but added that a referral from a friend may seal the deal. All respondents denied suppling children with mushrooms or desiring to do so. However, when probed,

some admitted to supplying people of similar ages when under 18. When asked why people bought them instead of going themselves responses included lack of site knowledge, confidence or time.

''yeah the shrooms are free, but 'I've got to get there, find 'em, pick 'em, dry 'em, get all the bits of grass out, weigh them, bag them, drop them off etc. You want paying for all your effort. You hurt after an intense session [picking] and you're proper tired after a full week up there.'' (Ian, Interview response)

None of the participants had ever sold handpicked liberty cap mushrooms via the dark web. Any link between Kent's production fields and cyber space could not be established. Respondents were all aware of the dark web but said they were unlikely to ever supply liberty caps via it. In fact, pickers said they were unlikely to buy mushrooms from the dark web with only one respondent making such a purchase. Finally, respondents were not aware of any local pickers supplying dark web markets with local liberty caps.

Respondents did not make any links between gangs or organised criminal enterprises. None of the respondents reported ever being stopped accessing a site by rival pickers. Nor did observations show criminal enterprises acting as site guards. As a result, links between mushroom production sites and criminal control could not be established as pickers did not report having any issues regularly accessing sites. Therefore, it is unlikely that magic mushroom production sites or mushroom markets have any type of protection and remain accessible to pickers as and when they chose.

'No people don't try and control the fields like territory or turf or anything like that. It's free for all and everyone. You might get a bit of friendly competition between mates up there. Like who picked the most but that's all. But really it's more all for one and one for all.' (Dave, informal interview note)

Overall, magic mushroom picking is hard work for little profit. Most pickers are primarily motivated by their own consumption needs and only sell reluctantly to friends. Their practices and methods are amateurish and lackadaisical. Where supply activity is more actively engaged in, it tends to be relatively low level social supply disconnected from other drug markets and/or criminal organisations. Instead, mushroom pickers appear as seasonal drugs market operatives, unique for the way they fulfil producer, supplier, and consumer roles within their own individualised markets. Consequently, magic mushroom picking and supply appear to be at odds with other forms of Class-A drug production and supply. In short magic mushroom markets are not occupied by archetypal drugs dealers.

Landowners as reluctant drug lords

This section presents findings regarding landowners of magic mushroom production sites. Unlike other Class-A drugs producers, landowners are placed into the category of drug producer unwillingly and through no fault of their own, largely down to chance as the production of mushrooms is natural and actually difficult to intentionally cultivate. The extent to which landowners appeared to actively discourage mushroom pickers from their land and how they interacted with pickers are the central focus of this section. The findings begin within initial observations of landowner -picker interactions before being followed up with observations from revisiting sites in later years to see how relationships had developed.

The penalties for Class-A drug production are amongst the most significant within the UK legal system and, technically, this is the scenario landowners of reluctant mushroom production sites find themselves in. Landowners should, in theory, be concerned by both the production of mushrooms on their land and the illegal picking activity they were technically facilitating. However, in practice, observations demonstrated that this was certainly not always be the case. Rather than presenting as archetypal Class-A drug producers, landowners were unwilling or even unwitting participants in the production of magic mushrooms, being forced into this position as a drugs producer by nature and chance rather than their own actions or intentions. Despite this, the degree of culpability felt by landowners appeared lacking as for the most part landowners did little to actively discourage mushrooming activities, although four respondents raised the idea that landowners sometimes chalked the fields to discourage magic mushroom spores.

Landowners weren't present in all research sites and observations between pickers and landowners were minimal. However, one site (the Pylon Feld) provided good opportunity with the apparent landowner present on two occasions. In these two observations, the landowner did not approach the mushroom pickers in the field but rather went about his own tasks. It is not known if the landowner was aware of the exact nature of the pickers' presence. Direct interactions with the landowner were not taken, minimizing the risk to the pickers and research site. Overall, observations found a near absence of landowners in research sites, highlighting the low risk of detection pickers face whilst engaged at production sites.

Participants generally reported favouring sites depending upon the conditions of the field over the risk of detection. When discovering new sites, reasons for favouring particular sites included short grass, sheep and south facing slopes, whilst distance from housing or main roads and being accessible via public transport were preferable for established mushroom sites. However, of the research sites, the leisure site was favoured as it was rumoured that the landowner did not mind the picker presence during season. While not directly observed, key informants did tell me about the occasional unfriendly landowner.

'got chased out the sheep fields one time. I think he is getting pissed off with all pickers. Mad man built a barricade up here last year. Wired over the fence.' (Gary, Informal interview note)

Overall, however, the responses of participants indicated that invisible landowners were just one of a range of features indicating a favoured mushroom picking site.

For participants who reported coming into contact with landowners, responses to their presence varied. Responses like the one above indicated that landowners can respond negatively towards pickers. Most common negative responses included being asked to leave. Only four respondents had ever been moved along from a research site. Interestingly these incidences were found to have all occurred in the same sites – the sheep fields which are one of my sites, although I never observed the landowner here. In such cases, participants' responses indicated a preference for leaving the site instead of risking further conflict with the farmer. Alternatively, participants stated that they returned at later dates, chancing their luck if the farmer wasn't around.

'I've only ever been asked to leave the field once, So we did. Went up the road and just picked a different patch. I've been back to that spot since anyway the bloke is barely ever in the field.' (Janet, Interview Response)

As research sites also often had legitimate uses, pickers were asked if non-pickers, including landowners, using the site were bothered by their presence. Rather than stop training exercises, farming, or dog walking, legitimate actors were usually described as carrying on with their own tasks rather than engaging pickers, often blissfully unaware. This type of behaviour was frequently observable in the leisure field as mentioned earlier, but was even encountered in the MOD field as recounted by Gary.

'Jumped the fence over to the MOD field, start scouting around at the start of the field, glance up at the top and a bloody army squad pop out the grass. They were training or some shit and weren't sent to scoop us up. Obviously, we went back the way we came though. Don't want to step on GI Joe's toes.' (Gary, Interview response)

As I revisited the sites over the three year ethnography, I was able to observe ongoing relationships with one landowner in particular. Whilst it was observed earlier that landowners may ignore or even allow mushroom pickers, upon returning to the leisure site, which had had an invisible yet present owner the season before who was rumoured to be tolerant to pickers, in the final year the pickers were observed being directly turned away from the site by the same landowner.

Previously disinterested landowner approached the group of pickers and announced that he knew what they were up to and asked them to move along. This request was amicably received by the group who quickly relocated to another site. (Ethnographic fieldnote)

In this leisure site, picker traffic was observed as increasing each year up until the above encounter which resulted in access to the site being formally removed by the landowner. This increased traffic appears to have brought awareness to the landowner of the deviant behaviours of pickers who previously went unnoticed or were of no interest. Increased traffic in the site is likely due to pickers sharing knowledge of the site amongst themselves leading to new pickers entering the scene. In some cases, the cooperative culture of mushroom pickers may therefore contribute to limiting site access as increased picker presence alerts landowners to mushroom production who were otherwise invisible actors.

The encounter with the landlord also resulted in the pickers asking in a number of subtle ways if there was a means by which they could remain picking on the landowner's site. Suggestions of a legitimate camping fee payment in return for future unsupervised access to the site appeared to be well met on both sides. However, when requested to leave mushroom picking ceased at that time, the landowner's word was respected, and no overt conflict occurred. In fact, the landowner provided the party of pickers with a tip about another research site. Unfortunately, this site was already known to the group and had a low yield compared to the field they had been removed from, however one picker at least remained optimistic.

'There's got to be a way back in to the mother field, trust me by this time next year me and him (the landowner) are going to right old pals. I'll get the van up. Do a bit of camping up here in the summer. Then it will be all sweet to come up next season' (Gary, field note)

Overall, the landowners were observed and reported as near invisible actors. Although reports of landowner – picker conflicts were minimal, the risk of such encounters was also minimal. Rather than fear landowners, pickers enrolled in a game of chance, hedging their bets as to whether landowners would be in attendance or respond to their presence. In cases of conflict, the authority of landowners was received well by pickers even when asked to move. However, despite this authority over pickers, landowners showed little desire to enact it, omitting strong responses which in turn, to some extent, facilitate picking. Therefore, despite their position of authority to deter mushroom pickers, owners of reluctant production sites often appear to choose not to intervene. However, it has also been found that increased mushroom picking traffic in certain sites, due to oversharing of site knowledge, may contribute to increased responses from landowners who would otherwise remain unconcerned invisible actors.

Evidence of law enforcement

This final section of the findings presents observations on the lack of law enforcement presence in these rural Class-A drug production sites. Instead of a strong police presence aiming to deter mushroom picking, law enforcement presence in fields is maintained as a bogey man in fairy stories which continuous to provide a type of threat even if only through a process of myth making in picker cultures. Therefore, whilst the perception may be that law enforcement are concerned with all types of Class-A drug production, in reality naturally occurring magic mushroom production, despite offering seemingly easy pickings, appears to be omitted from law enforcement efforts.

In theory, police should be as concerned with the production of magic mushrooms as any other Class-A drug. In practice, the literature already hints at differentiated priorities for law enforcement whose traditional focus remains on other Class-A drugs like heroin and crack (Black, 2020). Therefore, like landowners, the expectation of police strategy and the reality of police practices show that police are clearly not concerned by these Class-A drug production sites. In turn, pickers approach the legal risks of mushrooming with a nonchalant attitude, free to flout their deviancy across Kent's countryside.

''I've never seen a copper up here, ever and I've been coming for over 10 years now, got more chance of seeing a woodland fairy'' (Dave, Informal interview)

Interactions between law enforcement and magic mushroom pickers were not observed at any time. No police presence was observed in or around any of the research sites. In fact, no police presence was observed in the research sites whilst travelling to them via car. It was found then that magic mushroom sites lack any law enforcement presence. Despite sometimes being anticipated and feared by pickers, in reality they did not occur.

'So we were picking up at the leisure field, turn around and there's a fed [police] car pulling up. People are pranging out [becoming anxious] and me and my sister start running out of there. Problem is the car's parked in the car park. I've gone to stash the shrooms. When I come back, she says she lost the key whilst running out of there. Can't even brave it through and leave, we have to wait it out. So, we are there for about an hour, peeking through the trees until the feds had left. We go back through the field and have to find the key. Turns out they were there for a domestic on the campsite and weren't really interested in what we were up to.' (Ian, Interview response)

Reports of law enforcement sightings by respondents at production sights were minimal. Even in cases whereby law enforcement came to the site, mushroom pickers weren't prioritised, as described above. Finally, participants were found to be aware of the risks of arrest but were either not overly concerned by it, proposed some route of escape, or questioned the likelihood a patrol car would be sent to the sites in time to catch them.

''by the time the feds make it over to you, you'd long gone out the other side, I can't see them legging it over the hills after you. (Keith, Informal field note)

Throughout the research, rumours of police sightings have remained common, yet actual encounters with law enforcement either in sites or around the routes to them were not been observed at any time. Interestingly, however, stories about police presence in mushroom sites are recounted by pickers in a style similar to folklore. As a result, the threat of law enforcement plays a role in myth making within picker culture as the perception of the threat of law enforcement becomes , either deliberately or unintentionally, exaggerated by picker folk law tales which exceed the reality. Perhaps law enforcement folklore is exaggerated as a means of keeping of pickers out of fruitful patches.

Perhaps law enforcement folklore amplifies the deviancy of mushroom picking itself. Like other whispers and rumours it is hard to exactly pinpoint cause and effect. Yet what must be said at least is that, despite law enforcement being absent in reality, picker perceptions maintain the threat of law enforcement as 'very real', with the threat of law enforcement being built into picker myth making and folklore as a type of invisible enemy every picker should be aware the risks of.

Respondents generally reported arrests for mushroom offences as rare. None of the participants had been arrested or challenged by law enforcement directly for picking whilst on a research site. However, it was found that two participants had been charged for mushroom offences unconnected with this case study. One of these arrests was for possession of mushrooms on the way back from a mushroom field whilst the other was for intent to supply following a raid at home. Neither suffered a custodial sentence as a result of these charges. It was also found that these two offences took place before the participants were 18, significantly predating the start of this research. Both participants continued to pick mushrooms regularly.

Overall respondents reported reluctant mushroom production sites as easily accessible and free for all would be pickers to use. As a result, magic mushroom production sites were not found to be high conflict zones but rather the opposite with pickers adopting nonchalant attitudes to the risk of law enforcement or landowners. Therefore, whilst it was expected that law enforcement would be highly concerned by these types of Class-A production sites, observations over several years suggested that they are not. The threat of law enforcement is maintained more by picker perceptions, myth making and folklore which reinforces the threat of law enforcement to mushroom pickers as having the potential to be a 'real' threat.

Conclusion: Kent's Magic Mushroom Fields: A Deviant Stroll through Kent's Countryside

This final discussion draws out the three core findings from the 5 themes above. Firstly, magic mushroom production sites can be conceptualised as 'reluctant' and as 'liminal spaces', quite unlike other sites of Class-A drug production. Secondly, the magic mushroom picker will be shown as a type of Class-A drug market actor whose behaviours provide direct challenges to the conception of the archetypal drugs dealer, set out in the literature review, as violent, organised coercive individuals or groups motivated by rational economic theory. Finally, in relation to Goffman's *presentation of self in*

everyday life, the magic mushroom picker is a clear and distinct type of drug market actor face which is adopted and discarded as the season dictates.

Magic Mushroom Production as Reluctant; Magic Mushroom Sites as Liminal

I have described the sites producing naturally occurring magic mushrooms as reluctant. In fact, this term reluctant can be applied to the production of the mushrooms, the landowners and the sites themselves. The term reluctant has been applied as the production of mushrooms in these sites is unintentional. Therefore, the term reluctant also applies to the landowner, who has inherited the status of drugs producer through no fault or intention of their own and may even still try to prevent such reluctant production or be unaware of it all together. The idea of magic mushroom fields as reluctant Class-A drug production sites is not completely unique and may have some similarities with, for example, the practice of cuckooing (Spicer, 2021) whereby the houses of vulnerable people are used for drug supply/consumption purposes, or the practice of situating cannabis farms in rentals belonging to absent and unwitting landlords (Bateman, 2019). However, these modes of reluctant drug production do require some level of purposeful human intervention and are not naturally occurring like magic mushrooms, so may perhaps be considered reluctant at a more abstract social level.

As well as being reluctant, I have found magic mushroom sites to have a dual nature. This duality of purpose means that they have both legal and illegal status, and can thus be conceptualised as liminal spaces. Some of Kent's countryside may be Class A drug production sites, but they are also indistinct from the usual sheep fields and farmland. They represent ambiguous spaces where legitimate uses and legal goals are confounded with a naturally occurring and temporal potential for deviant behaviour during mushroom season. During that time, the space unfolds its deviant potential engaged with at floor level, simply because the Liberty Cap mushroom is small. Picking is, however, nothing more than one of the many behaviours the fields facilitate (alongside sport, country side strolls, dog walking, sheep grazing etc.). This means that the deviant potential of the space is only realised through behaviour -the harvesting of a Class-A drug. That behaviour, however, happens 'in the open', easily observable for all legal countryside actors. Thus only pickers are occupying a drug producing site, while all other country side actors might even be entirely unaware of the fields' deviant status. This is unique and unlike other drugs production spaces which are more obvious. Although, for example, cannabis farms can be well hidden in residential areas and neighbours may be unaware, what sets the

mushroom fields apart is their open nature, not hidden behind walls, yet still completely obscured to many of the more innocent users of the space. All of this means that these fields are spaces in a continuous state of liminality (Turner, in, Mahni et al, 1987). The natural process means that these sites remain betwixt and between legality and illegality, between a drug producing site and farmland.

These reluctant and liminal characteristics combine with a lack of territoriality or violence around mushroom production sites, as well as a general lack of interest or even awareness from landowners and an absence of law enforcement efforts, to present a picture completely at odds with archetypal understandings of Class-A drug markets.

Magic mushroom pickers as a direct challenge to archetypal drug dealer conceptions.

This section of the discussion draws together key findings that the magic mushroom pickers themselves also present a direct challenge to the concept of the archetypal dealer set out in the literature review. Instead, the magic mushroom picker is presented as a unique type of drug market actor who occupies a fluid position as a producer, supplier and customer within their own small scale drug markets. These formations of mushroom markets sit outside of traditional ideas of organised top down hierarchies (Bean, 2008) and perhaps have more similarities with small scale home grow cannabis markets. This discussion will draw on how pickers cooperative approaches to competition, sites and market supply offer a clear and distinct difference from that of the archetypal dealer, who is violent, coercive and driven by rational economics.

Findings indicated that picking magic mushrooms doesn't fit the traditional competitive economic activity associated with a Class A drug market, but rather a rich social experience. Picking was often conducted as part of a group, sometimes alongside other social activities demonstrating picking is largely a shared experience amongst a social collective. In contrast to traditional conceptions of competitors within Class A drug markets (Burrus, Sackley and Sollars, 2007) pickers engage in playful forms of competition and displayed no desire to conflict with other pickers. Observations showed that pickers rather become natural allies in a shared act of deviancy. Overall, magic mushroom pickers' cooperative behaviours and culture towards 'competitors' represents a clear difference from other drug markets which are traditionally conceptualised via rational economic theory (Caulkins and

McCoun, 2003) and where drug market actors are rivals in direct competition with one another, utilising violence and coercion as they seek an advantage.

Magic mushroom picking did not represent a career step for pickers, and picking wasn't viewed as a capitalist enterprise (two characteristics of traditional notions of the Class A drug production sites), but rather as a seasonal opportunity to make some extra money if needed. Participants' descriptions of any mushroom dealing they were involved in, had much in common with 'social supply' (Chatwin and Potter, 2014) with rewards seemingly coming as much from status exchange (Bourdieu and Waquant, 1992) as pure economic profit. The will to engage with commercial markets seems limited. Magic mushroom pickers, encompassing the role of suppliers and distributors of a Class-A drug, thus challenge the prevalent stereotype of the Class-A drug dealer. Or, to put it another way, when discussing common practices of the class-A drug dealer, it should be acknowledged that these social and gentle mushroom pickers are also a part of that category. For example, with an emphasis on social supply and consumption, magic mushroom practices do not fit the drugs-crime or drugs-violence nexus (Goldstein, 1985). From here we must ask whether or not the concept of archetypal drugs dealers rests alone on the class of drug supplied? Whilst the typology of drug may be one characteristic of archetypal drugs dealers, it may not be on its own the defining characteristic.

Magic Mushroom Picker as a Distinct Drug Market 'Face'

Finally, this section will explore my findings drawing on Goffman's *Presentation of the self in everyday life* to present the seasonal magic mushroom picker as a distinct type of 'face' or role, which can by is very definition, only be temporarily worn. If an individual were to play only one part in their lifetime, then it is impossible that this part would be a magic mushroom picker. Instead, it is conceded that the mushroom picker could only be one of many roles played in a lifetime. The mushroom picker then is a strong example of a type of face which may be worn, when the stage permits, and may be discarded with relative ease when out of season. The seasonal nature of the role, brings the notion of adopting a 'face' to the forefront and provides a useful starting point for understanding the relevancy of Goffman's work to exploring the identity of drug dealers.

Rather than being defined by their mushroom picking activity as an archetypal or master identity, the mushroom picker is instead a type of deviant face which becomes adopted and discarded as the

season dictates. As a result, whilst the magic mushroom face is clear and distinct, it may constitute a very small part of an individual's character as the seasonal nature of mushrooms only allows the picker face to be performed on the front stage for one brief period each year (Goffman, 1959). Accepting the idea that a drug dealer identity can be temporary, adopted for a short time and then discarded, allows the abstract nature of drug market fluidity to become clearer. Magic mushroom pickers at least are likely to possess a number of different faces, often combining roles from both legitimate and illicit worlds.

In the case of magic mushroom pickers the first apparent use of stigma management was to occasionally make use of normalised countryside symbols. General walking attire, like boots and big coats made pickers look like any other countryside actors with there true purpose only revealed by infrequent movements to the floor to pick a mushroom. Other symbols pickers made use of to pass as legitimate countryside actors was to occasionally take a dog with them adding another layer to their performance. Picnics were also documented and added to a legitimate day out. These examples taken together show how mushroom pickers could easily deploy symbols to legitimise their presence in the countryside and successful mange external stigmas from strangers.

Mushroom pickers were not always able to avoid conflicting moments when their secrets had been revealed. In the case where by the landowner asked them to move on because he knew what they were up to, the pickers were revealed as social deviants, their aims laid bear with little place to hide. Still little conflict emerged and the pickers were able to cover their stigma by confronting it, engaging with the farmers request and were rewarded with a tip about another field from the landowner that had initially moved them on. Thus mixed contact interactions did not necessarily lead to a fully stigmatised identity as even once revealed the stigma was managed to the point it was facilitated.

Finally, stigma management of magic mushroom picking performance appeared relatively easy as there are large periods of time where mushrooms do not grow and so there is no stigma to manage. The potential for the need to pass or cover in the moment are rare and it proved most likely to come into contact with a member of their own wider group, being other pickers than landowners who could reveal their secret or walkers whom appeared as largely unaware strangers passing by. Perhaps then the biggest aid to stigma management for mushroom pickers is the limited time the picking season

takes place in and the location production sites are actually situated in being vast lowly populated rural areas. Taken together the geographical features of mushroom picking add another layer to stigma management, adding its performance by making mixed social interactions infrequent lowering their visibility.

In conclusion, this first case-study has provided three key pieces of evidence in answering my central research questions. Magic mushrooms are a Class-A drug, subject to the strictest legal penalties and (supposedly) prioritised by law enforcement. As demonstrated in the literature review, class A drug production sites, markets and dealers are characterised as violent, immoral, hierarchical and driven by profit. My three year ethnography of magic mushroom pickers, however, has firstly introduced the concepts of reluctant sites of drug production, reluctant drug producers, and liminal drug spaces that serve dual legal/illegal purposes, in contrast to traditional understandings of Class-A drug production sites and markets. Secondly, it has provided a powerful challenge to the archetypal stereotypes described above, instead depicting a peaceful and cooperative community, unconnected to serious organised crime, and not motivated by financial gain. Finally, it has introduced the application of Goffman's face work, part of his *Presentation of self in everyday* life theory, demonstrating that being a magic mushroom picker does not define an individual's sense of self, but rather amounts to a clear and distinct 'face' type, which may be worn when the season permits. This final point in particular will be built upon in the next chapter which reports on findings from my second case study with 5-9 dealers who are more fully involved in drug markets while at the same time holding significant legitimate roles.

Chapter five: 5-9 dealers: legitimate faces, recognisable faces

The previous chapter demonstrated, via the example of seasonal magic mushroom pickers, that the drug dealer identity can be no more than an occasional face worn temporarily, rather than a master identity. This chapter provides a second case study, this time with drug dealers who engage in drug market activity on a part time basis, demonstrating that, even when more regular, the drug dealer identity can be just one of many parts an individual plays. The evidence presented here demonstrates that 5-9 dealers fit their drug market activity in around participation in legitimate spaces such as employed work, family life and social pursuits. This provides them with recognisable or socially sanctioned face in addition to their drug dealer identity, allowing them to resist a spoiled master identity.

The chapter begins by introducing its participants and thus defining the 5-9 dealer. The legitimate spaces of work, family responsibilities and social life are explored drawing on ethnographic observations, informal field interviews, and formal semi-structured interviews. These sections build to present a picture of 5-9 dealers as people regularly engaged in drug market activity at the fragmented bottom of the market, but in a manner that is clearly supplementary to their legitimate roles. Key findings suggest the needs, goals and desires of '5-9' dealers are more recognisable and relatable than we might expect. It presents evidence that legitimate roles are often prioritised over drug market opportunities and that participants are engaged and accepted members of society, as well as illegal drug dealers. Findings also emphasise the ways in which fluid and fragmented bottom level drug market structures are influenced by everyday life rather than top down hierarchies. A final section draws together the findings and applies Goffman's (1959) '*Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life'* to understand how 5-9 dealers knit together different parts, or draw on different fronts to resituate themselves as integrated members of society.

Introducing the 5-9 dealer

This section will set out a working definition of a 5-9 dealer based on my ethnographic observations. This outline will be further developed throughout the chapter by findings in later sections. The concept of a 5-9 dealer is a play on words of working a 9-5 job. This is because the 5-9 dealers I encountered already have legitimate occupations, viewing drug dealing as a supplementary activity, rather than

their main occupation. Therefore the 5-9 dealer is working in and around the '9-5' legitimate work culture, or more loosely around their everyday occupations, duties and daily responsibilities. Consequently, the key distinguishing feature of 5-9 dealers is that they must hold a legitimate occupational role alongside their drug dealing work, and thus they are actors who occupy part time supply roles. Next, 5-9 dealers are not direct members of organised criminal chains of command, instead holding autonomous roles as operatives within unique solo enterprises. Also 5-9 dealers operate small limited markets as they quite simply do not have the time to achieve a significant reach outside of an extended social supply network. However, this is not to deny they have any profit making expectation. These small markets may range from retail to smaller wholesalers, or even sometimes brokers. Finally, 5-9 dealers are made distinguishable by the sporadic intermittent, and sometimes unpredictable, time periods they operate within drug markets which may only find any rhythm or structure from the outside demands of everyday '9-5' roles. Overall, the idea of this case study is to observe dealers who display a range of faces when moving between legitimate spaces from '9-5' to deviant spaces from '5-9'.

