(IN)VISIBLE ENTREPRENEURS: CREATIVE ENTERPRISE IN THE URBAN MUSIC ECONOMY

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DECLARATION

"I certify that this work has not been accepted in substance for any degree, and is not concurrently being submitted for any degree other than that of Doctor of Philosophy being studied at the University of Greenwich. I also declare that this work is the result of my own investigations except where otherwise identified by references and that I have not plagiarised another's work".

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ABSTRACT

This thesis contends that the NEET category obscures the significant impact of the accomplishments of those who operate in the informal creative economy. Grime music, a black Atlantic creative expression, is used as a lens through which to explore and analyse the nature of entrepreneurship within this sector. East London, a site of poverty, movement and migration is the geographical starting point for the project.

Over a five-year period from 2007 – 2012, ethnographic field research was carried out in London and Ayia Napa, Cyprus. Forty semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants in the sector. In addition, participant observation was undertaken in various settings including pirate radio stations, nightclubs and music video shoots.

The global reach of those who operate within the urban music sector is highly visible and this sector has a significant socio-economic impact. Practitioners utilise advances in technology as well as innovative business practice to create opportunities for self-employment on a local, national and international scale. Grime music and its related enterprise culture is a mechanism for social and economic mobility particularly for those from ethnically stigmatised communities.

The findings disrupt existing strategies to deal with youth unemployment. Suggestions are made for a more differentiated approach to support the reduction of youth unemployment and the development of business start-up and self- employment. Finally, further research areas are identified including a more in depth study into the global economy for UK urban music and an exploration of the process and practice of business start-up.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The NEET category disguises and obscures the significance of the diverse range of activities, achievements and accomplishments of those who operate in the informal creative economy. The inherent contradictions and questions that emerge from an exploration of the Grime music scene, in particular, allows for a more complex reading of the socio-economic significance of urban music. In this research project I endeavour to take more than a hurried glance at constructions of entrepreneurship in a sector that traditionally has had little attention from the academy (Wacquant 2007). I negotiate the woven complexities of how this economy operates and examine the ecology that enables a certain mobility and reinvention of the practitioners to take place. The transformative aspect of participation in the urban music economy is also an underexplored area within the academy.

My original contribution to knowledge is an ethnographic critique of the concept of the NEET using case studies of Grime music and its related enterprise culture. Grime music offers a way to explore the education, employment and training that people in this NEET category are engaged in.

Part one provides the background and context for the project, the aim of which was to explore to what extent entrepreneurship exists within the informal creative economy. **Chapter 1** sets the scene and prepares the ground for the research project. With a specific focus on the informal urban music economy in east London, this project considered how this economy is constituted and analysed the scope of the entrepreneurial activities the practitioners within this arena undertake. Given that this sector exists, I also wanted to explore the educational achievements of those within the sector and identify what learning opportunities, if any, are in evidence.

This thesis is concerned with the invisible entrepreneurs participating in the informal creative economy in east London. Poor young people are often defined as NEET, that is aged between 16 and 24 and Not in Education, Employment, or Training (Chandler & Barrett 2013), therefore the genesis and political context of the NEET category of deficit is outlined and discussed. However, my research question considers the activities of those aged between 18 and 40, therefore the NEET category has been extended to include those

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over the age of 24 who may have been classified in this way in the past. As this project has east London as its geographical starting point, the specific history of this area as a site of movement, migration and poverty is outlined. For the purposes of this project east London is defined as the London Boroughs of Newham, Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest.

Grime music originated in east London and it is used as a lens through which to view the complexities of the NEET category. Its sonic genealogy is traced back to the Jamaican sound systems and their UK counterparts, filtered through Hip-Hop, Reggae and UK Garage. The purpose of the 'crew' as a field of operation and as a site of apprenticeship is discussed

The starting point for the project was urban east London in 2007 and the primary research phase continued through to the final interview in November 2012. A significant development during the primary research phase was the global recession from 2008 to 2009, and the subsequent economic slowdown.

Chapter 2 contains the theoretical framework and literature review for the thesis. My hypothesis is that, in east London, the informal creative economy is a repository for young people who are categorised as NEET. Grime is a cornerstone of the informal urban music economy and it has broken free of its east London origins to have a global presence. The organising framework for this project is Paul Gilroy's concept of the black Atlantic, particularly as it relates to the transnational and borderless flow of black creative expression such as Grime (Gilroy 1996). As the practitioners in this sector appear to belong to ethnically coded stigmatised communities, Loic Wacquant is used to consider how the concept of *advanced marginality* has an impact on participation, and the creation of enterprise, in the informal creative economy (Wacquant 2007). Participants in this informal creative economy, particularly if they are NEET or from poor areas, are subject to the disciplinary techniques of power and procedures of knowledge. How these techniques are used to impose order at the level of the individual to create and code different kinds of space is examined (Foucault 1991).

This chapter then proceeds to provide a review of the relevant literature pertaining to definitions of entrepreneurship and the significance of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship

for economic growth. The question of who is an entrepreneur is examined – why is it that some individuals are not recognised as being in the *field* when it is clear they have the skill, knowledge and talent to *play the game* (Bourdieu 1993, p.8). Particular reference is made to the importance of entrepreneurship in the informal creative economy, to which the urban music economy can be said to belong. The global economic significance of the creative industries in the developed and developing world is outlined. For comparison, special attention is paid to literature on the Jamaican recorded music industry and the Nigerian video film industry (Nollywood), in the context of Gilroy's black Atlantic hypothesis. As one aspect of the research is post secondary school learning opportunities and educational attainment, the literature relating to adult learning theories in formal and informal contexts is also reviewed.