This case study was informed by interviews with 8 participants and an ethnography which consisted of shadowing participants, mainly as they engaged in their legitimate roles, but also as they conducted market behaviours over a period of 3 years. Below, key informants are individually presented in order to build up a rich picture of the 5-9 dealer. In order to protect the identity of participants, pseudonyms have been used as some key details have been changed. All key informants were male and in their late 20s or early 30s, and all, by definition, were engaged in legitimate employment as well as drug dealing activities.

Barry

Barry worked full time in a local business. His working week consisted of four days on and three days off. He worked long ten hour days starting in the morning. In the earlier parts of the field work Barry was finishing reskilling via vocational college before re-entering the business as a skilled worker. He lived with his partner in a shared rented house with two others, one of whom was his friend and the other was rarely present.

Operating at the retail level of the market, Barry predominantly sold cannabis in £10 per gram denominated deals and powdered cocaine in decimal grams (£10 per 0.1 gram) and grams. At times he had other small amounts of psychedelic drugs for sale, including magic mushrooms, Acid, DMT and MDMA. Barry typically held stock to serve his established customer base and picked up 9 ounces of cannabis at a time, and between a half to a full ounce of cocaine from a handful of well known suppliers, sometimes on credit. It took Barry about a week to sell all of the cannabis and maybe the best part of two weeks to sell all the cocaine, extending some of it as credit but only as a favour to close friends.

Barry first started supplying drugs towards the end of his teenage years and had essentially drifted into social supply as a consequence of his own youthful drug use, enjoying the sociable aspect of sorting friends out and taking the opportunity to socialise and use drugs together while they were making their purchases. He still regularly used cannabis and occasionally other drugs. Many of his customers were still from the same friendship group, but over the years, and especially after the introduction of a pet into the house, smoking was banned indoors and only a favoured few were still invited into the house to socialise.

Barry conducted all of his deals from his house, predominantly in the evenings after work or on days off, and did not meet people on the street. Strangers could not knock on the door and Barry would frequently turn down the offer of new customers showing little desire to expand his market. The majority of his customers were people he knew well. Occasionally, he did add new customers, often as a favour to his long-standing friends, for example by selling small amounts of cannabis to their older family members. He also picked up new customers from work including his boss who asked him one day in the supermarket how his 'other' business was going. Because of his own use, as well as his partner's heavier drug use, It was difficult for me to ascertain if he actually much profit from these activities.

Derek

Derek worked 5 days a week, or more if available as overtime, as a skilled labourer. He had worked in various similar roles since he was 18 and had maintained fairly consistent employment, upskilling

along the way. He lived with his long term girlfriend and their dog. His mum and teenage brother were frequent visitors to the house, dropping off food and coming to play video games respectively.

Some of Derek's drug dealing activities were very low level – for example, some friends coming to buy small amounts of cannabis or others that he had chipped in with to buy larger high quality cannabis packages which would be split for consumption. Joints were frequently smoked and passed around in the living room. However, Derek's drug supply behaviours also extended to more commercial cocaine and ketamine supply. Whilst members of his inner social circle had access to these services, they were more commercial and profit driven, and were also sold to acquaintances from an extended social circle. Derek allowed existing trusted customers to refer new customers, and picked up new custom through work, expanding his base over time.

He sold cocaine (£100 per gram) and ketamine (£40 per gram) in gram deals with discounts for bulk purchases, e.g. 3 grams of cocaine for £250, or 3 grams of ketamine for £100, for his repeat customers. He preferred money up front, only reluctantly offering limited and short term credit to his inner most circle of loyal customers. Derek estimated that he made at least £1000 a week from these activities. Most of his business was conducted in a two to three hour period between finishing work and sitting down for his dinner, driving between customers who placed orders earlier in the day. Weekends were typically reserved for his own leisure time, normally with his friends or partner. Even when going to festival or music based events where there would be the opportunity to sell drugs, Derek preferred to enjoy himself consuming rather than supplying, and being careful not to start mixing the two activities.

John

John held many sporadic, short term jobs over the research period, for example a few days gardening or some one off handyman jobs in the building trade. He had attended vocational colleges in the past and had some entry level qualifications but had not pursued it much further instead seeking employment and experience. He lived in a small flat with his partner and their young children.

Earlier in life John had been engaged in the supply of powdered cocaine but had drifted away from class-a markets after the birth of his children and a close shave with the law. During the research, he

used cannabis supply as a way of supplementing the income from his unstable employment. He operated a small closed cannabis market, distributing to adults from his social network. He typically sold retail amounts of cannabis from gram deals up to whole ounces, charging £10 per gram or £25 for 3.5 grams for his closest friends and making less than £500 a week from these activities, sometimes significantly so. He obtained his cannabis from two trusted suppliers he had known since his teenage years and from growing his own product, championing an organic grow approach and producing some high quality cannabis along the way. Most of this crop was kept for himself and his inner circle, although some was processed into oil and sold at very high prices allowing John to use the profits to invest in a van and gain more consistent work. A few close friends and family members were allowed to collect packages from John's flat, but most customers were met in public locations.

Jeremy

Jeremy, now in his late 20s, had worked as a skilled tradesman in a family business since the age of 16, steadily extending his expertise through experience and vocational training. He worked 3 to 6 days a week depending on the job at hand, and had some brief lulls in employment. Over the course of the research he lived with various partners, moving into different rental properties several times. He occasionally used drugs recreationally and enjoyed going out to pubs and fine dining. He regularly lifted weights at the gym and played tennis once a week with a group of friends.

Jeremy had used family contacts to sell cannabis as a young teenager, seeing an opportunity to earn a bit of money by supplying his social circle, which largely consisted of cannabis smokers. As time moved on Jeremy drifted further into drug supply moving from smaller retail cannabis deals to larger ounce and kilo deals. At one point during the research period, for about 3 months, he capitalised on an old contact to become heavily involved in cocaine markets and these activities are explored further in the final case study. Ultimately, he retreated from the increased risk and returned to larger cannabis deals.

Jeremy operated in the hours after work, taking orders in the day time and meeting customers later at his house or an agreed public location, with dinner time signalling the end of this activity. If he had a long day at work it was not uncommon for him to abandon his drug market obligations delaying the meet or sending the customer elsewhere in order to keep them happy. While his drug market began

as a social network, as time went on it became more commercial, resulting in the ability to buy branded clothing and expensive jewellery out of his profits. His inner circle were still able to buy small amounts at near cost price, meaning that he effectively maintained two distinct markets.

Oscar

Oscar had left school at 18 to undertake a skilled apprenticeship and, at the start of the research, was employed 5 days a week and in possession of a strong work ethic, regularly grafting through weekends to get jobs done. Over the course of the research he was able to move from employment into starting his own business and eventually his legitimate work life commitments overtook his earnings from the drug market and became his central focus. He was engaged to a long term partner with whom he lived.   He was quite introverted, spending most of his time with his fiancée and a few close friends who he often entertained with dinner and board games evenings. He didn't use drugs except the occasional spliff and enjoyed attending local Sunday football matches to support friends who were playing.

Oscar had been entrepreneurial since a young age selling first football cards, stickers and other collectables, and then cannabis to his school friends. Over time he moved into wholesale supply, buying cannabis by the kilo and selling it on in smaller amounts, to established customers making substantial amounts of cash, up to £5000 a week.   Utilising a system of credit or 'tick' Oscar had set drop off and pick up days exchanging product for cash with many of his customers. Customers typically paid off the last batch whilst receiving the next. Oscar might only do one or two runs a week and regularly made people wait to reload product if it did not suit his schedule. He operated the same set routine, turning his supply phone on for only two hours a day after work to make arrangements and to fulfil orders which were fulfilled, to reduce risk, by driving from place to place during rush hour when the roads were busiest so as not to look out of place.

Adam

Adam worked in the family business, aspiring to take it over when his dad retired. He had three young children with his partner, who had another child from an earlier relationship. They were a busy family household, just down the road from his partner's mum and receiving regular visits from family. Settled

family life had a significant calming effect on Adam, who had given up selling anything when he met his partner, except small amounts of cannabis (anything from a gram up to an ounce) within a closed social network that he was not looking to expand and earning around £200 per week. Adam featured in observations at the start of the research, but the demands of family life meant he had hardly any spare time and my research visits tailed off.

Ronald

Ronald had a professional job and lived with his partner. I first met him at a local house frequented by drug users known as the 'bando' through one of the magic mushroom pickers from the previous study. He only became known to me towards the end of the research, but provides an interesting example of a professional worker and commercial 5-9 dealer, supplying high quality 'cali pack' cannabis to a wide range of cannabis connoisseurs. His operations were highly organised in the sense that he had set rules for customers to follow – he only operated between 5 and 8 pm, offering a range of high quality cannabis and THC products with prices decreasing the more you bought in what he termed 'combi deals'.

Orders were taken throughout the day and prepared for delivery in pre-arranged locations such as private residences and quiet roads. Each deal was packaged into branded bags and vacuum sealed, reducing the risk of detection. Ronald estimated that he sold over a kilo each week. The minimum order was £50, but most of his customers took at least 14 grams or half an ounce at a time. He served a market of connoisseurs or 'strain hunters' who seek high quality products and are happy to pay a premium on it. He sold 3.5 grams of cannabis from £25 to £70 depending on the strain. Entire ounces ranged from £160 to £340 depending on the quality. Payments could be made in cash or crypto currency and often claimed he made £2000 a week from these activities.

As these brief participant biographies demonstrate, the key feature of a 5-9 dealer is that they are employed in some kind of legitimate work, which their illicit drug dealing fits around. The drug dealing

is supplementary to legitimate employment, and takes place outside of work schedules, usually in the evening. Many of the biographies also demonstrate the importance of other responsibilities in addition to the work sphere, for example those relating to home life, social relationships and parenting. These roles and responsibilities are explored further in the next section.

Working 9-5, what a way to make a living…

It is important to highlight the types of legitimate work space occupations and roles the participants in this case study held, their motivations for working, the added value attached to these roles by them and the expectations of what this added value might bring. 5-9 dealers were not limited to one particular employment category, but were more commonly blue collared workers in both skilled and unskilled roles. Key informants, as well as others introduced to the research via gate keepers held a variety of legitimate roles including; bricklayer, plumber, plasterer, painter, kitchen porter, chef, barman, waiter, delivery driver, apprentice, grounds worker and gardener. One participant, Ronald, had a highly skilled office based job and was perhaps the most professional worker encountered. Some participants had prolonged exposure to one industry gaining further related skills and experience throughout the research. Others like John, moved between jobs and weren't always in regular employment. Whilst these observations are broad and don't really help to narrow down a particularly favourite job of the '5-9' dealer typology, the point is that 5-9 dealers are capable of a multitude of legitimate work roles and are embedded within legitimate economies in a variety of ways. More importantly, these legitimate work roles were described by most participants as their main occupation. Consequently 5-9 suppliers were found to draw most of their identity from their legitimate job. How 5-9 suppliers draw on their legitimate work lives will be explored below as one way 5-9 suppliers neutralise their deviant drug market behaviour.

Routine and structure

It may be odd to think of drug dealers as desiring jobs. Drug dealing is often assumed to be such a lucrative business flush with easy money they would have no need for a legitimate job. After all, any earnings from a job would be relatively low compared to the profits from lucrative drug markets

(UNDCP, 2020). Alternatively, it might be assumed that those involved in drug markets do so because they are outsiders (Becker, 1963), shut out from society because they lack skills or intelligence or enough discipline to maintain a job. In contrast, however my participants desired legitimate work roles and employment for a variety of reasons.

One aspect of legitimate employment favoured by 5-9 dealers was the routine and structure it added to their daily lives. Rather than dominating, drug market behaviour would fit around these mundane routines.

> *'up, work, home , shower, shots [dealing], dinner, bed over and over till the weekend'* (Derek, Interview)

> *'If I don't go to work I just sit here all day and night getting stoned playing computer games, its actually just better for me to go in'* (Barry, informal field interview)

> *'I spend most of my time at work these days mate, it 'aint like before when I was running round all day, wouldn't go back to it either'* (Oscar, Interview)

Whilst long hours and low pay were never popular, occupations which had fixed hours and good stable incomes were particularly valued.

> *'the pay's good, the job is on for a long time, it's going to be regular money in my pocket. How can I turn that down to just lay about the house'* (Jermery, Field note)

> *'if it's worth my time, I'll do it, but I 'aint wiping bums or stacking shelves for fuck all just because you're supposed to have a job, fuck all that'* (John, informal field interview)

> *'I've got to a nice pay-packet at the end of each month, but you've got to apply yourself, keep at it and eventually you'll be able to sit back. I've slogged it consistently for years and its finally starting to all pay off nicely'* (Oscar, interview)

Blue collared work was more common amongst my participants, despite the harder manual labour which came with the physical work.

> *'I like what I do, but it gets so hot in there, there's not the right equipment and it's like working from the gates of hell'* (Barry, fieldnote, after work observation)

> *'you get used to the graft after a while'* (Derek, Interview)

> *'I actually kinda like it, wears me out by the end of the day, I'd only be bouncing off the walls at home'* (Jeremy, Interview)

As 5-9 dealers had matured so had their attitudes towards legitimate work. Whilst Oscar had always been firmly switched on to the benefits of legitimate work space routines, and Jermery and Derek had consistently worked from a young age, others like John had resisted the benefits of work routines earlier and only slowly, over time appreciated the benefits of engaging in consistent routine work.

> *'When you're younger, you're getting it from all angles. Your mates are calling you boring for not going out, getting an early night and going into work. There's others slating you for getting a trade over going to uni. I don't think really any of that matters if you're not consistent with the main goal'* (Oscar, Interview)

> *'eventually you just got to concede that everyone's down on their knees to the taxman and you got to take your place if you ever want to get anywhere'* (Jeremy, informal field interview)

> *'the people I see really smashing it are the ones who got their heads down and levelled up, that's why I'm trying to stick to this grind this time round, go to work every day and do it properly'* (John, informal field interview).

Most important about the routine that legitimate work gave 5-9 suppliers was the way in which it impacted the structure of their drug market roles. As participants were occupied in full time work roles, drug market activities had to be structured around working hours, making drug dealing a secondary supplementary activity to the occupational working day: the amount of time 5-9 suppliers had to engage in drug markets was limited by their everyday work routine. Therefore their supply behaviours were fitted in around the structure of everyday life and were just another part of their everyday reality (South, 2004), often viewing it as a second job they had to go to after their legitimate workday ended. It is this working routine and the inability to be available 24/7 to drug markets which distinguishes 5-9 dealers, demonstrating that the drug dealer identity is not all consuming.

> *'People just have to wait till after work. I might catch one or two people on my lunch break, but I've got to sort him out [pointing to pet] and I want to have a shower because I'm so sweaty after being in that environment from 7am, so it's got to be someone that I really like otherwise it's a no go in the lunch break. Probably about a handful of people I might answer the phone to in that time'* (Barry, interview)

'100% going to work is more important than doing a deal, like I can't ring my real client up and say sorry it won't be getting installed today, I've had to go drop off a bag of gear. I mean like on the odd occasion when it's a big one I might get the guy to meet me at the job. But it only really works for me reloading rather than dropping off. Stream of muckas [customers] coming in and out of a clients house looks dodgy. Unless they're all wearing a high vis. But yeah 9 times out of 10, I'll avoid it' (Jeremy, interview)

'Work finishes at 5pm, I only drop off after. Never in the daytime. Never on the weekends. Between 6 and 8 weekdays.' (Ronald, informal field interview)

Of particular interest is the way in which participants moved from their legitimate 9-5 roles and routines to their illicit 5-9 drug supply roles and the behaviour they displayed during this 'shift change' or 'handover'. Furthermore It was common amongst 5-9 suppliers to only operate in a very short period of time, after work but usually before dinner. During several observations 5-9 suppliers wouldn't even change out of their work clothes but rather would whip round and complete all the deals they had arranged during the day. In some cases, it was actually seen as preferential to go back out still in work clothes and even sometimes the van as 5-9 suppliers looked indistinct from other genuine members of the public trying to get home during rush hour.

'I'm not really into all that after dark meet me in a shady road and we drive off in separate ways. Try explaining that when your pulled over. I think it's less bait to just go still in me work gear and do the rounds when I have to.' (Oscar interview)

'swear down every fed [police] just expects tinted windows or like a slammed car to indicate dealer alert, not pulling my tin can van, if they did I'd say I'm late for a job lads, let it slide' (John, informal field interview)

5-9 suppliers would generally have a cut off point for the evening after which they would not answer the phone or complete any more deals. The reasons for cut off times varied between dealers but generally amounted to a desire for a clear market / life separation. Thus drug dealing activity was limited not only by work, but the desire to be able to unwind after work.

'phone's on between 6 and 8, after that you got no chance' (Ronald fieldnote)

'I have a long day already, I'm not staying up all hours just because someone wants their smokes' (Jeremy Interview)

> *'I do the business straight after work, you've either lined it up with me or you haven't. The moment I get the text that dinner's nearly ready, I'm heading home and the phones off' (Derek interview)*

Some 5-9 suppliers were able to successfully separate and manage the dual roles as workers and suppliers and had well organised structures to switch between. For example Ronald, the premium cannabis supplier, created a heavily structured market replicating his professional job. Orders were placed in the daytime from a menu he had texted out. Ronald then prepared each order in a vacuum packed bag before completing his drop off rounds between 6 and 8pm. There was no room to negotiate as this was the only way he could fit the supply behaviour in around the demands his professional.

Not all shift changes were handled so smoothly, with one participant becoming visibly agitated by the demands of juggling legitimate work and drug market roles.

> *I arrive just after his shift has finished. He's texted me to say he's on his way home and I set off to try and catch the hand over between work and market. The door swings open, Barry is stood there, shirt off, overalls rolled down to his waist. He turns and charges up the stairs and I follow him up. 'good day? I ask. 'mate so fucking hot in there, still don't have the right equipment like a bloody sauna...' he goes off for some time on a rant about the job he's working in between flying up and down the stairs answering both the door and the phone which is inevitably the next person at the door. It is clear I am not the only one who has been waiting for him to finish work and there is a hawkish stream of customers that don't stay for long. After a while, Barry begins to leave them at the bottom of the stairs. At one point, the pet is out and moving up and down the stairs along with Barry, who has continued to sweat heavily from this out. This chaos goes on for 30 to 45 mins, then the rush appears to be over. Barry gets his pet and lets out a large sigh and slumps into his seat, and begins to procrastinate about the shower before the phone rings again. The cycles of phone, door, stairs and scales sets of again and after the dust settles for a second time, I leave him to enjoy a well-deserved shower. (Ethnographic fieldnote)*

In Barry's case, and much in contrast to Ronald's approach, there was some overlap between legitimate work and drug supply, which seemed to commence before he was quite ready to switch roles and begin a new performance.

This overlap eventually resulted in the mask slipping and Barry's boss becoming aware of his drug supply activity.

> *'well I'd started to sort a couple of people out from work, I think someone got clocked and maybe gave me away. But anyway, I'd just finished there as it was a short term role over Christmas. Then I saw the boss in the super market and he asked me how business was and if I was coming back to work for him. I asked him what he meant by 'business' and he said, you know what I mean. Turns out he was just after a bit. But like I was worried, proper worried. Actually took the job back in the end. He buys a fair bit every now and then.'* (Barry interview)

Interestingly, Barry's discovery didn't have any significant repercussions as we might expect to see with the revelations of a secret deviancy and some degree of engaging in supply within the legitimate work environment was not uncommon.

> *'I don't go shouting' would you like some green with that job', but like sometimes you're on site and you can tell'* (John interview)

> *'bag heads sell themselves out with their banter on site, you'd be surprised how many times you hear 'whose got bag' go round site, sometimes I bite'* (Derek, interview note)

However not all 5-9 dealers were prepared to mix the two roles.

> *'No I'm not advertising it from my van'* (Oscar, interview)

> *'nah not at all, the I'd get in my job, possibly the sack if I got grassed up, also rather not have people coming up to me at work trying to talk about weed'* (Ronald, interview).

For 5-9 dealers, legitimate employment provides a recognisable and socially acceptable front which allows them to operate as insiders rather than the assumed forced outsider (Becker, 1963). This is because the performance of a front like employment conforms to social normative values of work ethic and displays a willingness to contribute towards society simply by taking part in socially cohesive activity. By maintaining legitimate employment routine, 5-9 suppliers present themselves in an ideal way, as contributing members of society operating roles out in the open, rather than hiding as evil pushers on the outsides of society. Finally, this front of legitimate employment, being collectively owned and recognisable to audiences and outsiders, provides 5-9 suppliers with a firm base on which to conceptualise an alternative identity to a drug dealer.

It is perhaps cynical to talk in terms of legitimate employment routines being a type of front. The term front itself feels like it implies automatically that something is being faked, which is not the intention here. Goffman (1959) states that the sincerity of the performance is ultimately not important to a successful performance and that performers may believe the sincerity of their own performance. It is not the intention to suggest that 5-9 dealers were *intentionally* taking on legitimate roles to cover up their own tracks, to hide their illegal activity or to neutralise (Matza and Sykes, 1964) their more deviant drug supplying behaviours. Oscar, Jeremy and Derek's work ethic was long-standing. Others like John actively pursued legitimate work opportunities with a passion that went beyond covering up their other behaviour. Furthermore, the evidence presented above attests to the primary status of legitimate roles, with drug supply being fitted around employment routines. Rather then, the legitimate roles sometimes became a front that could be exploited to evade the drug dealer label or to provide an alternate identity.

Up skilling

Another motivation for 5-9 dealers to seek legitimate employment was the ability to upskill. It was found that most of the 5-9 dealers had sought blue collar employment as these jobs provided them with clear paths to skilled trades and therefore better wages. The acquisition of skills was also important because the more extensive experience and expertise became, the more fully fleshed out legitimate identities became for my participants. By accessing skills and maintaining/extending legitimate employment 5-9 suppliers were able to resist deviant drug dealer labels, with increasing success as the amount of time devoted to supply activities decreased in favour of their legitimate role. My participants were consistently clear that it was their legitimate roles that provided their primary identity, while at the same time acknowledging that once their drug supply behaviour was known, that would be the main light in which some others saw them.

> *'when you're out and about you don't just say oh I knock bits of gear out, I say I'm a tradesmen not a dealer' (Jeremy, informal field interview)*

> *'I spend most of my time knocking up walls, why wouldn't I say I'm a bricklayer?' (Derek, informal field interview)*

> *'Mate I've actually been doing this job [legitimate role] for like 10 years. I'm pretty good at it as well. I know my stuff. But add that I'm a drug dealer and all that other stuff wouldn't be important' (Oscar, informal field interview)*

Throughout the research period, in my interactions with them, 5-9 dealers took great pride in their legitimate roles, often peacocking about their achievements in a way I seldom observed in relation to their drug supply activity.

> *Earlier this afternoon I got a call from John asking if he could pop over as he was working round the corner. We put the kettle on and have a general catch up about what he's been doing. Eventually this leads to an invitation to come back with him and see the job he's been working on. It's actually just around the corner he urged me, put your shoes on and come and have a look. We take a short 10-15 minute stroll before he starts to set out what he's been up to and its clear he's proud of what he's achieved and keen to show it off, telling me he's week working 12 hours a day, 6 days a week for a month now. (Ethnographic fieldnote)*

Another memorable demonstration of the friendly competition between 5-9 suppliers and their peers was provided by Jeremy.

> *I meet Jeremy after work, he picks me up still in his work overalls and we go to the pub to meet a group of his friends who have also finished for the day. We order and head out to the garden. Once seated, he whips out his phone and starts to scroll for a video inviting me to check it out as the video demoing his craftsmanship starts to play. It's been rather amateurishly shown off via a shaky camera angle on a mobile phone, but Jeremy's pride is clear as he declares it a 'proper bit of nice', almost as if he had just shown me a bag of weed. As other friends arrive, the 'proper bit of nice' video does the rounds attracting a few heckles and inspiring others to share photos of their own best work. (Ethnographic fieldnote).*

These types of interactions demonstrate the pride taken in legitimate work and, at the same time, provide evidence about the sincerity of their legitimate employment front. As a result, 5-9 dealers could seamlessly integrate into legitimate spaces with non-participating drugs market actors as they had legitimate conversation topics to bring to the table. Consequently, 5-9 suppliers were able to derive a substantial part of their identity from their legitimate work, the skills they gained and their achievements outside of drug markets.

'You're just boring if all you got to talk about is drugs. It's good to have a bit of tradesman talk in your back pocket' (Jeremy laughing to himself - interview)

'It's not like you go round your mum's for Sunday roast and she starts asking how many sales I've made this week. You leave that at the door. It's not like she doesn't know but it's not a conversation starter. How's work's a way better way in' (Oscar - interview)

Furthermore, the skills gained by 5-9 suppliers could be directly transferred to providing useful services to the wider community and their own social groups, sometimes as a favour to close friends in need, extending their usefulness beyond the supply of drugs.

As I was chatting to Oscar he takes a call, anticipating a potential drugs sale. He answers the phone with a friendly 'hello mate' and after a short pause to listen to what's being said on the other end, confirms he'll be straight over. Turning to me he laughs and explains that it's not a customer but a friend with a basic home emergency and he's agreed to go over immediately to help sort it out. (Ethnographic fieldnote).

'I did a job for his Mum the other week, only charged the material costs' (John, field note)

'easiest way to keep your landlord sweet is offer to do the maintenance, they love saving money. Did a good enough job that he offered me work on a few of his other houses.' (Jeremy interview)

Upskilling during the successful performance of a legitimate employment front thus served a clear and distinct purpose for 5-9 dealers and was recognised as the best means of achieving their life goals and aims that seemed to have much in common with those not involved in drug supply. Normalised aspirations such as home ownership can only really be achieved through legitimate employment and were also found by Murphy et al (1990) in their study on cocaine suppliers, contrasting sharply with exaggerated representations of the profit and status to be derived from involvement with drug markets. Rather, for my participants, it was generally accepted that profits from the drugs trade could not easily be used to financial services such as mortgages and if they were to be truly comfortable in life, legitimate roles were necessary

'I mean you can have a shoe box full of crumpled up 20 pound notes but I can't take it to the bank and be like is this enough for a house' (Oscar, interview)

'I want to get my next lot of tickets, then I can take on bigger jobs, get my name out there , start running my own firm' (Derek, field interview)

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>*'I actually just want a good job, I've got kids to support they need stuff, I want to give them more than I had and I can't do that be just selling bags of weed' (John, field interview)*

The more success 5-9 dealers had in legitimate work spaces, the more they drifted away from drug market activities. Firstly simply because work took up more of their time, or they were too tired after work to engage in market behaviours. But more importantly, 5-9 dealers moved away from deviant market spaces and towards legitimate work environments as they matured due to the recognition of the greater opportunities legitimate work could bring. While the wage might not be initially as attractive as drug market earnings, legitimate work was widely viewed amongst my participants as having greater potential to advance future life opportunities.

>*'you can't do this forever, it ends in one of two ways … I want a house and a holiday, I don't want an empire or anything silly like that' (Oscar, interview)*

Finally, one interesting and perhaps counter-intuitive way 5-9 dealers signalled a drift away from drug markets was to reduce the frequency of their activity by moving on to selling larger amounts. Ironically, increasing the quantity being supplied was seen by some as a step towards the exit door rather than an escalation of the drug dealing behaviour. In many ways this was also seen by participants as a way of reducing risk as there was less opportunity to get caught if they were doing fewer deals despite the increase in size. This point will be explored further in the final case study on autonomous brokers.

>*'I've cut down - before I'd do grams, henrys, ounces, anything. Now I barely do anything less than a nine bar' (Oscar interview)*

>*'It's way easier just to meet like 4 guys a week than 40 or 50 people a week. Never, ever, ever going back. I'd probably make more running round, but whatever - got a proper job as well 'aint I' (Jeremy field interview)*

In conclusion, 5-9 suppliers have been found to pursue meaningful upskilling via legitimate employment. In doing so, they are able to maintain the successful performance of the employment front by progressing in their chosen professions. This is because, as time progresses, 5-9 suppliers are able to draw on their achievements outside of drug markets and make their legitimate labour visible (Gofman, 1959) so that they can evidence their claims to a normalised identity as something other than a drug dealer. The ways in which 5-9 suppliers have been found to be motivated by the benefits skills acquisition includes the ability to provide services to their peer groups beyond drug supply.

Finally, the motivation for maintaining and pursuing skilled work was linked to their aspirations to own homes and live comfortably, rather than control territory or seek powerful statuses. Overall then, these findings are similar to Murphy et al (1990) whose sample aspired to normalised middle class values such as home ownership. Many 5-9 participants were found by the end of the research to have reached a point where by the continued participation in drug markets at their past higher frequencies was deemed to be too risky and outweighed the relative benefits the extra cash brought now their wages reached a competitive stage. 5-9 dealers hold legitimate employment in a variety of sectors and organise their drug supply around legitimate work roles. Many find that legitimate employment plays an important part in the development of their identity and provides access to financial services like mortgages and credit scores.

Family responsibility

This section will set out findings in relation to 5-9 dealers and family roles. 5-9 dealers perform a variety of roles within the family and provide care to different members in a number of ways. Whilst some 5-9 dealers observed during fieldwork had very limited family responsibility, having to attend the odd dinner here and there, others were the core support network as either a parent or carer. Additionally, 5-9 dealers were found to be accommodating of customers' family commitments and allowed these responsibilities to the structure and organisation of their own supply behaviours. Therefore this section will set out the ways in which these family roles, responsibilities and duties further contributed to the organisation of drug market involvement.

Overview of family duties and responsibilities

Within my sample of 5-9 dealers, two participants were parents of two or more children. In both these cases the participants were the main bread winners in the house and supplemented their legitimate income with money from drug sales, often with the aim to provide a better life for their children, mirroring Murphey et al's (1990) findings. In John's case legitimate work was intermittent – his lack of recognised skills made regular work harder to come by and so at times he relied on the income from his drug supply more heavily. This motivation of providing for your children is a recognisable social

norm, whether or not the means are legitimate. Increased economic responsibility, in some cases, led to continued / prolonged / increased market participation.

> *'do you know how much a triple pram is?' (Adam, field interview)*

> *'the bills keep coming whether I'm working or not, I've been in arrears before - it's easier to sell a few zeds then face the court hassle' (John, interview)*

Participants without children sometimes had other caring responsibilities. Derek, for example, was responsible for the care of an elderly relative. These duties were so significant it was almost like having a second job. In a quest for flexible hours, Derek often jumped between a series of low skilled, short term, low pay jobs before finally securing more regular arrangements and continuing to pursue his trade. In this case the supplementary income from the small number of deals he was able to complete just about made up for the short fall when between jobs.

Oscar and Adam were making significant contributions to the payment for care needs for relatives, therefore legitimising drug dealing as an activity, citing their dealing as partially motivated by a need to supplement their income in order to support another family member in need. Therefore, my participants were not strictly motivated by self-interested economic gain, but rather depended upon the relief this extra income might bring to the lifestyles of those considered important to them. Rather than drug supply profits being spent on material status symbols, some of my participants were directing funds towards supporting family members and taking care of their needs. Throughout my sample, even where direct caring responsibilities were not in evidence, it was clear that family was important. Participants regularly helped out in the garden, dropped off shopping, provided babysitting services and dropped in on family members regularly.

Impact of family on market engagement

This range of family commitments and responsibilities impacted supply behaviour which was often organised around them as well as being organised around legitimate work roles, suggesting that 5-9 dealers also prioritised family duties over drug market opportunity. Whilst dealers aimed to be flexible, at times this was just not possible. In cases whereby participants had child care commitments it was not possible to maximise all opportunities for trade as the children couldn't be left, they weren't being taken to complete a drug deal, or the customer wasn't welcome in the home space environment. In

some cases drug and home life markets were observed as overlapping. However, in these rare cases whereby clientele came to the home space, it usually turned out to be a family member or close friend.

> *'I don't really like doing bits at home when I'm on watch but it's my dad so it's not just me shotting - grandad's actually paying a visit, it's just convenient that he's getting his smokes at the same time' (John, interview)*

In cases whereby drug market activities seeped into home spaces, 5-9 dealers were found to be quick to negate these practices to me as 'one offs', perhaps fearing being judged and stigmatised (Goffman, 1963). Furthermore, the two key informants with children further negated their market activity by stressing the point that they only sold cannabis and were not involved in what they felt could be considered potentially 'dangerous' drugs like cocaine. In fact, clear red lines had been set by their partners:

> *'There were clear lines drawn in the sand. Had to decide what was more important. Chose the kids over cocaine obviously' (Adam, Interview)*

Consequently, for 5-9 dealers who had parental responsibility, market activities were found to be limited by the values and expectations of their familial relationships which translated into not taking any overt risks within the children's home, which in turn translated into not having quantities of class-A drugs in the house. The risks of violating these boundaries set by spouses and partners were respected by the 5-9 dealers who didn't want to risk breaking up the family home.

> *'I'd rather live in my house than the dog house' (Adam interview)*

For those without children, some came from families within which drug use, and sometimes supply, was normalised, meaning they had not had to hide their supply activity.

> *'Weed's always just been normal in my house growing up, I could understand and support the powder ban but the green was staying, even if I was just smoking it, and then the cost of that makes sense to sell some of it and then you've just got some customers it happen' (John interview)*

> *'all the men in my family sold green, all the men in my family after me will probably sell green, it is the way' (Jeremy, informal field interview)*

Others reported having had to hide their behaviour from some family members, particularly when they were younger.

>'when I was younger, she'd (mum) just call me a waste of space, lazy sod, all that. Now I go to work and that, it's all extra biscuits when I come for tea, claps on the way in and out. I still do what I do, but nothing gets said about that anymore' (Derek, interview)

Interestingly, Derek describes above the change in his mother's attitude towards his drug dealing once he was proving his ability to also fulfil legitimate employment roles. This sentiment is echoed by Oscar.

>'it's quite funny really. I used to get it in the neck every time I'd come in the house: 'what's that smell' being screamed up the stairs. I used to hide my bud in the tarantula tank because I knew she wouldn't dare put her hand in there. Now she is bang on the weed butter haha. She aint trying to get high – it's for her joints and back but she's obviously getting high – it's power butter. I have to come drop it off for her every week or she starts moaning and she never pays me either, being hustled by my own mum who has gone full circle on the weed. 15 year old me would of loved to serve her up the butter' (Oscar, interview)

Finally, ethnographic observations of my participants whose markets were not tightly bound by their own family responsibilities, demonstrated their willingness to structure them around the family responsibilities of their customers. In such cases, 5-9 dealers were frequently observed timing certain deals to be dropped off after bedtime, or when the kids had gone to visit grandparents for the weekend, or to be fitted in around swimming club.

>'I go and see quite a few single mums who just want a bit of smoke – there's clubs, other kids coming round, all sorts, mad house really. I'll run it over when she has a moment rather than making a demand of like meet me here' (Jeremy, interview)

>'there's one or two parents I go see where the moves have got to be done subtly. Can't just slap the gear out on the side, its hidden from the kids. Normally put it in something to hand over. The clock more than you think the kids' (Oscar interview)

>'there's a string of mums who I go see normally every few Fridays for their party package if it's their weekend off and they want to let their hair down. Most of them are my Mrs's friends. All will have dad's pick up times at kind of a similar time and I can go after and drop them off like one after the other' (Derek field interview)

'Sometimes it's better for me the time they want to meet. 6pm post bedtime, it's when I'm home anyway. Other times I get caught out by a mum on my lunch break and can't say no because she can't get out again, I don't drop off and she won't have any smokes and I'll feel bad' (Barry interview)

5-9 dealers therefore appeared to be flexible where possible and sometimes allowed their markets to be structured around the lifestyles of their customers, resulting in drug markets being structured from the bottom up, (ie the customer level, as well as by their own other commitments). Whilst this may at first appear inconvenient to the dealer, because they are occupied during the day with their own 9-5 work role, the request for drop offs during 5-9 hours actually works better for 5-9 dealers as this is when they're largely available.

Finally, customers would sometimes bring children when visiting 5-9 dealers such as Barry, especially when they were close friends. In some cases they were just dropping off money they owed, in other cases they were purchasing or ticking on credit small amounts of cannabis. Before their arrival Barry would make a quick sweep of his room removing all paraphernalia into the spare room and generally making his best attempt to make the room child friendly.

'they always come running up the stairs to see the pet. I have to be on my toes. I don't really like kids coming here but there's a few who I can't avoid. Like my nephew, can't turn my sister away, but he is the most ruthless, knows there's a ton of trading cards under my bed and how to lift the hatch up. That's why everything had to go in the other room, he nearly busted into my stash looking for pokemon. Me and my sister had a laugh about it, she was here for weed and he really don't know what weed is. Chucked him a card or two as he left. Happy chappy' (Barry interview)

Here Barry describes making accommodations for customers who might have perhaps acted against their better judgement in bringing their children along to buy drugs.

In conclusion, this section has set out findings in relation to 5-9 suppliers and the family roles they perform. It has been shown that 5-9 suppliers may perform a number of family roles and take on a variety of responsibilities and at times their involvement in drug supply may contribute to the support of a relative. This is in stark contrast to the motivations of a homogenises group of drug dealers conceptualised as being greedy and profit driven and marks 5-9 suppliers as distinct for some of their

motivations in seeking supplementary income from drug supply. Finally, parental and carer roles have been considered in the context of market structure finding that, like work, family roles organise drug market activity around the demands of the routine front they are performing, in these cases as a care provider, often on top of their legitimate employment and drug market commitments. Consequently, we start to see that 5-9 suppliers are complex characters whom have to juggle a number of roles or fronts at any one time.

Finally a really key finding from this section is around the manner in which the demands of customers' work lives and/or family responsibilities can shape the supply behaviour of my participants. Rather than their supply behaviour being dictated by somebody above them, or even structured entirely to their own convenience, 5-9 suppliers have demonstrated that their markets are in fact frequently prone to influence from the bottom customer base upwards. Thus how a 5-9 supplier structures their drug supply may actually be dependent on a number of factors out of their control. For example, customers themselves have routines and fronts that they must maintain and so, like the 5-9 supplier aren't always available at the same time or place to complete their desired transaction. Fluidity is therefore a key strength for a 5-9 dealer whose customer base are more likely to be recreational users with limited time to make drug deals, than heavy, frequent users who will put their drug use above other responsibilities. For both 5-9 dealers and their customers, transactions must be conveniently subsumed within the mundane routines of everyday life (South, 1999, 2004). And in this way 5-9 dealers structure themselves as sole traders, making not only profits for themselves but decisions on when and who they are able to supply.

Social / leisure spaces

This next section will set out the ways in which 5-9 suppliers make commitments to social and leisure spaces which in turn organise, govern or limit their participation in drug markets. In this section, the ways in which 5-9 dealers prioritise social engagements over economic market opportunities will be set out, drawing on findings from observations. These observations have been selected as they show 5-9 dealers favouring social spaces over drug market opportunities. In the extracts that follow, 5-9 dealers have been found to make time for social occasions and leisure time which reinforce wider shared histories through experience. In doing so, 5-9 dealers have been found to organise their markets around social life and leisure activities acting against rational actor theory which assumes drug market actors seek to maximise profits at all times.

During fieldwork, I often spent time with Oscar during his trips to Sunday league football matches. As with many participants, I tagged along to observe these kind of social environments as part of my ethnographic fieldwork.

> *Oscar picks me up and we begin chatting on route. He tells me his phone's off and he's just interested in watching the lads play football, many of whom he knows. We arrive just before kick-off and get a drink each from the bar before moving pitch side. The side of the pitch is strewn with little groups of supporters, made up of friends and family of the players as well as the local club enthusiasts. We meander along the side of the pitch till we get to our team area where huddles of windswept girlfriends, kids and social sidekicks have gathered and are all cheering them on. Oscar receives a warm welcome from the supporting cast and quickly falls into conversation with members of the group about work responsibilities and family life. The cycles of small talk soon start to get replaced with deep belly laughs from amongst the huddles. It is clear that Oscar more than comfortable within these social circles and appears to be enjoying himself chatting away to various members of the crowd as he networks up and down the side of the pitch. For Oscar, the social interactions with other supporters are clearly of more interest than the match itself. Once the whistle goes, it's all into the pub for a final round of drinks. It's a Sunday, most have work the next day and it's not long before we say our goodbyes. As we leave, a couple of the lads enquire about cannabis drops and disappear with Oscar for a few moments. I raise my eyebrow when he returns, reminding him that his phone was supposed to be off. He looks slightly sheepish and protests that he couldn't say no to these lads or he'd never hear the end of it. (Ethnographic fieldnote)*

Observations at Sunday league football matches continued for several matches, including a cup final and only ended when the team folded. They provided an opportunity to observe Oscar structuring his market around social spaces as he would prioritise the football over meeting most of his customers. The small deals that he did make to the football lads were not at his usual scale and appeared to help reinforce the social bonds between them by providing a deviant favour within the close social network. Any money he might have made from the deals would have been negligible, indicating he was motivated, on this occasion, more by social ties than potential profits.

Jeremy's regular, and John's occasional, membership of a local sports group provided another opportunity for making ethnographic observations of social interactions. Jeremy was frequently observed putting aside market opportunities to engage in this leisure activity with friends. He would turn his phone off before playing and often end up going for something to eat with the other players afterwards, rarely turning the phone back on.

> 'To be honest I just try and say no Thursday meets as I'm needed out there on the team ...I love it really, taking on your mates, it gets serious. A late charge for glory and dominant performance from top shelf throughout, who knows, be there next week to find out' (Jeremy, interview)

This types of activity served to reinforce social bonds rather than drug market relationships and displayed the value 5-9 dealers could place on non-deviant leisure participation. In going to the club each week, Jeremy showed how social capital and participation may be valued over economic gain. His commitment to the team essentially reduced his ability to maximise drug market opportunities, instead prioritising the enjoyment of friendly competition amongst peers.

> 'I probably miss a couple of shots here and there, but to be honest it doesn't take long before most people clock no Thursday rule' (Jeremy, interview)

However, it should be noted that whilst Jeremy did make most sessions, occasionally he didn't make it. When challenged after not appearing for two weeks by one of the boys, the response was that it was too big a shot [deal] to turn down and they had refused to meet him after the game. In this case, whilst Jeremy preferred to play at the club, it was overridden by the the economic gain on offer from that particular large market opportunity. Therefore, whilst social spaces and leisure activities can govern drug markets they appear potentially more susceptible to chance than say work commitments and family responsibilities, to giving way to drug market opportunities. Perhaps because the shared histories amongst friends make forgiveness easier to garner than say from your boss at work when you haven't turned up on a Monday, or your partner when you've not turned up for the kids because you were doing a deal.

> 'I think the worst part of it is that if I don't turn up I get loads of messages in the group chat calling me scared, mocking my game play, trying to say I'm hiding. They know what I'm saying about having to do the shot [deal] and would probably take the money themselves but it don't stop them from fishing' (Jeremy, interview)

Jeremy, Derek and Adam were regular gym goers. Jeremy tried to go everyday whilst Adam and Derek participated less frequently. Going to the gym was cited for its obvious health benefits, a way to shake out the demands of work, and also a means of achieving personal goals. Jeremy in particular might resemble more of a gym bro, often gazing at himself in the mirror as he lifted weights. Both Oscar and John were enthusiastic bike riders and would go out together on either push bikes or motor crosses for long rides. Individual personal activities and hobbies such as these sometimes took precedence over market opportunities and were another factor feeding into market schedules. For example, weekends were often off limits for drug supply as they were reserved for leisure and social pursuits. Therefore, like legitimate work routines, 5-9 dealers schedule time off from drug supply routines in favour of leisure time and social pursuits.

Finally, two 5-9 suppliers, John and Jeremy, were observed during regular boardgame nights. These board game nights were social occasions whereby a group of friends competed in strategy based turn taking games, like risk, over hours of dice rolling. These evenings would involve either collectively cooking dinner or ordering in, and drinks and cannabis smoking till the early hours of the morning. Never able to start early due to work commitments and never prepared to give up a full day for the weekend, games nights were crammed into Friday evenings once everyone had finished work. On one memorable occasion when I joined the games night, John and Jeremy were making jokes about how much money they were missing as their phones rang.

> *As Jeremy's phone rang for about the third time in half an hour he turned to John and commented that was another couple of hundred he'd probably just lost out on. Jeremy was trailing in the game and was losing any hope of winning. Perhaps I should call them back he said out loud but was quickly dissuaded by John who had also ignored several phone calls, passing the dice and telling him it was his turn. (Ethnographic fieldnote).*

This provides another example of 5-9 dealers turning down market opportunities in favour of legitimate leisure activities with friends, valuing social ties over profit. Bonds such as these form the basis of shared history relationships which can only be maintained by continuing to engage in social opportunities when they were presented. The fear of missing out on these opportunities could be as important as the fear of missing out on market opportunities

> *'they started one time without me, because I had to go drop off a thing. I was like 20 minutes late and I weren't having none of it. They'd just set all there little men up and thought they'd excluded me from the land grab. Flipped the board. Redo lads'* (Jeremy, Interview)

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In conclusion it has been shown that 5-9 dealers' drug market activities may be governed in part by their social commitments and leisure time activities as well as work and family responsibilities. Thus 5-9 dealers have been found to value social bonds and shared histories over maximising drug market opportunities, turning down profits for participation in social events such as sports and game nights. From these findings it is clear that 5-9 suppliers have a wider social network that goes beyond just drugs market actors and their friendships and leisure time are not limited to strictly interactions with other dealers. The assumption that all drug dealers are evil pushers proports an idea of somebody you wouldn't want to be friends with, to play sports or a board game with. In contrast, these findings demonstrate that 5-9 suppliers are able to sculpt and maintain meaningful friendships and lasting social histories. Therefore, 5-9 suppliers are able to integrate into non-deviant social spaces and partake in non-deviant social activities.

Resisting stigmatised drug dealer identity

In this chapter so far, 5-9 suppliers have been shown frequently drawing on three additional fronts to their role as a drug dealer: legitimate employee, responsible family member, committed to their social circles and activities.   These fronts are recognisable to audiences and outsiders as socially acceptable or even commendable. The successful performance of these three fronts allows 5-9 suppliers to build identities based on much more than their drug supply. This section explores the ways in which 5-9 suppliers drew on these fronts to reject the spoiled master identity of drug dealer.

Firstly, because 5-9 suppliers didn't spend most of their time supplying drugs they didn't think it was fair to be identified primarily by the drug dealer label. Instead, they pointed out that most of their time was spent outside of drug markets in some other capacity. Therefore drug supply was presented as a supplementary part of their identity, rather than the dominant or master role.

> ' Its only a little bit of who I am really, if I was just doing this [supply] then fair enough call me a drug dealer, but I'm not. I'm up every morning going to work just like the rest of you' (Oscar, Interview)

> ' I actually spend most of my time with the kids if I'm not at work, not hanging out down some alley going excuse me mate want any gear' (John, field interview)

> 'Its not like drug dealers all hang out with each other, we've got other mates and lives and stuff' (Jeremy, field interview)

In this way, 5-9 dealers resisted the negative dealer identity by neutralising their drug supply behaviours (Matza and Sykes, 1964) as something minor in comparison to other roles or fronts which they inhabited more frequently. In this way 5-9 suppliers use their participation in other fields as a '*passing*' technique when the information is not revealed or a '*covering'* technique as something other they can deflect the audiences attention to (Goffman, 1963)

5-9 dealers often portrayed their dealing behaviours in a way that pointed out the differences with drug dealer archetypes, for example emphasising the limited reach of their respective markets, the small quantities they sold, and the fact they predominantly supplied social networks of friends and acquaintances.

> 'I only really still sell a few bits to old mates and a the odd family member who wants some smoke' (John, Interview)

> 'I could sell more if I wanted to really put my name out, but I'm not after any more than I got - less if anything' (Oscar, Interview)

> 'You can't just knock at the door if you don't know me and ask for drugs. I'd just say go away you've got the wrong house and play dumb' (Barry, Interview)

A particularly key neutralising factor for most 5-9 suppliers was that they were able to draw their custom base from work, family and social relations. As a result, their drug dealing activity was embedded within relatively normalised routines and interwoven into the fabric of everyday life (Coomber et al, 2016).

> 'My boss must of sussed it out and now he's a customer, comes round, I don't know, maybe once every week for cocaine. I mean its perhaps not ideal. But it's definitely better then him finding out and then sacking me or something worse' (Barry, interview)

> 'My dad buys weed off me. I used to help chop his plants down. Bit late to say don't sell weed as he's coming to buy it' (John, Interview)

It wasn't hidden from much of their social circle like some kind of 'dark secret' Goffman (1959), but was rather just a minor part in the repertoire of roles they played as employees, fathers, sons, uncles, and trusted friends.

5-9 suppliers also rejected the spoiled drug dealer identity by contrasting their own behaviour with market archetypes. In this sense, participants had an idea of the 'evil drug pusher' and would use that as a start point to neutralise their own supply as something less than or totally different to what they considered to be a real dealer. Common ways in which 5-9 suppliers identified real or proper dealers was; full time, violent, making significant profit, selling drugs like heroin and crack, and/or selling large quantities.

> *'There's guys out there near the top that don't need a job. They're actually making proper money, not chasing pennies like us. I don't even think I move enough for the police to be that interested in me, I'm a little fish, real little fish, in a pond full of anacondas' (Jeremy, field interview)*

> *'The guys I get some of my stuff off, the ones above them are real dealers. You wouldn't fuck with them, but that's why I like using my guy, I don't have to see them, I just buy from him' (Oscar, Interview)*

A variety of audiences were also able to reject this identity and recognise 5-9 suppliers as hard working members of society on their way to and from work, as responsible parents trying their best to provide for their children, or as dedicated reliable and trusty worthy friends. Rather than outsiders operating at the margins, they are well integrated members of society occupying normal, everyday work, family and social roles.

Legitimate spaces and recognisable faces

This case study has presented 5-9 suppliers as a distinct typology of drug dealer who is able to operate within fragmented bottom level markets. 5-9 suppliers have been shown to be small scale autonomous dealers who organise their schedules on their own terms and around their work, home and social commitments. Instead of drug market commitments taking precedent,. 5-9 suppliers self regulate in which opportunities they pursue because they hold legitimate employment, have family

responsibilities and/ or are committed to engaging in social and leisure pursuits. These normalised roles allow 5-9 dealers to appear just like anyone else in society.

5-9 dealers seek the security that comes from fixed income and legitimate work roles, using their drug supply activity as supplementary income. The desire for, and motivation to maintain, legitimate employment stems from normalised social values, such as providing support for families and partners. These findings replicate Murphy's et al (1990) earlier findings that drug suppliers have normalised and recognisable aspirations, including providing for families, owning homes and upskilling at work. Consequently, 5-9 suppliers have been found to have motivations distinct from those often attributed to drug dealers. The reality is that their lives are not glamorous or flush with cash gained from lucrative markets and immoral practices. Rather, 5-9 suppliers live out mundane 9-5 jobs, juggling these with family responsibilities, somewhat ordinary social lives, and a bit of supplementary drug supply. They are employees, tradesmen, parents, football fans, sports players and board game enthusiasts. The reality of their drug supply behaviours does little to inflate the excitement of their everyday lives

5-9 suppliers operate markets which are convenient to both themselves and their customers. In being active in the hours after a traditional 9-5 working day, 5-9 suppliers typically deal with high functioning recreational users with professional working schedules or family commitments of their own. Thus, 5-9 suppliers are able to fill the gaps within markets as their structures are dictated by the demands of everyday life, rather than allowing drug market structure to dominate everyday life. Participation in drug markets is limited by their non-deviant lifestyle commitments and also those of their customers. As a result, 5-9 suppliers have been typically found to supply networks of friends and acquaintances as opposed to large retail markets.

Consequently, 5-9 dealers attempt to preserve their sense of self by performing normalised and socially commendable roles in everyday life. When conceptualising what a drug dealer is, descriptions rarely start with fully employed, skilled, hard working parent, or anything else reflecting societal norms and values. Yet these descriptions fit 5-9 suppliers as much as the drug dealer label and challenge the idea that drug dealing leads to spoiled identities. The sincere pursuit (Goffman) and normalised aspirations and lifestyles of these otherwise mundane drug dealers and the value placed on the experiences of work home and social life perhaps marks 5-9 suppliers out as a distinct typology of dealer, akin to Dorn et al's (1992 sideliners or Murphy et al's (1990) participants described as indistinct

from other normalised citizens. The idea that some drug suppliers lead mundane and normal lives takes up Coomber's (2006) invitation to resituate drug dealers, in this case from the extraordinary to the ordinary.

Presentation of Self in Everyday Life

Applying Goffman's (1959) *presentation of self in everyday life*, 5-9 suppliers can be viewed as multifaced individuals employing work, family and social fronts which are unrelated to drug markets. The variety of recognisable and relatable faces worn by 5-9 suppliers marks them as distinct from the ideal or archetypal dealer identity and are used to manage stigma (Goffman, 1963). Instead, they are complex characters, possessing the ability to move seamlessly between legitimate spaces and deviant markets. Rather than just being drug dealers, 5-9 suppliers have been shown to 'play many parts' with sincere commitment (Goffman, 1959). They have been shown to be hard workers who desire upskilling to fulfil their life goals, motivated parents and loving carers, and dedicated and dependable friends and so can reasonably occupy the normal perspective as well as the deviant (Goffman, 1963).

Viewing the 5-9 dealer through Goffman's (1959) *presentation of self in everyday life* allows us to move beyond proposing another typology of drug dealer, continuously breaking down each category into smaller subsets.   Instead, face work is presented as a solution that allows us to knit together the different fronts making up the identity of the 5-9 supplier. Work, family responsibilities and social life are legitimate fronts, collectively owned and instantly recognisable to a variety of audiences. Therefore when 5-9 suppliers successfully maintain the performance of fronts including employee, parent or reliable friend, they demonstrate to audiences and outsiders that they are normalised, well integrated and indistinct from any other citizen. They are able to '*pass'* (Goffman, 1963, p170) without much need for *'covering'* (Goffman, 1963, p181)

The performance of these legitimate fronts may also act as what Goffman (1959) refers to as '*peace offerings'*: a type of performance which keeps the audience happy. Audiences who can see sincere performances on work, family and social fronts, may be happy to allow the illicit drug supply front to fade into the background. By holding a variety of legally conforming legitimate faces, in addition to drug dealer, 5-9 suppliers are able to resituate themselves as normal members of society through a clear collection of social roles in the continuous biography (Goffman, 1963). As my ethnographic work

demonstrates, they are successfully integrated into society, shaking off the deviant label to be welcomed into non-deviant social spaces, work places and home lives. They are able to move between both normal and deviant perspectives with relative ease and do not appear to struggle much when managing a potentially stigmatising secret in normalised spaces (Goffman, 1963).

A final point of note emerging from this case study, which will be taken up further in the next chapter, relates to the wide range of capital exchanges engaged in by 5-9 drug suppliers, indicating that their drug market activities were not perceived as being able to meet all their needs.   By using Bourdieu's (1986) concept of capital exchanges we can clearly see the types of alternative capital being engendered by 5-9 suppliers'' legitimate performances. 5-9 suppliers displayed a desire for the status of employment and the access to an insider identity it gave. They demonstrated a commitment to upskilling within their chosen career path, showing they also sought educational capital. Finally, work space performances and the employed identity were valued by 5-9 suppliers for the types of access they brought to financial services, like mortgages, which in turn helped them achieve life goals which were not accessible solely from drug market activities. The types of capital gained through legitimate role performances are important for understanding the ways in which 5-9 suppliers build identities but also in explaining why they are motivated to perform them in the first place.

While not so explicitly stated by participants, social capital, through maintaining friendship and family relationships, allowed 5-9 suppliers to build insider status and project relatable faces which were indistinguishable from other members of society. In doing so 5-9 suppliers were able to convince both themselves and their audiences that they were distinct from archetypal drug dealers, rejecting the spoiled master identity. They allowed their market opportunities to be dictated, not by a hierarchy of organised command, but by the everyday work routines and caring responsibilities of themselves and their customers, and by their mundane hobbies and social pursuits. As a result, any challenges to their identity, a revelation around their deviant market behaviours may be controlled and challenged head on with hostile bravado (Goffman, 1963) that they are in fact a hard worker, family man or good friend and not just a drug dealer.

Finally, 5-9 suppliers showed interest in providing services to their peer based customer networks that went beyond drug supply.   They were frequently observed exchanging non-deviant favours, such as

simple DIY tasks or providing babysitting services, that relied on skills from their normalised fronts rather than their drug market capabilities. 5-9 suppliers also received non deviant favours from their peer networks. Within these friends and favours economies, 5-9 drug deals were not always seen by their audiences as entirely criminal, but interpreted as just another favour or capital exchange. As a result, 5-9 suppliers' drug market behaviours were well integrated within private social networks. Overall then the key finding here is that rather than drug supply being seen as criminal or even deviant, 5-9 suppliers drug supply services was often situated within a wider friends and favours economy as just another favour, one of many that could and would be provided by the friend network. Consequently, drug market activity of the 5-9 suppliers did not necessary have to be managed as a stigma in all normalised spheres and was presented at times as an open secret to a wide audience with little consequence to the dealer participation in normal spheres.

This case study has demonstrated that the drug dealer identity can be just one of many varied parts played by an individual in the course of their everyday life. 5-9 dealers engage in part time drug market activity. They combine it with legitimate roles as employees, family members and committed members of social groups effectively managing stigmas by adding recognisable normal roles to their biographies (Goffman, 1963) . 5-9 drug markets are largely supplementary to these legitimate roles, frequently being deprioritised in favour of other responsibilities. Crucially, 5-9 dealers do not expect to attain their life goals through engaging in drug markets, recognising the value of stable wages and shared histories. 5-9 drug dealing activity provides an additional source of income within a normalised environment, and often provides other forms of social capital in a peer based friends and favours economy. The legitimate spaces occupied by a 5-9 dealer, and the recognisable faces they wear, allow them to reject the spoiled master identity of a drug dealer, effectively resisting stigma (Goffman, 1963) , by presenting to a variety of audiences in a respectable and socially sanctioned manner making themselves visible in normal worlds rather than being cast as outsiders. In the next chapter my final case study on autonomous brokers will be presented, turning this time to exploring how higher level drugs dealers are able to switch between different roles and faces within their market maker roles.

Chapter six: Autonomous Brokers. Benevolent faces in Illicit Spaces. Impression Management in the Middle Level of Drug Markets.

The first case study on seasonal magic mushroom pickers demonstrated that a drug dealing role or face can be adopted temporarily. The second on 5-9 drug dealers demonstrated that people can hold both legitimate and illegitimate roles at the same time. Both suggest a high degree of fluidity within drug market structures. This case study reports on the observed behaviours of those dealers who perform what we might traditionally understand as 'middle level' roles within the hierarchy (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001), involving the brokering of large quantities of drugs to those supplying street level markets. Its ultimate aim is to explore whether roles or faces become more fixed at higher levels of the drug market, and whether the market itself remains fluid and dynamic at this level.

In this chapter, my ethnographic observations challenge the criminal justice systems' archetypical conception of organised hierarchical dealing by presenting my participant brokers as autonomous, operating outside of the traditional chains of command which define a hierarchical conceptualisation of the drug market. Despite dealing in larger quantities of illegal drugs and selling mostly to other dealers rather than end users, my participants were agile in their approach to drug supply, taking advantage of opportunities as and when they presented themselves. This freedom enabled them to have agency over their operations, often resulting in a reliance on trust and empathy rather than violence and coercion.

This chapter will begin by providing a summary of the specific methods used in this case study and introducing the reader to the key participants informing this chapter, outlining their involvement as middle level brokers and defining their activities as autonomous. Findings are split into 3 sections. Section one will establish the autonomy displayed by middle level brokers, emphasising the distinction between occupying a position within the supply chain and being a part of an organised chain of command. The autonomy displayed will be presented as helping to explain fluidity within drug markets: the freewill brokers enacted allowed them to exert control over what they saw as their own markets where by they could favourably set the price, procure quality products and restrain from practices like cutting or under weighing clients. Therefore, section one finds that the autonomy of brokers allows them to sculpt an alternative identity to the dominant narrative about large scale drug

dealers, as the everyday reality (South, 2004) of their markets is distinct from associations with violent, organized crime.

Section two explores two distinct roles or faces employed by my participants: the entrepreneurial, commercially driven face and a more benevolent one. It demonstrates the way participants were able to switch between faces when devising pricing strategies and managing credit services for different customers. The final section demonstrates how the existence of autonomous brokers challenges rigid and hierarchical models for understanding drug market structure. It argues that by using Goffman's (date) face work to analyse the behaviour of autonomous brokers, we can learn much about the fluidity and dynamism of drug markets, even at the higher level.

Case study specific methods

Accessing the middle level of the market, participants were harder to come by and shadowing work was more time consuming and the overall sample size is thus smaller, comprising 4 participants. Two emerged from the 5-9 dealers case study as their drug dealing activities escalated over time, one was a previous contact of mine who also featured in the first case study, and one was introduced to me by a gate keeper. This was the latest case study to emerge as I was mid way through the 5-9 dealers' research and as such represents 18 months worth of ethnographic research. As with other case studies, participants were invited for formal interviews at the beginning of fieldwork and again for follow up interviews towards the end. Early interviews focused on existing market relationships and types of opportunity participants sought from drug markets, whilst later interviews focused on how market opportunities and relationships were maintained, how they came to an end and what sort of conflict resolution was enacted. Informal interviews were frequently used during ethnographic observations. These informal field interviews were invaluable for catching participants' reactions in the moment, rather than building long lists of questions to go through in large chunks at a time. Informal interviews also allowed for new market relationships the participants had developed between interview stages to be tracked in real time. This as and when approach suited the fluidity with which brokers moved, which couldn't always be tracked with rigid interview schedules.

Ethnographic observations involved shadowing participants throughout their day at various stages of the fieldwork. Observations were centred around wholesaler retailer interactions. Participants were

shadowed whilst performing drug market roles. This involved riding along with participants as they made various deals during field work. Whilst some periods would involve a high volume of deals in a certain period of time, others would only involve one or maybe two drug market commitments and left time in between for these informal follow up interviews. Typically fieldwork involved meeting a participant, shadowing them during market performances and then asking informal follow up questions about the market performance. Observations were not limited to drug market profits but extended deeper into the relationships between the participating broker and the retailer they had interacted with. Fieldnotes were recorded inconspicuously via notes on a mobile phone. Collecting field notes in this way proved less intrusive than official looking items like note pad and clip board. By collecting fieldnotes inconspicuously, interactions between participants and retailers could be recorded without interfering with the natural order of the event. Instead the researcher was able to fall into the background.

Introducing Participants

In general, participants in this case study were operating small scale broker markets, whereby they facilitated sales to street level dealers or smaller wholesalers after purchasing larger quantities from bigger wholesalers. Therefore, participants are referred to as brokers and perform market maker roles, acting as sorts of middle men. These broker roles were typically observed as being between various sized wholesalers and street level dealers, rather than working with the very top sources of drugs. These observations reinforce Pearson and Hobbs (2001) take that the middle level of markets is the most 'elongated' of the three levels. Consequently the sources (or top end dealers) largely remained elusive actors throughout observations. Some interactions between sources and brokers were observed but these were typically limited to cannabis growing rather than importations. Therefore, observations were typically focused on the brokers towards the retail end of the supply chain rather than the top level of the supply chain.

'there's some real big fish in the pond and really I'm just a newt bruv' (Gary, Interview)

Due to the interchangeable nature of face work some of the participants below will be familiar. These recognisable participants have already featured in previous case studies. At times the 5-9 dealers and brokers showed significant overlap with participants aiming to perform broker roles in 5-9 hours. The key participants for this case study will be presented below.

Gary

Gary, in his late 20s, lived in a shared house with three other tenants who intermittently changed, but all of whom were known to Gary who had a hand in choosing who got to live in the other rooms, essentially subletting them to members of his social circle. The house was known for an underlying culture of heavy drug use. In regular research visits to the house, burnt out visitors were strewn across the living room floor. The kitchen was greasy and unclean with the bin days regularly missed and there was often a mountain of rubbish causing the house to smell. The house was itself a chaotic place and Gary's own drug use was heavy. His supply fuelled the drug use of the other tenants.

Gary first appeared in the pickers chapter but predominantly sold ketamine and cocaine in various sized deals, purchasing up to 5kg of ketamine and 2kg of cocaine at the same time from the same supplier. These purchases were normally made every two weeks, however in the height of summer season when there was more demand, reloads were more frequent. Gary distributed the drugs in three ways. Firstly he sold the majority to other suppliers in multi ounces deals. Secondly he sold single ounces to retail dealers he knew in the local area. Finally, Gary he held onto what he calls the 'profit bag' (the substantial portion of drugs remaining in a bulk purchase once original financial outlay had been covered) which he largely ended up ticking out to the various waifs and strays that come in and out of the house throughout the week.

How much profit Gary made each week exactly was hard to determine as he was prone to consuming a lot of the product himself. However, despite living rather chaotically, he definitely made a decent profit (perhaps between £2000 and £5000 per week) from his endeavours, using the proceeds to fund a rather hedonistic lifestyle in the summer, hopping from one event to another, in search of fun rather than supply opportunities. He was prone to putting his entire supply duty on hold and disappearing for the winter months in search of sun before returning in the run up to summer. Throughout the research period there were many times when his drug use significantly reduced. In these phases, Gary was quite good at utilising connections he'd made for opportunities within legitimate industries, like festival event work, or tapping up someone for their skill set to help on a vehicle restoration. Therefore, whilst at times Gary was a chaotic hedonist fuelled with a seemingly never ending bag of powder, there were more productive periods where by Gary was able to maintain some goals and regular activity outside of drug markets but still outside of regular employment. Essentially, he did what he wanted, when he wanted and had no legitimate forms of employment.

Basil

Basil was a cocaine dealer in his late 20s and was less well known to me as a contact I was introduced to towards the end of my 5-9 dealer case study. Basil lived on his own with a cat. He occasionally took on an odd job, but only really worked if it took his fancy, preferring to enjoy the profit to be made from wholesale cocaine deals. This was partly enabled because he had a very good contact that was able to get him a cheap kilogram when he reloaded. Able to take advantage at advantageous price he could get cocaine at, Basil gradually built up into moving a kilogram in around the best part of a week. He never fully gave up the price he was getting his product at or how much exactly he was making, but it was certainly enough for him to live comfortably. In the summer, he also sold ecstasy in both tablet and crystal form, again drawing on a very good contact to deliver what he needed.

He predominantly dealt in ounce and half ounce deals to a range of retail level dealers known to him or introduced to him be a trusted social contact. These retail level contacts would then go on to break up their purchase into grams and sell them on to recreational users. He aimed to make sure he had stocked up by Friday before the retailers he knew wanted their product for the weekend, typically their busiest period. Despite the fact that he needed increasing amounts of money to fund his lifestyle, he wasn't actively looking to expand his market share. Instead, towards the end of the research period, he was making serious attempts to set up a legitimate business in addition to his drug market activities to give him that bit of extra income. Had the research period continued, it is likely he might have ended up fulfilling the criteria for a 5-9 dealer.

Oscar

Oscar was first introduced in the second case study which set out 5-9 suppliers. Oscar is included in the autonomous broker as he mainly supplies cannabis in large quantities. Oscar started dealing cannabis in larger quantities as an older teenager and gradually progressed from selling grams to ounces to multiple ounces and kilos. By moving to larger quantities of cannabis Oscar was able to reduce the number of deals he was doing each week yet maintain and even increase his profit margins. Oscar also had a full time job and therefore organised his market behaviour around these commitments, see case study two. For Oscar then, the move into larger wholesale cannabis supply was practical and reduced the risk of getting caught as the little time he did have available wouldn't be spent for the most part in drug markets.

Oscar bought between 2 and 10 kilos of cannabis a week and then broke these down into ounces and distributed them over the course of the week to a limited number of customers, typically in multi-ounce deals. He bought his stock mainly from one larger, wholesale distributor, but also occasionally bought from local growers with a crop ready. At one stage of the research, Oscar sold bars of hash which he had acquired from somewhere but these were limited in availability. Typically Oscar aimed to buy ounces around the £100 mark and sold these for between £150 - £200, depending on the customer and the size of the order. Over the course of the research the minimum purchase went up from 2 ounces to 9 ounces, meaning that he often made upwards of £5000 a week.

Oscar preferred cash up front transactions but sometimes utilised a credit system. In most cases of ongoing credit, a fresh batch was dropped off whilst the money for the previous week's order was collected. This suited Oscar as he didn't like holding large amounts of stock for long periods of time, preferring to drop it off sooner rather than later, even if it meant collecting the cash at another date. In this way, Oscar reduced the risk on himself by extending a credit system so he could quickly rid himself of the risk of possessing the drugs. Towards the end of the research period Oscar drifted away from drug supply, becoming increasingly content with the legitimate fronts he sincerely performed. Considerations around completely stepping away from drug markets were more frequently aired then any desire to expand the reaches of his markets.

Jeremy

Jeremy was also first introduced in the 5-9 dealers case study. Like Oscar, over the research period, Jeremy also began to deal in larger quantities of cannabis and most of his sales became multi ounces deals, elevating him to the status of mid-market broker. Jeremy had always had access to ounces of cannabis since his early teenage years through family connections. As he got older he was able to buy larger quantities and settled into consistently moving larger amounts as time progressed. Instead of one or two ounces at a time Jeremy would buy one or two kilos at a time and split those into ounces to be sold to retail level dealers.

Jeremy got his cannabis from a wide variety of distributors, including family connections and people he had met through his own social network. He sourced a lot of his cannabis from local growers and

typically would take any quality of cannabis as long as he could make some money on it. As a result, Jeremy loved to haggle and was quite good at cutting a deal. For lower quality cannabis, normally from a grow gone wrong, Jeremy would pay up to £50 an ounce and still aim to sell these for around £100 - £125. For higher quality cannabis Jeremy aimed to pay £125 - £165 on the ounce and resell these for £175 - £220. There was considerable variation in the prices, usually due to a combination of the quality and success of the haggle with the supplier, meaning that there was also considerable variation in the amounts he made from these activities, which perhaps averaged out at between £1000 and £2000 per week.

Jeremy kept his stash at his house and didn't really seem too fazed by the amount of cannabis he was holding. At any one time there were a great variety of jars with different strains he had acquired from different dealers. If they didn't come with a name Jeremy was prone to making one up as both a marketing tool and means of distinguishing the jars from each other for his own reference. There wasn't much finesse in the way Jeremy sold his deals, taking customer orders before batching each into torn off black sacks and setting off to do his evening rounds. Towards the end of the research period strong high quality cannabis which imitates or at least attempts to replicate the trends from America become pervasive in the local market. Jeremy initially moved towards buying these high quality products but could not find a consistent supplier and so settled on the mid-grade, mainly locally grown products he had been familiar with for most of his life.

As the research period progressed Jeremy drifted into commercial supply more and more. As larger deals were done, the frequency of supply dwindled, and the strength of the referral needed began to shift from known friends, to acquaintances, to acquaintances of acquaintances and very much merged into what Potter (2009) calls the 'grey zone' in distinguishing between such relationships.

Autonomous Brokers - inside supply chains yet outside of chains of command

In this first substantive section of the chapter, I present ethnographic data offering a depiction of the middle level dealers I engaged with that contrasts with traditional notions of a hierarchical, organised market structure as described in the literature review. Rather than occupying a fixed position within an established chain of command, my participants demonstrated a high level of autonomy over product offer, customer base and market share.   While I was not able to observe interactions with

the actors providing wholesale drugs to my participants, it was clear that many sales were based more on retail level demand and opportunity, rather than top level command and governance.

Autonomous supply chains

In contrast to the archetypal hierarchical market structure described in the literature review, my participants displayed a high degree of autonomy. Rather than forming part of a chain of command in a structured top down hierarchy, brokers floated between retail opportunities as and when they appeared within the supply chain. They **did not** take orders from 'top level' dealers and, importantly, they also **did not** give out orders to the retailers they sold to as if they were below them in a strict hierarchy. In fact, it was found that brokers did not operate an employment structure, as the retail dealers they supplied were also fragmented autonomous actors, like for example John or Adam encountered in the 5-9 dealers case study.

'the people I go see all do their own thing, it aint a game of simon says' (Jeremy, Interview)

'fuck working for some guy, I make enough on my own' (Gary, field interview)

Some evidence of structured top down hierarchies were found in the research areas, but only through participant reports as they attempted to distinguish themselves from such rigid employment structures. These rigid employment structures were seen by participants as something negative from which they distanced themselves as a means of neutralising their own supply behaviours because they didn't use other people to sell their drugs.

'I occasionally drop bits to one guy and he actually has a string of runners, he pays 'em like 4 bills (£400) a week and they just answer the phone all day. None of it's actually theirs to keep other than their weekly wage and that's just if they don't fuck it up along the way. I 'aint about that but sometimes a shots a shot' (Jeremy, interview)

'I get it, like some of these lads 'aint got no hope of a better job or wage, no grades at school no skills on site, so they go for it. Can see why they're easy to scoop up with the offer of a few hundred quid a week to knock bits out' (Oscar, interview)

'they just use them really. I know one lad who works for some other lad, been birded [sent to prison] twice now and still works for him. Probably 'working' off his debt till he gets caught again. 'Aint really my business though' (Gary, interview)

In contrast, the brokers participating in this study were found to fill gaps in fragmented supply chains and facilitate market maker roles between larger wholesalers, smaller wholesalers and retail suppliers in a more fluid and dynamic fashion. Therefore chains of command (traditional hierarchies) and supply chains (normal lines of economic based supply) are perceived by my participants as distinct, with chains of command defined as rigid and static, whereas supply chains are fluid and fragmented. Whilst drugs move efficiently along supply chains, hierarchical orders, employment structures and coercion do not necessarily follow. Instead dynamic and reactive brokers fill supply chain gaps as and when opportunities arise rather than relying on rigid modes of organisation.

'I answer the phone when I want. If I want.' (Gary, field interview)

Furthermore, broker roles reported on here were also unconnected to gang involvement, despite the importance of deep seated bonds between actors which went beyond markets and acted as tools for defining market maker behaviours and interactions. Thus, despite overlap between social interactions and deviant market behaviours, brokers were not observed as acting as part of a collective entity. My participants were not organised in a way which made them a dependent part of a collective structure: broker participants were, instead, observed as autonomous actors. Whilst these autonomous brokers were at times observed suppling other rigid market structures, it did not necessarily mean they were part of that operation, floating instead between a number of market types. Even in cases whereby brokers and drug market actors performed repeat business, these relationships still didn't translate into a top down hierarchy of control.

'just because I get bits from them don't mean I work for them, and just because they get bits from me doesn't mean they work for me either, that's not how it goes' (Jeremy, Interview)

In fact, membership of such organisations, or even association with them, was found to be undesirable in the local setting. Therefore, participants used the idea of gangs as a way of distinguishing themselves from what might be imagined as a stereotypically 'evil' dealer. Interestingly, this type of neutralisation (Matza and Sykes, 1964) shows again how embedded conceptualisations of archetypal dealers are as participants themselves draw on them as a way of distinguishing their own behaviour. Consequently, participants used the idea of gangs and the non-participation in an organised structure as a way of displaying both their autonomy and as a way of neutralising their involvement in the supply of larger quantities of drugs.

'there's no local gangs round here, that's a proper London thing, we don't have hand signs to throw haha' (Gary, Field Interview)

'you do get the ones who get carried away after they watched the god father, starts going to their head, but like it's calm round here, nobody's pulling a Scarface, they get kinda laughed at when they go strutting about because they knocked out half a zed - the aspiring roadman' (Oscar, Interview)

'a few lads ended up on the end of the line for some proper horrible cunts in London, some got rescued in time, one lad spent some money that weren't his, come home with a moon scar on his face, fuck getting involved with that' (Jeremy, Interview)

The final observation made of brokers' market structure which challenged the conception of top down hierarchies was the fact that sometimes market maker opportunities were presented from the bottom up rather than the top down. Retail level dealers were thus able to influence the actions of those traditionally seen as above them in hierarchical structures. In such cases smaller wholesalers or would be retailers would instigate contact with a broker because they were looking for a specific substance or amount. Requests from lower down the supply chain would set off a reaction whereby brokers would hunt down the product if they didn't have it in stock. These types of bottom up opportunity may also cause the broker to resupply or provide at least a good opportunity / motivation to re-enter markets.

'Summer time, I get requests for all sorts. Mainly Mandy and pills (MDMA). Everybody loves to love buzz in the summer. Sometimes big amounts of trips but they're kinda as and when you see 'em. But Mandy in the summer, I'll have people asking for zeds all the time, only makes sense I get a lump myself, expand what's on offer' (Basil, interview).

'I only kept buying bigger bits because I had more people asking, I wouldn't keep buying so much if people didn't want it' (Jeremy, Interview)

In these examples of bottom up opportunity, it is actually the bottom level retailers *driving* the drug market by recruiting brokers to fulfil a market opportunity. It is therefore not always the case that larger shipments of drugs drive broker opportunities from the top down. Of course the availability of larger quantities of drugs is necessary for the broker to be able to act. But the point here is that the driver of chains of supply can sometimes come from bottom up requests rather than top down commands.

Participants then acted as autonomous brokers somewhere in the middle level of the supply chain and could be led by opportunities from both above and below them. Instead of being strictly controlled via a chain of command whereby middle level dealers move products between the various links in an organised network at the direction of others, these autonomous brokers do as they please and are not bound by any direction other than their own. They are fluid because they are autonomous and they fragment our understanding of rigid chains of command by occupying a place in a supply chain ,that I suppose are seen as competing entities for market share, because this autonomy gives them free will over the ways in which they run their own markets, which will be explored below.

Autonomy over market share

Being free from hierarchical chains of command, brokers were able to form market sizes of their own choosing, which did not necessarily involve the direct employment of other retail suppliers and were not always particularly large. Instead, autonomous brokers operated on their own and established their own connections often starting with social networks and expanding from there. The importance of free will as a drug supplier was expressed by all participants and stressed as key to their success because autonomous brokers can pick and choose what types of market they want to operate, the size and whether or not to expand or contract business at specific times.

'If I wanted a boss I'd go and get a job' (Gary, Interview)

'I'd chase every shot when I was younger, now I can just say no if I don't feel like going out. The older I get the less I do' (Oscar, Interview)

By having the ability to choose how they operated, autonomous brokers could choose who they would and wouldn't sell to and the size of deals they were comfortable doing. Most important was having the ability to choose who to buy from, and the ability to shop around the market for either the best product or the best price. Finally, any fallout from a deal gone wrong would end with the loss to them - they wouldn't have to go and explain the loss of product or money to someone else higher up the hypothetical chain, and subsequently working as an independent autonomous broker in the middle level reduced the risks involved with organised drug crime as they had nobody to answer to other than themselves if there was any conflict.

'There's certain people I just wouldn't deal with, don't even care if they got all the money, probably stolen from their nans or whatever. Scummy' (Jeremy, field interview)

'I wouldn't buy off some people just because you're on edge the whole time waiting to get robbed of your cash or ripped off with a shit bag of gear and not a lot you can do about it. Some people don't offer the same returns policy I do' (Gary, Interview)

'There's people you just wouldn't buy stuff off, like even if one of them London gangs had real good stuff at a real good price I wouldn't buy it off them, there's no need to take the chance when you could just get it off someone down the road for slightly more but with a cup of tea and a smile' (Oscar, Interview)

'If I work on my own I don't have to run any decisions past anybody, I don't have to get the ok to not meet someone I think is going to set me up or something, even if I decide to go and meet some shady guy in the alley at night it's my own bag I can deal with the loss, I don't have another problem owing the guy I work for' (Basil, interview)

By controlling their own markets autonomous brokers were not stuck in one fixed geographical location but were free to transcend local borders. They were able to shop around between local distributors if they wanted to. More importantly they were free to be approached by people known to them or via a trusted introduction who had an opportunity for them. In this way autonomous brokers acted as free market agents within commodity markets and could use this position to uncover knowledge about better deals elsewhere, or use this knowledge about better deals elsewhere to negotiate themselves a better deal with suppliers.

'there's one guy I know who rings me and says I've got a proper nice bit, I ask him where he's got it from, once he's let me know I ring that guy, buy 10x as much and sell it back to the guy who let me know for slightly less than he was getting it the first time round' (Jeremy, Field interview)

'If I know I can get it cheaper or its better gear and its only down the road, then yeah 100% I'm going to check it out' (Gary, Interview)

However, this is not to say every broker spent their time utilising their position as a free market agent constantly and were not always in the business of hunting down links to buy or sell drugs to. Instead participants showed a degree of loyalty to their main suppliers due to the consistent basis of the business which provided a means of convenience. Finding new suppliers would largely only happen if the oppotunity landed in their laps. Only really in rare occasions when supply became restricted did brokers actively seek out new opportunities to fill the gaps.

'if I ring my guy and for whatever reason the bag 'aint there, maybe his guy got delayed or whatever, then I'll start to pick through the phone book and see which ones ring a bell for take my number mate I've got something you might be interested in' (Gary, Interview note)

'I stick to the same guy not because I have to but because its just easier, same stuff every time, consistent. I could shop about but then it's adjusting to a different system and I'm set in my ways. Maybe when I was younger I'd of gone here there and everywhere chasing strains but I can't be arsed anymore' (Oscar, Interview)

For the majority of my participants, a smaller market reach was actually found to be favoured as a form of risk reducing behaviour and participants were not generally focussed on significant expansion of their market share. Market expansion may have been an earlier goal when they were first setting out in drug markets looking to increase their profit margins but all participants reported being happy with the size of market they had ended up with. Any expansions from here was put down as unintended or accidental resulting in part from an inability to say no sometimes.

'I don't set out to gather more customers, just my stuff is good, word gets out and others start trying to get hold of me for big bits. Or like the guys I drop it off to already sell it out quick because its better than the other shit everybody was getting round here, so their orders go up and my orders go up. The real savvy ones do one big order to me and then dish it out and I prefer that to be honest -don't have as many of them coming through the house.' (Gary, Interview)

Overall, the autonomous nature of brokers, being outside of chains of command, allows them the freedom of choice to turn down market plays which may entail too much risk. Therefore, in contrast to greedy profit driven archetypal dealers, my participants did not pursue every opportunity, instead preferring to selectively engage with markets via risk reward which includes more than just finical gain. As a result, autonomous brokers are able to occupy positions within the drug market supply chain and establish their own markets as free agents in a commodity market independent from organised crime groups who use direct chains of command to link the actors between the levels in their own markets.

Autonomy over product

Similarly, the autonomous nature of their broker roles allowed my participants to be selective over which drugs they would sell and which drugs they would not sell. Unlike rigid top down hierarchies, where street retailers have little say on the product type and quality on offer (May and Bhardwa, 2015), autonomous brokers are more able to set and maintain their own standards of practice within their own markets. Essentially, in the absence of a hierarchical chain of command, participants engaged in self-regulation. In some cases this appeared to be based around a self-imposed moral code. For example, sale of drugs like crack cocaine and heroin, perceived as the most damaging, appeared to be off limits for some participants, partly because they were associated with more archetypal dealing which they clearly perceived themselves as separate from, and partly as a kind of personal risk reduction strategy.

'You're a bad man and a bad guy if you're selling heroin' (Gary, Field Interview)

'you sell that shit you're dealing with nittys [people addicted to drugs] on the daily basis, I 'aint about that' (Basil, Interview)

Whilst there were some substances like heroin and crack cocaine that participants wouldn't sell, there was a greater variety in terms of what they would sell, and some difference between each about what was on offer and what wasn't. Oscar for example only sold cannabis and refrained from any class-a sale.

'I only sell weed mate, none of that other stuff, since I've had a couple of mates die don't even like people doing it round me. As if I'm going to start knocking out the stuff that helped kill him' (Oscar, Field Interview)

In contrast, Gary would sell most things he could get his hands on, especially if he took it himself. Interestingly, for Gary, whilst heroin and crack were off limits, other varieties of opiates and cocaine were deemed as acceptable recreational drugs and therefore ok to sell.

'I don't sell anything I don't do myself. I'll grab a variety of blister packets sometimes to ride the come downs in a heavy sesh period. Some of them are opiate based. So I don't have a problem with guys knocking them out.. Would I sell a few to people in the house asking? Probably. Am I about to buy a shit ton of them and start knocking them out? No, but not because I'm being snooty about it. (Gary, Interview)

Product preference was therefore found to be one type of technique of neutralisation (Matza and Sykes, 1964) which brokers displayed during field work. Participants negated guilt from drug market involvement by distinguishing their recreational markets from more problematic ones centring around drugs like heroin and crack cocaine, instead presenting themselves as facilitators of hedonistic cultures.

'it's just different, I know it's basically the same drug and all that. But powdered cocaine cost £100 a gram crack's like, what £5 or £10 a go, I don't even know. But the clients are different. One's out having a good time, can probably afford it. The other sits in a doorway' (Gary, Interview)

'People are just out there trying to have a good time, I suppose I help keep the party alive' (Jeremy, Interview)

Autonomous brokers were also able to exert some product control over what they released into the market. My participants sometimes rejected suppliers that were suspected to have heavily cut their drugs, or were rumoured in general to have low quality products. In a similar way, cannabis suppliers could be rejected if there were issues with the crop and the way it had been grown.

'Sprayed weed, awful, covered in starch to stop it smelling or just covered in something to make it look like its covered in THC crystal. You either drop a bud on the side and it all falls off or you crack a nug and there's none of the 'crystal' on the inside' (Oscar, Interview)

I used to get bits off one guy, then he sold me a bag cut to pieces and all I got were complaints and had to do the rounds on the refunds' (Gary, Interview)

In a similar fashion, they reported being unlikely to cut the drugs they were supplying, especially if they had a pre-existing bond with the customer. Whilst some participants had experience with batches of cut drugs, this did not necessarily mean it was a technique they had then copied. Instead they resisted tampering with their products to increase profits, and then used this as a further technique to neutralise their own behaviours as something different from an 'evil pusher'.

'I aint putting nothing dodgy in there, no extras. What - to make an extra few quid? There's enough to be made as it is, you're just getting greedy even if you're just reaching for the caffeine mix." (Basil, Interview)

'I spend all my time hunting the good gear, why am I going to water it down?' I can get zeds of pub grub if I wanted and I don't want to.' (Gary, Interview).

Therefore, whilst participants were aware of the practice of cutting drug products in wider markets, in their own markets the deliberate direct practice of cutting drugs was avoided and framed as a negative behaviour.

Ultimately it was found that the autonomy displayed by my participants translated into an ability to exercise choice over how their market would operate and the types of product they would bring to markets. The free will displayed by participants was found to be key to making or breaking deals. Instead of being compelled by a direct order or coerced by a scary dealer further up the chain, it was found that whilst brokers could make deals, they could as easily walk away from a product they weren't happy with. In fact, even after taking the product on a distributors word, if not up to standard the rejection and return could and would still follow.

'I'll take his word for it most of the time, but last time absolute bash, had to send it back, was cutting people's noses. Bit of a grumble but like if he wants me to ever come back he don't want to fob me off with something I don't want' (Gary, Interview)

'if it's shit when I turn up I'll just say why you wasting my time mate and go. He can't force me to take it' (Jeremy, Interview)

The autonomy displayed by dealers in making deals also allowed them to buy as much or as little of the product as they wanted without being coerced into buying larger quantities, although many wholesalers did have a minimum buy threshold.

'If I only want x amount I don't end up coming away with a ton more than that, having it shovelled down my neck and that' (Basil, Interview)

'If I wanted more I could get more, if I wanted less I could buy less, but it would still have to be worth his time' (Gary, Field Interview)

Being able to control how much product they were dealing with in their own markets also allowed participants to operate within a degree of risk they felt comfortable with. By operating outside of an organised chain of command, autonomous brokers never had to deal in quantities they felt carried too much risk. By controlling the amount of product they had to store at any time, participants felt they were able to control the amount of trouble they would get into if they were raided.

holding too much makes me prang [anxious], you're either a picnic for the feds [police] or someone brave enough to grab a free lunch' (Gary, Field Interview)

'if I 'aint got that much on me, if the door does go through I might be able to swing it as percy [personal supply]' (Jeremy, Interview)

Autonomy and the construction of benevolent brokers

In this final part of the section, I draw out the idea that the autonomy observed in my sample allows participants to construct themselves as a kind of 'benevolent broker'. Their freedom from the chains of command enables them to exert a degree of control over product type, quantity and customer base, and provides the opportunity for them to construct their own individualised moral code which governs their interactions and operations. My participants displayed benevolence towards their customers via product and quality controls, but also demonstrated a type of benevolence as a sense of self-care by restricting their market involvement and not entangling themselves within more dangerous markets. In seeking to distinguish themselves from drug market archetypes, participants emphasised that they did not engage in behaviours such as cutting products, reducing quality or supplying underweight deals. In turn, these market behaviours reduced the risk to the participants themselves who were less likely to draw complaints from customers or attention from non-participating audiences as they are not associated with these dangerous practices which could draw attention from the criminal justice system.

Autonomy was also found to be important for the way participants constructed identities as something other than the master spoiled identity of the 'evil pusher' (Coomber, 2006). Because participants could exert control over how their market would operate, the rules they set were found to be types of techniques of neutralisation (Matza and Sykes, 1964), helping them to project a more benevolent face. Therefore, by having rules around product quality or typology on offer, autonomous brokers were able to exert a type of moral code into their own understanding of their operation. By not directly cutting drugs or not selling certain types of drugs, autonomous brokers saw themselves as acting in a more benevolent manner than the drug dealer archetype.

Collectively, the evidence presented in this first section also hints at a more fluid and dynamic middle market than often imagined. Our understanding of drug markets as dynamic and fluid would be

facilitated by interpreting much of the drug market as being made up of autonomous actors who are able to enact freewill in constructing their own markets and, where necessary, change course. It is perhaps a convenient fallacy to assume that all participants in drug markets move under rigid directions from somewhere above them in a chain. Drug markets are a type of commodity market and it appears that autonomous brokers not only build in rules of engagement in an absence of regulation, but like other commodity markets are able to do so as free market agents. Autonomy therefore complicates the simplified top down hierarchy and highlights the ways in which contemporary policing and reporting conveniently misconstrue ideas of supply chains and chains of command as one and the same when talking about drug markets. The evidence presented here makes it clear that chains of command are a feature of some supply chains, but by no means all.

Benevolent and Entrepreneurial Faces in Illicit Spaces.

In this second substantive section of the chapter, I present evidence to suggest that my participants, as autonomous brokers, were able to choose from at least two different role that could be played or faces that could be worn when conducting drug market transactions. The first, a benevolent face as introduced above, appropriate in many scenarios as a way of distinguishing themselves from drug market archetypes and navigating transactions with members of their own social networks. The second, an entrepreneurial face, still distinct from many of the drug market archetypes, for example around violence or greed, but commercial motivated and profit driven. The section is divided into two parts as benevolent and entrepreneurial faces as discussed first in relation to variable product pricing and then in relation to conflict resolution.

Variable product pricing

The markets I observed sometimes acted as friends and favours economies based on shared histories and experiences which originally stem from legitimate everyday environments. They share similarities with the social supply (Potter, 2009) of drugs between friends at a minimally commercialised (Coomber & Moyle, 2014) level. Usually, however, the concept of social supply is applied only to the very bottom level of markets for some drugs, and only to transactions where little or no profit at all is being made. In these middle level markets that I observed, where significant profits are being made, some of the benevolent features of social supply appeared to have extended to my middle level

participants, even though they weren't always selling to friends and were aiming to operate as commercially viable enterprises.

From a rational actor perspective, drugs are seen as valuable commodities where sale involves a degree of risk. Therefore, we should expect dealers to maximise the risk reward return for drugs by selling consistently at optimum prices. Yet my observations demonstrate that the motivation to economically benefit from drug deals is sometimes outweighed by other factors, for example a reinforcement of existing bonds. One area in which this phenomenon is easily observable is the often quite significant price variations my participants employed depending on who they were selling to, with very favourable 'mates rates' being regularly employed throughout their social network despite significantly restricting their own earning potential.

Whilst participants were observed as having a fixed price for run of the mill customers, the price scales varied a lot depending on who the customer might be. Variation between price was noted within all participants' pricing strategies. Below, extracts from conversations with participants about observed price differences will be presented and unpacked in order to summarise the types of relationships which underpin and motivative 'favours' in these types of economies. Fixed retail prices were rarely used by dealers when supplying someone they described as being close to. Whilst deals were sometimes provided, in which dealers made no profit at all from the transaction, more common were a variable scale of discounts employed, dependent on a variety of factors.

The starting point for a discounted purchase was often some form of shared history, encompassing both family members, friends and other long-term relationships.

'I sort a few of my older brother's mates out and they expect some sort of deal' (Oscar, Interview)

'few of the people I sort out are old school, old friends of my dad's. I can't be charging them over the top, they just wouldn't have it' (Jeremy, interview)

In turn, some sort of established pre existing connection to a larger distributor could prove beneficial for participants who might either benefit from a price discount or at least get first refusal over a product.

'I get a ring from the older guys quite a lot offering me to come have a look at their crop' (Jeremy, interview)

The most common type of discount, however, to stem from a shared history was motivated by friendship. The sense of duty to help out your friends was clearly more important than maximising profits. In this way autonomous brokers were found to once again display a benevolent face when larger drug sales and social networks intersected. Typically, the longer a relationship the better the discount on offer.

'I've known him since way back when, used to get up to all sorts when we were younger. He's calmed down but still does a few bits here and there, so I sort him out bits when he needs, just add it to my own order. It's no drama really, would feel bad putting a drink on it for him [making any kind of profit whatsoever, even the price of a drink]' (Oscar, Interview)

'the amount of times they helped me out in the past, making money off them now when they need a favour is just dirty' (Basil, interview).

Shared history and experience that formed the basis of dealer customer relations was not always built on a long foundation but may stem from a particularly good initial one off event.

'Sometimes you just end up on a mad one with a randomer in the field, one thing leads to the next and before you know it you're down on the reg to Brighton dropping off gear to the lad in a camel suit from the field' (Gary, Interview)

Such interactions included festivals and raves but also work spaces. While some events entailed drug taking experiences, such as festivals, it was possible for experiences in non-deviant environments to lead to drug market relationships.

'Bare guys on the [work] site have got their fingers in pies, you've just got to sniff 'em out. Normally it's the bag related banter that gives them away' (Jeremy, Interview)

Finally, participants were able to utilise their access to larger quantities of drugs to provide close friends within their network with smaller quantities of drugs than they would normally bother with, often for less than their street value. By doing so, they essentially made exceptions to their normal minimum quantity rules as a favour to their social network. However, even though it was being sold at below retail value there was still some money to be made on these transactions.

'I'll sort people that come through here bits out the profit bag, normally ket [ketamine]. Most of them want it on tick [credit] which is a pain chasing up after they've got seshed up [high on drugs], but I make a little bit extra doing that part in smaller bits and it keeps the party going I guess' (Gary, Interview)

'There's a few people ill always do an 8th [3.5g] or Q [7g] for, saves them a bit of money in the long run, but it's not a nationwide service' (Oscar, Interview)

In relation to cannabis, it was quite common for participants to supply more than their usual maximum buy to members of their social networks who wanted to keep personal stashes. In a similar fashion, participants were often approached by friends and associates with a group order for substances other than those they usually sold, particularly ahead of a big event. In both cases, supply approaches can be viewed as being led from the bottom up. Therefore, autonomous brokers appeared to be in engaged in the social supply of larger quantities of drugs, despite social supply usually being associated with smaller retail transactions (Potter, 2009).

'A lot of my mates are stoners, always sold them bits. Started with little bits as kids, now they just take a whole zed at a time to blaze so I don't mind doing it' (Jeremy, Interview)

Thus, these brokers are economically benevolent in the sense that pre-existing social bonds and established normative values amongst peers influence drug market maker behaviours and codes of conduct. As a result, drug deals become packaged within wider processes of capital exchanges and are not excluded due to their deviant / illegal nature. Instead shared deviancy between actors becomes normalised and becomes a type of bond reinforcer in the spirt of a favour. In these cases, access to larger quantities of drugs at lower prices becomes seen as a skill by drug using members of the social network which may be extended as a favour in times of need.

It is important to note that this benevolent face was not the only one which could be worn by my participants. At the end of the day, participants did look to make profits from their drug dealing behaviours and could not maintain their market position if the benevolent face was the only one they wore. An entrepreneurial or commercially motivated face was also frequently adopted, usually reserved for those outside the immediate social network. At times this entrepreneurial face might appear benevolent, but in these cases motivations were not based on shared history, trust and loyalty, but were more about maximising profits. For example, participants also used price variation strategies as a type of market tool, whereby they could drop prices to maintain a good repeat customer.

Entrepreneurial discounts were observed as being used to give a competitive advantage to regular and reliable customers, which could have important consequences in maximising overall market share / profit.

'it's a market at the end of the day, I can't move it if I'm the most expensive and my guys won't keep coming back' (Gary, Interview)

'This lad takes a 9 bar every week without fail, I want him to keep coming back. If I have to knock a little bit off the price so he don't look elsewhere I will; he's my golden goose' (Jeremy, Interview)

The reference to particularly good repeat customers, who always paid upfront, were punctual to drops and who didn't repeatedly ask for credit services, as a '*golden goose'* was symbolic of the entrepreneurial face. The desire to keep good relationships with these customers led to favourable price variations to stop them from looking elsewhere. Rather than coerce potential clients, participants were thus observed enacting policies of favourable indirect persuasion by offering what may be perceived by the client as a 'good deal'.

Sometimes participants were approached by customers themselves in search of a better deal, especially if they had become established as regular purchasers of significant amounts.

'He was brave enough to ask, so I thought fair enough, knocked a little bit off. He was pleased, I'll be seeing him again next week' (Oscar, Field Interview).

In contrast to dealings with members of their social networks, however, participants were not always willing to bend to these demands.

'He said he could get it cheaper somewhere else. I said you won't be needing me and hung up, rung me back maybe within the hour, cheeky prick just trying his luck' (Gary, Field Interview).

Thus, while the entrepreneurial face could sometimes appear benevolent, it was clearly distinct from the benevolent face displayed to customers drawn from existing social networks.

Observations also provided evidence of transactions where discounts were not applied and instead sales were offered at the fixed retail price or even, in some cases, at an inflated price, demonstrating that although their markets largely consisted of non-strangers and acquaintances, autonomous brokers still had well developed commercial faces motivated by profit.

During an afternoon spent with Gary, he receives a phone call from a regular customer who appears to have been trying to negotiate a better price for himself. The call starts with some general chit chat in an amicable tone. The original price is repeated a couple of times before Gary's tune changes. Verging on shouting down the phone and appearing to have lost his patience he begins to draw a line under the incident making it clear that he isn't a charity before eventually hanging up. (Ethnographic Observation)

In other scenarios, some customers were even charged a premium price above the standard rate.

'depending on who it is, I might even put a drink on it and say it's for the petrol money' (Jeremy, field interview)

This price inflation strategy was also described by participants as being used to ward off unwanted customers.

'How he keeps getting my number I don't know, even charge him more than normal and they still come back, maybe he fancies me or something haha but like nah he probably don't have any other links' (Gary, Interview)

Finally, premium prices could be used as a type of punishment by participants for breaking the terms of a previous arrangement. In this way, threats of denial of access to price discounts or the prospect of future access to discounted prices was used as an indirect means of harbouring good market practice. Those who always turned up on time in the right place and settled payments in the agreed periods were motivated to do so as they felt like they may get rewarded.

'there's a couple of lads that I dangle a carrot in front of, like keep this up lads and I might be able to knock a bit off the price' (Basil, Interview)

Equally, however, those who failed to adhere to the autonomous broker's market rules may find their prices increased or deals declined. Unfavourable price variation may thus be used to maximises profits, distinguish between friends and associates, ward off unwanted clients and also act as a type of market punishment or tax for an earlier break down in the relationship. Therefore whilst autonomous brokers have the ability to act in benevolent market maker roles towards friends and trusted customers, they are also free to adopt an entrepreneurial or commercially driven face when dealing with undesirable customers or run of the mill clients.

Any 'tick' available?: dealing with the extension of credit and conflict resolution

This second part of the section will explore findings on the provision of credit that middle level brokers were sometimes observed providing to bottom level actors and how conflicts resulting from the provision of credit were resolved. As with the previous section, it draws on Goffman's (1959) work to suggest that my participants adopted at least two different faces (benevolent and entrepreneurial) in executing these services. The extension of credit services is often descried as supplying drugs 'on tick' and refers to the practice of providing the product up front without taking payment, instead allowing the customer to pay back the money at a later date when they have it, or, if they are themselves a dealer, to pay back the money only once they have sold the drugs themselves (Salinas, 2018). Within a hierarchical model of understanding drug markets, credit markets such as tick services are often presented as a type of coercion, where higher up drug dealers use drug debt to control the dealers below them, frequently providing a source of conflict and violence (Connolly,2017), when debts are not paid off promptly. In this research, credit markets were encountered as either a practical and convenient business tool (entrepreneurial) or as suitable for participants engaged within a friends and favours economy (benevolent).

As seen earlier in this chapter with pricing strategies, the motivations for tick services amongst my participants went beyond the economic with evidence suggesting that trust is built outside of drug markets, through shared histories and experiences, and imported into drug markets in the form of deviant favours. Close friends frequently made requests for tick to my participants reinforcing the idea that drug market relationships can be bottom up and are not always examples of hierarchical control, hinting at more fluid and nuanced negotiation / mediation. Some participants were reluctant to offer friends and favour tick services, but all reported that it was something they engaged in relatively frequently.

'I don't really like to tick to be honest but sometimes you feel like you have to. Someone you know comes in with a bit of a sob story you feel like you have to help out when they ask. So you know you say yes' (Jeremy field interview)

'It's just easier to say yes innit. Don't get that 'but why can't you help me out' question. It gets awkward sometimes when you have to keep saying it. Not that I don't say no when I have to. But you get what I'm saying' (Gary, interview)

But participants also acknowledged the status that came with being able to help someone out and the potential use as a bartering tool for a future return favour.

'You never know what you might need one day, you never know who you might need to ask, best to keep as many options open as possible' (Gary, field interview)

In such cases the drug brokerage may not be the main action, but rather the precursor to some other event later down the line.

The most common request for credit to my participants by bottom level dealers was for the pursuit of a one off opportunity that had arisen which could be facilitated by the broker and paid back in the coming days. Participants were relatively happy to enable the pursuit of such an opportunity for those they had a developed shared history with. In fact, both Gary and Jeremy reported going out of their way to fulfil a request they didn't usually stock.

'you get them calls when one of your mates are going to some event and they all want bag but he wants to make a little piece on the side or save his mates some money. Either way it helps them out so why not' (Gary, interview)

'I've just had odd calls in the past off people I've known for a while completely out the blue asking for random stuff. And to be honest it 'aint that hard to track down sometimes if it 'aint at hand so you do the search for them. Sometimes there's a quick flip involved, sometimes it's just because you haven't seen them in ages' (Jeremy, interview)

These types of responses were typical and showed that many mid-level broker were willing to provide what may be considered as deviant favours to members of their inner circle and social networks. In these examples of sporadic supply to bottom level opportunists, the tick service provided has more overlap with social than commercial, organised supply.

Some of the autonomous broker participants would also enable tick services as a way of bottom level actors paying off other debts. In a sense, this may be understood in similar terms as taking out a loan at one dealer's bank to pay off debts at another dealer's bank in order to avoid any consequences. Below some of the reported requests from bottom level actors to brokers are presented which best expose their motivation as depending on relationship rather than economic gain.

'Most of the time it's because they dipped into their own bag and then haven't got the cash for the guy they owe, so tick one off you so they can cover their backs. (Basil, Interview)

'Calls normally start with mate I fucked up (starts laughing)' (Jeremy field interview)

'I don't even know why some people do it to themselves - they mess up so often it's like just stop mate you already owe me enough. Then they pay off a bit then - bam - reckon I could tick a bit more? Gets a bit annoying after a while' (Gary, Interview)

Sometimes, in my observations, the need for someone to consolidate their debt is pressing as the other dealer they owe money to is part of an organised network or is adopting a more punitive face.

'I had one mate - substance issues. tons of debt with a bunch of horrible blokes. Right state really. Kept asking for tick to help him out and it's like, if I don't sort him out he's just going to go elsewhere and get himself into worse trouble than he ever could with me. Eventually the penny drops - you're never seeing that money again - but you let it go on for longer than it probably should. It's hard to cut someone off when you've known them for so long and they're basically begging.' (Oscar, Interview)

These examples clearly demonstrate that, even at these higher market levels, a tick service can be provided out of concern for a friend in trouble, even sometimes where it involves acting against their own economic interests for a prolonged period whilst continuing to extend a debt. The manipulation of a shared history by bottom level actors makes these types of bottom up drug market requests possible. More importantly, particularly in the final example, Oscar displayed a strong sense of empathy and adopted a benevolent face type. Whether enabling / prolonging what in hindsight turns out to be destructive behaviour, Oscar still acted against his own economic interest in what could be construed as an attempt at harm reduction. This final example also highlights that eventually a time comes when tick services can no longer be extended to customers, despite any shared history.

It is undeniable that economic profits motivate individuals to participate in drug markets. After all, drug dealing is an action largely dictated by one's appetite for risk exposure. In return for risk taking, the most obvious reward associated with and assumed of drug markets is economic profit as drugs are valuable commodities whose sales can drive large revenue streams (Reuter and Kleiman, 1986). This kind of economic motivation was also observed amongst my participants. Whilst tick has been used as a general term, how exactly credit markets were organised and the nature of each agreement varied between participants and was also variable depending on which bottom level dealer they were engaging with. However, there were some general patterns to the models of tick service provided as a entrepreneurial tool rather than a benevolent deviant favour, varying from regular and organised to sporadic and one off events.

It is early evening on a Monday and I'm a passenger in Gary's car. The radio is on in the background and we begin chatting about one of his regular customers who buys in ounces indicating mid-level supply and who often avails himself of tick services. Gary explains that it's a good money maker as it's a regular, high end customer who he met through a friend. I probe a little more about the motivations for providing drugs on credit and Gary admits it is a little risky, but reflects that there are also advantages for him. Previously he was meeting the customer much more frequently and this method allowed larger quantities to be exchanged at one time and, as a result, fewer meetings were required of Gary. It worked, but only because a relationship of trust had been built up between them. The relationship continued in this way for several months before the customer moved away from the area at which point Gary felt the extra distance was too far to travel, the relationship dissolved and Gary and the customer lost touch. (Ethnographic Observation)

This longitudinal ethnographic note demonstrates how participants could adopt a benevolent seeming entrepreneurial face to the provision of credit services which is driven by economic profits, risk/reward calculations and convenience, rather than shared social history. Similar arrangements were reported by other participants who had at some stage had a tick service which brought profit and was based around trust of repayment and convenience. For Basil, credit services were a deliberate part of his core market model, both reducing the risk from multiple sales and allowing him to dispense with a large amount of product more quickly

'If I get it, split it between 4 or 5 people on tick, then they're all getting rid of it at the same time. It goes quicker. I'm having to do less and they just keep coming back for more'. (Basil, Interview)

Equally, being perceived as somebody who had become problematic in their use of drugs and therefore unreliable was good grounds to deny tick services.

'they won't pay you back; they will just do all the stuff' (Jeremy, interview)

These commercially driven behaviours have more in common, perhaps, with hierarchical, organised and commercial understandings of mid level dealing as motivated by rational economic theory. As we move into looking at occasions when credit services are denied or conflict arises, however, the differences become more apparent.

Whilst entrepreneurial tick services help mid-level brokers maintain drug markets, they can also be a source of conflict requiring resolution. Overall, within my sample, it was found that whilst economic loss was an inconvenience, unpaid debts were not usually responded to with acts of overt violence or coercive control as might be expected from drug market archetypes. Instead, more peaceful means were used in order to resolve market conflicts arising from the provision of tick services. However, this is not to say that market conflicts were found to be easily resolvable. By providing credit services the broker has to take on an extra risk and defer profits from someone else buying the drugs for cash in the near future. It was also found in more than one case that the middle level broker also opportunistically had his supply on tick /credit.

'made the mistake early on of ticking my stuff from one guy then ticking it out and chasing the debts. Teething problems the business doesn't work like that anymore. Learnt my lesson. Nobody sticks to their word in the long run' (Oscar, Interview)

Not paying back an existing tick debt was most commonly addressed by simply saying no to another request.

'one chance and then that's that, it's not a repeat offender three strikes deal here' (Gary, field interview).

'Honestly I can't believe the cheek of some people when they ask you for another debt after you chased them the last time for like 50 quid' (Jeremy, field interview)

Participants here reported that it wasn't even so much the finical inconvenience, which was often small, but rather the fact the person hadn't stuck to their word. This break of trust was sometimes felt more significantly then the failure to make a repayment.

'I hate chasing people. I shouldn't have to, yet you sort someone out and they just eventually take the piss, it's why I'm more likely to just say no. I'm doing everyone a favour in the long run' (Gary, field interview)

They drag their feet I hate that - if you're going to be two weeks just say that, don't say one then take two, it's just rude.' (Oscar, interview)

Even delayed payment was found at times to be enough of a hindrance to ward off the broker from allowing a repeat business. This is because if it was a large enough amount from say a commercial customer it may inhibit the autonomous broker's ability to restock or even repay their own tick.

'If they don't pay me then I can't reload or pay my guy who I sometimes tick even bigger bits off of. It's a bit of a chain sometimes, not that I work for him or anything like that or they work for me, but like you have to start making excuses. Puts me on the spot and I have to start making excuses to someone who did me a favour for someone I did a favour for' (Gary, interview)

This final example hints at the links and relationships brokers maintain between the different levels of drug markets, which may be finely balanced at times. Brokers who lease too much product via credit leave themselves exposed to cash problems and are unable to restock. This in turn may lead to problems further up the supply chain.

During the course of my research I did not come across cases of unpaid tick being responded to with violence, although of course this may have happened behind the scenes (this point is explored further in a later section on 'hidden faces'). In final interviews, I asked my participants about why they didn't use violence to resolve conflicts such as those arising from unpaid tick. In part, this was due to concern about drawing unwanted attention from law enforcement or other parties.

'heard about some lad got nicked after smashing some other lad's car up over some drug drama. Probably money related. Don't hold me to it. Anyway neighbours or someone rings the feds, they turn up nicked, yard raided, stash found ,not looking good really. Drawing attention to yourself over small dumb shit is how you get caught out here.' (Oscar, interview)

Participants were also worried about the reaction of their own social networks if they were to respond violently to unpaid debts.

'if I go and smash someone up for not paying me some money I'll probably look like a right twat. There's guys out there like that but I 'aint one of them. End up in more trouble than its worth' (Jeremy, field interview)

Participants did not generally seem unduly concerned about failure to repay drug related debts, resolving to change their own practices rather than resort to violent means.

'What you going to do about it at the end of the day, ring the old bill and say I've been ripped off, kinda my own fault for letting them have it in the first place' (Oscar interview)

'like don't get me wrong I'm pissed off about it but what can I do? Hire the heavies to go round and raid? That's only going to cost me even more money he probably doesn't have waiting for me even if I do put the door through' (Gary, Interview).

Finally, it was also acknowledged by participants that non payment could sometimes occur for legitimate reasons not easily apparent at the time.

'didn't hear from one lad for ages, weren't loads of money but enough to want it back, turns out his mum had died, complete state, forgot he owed me the cash, had it all sat there. Felt awful for asking, didn't even go and get it till well after the funeral' (Oscar, interview)

'was proper fuming: I hadn't heard from them, been two weeks past due. Tried ringing but his phone was dead or constantly off. Thinking this guy's dusted off into the sunset with my cash. Anyway, I'd been getting a call on a number for a couple of days, didn't recognise it, kept rejecting, eventually answered and snapped ' who is this'. Turns out it was the guy who owed me the money, lost his phone and my number out on a mad one and there's me about to launch a hunting party' (Gary, Interview)

Hidden faces

This case study has focused on two faces, benevolent and entrepreneurial, both of which I had plenty of opportunity to observe, it is important to acknowledge that participants likely also sometimes wore a more archetypal face which they kept hidden from me, perhaps in an attempt to avoid face loss (Goffman, 1959), stigma and a soiled identity (Goffman, 1963). At the end of the research period, however, I did catch a glimpse of this face, revealed to me by my gatekeepers who could be construed as team members or audiences (Goffman, 1959). In these very rare cases, unsolicited information was leaked which made it evident that the participant had aimed to hide, or at the very least not reveal directly, some aspects of their behaviour from me.

The first significant example involves Gary. Towards the end of the observation period at Gary's home address a relationship with one house mate had soured significantly. On the earliest trips to the house, this house mate had been referred to by Gary as having had a bit of a problem with ketamine, but now getting the help he needed to cut down. At the time I noted that living with a ketamine dealer (Gary) was perhaps not the best place to recover from a ketamine problem, but I never heard much again from Gary on this topic, other than to eventually say that his housemate had left because he had not been able to keep up with the rent. After the research had ended, however, I heard a story

from my gate keeper that I had been entirely unaware of, but which is perhaps unsurprising. The house mate had ended up owing Gary a considerable amount of money, not for rent, but for ketamine ticked out to him over time in small amounts. Gary had got into an argument with him, further fuelled by rumours that Garry had been seeing his ex behind his back, and barged into his room, elbowing him in the face, seizing his laptop and snapping it in half, before kicking him out for good.

In another similar incident, also involving Gary, on one of my final visits I noticed that the front door was damaged and was wide open.

Arrived at Gary's house to find the handle dangling, asked what had happened and Gary proceeds to ramble off some story about a lad's angry girlfriend turning up kicking off on the hunt for her partner. Feeling frustrated when she didn't find him there she kicked the door in apparently. I went in and proceeded to have an informal check in over breakfast. (Ethnographic field note)

I never gave this story a second thought, but on a later purely social visit, I found the door (still unfixed) to be open and let myself in shouting up the stairs to say hello. Gary wasn't at home, but two of his housemates were and one was half asleep on the floor and shivering. We joked about the door never getting fixed and one of the housemates recounted an entirely different story involving some shady guy who turned up when they were out and robbed part of Gary's stash

In these cases, gate keepers and audience members let slip a hidden face that usually resides in the back space not worn by the participant in my presence and met with, by my gatekeeper with at least, some disapproval. These brief slips are important for the accidental visibility they bring to the participant and they failure to always be able to control stigmatising information (Goffman, 1963). This is important to note as it shows that despite my positionality, I was never completely an insider, and it is likely that all participants had faces they hid from me. Despite the unsolicited nature of the countering information I received, their intervention does demonstrate how team members or audiences can become vital informants, enriching the overall data. Such moments can only really be captured through immersive techniques like ethnography and reinforce the value in using such methods in these investigations. The capture of the loss of face through information leaks and the likely existence of hidden faces is also important to acknowledge as a potential limitation of my research, reminding me that I did not have access to all facets of participants' behaviour and leading me to conclude that, alongside benevolent and entrepreneurial faces, there perhaps existed an archetypal face.

These revelations about Gary coming quite late in the research processes caused me to reflect and reanalyse some of my earlier data. For example, when observing Jeremy for my 5-9 dealers case study I had noted some unexplained interactions during my observations of him in social spaces. Several times when playing sports with his friends, I had noticed him becoming slightly aggressive in response to what I considered light teasing about his poor performance. He had snapped, and directed some sharp comments to one associate in particular, who I also knew to be one of his customers. After hearing the revelations about Gary, I reflected that perhaps these observations of Jeremy were another indication of a hidden face, or at least market dynamics that I was entirely unaware of. Thus immersive methods allow observations to be triangulated, reflected upon, and sometimes reinterpreted. It is particularly important to note that just because I did not directly observe negative drug-dealing related behaviours, does not mean they did not exist. Ultimately, however, this does not detract from my overall argument that autonomous brokers were able to choose to wear different faces as the situation demanded.

In conclusion this section has presented findings surrounding credit services, or tick, and variable pricing strategies that reveal two distinct faces worn by autonomous brokers in the management of their own markets: benevolent and entrepreneurial. Both are distinct from archetypal understandings of drug market behaviour, particularly at the middle level. Furthermore, they hint at a fluidity within drug market structure not currently well captured in existing literature. These ideas will both be explored further in the final section of this chapter.

Autonomous Brokers and fluidity within drug market structure

This final section of the chapter presents the overarching conclusions which can be drawn from this mid-level 'autonomous brokers' case study. Drawing on the material presented above it firstly argues that not only are autonomous broker participants distinct from drug dealer archetypes, the markets they operate within are also distinct from the rigid hierarchical structures described in the literature review. Secondly, it applies Goffman's dramaturgical framework to explore my sample of mid-level dealers as multifaced actors able to dynamically react to opportunities arising within markets, and adopting different roles in different situations. Ultimately it argues that this autonomous broker case

study suggests a level of dynamism not yet captured within existing models of drug market structure, even when increasingly nuanced by providing more detailed categorisations and typologies.

My work situates autonomous brokers as an alternative type of drug dealer operating within the middle level of drug markets. These brokers were made distinct by their ability to establish viable positions within supply chains independent of the traditional chains of command associated with organised crime. Findings indicated that brokers encountered in this study were largely autonomous actors with agency over market share, customer base, product control, pricing strategy and credit services. They thus presented as masters of their own distinct markets. While some evidence was found of more organised local drug market employment structures, my participants were keen to distinguish themselves from those involved in rigid chains of command and this was often achieved by presenting a more benevolent face.

Key here, however, is the idea that not only did the participants themselves present as distinct from drug dealer archetypes; the markets they created also presented as distinct from those most frequently described in the literature as hierarchical and subject to top down control (Bean, 2008; Black, 2020). The traditional drug market hierarchy is broken down into top, middle and bottom levels, mainly distinguished by the quantity of drugs being dealt. Market structure is portrayed as having a top down, organised, chain of command preserved through violence, coercion and most recently county lines (Spicer, 2021), (Densely, et al 2020). Overall, these conceptions of traditional drug market hierarchies feed into the archetypal drug dealer concept: involved in larger quantities of drugs, has a position within an organised chain of command, exerts control over others and may resort to violence in order to maintain that control. Consequently, autonomous brokers attempt to use their own implementation of moral codes into markets as symbols of their difference within the category of drug dealer as a means of stigma management (Goffman, 1963). Yet they have little value in understanding the autonomous middle level dealers encountered during my research, indicating that the middle level drug market may be more fragmented than previously supposed.

Simply put, traditional top down hierarchies fail to explain the complex and nuanced relationships between bottom and middle level dealers because they fail to account for the autonomous nature of some drug dealing. Whilst drug market organisation may be more prevalent at the top level and certainly present in modes of dealing like county lines (Spicer, 2021), it still does not account for the

middle to bottom level dealers I encountered in small coastal towns, who operate their own individual markets and therefore do not follow orders from those above them. In short, whilst it may be a neat idea that drug dealers follow the orders and directions of those above them in clearly defined hierarchies, it is not necessarily an assumption which can be applied like a blanket to all relationships between dealers. Therefore findings on autonomous brokers who exert control over their own markets challenge this hierarchical understanding of drug markets as over-simplified because it fails to explain the complexities of these fluid middle market operatives who are enabled by freewill rather than being compelled by direction or coercion.

These findings on autonomous brokers operating in the middle level of drug markets support Pearson and Hobbs' (2001) finding that the middle level is made up of fluid participants. My suggestion is that the fluidity of middle level actors is due to their autonomy and the free will they are able to enact when managing their markets, providing the space to negotiate each transaction on a case by case basis. In turn, my participants were able to tailor their own markets and establish commercially viable enterprises within drug market supply chains whilst remaining independent of organised chains of command and associated violence. Finally, because autonomous brokers are not directly employed by organised criminal groups, gangs or running county lines operations they remain somewhat indistinct from other citizens without prior knowledge of their illicit activities.

In previous chapters, Goffman's (1959) *presentation of self in everyday life* was applied to demonstrate that the drug dealing role can be a temporary face adopted by seasonal magic mushroom pickers, and that 5-9 dealers switch between legitimate and illegitimate faces on a daily basis. In this chapter, my autonomous broker participants demonstrate the ability to switch between different kinds of drug dealing role, sometimes adopting a commercially driven entrepreneurial face, but often choosing to wear a more benevolent face. Goffman's dramaturgical framework allows us to understand participants' fluid autonomous behaviours as types of performance. Facework can thus be used to enrich our understanding of the fluid nature of this part of the market, transcending beyond detailing role typologies.

I found the 'autonomous broker' to be capable of different types of performance within the middle level market, rather than a definitive category label: the benevolent or entrepreneurial faces are just parts of the broker's act rather than the entire performance or show. Using face work to understand

dealers, rather than descriptive categories, reveals how these fluid individuals may perform a multitude of drug market roles across different times and spaces. Two distinct faces have been described here, an entrepreneurial face and a benevolent face, both distinct from the archetypal conception of higher level drug dealers. Whilst my research did not reveal coercive, violent or punitive faces, these or other faces may be hidden from me and only adopted at specific times. The point here is that in spite of rigid drug dealer identities or tightly structured conceptions of drug markets, my participants are fluid, dynamically adopting different faces at different times. If all the world's a stage, then autonomous brokers certainly play many parts, not just switching between legitimate and illegitimate roles, deviant and normal perspective (Goffman, 1963), but even capable of switching faces within the illicit spaces they occupy (Goffman, 1959). Previous work attempting to better capture the fluidity of drug markets has focused on creating more nuanced categorisations of drug dealers (Dorn et al, 1992), but the application of Goffman's (1959) face work suggests that drug dealers do not always operate within rigidly defined typologies, instead dynamically moving between roles as they navigate a variety of drug market opportunities.

Goffman's concept of teams is also useful in understanding market maker relationships which are based on more than the economic transaction, requiring a degree of trust. In turn, successful drug deals served to reinforce the bonds between actors over time. Consequently, the drug market relationships observed in this case study were not underpinned by traditional concepts of fear and violence but rather by trust, loyalty and empathy. Team mates arising from existing social networks were usually met with a benevolent face, benefitting from credit services and price discounts. Over time, especially trusted customers could also become team mates with similar access to credit services and price discounts. These relationships between market makers and team mates can also be viewed as a type of performance, adding further nuance to our understanding of the dynamic nature of drug markets.

In providing credit markets, the broker is also reinforcing bonds with the other actor in the exchange, implying a degree of trust, loyalty and empathy between them. When paying back credit, the debtor reinforces the bond by repaying, not only the economic debt, but also the trust. In turn, these repeat performances start revolving in a flywheel motion, whereby each successful performance reinforces the bonds between actors overtime and becomes incorporated into a wider shared history, perceived as one of many favours, some legitimate, others deviant, rather than simply a criminal enterprise.

Through successful repeat performances, brokers and actors develop symbiotic bonds which become mutually beneficial and interdependent over time, becoming incorporated into wider shared histories.

Equally, a wrong move on the part of either party can change the relationship significantly, impacting not just on trust and loyalty, but also on drug market transactions. The fluidity with which the customers of my autonomous brokers could gain or lose team member status thus added to the dynamic nature of their drug markets. The inclusion of many customers as team mates meant that autonomous brokers' market making behaviour could instead at times be susceptible to being driven from the bottom up by retailer team mates. Despite not being part of a top down chain of command, autonomous brokers' markets were subject to outside influence as they reacted to one off or seasonal requests from their team mate customers, requiring them to be dynamic or agile in their service provision, operating outside the confines of their usual roles.

Finally, because autonomous brokers are independent of chains of command and exercise their own freewill when navigating markets, they are able to develop and impose their own moral codes, outside of any hierarchical chain of command. Often, these moral codes necessitate showing a benevolent face towards those customers who are 'team mates', and the frequent presentation of a benevolent face in turn allows the broker to shrug off a spoiled master identity and create a distinction between their drug dealing behaviour and that of the archetype, demonstrating further fluidity within their overall performance.   For my autonomous broker participants, the frequent presentation of a benevolent face makes the mental gymnastics or soft neutralisation techniques (Coomber et al, 2016) required to reject the archetypal drug dealer identity was relatively easy to achieve, despite the higher levels of the market they are operating within. There is perhaps some other underreported element involving white privilege that allows these dealers to shrug off with some ease the more negative aspects of their behaviours, being dealers. Yet what has been found is that the alternative market making tools autonomous brokers use formed the basis of why they were different from real or proper dealers. They were able to cover their own behaviour by referring to some stereotypical other they had in part created but in part been fed through racialised media images.

The autonomous broker is described here as a multi-faceted and complex performer, in control of their own market and influenced primarily, not by a top-down chain of command, but by the demands of serving team mates within a friends and favours economy. The dynamic nature of their

performance, alternating between different faces as the occasion demands, presents a clear challenge to rigid and hierarchical conceptualisations of drug market structure. Instead of acting as rigid pieces in a machine, bound by strict archetypal notions of identity, autonomous brokers are dynamic actors operating as entrepreneurial free market agents as commonly encountered in legitimate commodity markets who are able to manage their impressions and stigmas with relative ease despite having deviant and normal perspectives (Goffman, 1963). In the final and concluding chapter, findings from across the case study chapters will be drawn together to answer my research questions and explore the implications for drug market structure.

Chapter seven: Conclusion: towards a gas cloud analogy for drug markets

This final chapter will draw together the findings from the three case studies presented above, structured around my research questions. The case studies were all chosen as examples of 'alternative' dealer typologies or drug markets and the first part of this discussion summaries how they qualify for that label, dislodging existing drug market archetypes. Next, drawing on Goffman's work, I summarise key findings from across case studies that relate to the fluidity of drug dealer identity. The main aim of this final chapter, however, is to explore the implications of my findings for understanding drug market structure. I begin by setting out the binding similarities yet key differences to the three case studies that have been used. The chapter will then draw on some strengths and weaknesses of the study before a more critical reflection on the lack of discussion around critical race or policing. Next, I will explore the significance of my approach for providing enriched understanding of drug market structure. In my final section, I tentatively suggest a new conceptual framework for understanding fragmented and dynamic drug markets, based around a gas cloud analogy.

Case Study Similarities and Differences.

It will be briefly set out what binds the three case studies together, there similarities to one another before a brief assessment of what makes them different from one another. First all three case studies have been completed with the same variety of methods being informal interviews and participant observations. However the ways in which the observations have been completed have been in

different settings with mushroom pickers largely taking place in a few fixed outside positions whilst 5-9 dealers and autonomous brokers observation were more mobile and moved between deviant and normal spaces regularly. Another similarity of the case studies is that all three have been observed and asses with a dramaturgical analysis of performative interaction and each case study has similar presentation of rich descriptive data that aim to bring once static typologies to life as fluid interchangeable roles.

Finally all three case studies approach, at some time, class a drug markets. However, it is the types of market they operate where the differences in each case study begins to emerge. Magic mushroom pickers are involved in class a drug production and supply but the case study finds limited involvement for the majority of participants in supplying other drugs outside of the season. This is unlike 5-9 suppliers and autonomous brokers who operate year round week in week out markets and so have regular participation. These 5-9 and autonomous brokers differ further from mushroom pickers form the range of drugs they supply including other class a like powdered cocaine and ecstasy. As a result, magic mushroom pickers are presented as novel class a drug dealers in contrast to the more regularly active 5-9 and autonomous brokers. Furthermore, there were apparent differences in the scale of some operations with some participants selling largely quantities in multi ounce or kilo deals which disguised between some smaller 5-9 dealers and those autonomous brokers who through traditional thinking occupy middle level positions on quantity hierarchies. Overall then the three case studies differ for the way they approach class a drug market interaction but from novel, bottom level social supply and middle level broker perspectives showing that there is no one homogeneous class a drug market identity, making policing it through similar methods difficult.

Reflections on the Strengths and Weakness of the Study

To end this study, I would like to take the chance to reflect briefly on what are perhaps the strengths and weaknesses of this study. I will first go through the perceived limitations of this work before reflecting on its strengths.

The study does perhaps suffer from some weakness which will be briefly set out. The study perhaps lacks full consideration of gender and race. Whilst there are some women who appear in the first mushroom picking case study, they are not represented anywhere else as dealers in the research. As a result, women's voices are limited in the findings. Whilst women appear in mushroom pickers, mushroom picker communities appeared inclusive of women, allowed them to hold equal status as pickers and were not shut out from participation. Perhaps these types of reflections could have been

drawn out more in the findings. This was not deliberate but simply the result of not finding or interacting with any female dealers outside of drug markets. That is not to say that they do not or could not exist but that they didn't come into 5-9 or autonomous case studies. However, the study does also lack any gender based reflections on why this might be the case, why women may be shut out from other types of market, or why they may have not been so forth coming with more stigmatised forms of dealing as their male counter parts were. Consequently, the lack of gender based reflection or investigation or critical focus is down to having a largely male sample across the research in two of the three case studies.

In a similar fashion the work perhaps does not reflect entirely on the role critical race theory has in some of these case studies, especially 5-9 dealers and autonomous brokers. Whilst there has been refences made to archetypical / stereotypical dealers in the literature review and the implication that these are racialised roles, there is an absence of these considerations in the reported findings. The problems here perhaps lie with the use of an all-white sample in a majority all white area. The conclusion contains some reflections in more depth around race and policing about the general absence of reporting on these two topics. But they are perhaps left under explored or understated in the research. Policing others and not them in particular has been accredited to this rationalising an alternative non-identity and resisting a homogonous archetypal identity. These archetypal identities have been acknowledged as racialised stereotypes and when the participants draw on not what the police are looking for, there is an element of this racialised stereotype they are drawing on. As a result, the work should have perhaps probed these in more depth when assessing stigma management.

Finally there is perhaps some limitations around discussion of interactions between participants and the police. Again some final reflections have been added to the conclusion on this topic. But in short interactions with the police were limited, rationalised as unlikely and so evasive man lives were limited or rather mundane to what might be imagined. Some evasive manoeuvres were drawn out through tick and other market behaviours. But overall, this study was not a discussion of drug dealers interactions with law enforcement, it was about their interactions in other spaces and spheres, from the perspective of the normal as well as the deviant (Goffman, 1963). The threat of the police is for sure there, in the back of their minds, but that is where the police reside and so they sit at the back of this study as well, lurking almost until the moment for mixed interaction comes. The stigmatising effect of law enforcement only becomes apparent after such mixed interactions with police, which did not happen until the end of research but Jermery experiences during debriefing have been now added and reflected on in the race and policing conclusion.

To conclude, the strengths of this work will now be presented to draw the piece to a close. Firstly, the research adds to and follows a rich history of typology development in drug studies. Secondly, the research provides a novel way for exploring drug market interactions, through Goffman's impression management, bring once static typologies to life as dynamic fluid and interchangeable roles. In doing so, the perspectives of normal and deviant (Goffman, 1963), that drug suppliers switch between has been captured and the ways in which they manage stigma, resist homogenous identities and sculpt their own identities through a range of performance types across both deviant and normal social spheres. In doing so three case studies have been presented alongside rich descriptive data of three distinct market actors being magic mushroom pickers, 5-9 dealers and autonomous brokers. As a result, the strength of this research lies in the ways these case studies have been formulated in the gas cloud analogy, which provides a direct challenge to the dominant narratives of top down structured organised drug market hierarchies. In doing so, the research provides not only a challenge to the dominant narrative but also a method by which to understand these interactions more wholesomely through impression management and the ways in which drug dealers present themselves in everyday life not just in markets. As Goffman says the normal and the deviant are two sides of the same coin, and so it makes sense to investigate both perspectives the socially deviant drug dealer has through performance if we are ever to fully resituate drug dealers (Coomber, 2006). Consequently, this paper makes a genuine addition to the current literature in the field, provides a dramaturgical method for investigating drug market actors and finally offers a new gas cloud model for drug market structures which allows for static typologies to be understood as dynamic interchangeable reactive roles.

Reflections on Race and Policing

Direct contact with police, arrest raids or even close shaves were not recorded during observations. There was times when discussion around the potential for police to interfere the premise of getting caught and the impact it would have. These largely get brushed off and there didn't appear to be much of deliberate risk reducing manoeuvres with regards to the police. Some of these risk reducing manoeuvres are mentioned in autonomous brokers, with tick being used to reduce the number of trips taken to drop off drugs and therefore lowering the risks of getting caught whilst Roy in particular only operates at certain times to reduce time spent in market and therefore the chances of getting caught. In the novel case of mushroom pickers where the closest police interaction came, it proved the police were not there for them but rather someone else. However, it still induced a fear response

and so even if played down, when faced in the moment with a potential mixed interaction with law enforcement the fear of stigma and the consequences of criminal prosecution begin to feel more real.

Whilst debriefing one of my participants, Jermery, he disclosed that he had since had a close encounter with the police, been arrested then released and had very nearly ended up with a charge. Without disclosing the ins and outs of the incident, the incident had led to him to fully step away from the market. Before his approach to policing had been very much to brush it off but once the consequences became real possibilities than hypothetical what ifs his appetite for risk and markets fell off, even though he had not ultimately been charged he was not emboldened but had almost a wake up to real consequences when you get caught. In turn a lucky escape led to a change of perspective about the risks of police leading Jermery to conclude the best way to avoid arrest was to give it up altogether and instead focus on his trade. From this example, the prevalence of policing only really becomes apparent once arrested or faced with a real mixed contact with law enforcement rather than hypothetical ones. Nobody ever thinks there get caught, or seemingly pays it much awareness, until they are caught. Overall then the potential what if I'm arrested is put off or naively doubted until a serious stigmatising life moment, that blemishes a biography like arrest (Goffman, 1963), attaching stigmas to community and group members because a real lived reality and the consequences having already been learnt in previous socialisation become apparent. Because of this it is only until the moment it is to late that these risks of policing are dealt with. They are negated until a mixed interaction with law enforcement is forced upon them.

Yet these were only in the moment of mixed contact with the police which were reported to be rare and not continuous. As a result, there were not extravagant efforts to conceal what they were doing, the occasional switch of phone, but a general lax attitude amongst most 5-9 and autonomous brokers towards evasive manoeuvres. No evidence of stash houses or paid employees to take the biggest risks away from them or any of the other hyper realities we might come to expect from organised crime fed imagery. Instead it was all rather mundane, enabled by the self-identification process that rationalised themselves as something other than what the police were looking for. There were no need to take police reducing risks as the police wouldn't catch them as they simple weren't looking for them. Getting caught would of been down to bad luck rather than bad practise from them or good practise from the police. Whilst these concerns about policing may be at the forefront of the minds of policy makers and enforcement officials it appeared from observation for these participants to be fairly easily able to avoid policing efforts, if they were ever targeted at them in the first place…

As noted in the methods, this was an all-white sample of dealers. It has perhaps not been acknowledged in full until now the critical role race may have on impression management and has

perhaps been overlooked. Alluded to in the literature review is the archetypal dealer, or stereotypical dealer, associated with market violence (Goldstien, 1989), and understood largely through the lens of organised structures, most recently being county lines dealers. These stereotypical or archetypal depictions of drug dealers have running throughout them a racial underpinning where by the assumption is of a BAME dealer. The term archetypal drug dealer is one that is racialized. There is certainly overhang from the crack epidemic Goldstein documented and the legacy left behind with super predator label in America, stripping young black offenders of their human characteristics presenting them as unemphatic monsters to the public by the mid-90s. County lines today carries many of the same stigmas and once again the concept of an evil pusher is racialised bringing with it assumption about who is and who isn't a drug dealer (). In the UK the gang matrix BAME groups are disproportionately represented and making up 80% of the entries (). Consequently, it appears to have translated to local white dealers outside of city areas that they are not in fact what the police are looking for. Rarely do any other dealers feature on the 6 o'clock news other than large organised county gangs of late, which in turn reinforce the idea of who is and isn't a dealer.

Whilst this paper has not focused specifically on critical race theory, it is acknowledged as potentially having a significant role on the influence of performers when moving between the perspectives of normalised and deviant (Goffman, 1963, p180). White dealers to a degree feel insulated by there whiteness when rationalising themselves as something other than a real or proper dealer. As Coomber (2006) notes, dealers are aware of the stereotypes around them and use them to other there behaviour as something else. However, whilst there may be a racialised aspect, participants in 5-9 dealers pointed to their work ethic and legitimate jobs and not there whiteness. It was an adherence to working class values rather than there racial backgrounds that they felt distinguished them from their own deviant category of dealers. It was their ability to manage multiple roles across deviant and normalised perspectives in markets, work, family and social spheres through a variety of performances and interactions they felt gave them strength in rationalising a different identity. These characteristics were defining features rather than there race. On reflection this is perhaps due to one's whiteness being a subtle positive reinforcer lacking experience of negative racialisation they were perhaps unaware or even unwilling to give up what they saw as significant differences to white privilege.

Finally on these types of reflections, whilst race may not of been an obvious stigma my white sample felt they had directly experienced, they were aware of and motivated by other ingroup stigmas (Goffman, 1963) being class. Membership of and reminders of one's class is readily available in the everyday experience. The areas I explored were in majority run down seaside towns that lacked much opportunity or aspiration. A unifying and underlining feature during backgrounding interviews and the motivation for first getting involved in markets were experiences with poverty and the continued

engagement with markets could be attested to as the only way to maintain a comfortable lifestyle. Such experiences with poverty early on in life perhaps stop white people from being able to comprehend the concept of white privilege as meaningful, when they have always felt stigmatised in some way by their poverty and the forced omission from society simply because they cannot afford to do participate. From this perspective, having only their own experience to go by, and feeling downtrodden from the off, white privilege is unlikely something those from the lower classes immediately feel the beneficiary of in their everyday lives. Despite this resistance from those in poverty to accepting they are beneficiaries of white privilege, it is a fair acknowledgement that stigma management way not have been so easily achievable if my participants had been competing with outliners like race for successful performance given the acknowledgment that archetypical dealers and stereotypical dealers are inherently racialised, making them in turn the would be focus of the police.

These experiences of poverty and class position perhaps come to the forefront of white samples in a number of ways over race. Firstly, overcoming poverty rather than benefiting from ones race makes the achievement more praise worthy. The first example is to be embraced and the second perhaps resisted as a result. Secondly, overcoming poverty has been tangibly experienced and embedded itself into memory where's as benefiting from ones race even subtly may have happened in ways they were unare of. In this case it is the effect of negative experience impact whilst positive experience impact may be overlooked by the individual. Finally and perhaps most interestingly, both class and race considerations appear to be incorporated into the dealers stigma management (Goffman, 1963) when deploying techniques of neutralisation (Matza, 1964) to rationalise themselves as something other than a real or proper drug dealer. Whilst class based stigmas may be embraced to justify their participation in markets, it is this repetition as something other than a real or proper dealer that subtly relies on and subsequently reinforces the racialised versions of archetypal or stereotypical drug dealers as the true evil pushers you see on the news and hear about running gangs on the evening news.

Challenging the mainstream narratives

My first research question concerned finding out how drug dealers operated in 'alternative' markets and exploring in what ways their behaviour contrasted with existing stereotypical, often racialised, archetypes. In the first case study, magic mushroom pickers were observed as a typology of drug dealer that appeared distinct from the archetype set out in the literature review, involved in not only

the sale of Class-A drugs but also their production. In presenting magic mushroom pickers as drug market actors who were involved in Class-A drug markets, the archetypal stereotypical conception of drug dealers based solely on Class-A drugs market participation was dismissed as a standalone indicator or measurement of character type. That is to say, not all Class-A drugs dealers are archetypical dealers. Instead magic mushroom pickers wore a seasonal or temporary face, able only to engage with mushroom markets during the brief season.

Furthermore, findings suggested that mushroom fields themselves were liminal spaces, whose deviant status only became apparent with an insider perspective. In turn this liminal nature of the space led to landowners accidentally becoming reluctant drug producers, challenging the idea that class-A involvement is always intentional and economically driven or maintained by coercive violence. These liminal production sites were found to be devoid of drug market violence, instead cooperating when needed, with neither the control of the site nor its valuable commodities fought over by competing elements. This finding also renders naturally occurring liminal mushroom sites as distinct from other man made class A production sites, requiring no specialist production equipment or protection from competing parties. In this way naturally occurring magic mushroom sites challenge the assumptions that class A production sites are always valuable commodities worth defending. They may be seen as valuable commodities within mushroom picker culture, but not to the point that the typical market violence associated with drugs production might erupt. In this sense we might imagine magic mushroom pickers as engaging in a type of folk production, or agricultural harvesting rather than class A drug production. Magic mushroom sites are thus liminal, only gaining deviant meaning when frequented in the season by those who are drug wise.

The mushroom culture of picking emerged as a sociable activity engaged in by friendly competitors who developed and maintained unwritten codes of practice around field and yield access. Picking itself therefore resembled more of a picnic, bathing in the fields and forests whilst resembling archaic agricultural foragers or farm workers rather than archetypical class-A drugs dealers. Picking thus stands distinctly marked from other forms of class-A production. The magic mushroom pickers case study thus challenged the assumed archetypal drug market because it was rarely profitable, there was an absence of violence, many involved in production were reluctant or even unaware of their roles, the production sites were liminal, and the seasonal nature of the work meant that mushroom picker could only be a temporary identity or role within drug markets. Therefore the findings on magic mushroom pickers may be interpreted as a typology of drug supplier, who is engaged in Class A drug

production and distribution, yet remains distinct from traditional conceptualisation of archetypal drug dealers who are involved in the sale of the most dangerous drugs.

In the second case study, 5-9 dealers were observed as another potential typology of drug dealer distinguished by their participation in legitimate work spaces and the supplementary nature of their drug market work. This case study sought to challenge the idea that archetypal drugs dealers are occupational in the sense that they spend all of their time as dealers, that market activity occupies all their time, is their primary source of income and therefore they have very little else to develop their identity from or around. In this case study, 5-9 dealers' participation in legitimate spaces was demonstrated via the ways in which they self-organise their markets around everyday life. The participation within legitimate spaces and the types of social and/or status capital 5-9 dealers seek to attain also goes beyond the typical assumptions of archetypal greed. Instead of allowing market activities to dominate their lives, 5-9 dealers were found to use drug markets to supplement their main income.

Therefore 5-9 dealers were found to be fluid, dipping in and out of the market, their drug market activities fragmented by their commitments to legitimate space performances and roles which they valued as important means of sculpting identities to audiences. Overall, the 5-9 dealer challenged the assumed archetype by prioritising legitimate roles over illegal drug market involvement and profit, by adopting drug dealing as a supplementary rather than dominant role, and by presenting a normalised approach to drug dealing, with supply behaviour fitted in and around everyday life.

In the third case study autonomous brokers were presented as a potentially distinct typology of drug dealer distinguished by the autonomous nature which allowed them to sit within supply chains yet outside of chains of command. This case study sought to challenge the concept of top down rigid hierarchies and market structures attributed to archetypal modes of dealing. Due to their autonomous nature, brokers were able to exercise a large degree of control over their involvement in markets, for example around product price strategies and complex credit markets. Despite being middle level markets, the underlying structure was based on friends and favours economies and had similarities to social supply. Even at this level, market relationships relied on the trust, loyalty and empathy built out of shared histories and experiences to navigate deviant spaces as market makers on a case by case

basis. Shared social morals and histories within localised markets governed conflict resolution, largely removing the overt violence and coercion associated with archetypal drug dealers.

Further analysis of the autonomous broker found two clear face types (as well as a potential hidden and more archetypal face) being benevolent and entrepreneurial that they use to navigate markets. The face type of autonomous brokers provided a clear and direct challenge to stereotypical archetypes by presenting participants as: autonomous, operating outside of hierarchical chains of command; sometimes acting against their own economic interests; able to adopt a benevolent face towards those with shared histories; and often acting in a responsible manner avoiding selling certain drugs, selling to particular kinds of people or acting in other ways to minimise their own personal risk, despite their involvement with larger quantities of drugs.

Taken together, these findings challenge the usefulness of established archetypal drug dealer conceptions when exploring the lower levels of fragmented drugs markets within the context of localised coastal towns. The case study of magic mushroom picker provided a challenge to class-A archetypal dealer conceptions, the 5-9 dealers challenged the assumptions around archetypical occupational supply, whilst the autonomous brokers challenged the concept of hierarchical top down chains of command. As a result, the involvement of Class-A drugs, organisation or position within a supply chain do not necessarily translate into archetypal dealer conceptions. Overall these findings demonstrate the value in pursuing lines of drug market enquiry that do not fit into existing bodies of assumed knowledge about drug markets. While there is evidence for archetypal drug dealers and markets, it is important to recognise that they are not homogenous and, in reality, can be extremely varied and nuanced in nature. Seeking to explore and understand case studies outside of assumed archetypes can be valuable in enriching our overall knowledge of drug markets and the ways in which they operate as outlined below.

Face work as a way of understanding fluid and fragmented markets

My second research question sought to extend findings beyond observing the lack of homogeneity or uniformity when conceptualising drug markets by applying Goffman's (1959) *presentation of the self in everyday life* to understand how 'alternative' drug dealers self-conceptualise their behaviour and how they manage fluid roles within fragmented drug markets. Whilst this research began by

identifying three distinct 'alternative' markets within to conduct my research, it was also motivated by a desire to better understand the fluidity within bottom level fragmented markets. Other researchers who have explored alternative markets have used the results to provide richer and more detailed typologies of drug dealer roles, particularly at the bottom levels of markets. At one level then, my thesis contributes to this ongoing work by identifying three new and distinct drug dealer typologies: the seasonal magic mushroom picker; the 5-9 dealer; and the autonomous broker. Analysing the findings through the lens of Goffman's work, however, suggests that drug dealer roles and identities are not fixed, but rather can be viewed as temporary 'faces' performers can be adopted or discarded at will.

Using Goffman's (1963) dramaturgical analysis, static typologies, like picker, 5-9er or autonomous broker, can be understood instead as dynamic faces, worn by free agents capable of changing direction depending on their environment. A belief in static drug dealer typologies underpins the notion of the archetypal dealer outlined in the literature review and critiqued throughout this thesis, presenting an all encompassing descriptive feedback loop of how we might expect drug market actors to be. It is not a case of how we think mushroom pickers or 5-9 dealers ought to have acted or would act put into a given environment in some sort of hypothetical thought experiment, where reason begins to shape the typology rather than the reality of their actions. Instead, by understanding static typologies as dynamic face types, the nuances between drug dealing roles start to become clearer via a new process and procedure for understanding fluid drug market actors: immersive ethnographic dramaturgical analysis. Face work reveals how drug market actors are able to sculpt their identities and maintain status as social insiders rather than being rendered outsiders, seemingly living with a foot in two different worlds.

My seasonal magic mushroom pickers case study introduces the value of face work and demonstrates how some faces must, by definition, be temporary. As magic mushrooms only grow in certain seasonal conditions, the window to get out and pick them is time limited. Therefore, it is not possible to wear the naturally occurring magic mushroom picker face all year round. The mushroom picker face may form part of the participant's identity, as a performed behaviour, yet only for a limited time, dictated by the forces of nature rather than some other social construction or man made limitation. Furthermore, the observation of the mushroom picker as a face type that is performed rather than a static typology yielded greater understanding of wider mushroom picker cultures.

Interactions between pickers, landowners and even outsiders such as dog walkers demonstrated an adherence to proper practice and conduct within the fields. Pickers displayed a comradery with one another, engaging in friendly competition but also valuable knowledge transfer for fruitful site locations through word of mouth. Behaviours within the field, like tapping spore heads or not over picking small patches, displayed the desire to maintain a wider mushrooming culture in addition to individual mushroom markets Overall then, the mushroom picker face type initially supports the premise that drug dealer roles can be faces that are intermittingly worn depending on the environment. Dramaturgical analysis allows the magic mushroom picker to be understood as a complex dynamic character creating subtle performances within liminal spaces and as part of a rich underlying culture, rather than a static typology.

Applying face work to my case study about 5-9 dealers demonstrates how some drug suppliers can have legitimate and illegitimate faces at the same time, illustrating that people dip in and out of drug markets, combining dealing with legitimate work, family responsibility and social life. Whilst the mushroom pickers case study focused on one clear and distinct face, 5-9 suppliers used a dramaturgical analysis to show how multifaced 5-9 dealers have legitimate work, family and social faces as well as their deviant drug supply face. Furthermore, 5-9 dealers' commitment to maintaining the successful performance of legitimate faces in everyday life was occupational, dominating most of their time in everyday life. As a result, drug supply behaviours were fitted in and around commitments to these legitimate spheres of interaction. Findings suggest that there is significant overlap in places between legitimate spheres and deviant drug markets, with the underlying bonds from legitimate spheres coming to influence drug market relationships and networks. Thus in many cases drug supply was one of many favours within the friends and favours economies 5-9 dealers belonged to.

It is too often the case that conceptualisations of drug dealers miss the very essence of what lies at the heart of their identity, pinpointing deviant behaviour and casting aside any value in positive characteristics as nothing more than a show. Instead the use of dramaturgical analysis and the understanding of typology as a dynamic face allows for the defining features of 5-9 suppliers to be drawn from their legitimate performances rather than their drug market role. 5-9 suppliers are distinct because their occupations are derived in the majority from performance in legitimate spaces, yet this engagement within legitimate spaces renders them indistinct from any other ordinary citizen without

prior knowledge of their deviant behaviour. Instead of appearing to audiences and outsiders as archetypal drug dealers, they occupy other roles well established in the collective consciousness (Goffman, 1959) as employees, workers, parents, siblings, friends and colleagues going about their everyday lives much like anyone else. Each successful performance adds to the drift from market to mundane routine which ultimately comes to be valued over time as drug market actors mature and begin to favour the status and social capital gained through participating in the legitimate economy.

By understanding the legitimate faces 5-9 suppliers perform rather than approaching them strictly based on their drug market behaviours, the manner in which deviant actors are able to resist an archetypal identity becomes clearer. Coomber, Moyle and South, (2016) refer to the mental gymnastics involved in operating across legitimate and illegitimate worlds, but for 5-9 suppliers the process is relatively simple in the sense that they sincerely believe themselves to be something other than a violent organised occupational dealer, even using the concept of archetypes themselves as a means of neutralising their own deviant behaviour. Their performance of these legitimate roles are further enabled by audiences who deploy tact and accept successful performances within work, family and social spheres as sincere or a type of peace offering, turning a blind eye to any drug market behaviours they may be privy to. The tacit protection yielded by audiences' acceptance of the 5-9 dealers' legitimate faces as sincere, reinforces to 5-9 suppliers that they are right to derive their core identity from these legitimate spaces and occupations rather than drug markets. As a result, 5-9 dealers sincerely believe themselves to be something other than an evil pusher and are confirmed in this belief by various non-participating actors and audiences. In this way, dramaturgical analysis reveals the on-going interactive process between performers and audience members that is imperative to the creation and maintenance of an identity as something other than an archetypal drug dealer.

Overall then, the use of a dramaturgical analysis as a means of understanding fluid 5-9 drug market actors revealed the legitimate faces of drug suppliers and the process by which they sculpt more positive identities through their participation in legitimate work, family and social spaces. In this way, rather than conscribe static descriptions focusing solely on drug dealing roles, face work goes beyond zoological obsessions with the nature of the crime and gives room for the more ordinary aspects of the criminals' lives to come to centre stage as important and distinctive. In the case of 5-9 dealers a static typology might simply read as a part time drug dealer who has legitimate job outside of drug markets. Instead, dramaturgically, 5-9 dealers become complex, dynamic, multifaced characters,

whose varying performances in legitimate spheres occupy most of their time and go beyond one simple homogenous motivation.

Thus face work allows us to see all the parts a drug dealer plays, both over their lifetime and within one specific time period, which should not be limited by archetypal assumptions of dealer typologies. The ways in which everyday performances structure market activities explains how fluid dealers switch between legitimate and deviant spaces without their identities becoming dominated by drug market activities. Therefore by presenting 5-9 dealers as dynamic face types rather than static typologies we are able to offer a better understanding of fluid drug market actors who are capable of resituating themselves (Coomber, 2006) as social insiders within their lived everyday reality. In spite of the drug market involvement and without much need for academic classification, drug dealers are going about their days without much risk of a break down into identity crisis from simultaneously occupying spaces in alternative worlds, sincerely believing themselves to be your average friendly member of the community.

My third case study on autonomous brokers demonstrates that, despite dealing in larger quantities of drugs and holding a higher position within supply chains, my participants could choose between a range of faces on a case by case basis. This is because autonomous brokers were free from chains of command and could therefore enact freewill over their own markets. A detailed analysis of how participants dealt with variable price structures and credit services via tick revealed autonomous brokers' ability to manage markets with at least two distinctive faces: benevolent and entrepreneurial. When displaying benevolent faces, autonomous brokers reduced prices, extended credit and were generally influenced by pre-existing relationships that went beyond drug market roles. The evidence presented here suggested that autonomous brokers were sometimes motivated out of a sense of obligatory social duty to their networks and were influenced from the bottom up by their peers, sometimes against their own economic incentives.

On the other hand, particularly at this level of the market, an entrepreneurial face could also be worn to maximise potential to profit from drug market activity. For example, they could use credit services as a convenient means of managing markets, dropping off one week and collecting another, whilst variable reductions in price kept positive relationships ticking over and encouraged repeat business. Even when faced with market conflict, non-violent means of market exclusion or social isolation were

usually chosen as distinct forms of punishment motivated by a desire to avoid risk, but also to avoid the social isolation that could result from being labelled as a 'real' or 'archetypal' dealer. In both cases, the autonomous broker displayed face types that resisted archetypical conceptualisations of evil pushers despite their involvement with larger quantities of drugs.

Overall then, the autonomous brokers case study demonstrated that even drug dealers higher up the supply chain are able to resist adopting master identities as evil pushers and sculpt more positive reflections of themselves by pointing to the differences in the ways they manage their markets to other organised criminals. The use of dramaturgical analysis and facework in assessing middle level dealers reveals the importance of fluidity and adaptation which enable multifaced brokers to situate themselves within markets they control and regulate without reflecting the violent imagery attached to conceptualisations of drug markets (Goldstein, 1989) or county lines type organised chains of command (Mclean et al, 2019).

Understanding drug market structure

My third research question required applying the findings from the case studies to add nuance or detail to our understanding of drug market structure. Conducting my research within the context of impression management, dramaturgical analysis and facework, thus led to a possibility to extend my findings beyond the identification of three new static drug dealer typologies. Instead I collated a substantial body of evidence suggesting that participants across all three case studies were fluid actors able to dextrously switch between legitimate and illegitimate roles. Furthermore, they were also dynamic within their drug dealing roles, reacting to gaps in the market, new opportunities and changing circumstances. Without the framework of Goffman's (1959) *presentation of the self in everyday life*, my research would have made a clear and distinct contribution to the development of our understanding of drug market structure by identifying three new nuanced typologies: the seasonal mushroom picker; the 5-9 dealer; and the autonomous broker. While this is important detail, once rigidly classified and transferred from everyday reality into academic text, their potential to explain the dynamic and fluid nature of drug markets is lost. They become no more than recycled labels, descriptive classifications or static typologies which may, over time, become just as restrictive as archetypal drug dealer identities.

Generating richer and more nuanced detail on roles within drug markets does of course have value. The differences between Dorn et al's (1992) 'sideliners' (using legitimate business opportunities to cover up their market activity) and my '5-9 dealers' (merging their legitimate and illegitimate roles in a more nuanced and less conscious manner) is subtle but important. But the analysis I undertook in response to my second research question provided an opportunity to move beyond the creation of ever finer and more detailed subcategories of drug dealer and explore instead how drug markets fit together. Increasingly, drug market researchers have pointed to the fragmented nature of drug markets (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001). Yet paradoxically the biggest driver of a fragmenting drug market is perhaps the zoological demand of criminology to find more and more species of drug dealers. Instead, the presentation of the mushroom picker, 5-9 dealer and autonomous broker as dynamic face types helps us to better understand fluidity within drug markets as autonomous actors drifting in and out of illegitimate spheres as and when the opportunity presents itself, deploying a multitude of faces as they navigate their way betwixt and between performances, and creating their own micro markets as demand requires.

Taken together, the challenge that my work provides to existing assumptions about drug markets and the exploration of fluidity in drug markets using Goffman's (1959) *presentation of self in everyday life*, significant limitations in existing models of illegal drug markets. Overall the use of dramaturgical analysis allows for static typologies to come to life as dynamic and fluid faces that are interchangeable and challenge the assumptions of homogeneous identities within drug markets and further expand our nuanced understanding of fluid markets and operators within them. By looking at typology as an interchangeable face, behaviours or performances inside of markets and outside within work, family and social spheres, reveal the true nature of character and become intrinsically valuable for understanding how participants are able to neutralise their deviant market participation and project sincere positive identities, seemingly able to resituate themselves.

In this way the simple answer to the great mystery of fluidity is that, alternative drug market agents largely have a degree of free will that is perhaps missed in our neat and simple reductionist reading of drug markets. Whilst it might be neat and simple to have a pyramid it is also neat and simple to have a homogeneous dealer identity, often conceptualised as the archetypal evil pusher; a one size fits all dealer, to slot into the pyramid. It may complicate the ability to neatly slot the pieces together and this free will or fluidity contributes to the issue of trying to put your finger on a moving part (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001). Therefore, the free will or fluidity displayed by my participants best challenges the

rigid hierarchical understanding, more than the classification of them as a static typology which if anything further fragments our understanding of drug markets. The final part of my thesis thus proposes a 'gas cloud' analogy to better explain the fluidity within some bottoms level drug markets.

Towards a gas cloud analogy

Dorn et al (1992) described the pyramid model of drug markets, reflecting a top down hierarchy, as neat and simple, surmising that the reality is likely rather more messy. Similarly, Reuters (1983) finds drug markets to be disorganised and Bouchard (2007) argues that they are decentralised. There is then already some work that challenges this idea of the top down pyramid structure of drug markets as homogeneous, but researchers have tended to chip away at archetypal narratives by providing increasingly subtle and nuanced typologies of drug dealer operating beyond the bounds of a hierarchical, pyramid structure. Dorn et al. (1992, p13), however, document '*the clear problems with typology; the world always turns out to be rather more shifting and creative than can be represented as a series of static types*'. It is thus this thesis's final intention to go beyond the creation of new typologies by tentatively presenting, based on my research findings and through the lens of Goffman's (1959) *presentation of self in everyday life*, a gas cloud analogy for understanding alternative drug markets.

My analogy draws not only on my own findings, but also on a small but persistent body of existing drug market research, to argue that drug markets can in fact be disorganised (Reuter, 1983), messy (Dorn et al, 1992), dynamic (Paoli, 2002), fragmented (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001) and fluid (Dorn, 2000), rather than operating within a neat top down pyramid structure (Bean, 2008). In particular, it builds on Pearson and Hobbs's (2001, p72) attempt to better explain the fragmented and fluid nature of drug markets by likening it to a jigsaw puzzle:

 '*The picture is rather like a large jigsaw – but a jigsaw in which each particular piece comes from a different set.*'

Drawing on this jigsaw puzzle analogy, this mixture of puzzle pieces can be understood as being made up from three different sets representing the top, middle and bottom levels of drug markets and it then becomes just a case of picking out each piece and putting it back together within its correct set, which may be understood as 'simple yet neat' top down structure. Alternatively, if we take Pearson

and Hobbs's (2001) analogy more literally there is a potential to view it as a mishmash of different sets, allowing for some of the complexity of drug market fragmentation.

In this way, the jigsaw analogy allows us to move away from a simplified top, middle, and bottom structure of the drug market, neatly organised from the top down. Instead, it invites us to imagine the wide range of drug market roles as indicative of a fragmented and mixed up market. It views individual pieces in the puzzle as unique, capable of multiple connections. Ultimately, however, the pieces themselves are static, incapable of change and belonging to some preordained overall set which could, with enough work, eventually be put back together.   Overall then, Pearson & Hobbs's (2001) idea of fragmented drug markets, in which actors are represented as individual pieces from mixed up jigsaw puzzles, does not necessarily dismiss quantity based, hierarchical drug market structures. Rather, it accounts for the wide variation in relations between actors and the variety of roles and individuals who perform them, allowing us to make sense of the abstract messy reality of the many fragmented roles which make up each level.

In seeking to explain fluid drug markets which are occupied by dynamic individuals, therefore, problems persist with the jigsaw analogy.   Categorising combinations of drug market structure and modes of supply into numerous individual pieces of different puzzles implies that at some stage they could theoretically all be put back together in order to pin down the drug market in its entirety. Here then the problem of a jigsaw is that all the pieces can precisely be put back together in one particular way. In short there is no room for manoeuvre and all of the drug market fragments, no matter how complex, are unable to change their fundamental nature. Whilst the jigsaw puzzle analogy in useful in visualising the fragmented nature of drug markets, its rigid portrayal of static puzzle pieces is limited. They do not overlap or intercept and are incapable of changing as the situation demands and connecting with other pieces.

Thus, the puzzle analogy is limited as it does not help us understand the ways in which drug market actors are able to operate fluidly, changing their nature and adapting to circumstance or opportunity. This is because jigsaw pieces are rigid themselves, as they only have one place they could possibly fit within a puzzle. A corner piece will always be a corner piece, certain edges will only go with others and there is no room to negotiate when trying to solve a jigsaw puzzle. Instead of this jigsaw analogy, in this final section I argue that a gas cloud analogy for drug markets is better able to reflect the true

nature of fluid and fragmented markets by understanding drug market actors as dynamic performers capable of reacting to market opportunities as and when they present themselves.

I draw here on a very basic understanding of chemistry to describe a gas cloud. A cloud of gas is formed of atoms (basic units of matter) and molecules (bonded groups of atoms). In contrast to solids and liquids, the molecules in gases are energised, constantly moving around and colliding with each other in random ways. Internal factors, such as kinetic energy, can drive the atoms and molecules to move in different ways, sometimes impacting the overall nature of the gas. External factors, such as temperature and pressure, can impact on both individual molecules and the overall behaviour of the gas cloud. Finally, a gas has no fixed shape or volume and can easily disperse entirely, change into a different state (solid or liquid) or react with something new to make a different substance.

Overall, the gas cloud provides a particularly relevant visual analogy for fluid drug markets because the loose structural nature of a gas cloud reflects the ability for fluid actors to drift in and out of different drug market roles and between legitimate and illicit spaces. These loose or fluid bonds within gas cloud structures may also be unstable or at the very least easily broken. Yet molecules within gas clouds are dynamic and reactive and may reform given the right environment or catalyst. Overall, the gas cloud provides a structure which is loosely bonded and easily fragmented, yet fluid and malleable in shape and structure, and therefore similar to the types of markets found in my case studies. Below, each feature of the gas cloud analogy will be set out and its parts related to both my findings and overall drug market structure.

In the gas cloud analogy, drug market actors are represented by molecules. Molecules are groups of atoms which have bonded together in a particular way. Atoms, the smallest units of matter, might thus be thought of in drug market terms as a multitude of different parts, roles or faces which can be utilised by a drug market actor. At any one time some of these will be bonded together to create a molecular and temporal drug dealer identity. Just as for a molecule, the coming together of different parts into a temporary identity is influenced by both internal (need for cash, extent to which alternative sources of income are available, shared history with customer) and external (what substances are available to sell on, size of potential customer base, law enforcement activity) factors. In this way, a diversity of drug dealing roles can be thought of as different types of molecules: the seasonal mushroom picker, the 5-9 dealer and the autonomous broker, as well as many others of

course. There is room for all typologies within the gas cloud. Also important here is that drug dealer identity can be made up of multiple different parts or faces (atoms) at the same time including, for example, both legitimate and illegitimate roles, or both benevolent and entrepreneurial faces.

Existing research which has provided more detailed and nuanced descriptive typologies, might then be thought of as adding to the range of atoms we have identified, but it does not seek to explain how they combine into molecules, or how those molecules then move, form, react, disperse and reform under different circumstances and in response to specific internal and external catalysts. The gas cloud analogy, however, provides a way of fusing all of the different parts or pieces together into one collective, whilst still respecting each individual typology and the body of work behind them. Therefore, by thinking of drug market actors as molecules formed of reactive atoms (parts, roles, faces), each typology of dealer may find their place, albeit it in a temporary manner.

Inside a cloud of gas, molecules move around a lot, colliding with each other in a seemingly random fashion, but influenced by internal (kinetic energy) and external (temperature) factors, including type of bond (ionic). Similarly, in my research on alternative drug markets, drug market actors were found to conduct a lot of varied transactions in a seemingly chaotic manner, but influenced by internal (need for cash) and external (magic mushroom season) factors, including type of bond (shared history). Drug market actors are able to dynamically react reflecting the way atoms and molecules dynamically react to catalysts to form new molecules / compounds. These factors, or catalysts, help to shape the molecules and continue to exert their influence on the movement of molecules within a gas cloud. They may come in many forms and could include, but are not limited to, external factors such as law enforcement, technology, drug market opportunities, market entrances or exits, supply shortages and deliveries and internal factors such as shared history, social capital, ability to perform legitimate roles, intimate relationships and specific mood. Perhaps an arrest opens the opportunity of promotion within a gang structure, while elsewhere a police crackdown shuts down one market, inadvertently creating an opportunity for another. The loss of a legitimate role might lead to falling back on increased drug market activity, or conversely the extension of a legitimate role might cause an actor to cut back. The combination of reconnecting with a group of friends at magic mushroom season might cause molecules to move in one direction, while the immediate need for cash combined with a rare market opportunity to extend into a new area might lead to another.

Molecules within a gas cloud can also bond with each other in different ways which are key to understanding the formation and development of a gas cloud. Without understanding how atoms and molecules bond together, stay together and break down, the gas cloud ultimately remains a mystery. And this is true for drug markets, which cannot be understood without an appreciation of the underlying bonds between drug market actors. Whether this be between customer and supplier, or different drug market actors. To understand drug markets, we must also understand the variety of bonds that support their structure. These bonds may be forged through fear, violence or coercion. They could be social bonds existing as part of a friends and favours economy. Or they might be the result of a more entrepreneurial business relationship.

Of central importance to this analogy is that, under certain conditions, a molecule can disperse into its individual atoms, which can reform as something entirely different. This allows for the idea that drug dealer identities are not fixed, but instead can be fluid depending on a variety of internal and external factors. Drug market actors can thus drift in and out of different drug market roles at different times, just as they can drift into the market in the first place, and drift out of it eventually. Unlike the jigsaw piece with its rigid unchanging structure, the molecular drug dealer identity can disperse and reform as opportunity dictates. Just within my own case studies, the dynamic faces I identified were sometimes worn by the same participant across different times and spaces. Oscar and Jeremy, for example, appeared across two case studies, fulfilling the criteria to present as 5-9 suppliers but also as autonomous brokers, at different times in their careers. Equally, Gary participated as both a seasonal mushroom picker and, then later as his role developed and reformed, as an autonomous broker.

The gas within a cloud is made up of molecules moving around in a chaotic manner, has no fixed structure and, like individual molecules, can even disperse, change state or reform into something new based on internal and external pressures. Arguably, the drug market in its entirely is equally nebulous. We can relatively easily imagine catalysts large enough to impact the whole gas cloud. Think for example of the impact developing technology has had on drug markets, first through mobile phones transforming the majority of transactions from open to closed (May & Hough, 2004), and then later through the internet and, in particular, the darkweb, providing the potential to combine the benefits of open and closed markets (Aldridge and Decary-Hetu, 2016). Another example is provided by the rapid development of new psychoactive substances created to mimic the effects of existing illegal drugs, but without the associated criminality (Chatwin et al, 2018). Another by the simultaneous

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development and proliferation of new categories of human enhancement drugs such as performance and image enhancers, cognitive enhancers and sexual enhancers (Mcveigh et al, 2012) In each of these scenarios the drug market reacted dynamically to these catalysts to change and reform into something new, further reflecting the properties of a gas cloud.

In conclusion drug markets are like gas clouds than pyramids or jigsaws. The different typologies (autonomous broker) and faces (benevolent vs entrepreneurial) of drug market actors are represented by individual atoms. Internal and external pressures cause atoms to move around and bond together in different ways, creating a temporal and molecular drug market actor or identity. The molecular drug dealer conducts transactions reacting dynamically to a complex interplay of internal and external pressures, as well type of relationship or bonds with other drug market actors. Over time, a molecular drug dealer identity can disperse and drift into a new permutation or exit the drug market either temporarily or permanently. Similarly, the drug market itself is also subject to internal and external factors and the types of bond contained within it. Just as a molecular drug dealer identity can change and reform, so can an entire drug market undergo significant change in response to external stimuli. Despite being unstable and easily fragmented by market change, the induvial drug dealer identities are dynamic enough to reform into new roles, reflecting and sometimes creating new market structures. Therefore the gas cloud analogy, unlike the jigsaw puzzle analogy, is not static instead recognising drug markets evolve constantly over time and are subject to change. Overall, instead of approaching dealer typologies as static labels which appear independent of one another, the gas cloud analogy allows drug market actors to be presented within the context of fluid fragmented markets ie as a collective of fluid moving parts rather than rigid pieces of separate jigsaw puzzles.

Reflecting on Impact of the Gas Cloud Conceptual Framework for Criminal Justice System Policy Makers and Practitioners

The gas cloud provides a direct challenge to understanding the structure of drug markets as systemically violent (Goldstein, 1989) or being organised as top down hierarchies (Broome, 1985) controlled by a '*Mr.Big*' (Bean, 2008). Instead, the gas cloud model allows us to think of markets which are non-violent, the alternative they react and come together under certain conditions in certain environments, forming various bonds which over time may be broken apart and reform in a number of dynamic ways. This approach of the gas cloud market structure module adds to the work already established on messy (Dorn et el, 1992) disorganised (Reuters, 1983) and dynamic (Paolai, 2002) and fragmented (Pearson and Hobbs, 2001) and provides a visual model that incorporates these ideas on

drug market structure alongside organised hierarchies. As a result, the gas cloud model provides policy makers with a wide ranging set of atoms to understand markets with that may be put together and taken apart and reformed into new shapes as and when the time comes, keeping pace with dynamic markets, which evolve all the time, rather than an over reliance on one dominant rigid hierarchy model.

There are of course hierarchies of organised crime in the mix but they are one of many elements. Therefore gas cloud provides a relevant understanding and challenge to the model of structured drug market hierarchies by allowing for alternative styles of actor and market to emerge alongside these top down systems. The point of the gas cloud is not to dismiss these established top down organised hierarchy models, but to place them alongside other reactive disorganised aspects of drug markets that come to make up a significant proportion of the drug market.

The gas cloud analogy then is relevant for policy makers as it gives them a dynamic way of understanding the fluidity of market participation and provides tools like catalyst for understanding the way in which these more chaotic markets come together, being influenced by a range of circumstances not just violence fear and coercion. Currently, in the UK attention is firmly focused on county lines narratives, which fits the old top down hierarchy and has come to largely reproduce racialised stereotypes. The dominance of county lines narratives symbolises a return to the old ways of the Broome report and the gas cloud model for understanding wider drug market structures equips policy markers with a tool to broaden the perspectives on exactly who is and what is the identity of a drug dealer. By exploring the range of atoms hypothetically possible, through literature, policy makers may find themselves moving away from homogenous conceptions and finally be able to begin fully resituating drug dealers in the policy that comes in control a wide range of markets with similar control methods.

The outcome of this will either be a change in policy to reduce control over lesser dealer types. Perhaps a move in the control of magic mushrooms from class a given its production and market type and been shown to be vastly different to other class a drugs market like heroin or crack cocaine after building the atoms and molecules and realising they are two very different structures. There may be a move to soften stances on friends and favours networks and acknowledge the dominant role social supply has throughout markets. Alternatively the gas cloud provides context for policy makers to begin targeting a range of drug dealers they were entirely unaware of being those that live between the deviant and normal perspectives and do not meet there own dominant stereotypes. The outcome remains to be seen. Yet the introduction here of the gas cloud model in its initial theoretical presentation, does overall offer policy makers with a new tool for deepening their understanding of

drug market structure as something more dynamic than before able to incorporate all modes of supply and market actors.

Final conclusion

In overall conclusion then, my thesis has answered its research questions. It has identified three 'alternative' drug markets presented as individual case studies: seasonal magic mushroom markets; 5-9 part time markets; and autonomous broker markets operating outside of the chains of command. In response to my first research question, a detailed exploration of these alternative drug markets reveals that they are not subject to archetypal market structures and the drug market actors active within them do no align with drug dealer archetypes. In response to my second research question, Goffman's *presentation of self in everyday life* has been applied to uncover the fluidity of drug market actors operating within dynamic market spaces, suggesting that drug dealer identities can be temporary, can be combined with legitimate roles, and can change over time depending on, for example, type of customer being dealt with. Finally, in response to my third question, I have drawn on these findings to present an enhanced and enriched understanding of drug market structure as having more in common with a gas cloud than with a jigsaw puzzle or hierarchical pyramid.

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