Chapter 3 outlines and justifies the ethnographic method used for this research project. My research project had three key objectives; firstly, to identify existing formal qualifications, secondly, to explore the learning choices of those within the sector and the learning opportunities within the hidden or underground creative economy and finally to identify ways to harness the skills, talents and energy of these participants and translate that into formal qualifications and legitimate business pursuits.

The research question therefore lends itself to an ethnographic approach as it is primarily concerned with the experience of being in and participating in a particular social world – in this case the informal urban music economy. The ethnographic method as it relates to fieldwork – participant observation and interviews - is discussed and justified and draws on key examples of ethnographic practice. These examples informed the research design and sampling strategy. The key biographical details for informants are outlined (pseudonyms are used). I outline how the study was conducted, detailing interview and fieldwork activities and timescales.

The methodology used consisted of a literature review, internet research, semi structured interviews, participant observation and the collection and archiving of selected merchandise and promotional material. As well as a library of photographs, I also have 'behind the scenes' film footage of a model shoot, a pirate radio station as well as two music videos. I have created a forty minute film documenting the urban music scene in Ayia Napa, Cyprus – '*Making it Funky*' (White 2013b). Forty interviews were carried out over a four year

period with respondents who are involved in the most common aspects of the urban music industry: artists/performers, event promoters, sound engineers, music producers, models and filmmakers.

Part two of the thesis contains the findings from the fieldwork undertaken in the urban music economy in London and Cyprus. **Chapter 4** brings to the fore the wide range of activities being undertaken in the urban music sector in the UK. This chapter situates these ventures into a broader economic and social context. The traditional split between formal and informal economy is empirically examined within the context of the urban music economy. The significance (or otherwise) of formal learning and educational attainment of those within the sector are examined. The chapter identifies and narrates the experience of both the old hands and the new entrants to the field as well as those who are making their mark. Interviews with these respondents were carried out in east London. Fieldwork was undertaken in a pirate radio station - somewhere in Tower Hamlets, cultural seminars in Dalston, a nightclub in Shoreditch and on the set of two music video shoots in Beckton and Hoxton respectively.

Chapter 5 outlines that far from being a highly localised, niche creative practice, the act of creating Grime music propels its practitioners out into the world and away from 'the ends'. During the interviews and while exploring the artistic output of the Grime scene online and on radio, it became apparent that although the respondents were grounded in east London through residence and/or performance, their reach and influence extended far beyond this locale. With a specific focus on urban music, this chapter considers how the informal creative economy co-exists with, and is embedded within, the formal sector. Using ethnographic field research undertaken in the UK and Ayia Napa in Southern Cyprus as a case study, this chapter considers how practitioners apply their informal learning in practice. Their contribution and my participation in the field is recorded in a video documentary *Making it Funky* (White 2013b). It also explores how music and its by products has enabled markets to be created and developed and primary and secondary business activities to take place.

Part three provides an analysis of the initial research and findings from the fieldwork to explore the transitions and transformations that occur as a result of participating in the urban music economy. **Chapter 6** explores the inherent contradictions and questions that

emerge from an examination of the Grime music scene, and offers a complex reading of the socio-economic significance of urban music. This chapter endeavours to take a close and detailed look at constructions of entrepreneurship in a sector that traditionally has had little attention from the academy (Wacquant 2007). The contradictions of 'the ends' as an area of constraint and restraint while at the same time offering comfort, security and innovation is outlined and examined. Participation in the urban music economy enables a transcendence of the boundaries of the ends. Whether this participation enables the crossing of ethnic and cultural boundaries is explored and discussed (Gilroy 2004).

Chapter 7 examines the types of business activities that are in evidence in the urban music economy and the significance, if any, of educational attainment for those who participate in the sector. During the primary research phase of the project, I met informants who had established a number of enterprises including; an online TV channel, music video production, clothing lines, a SIM card for a mobile phone network, record labels, event promotion and an internet radio station. It was evident that these individuals had established businesses that have afforded a move beyond the socio-economic boundaries of their inner city environments to create meaningful work for themselves and others. How they have developed the necessary skills, knowledge and talent to become participants in the urban music economy is explored and discussed. The businesses and individuals featured here are at the forefront of a push for a reconfiguration of the existing discourse regarding who is an entrepreneur and what constitutes entrepreneurship.

Part four contains the closing remarks for the research project, reflecting on and drawing together key findings and contradictions. **Chapter 8** identifies key findings and further areas for research including a more in-depth analysis into the dualisation of the urban music economy and the impact of the social context on who is classified as an entrepreneur. It also argues for a reworking of existing policy initiatives for tackling youth unemployment and the NEET issue to take into account actual activity, rather than imagined inactivity.

PART ONE: CONTEXT AND SCENE SETTING

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

> *'This is eskiboy right now, I know everyone's wondering what's he gonna say what's he gonna say? Oi no one can tell me what to say so shattup. You coulda been a badman, gunman, drugman, roadman can't get a stripe off me […] But I'm a fly b I roll in E3, I was hiring cars when I was sixteen'* Wiley - Nightbus Dubplate (ross121111 2009)

My thesis is concerned with the invisible entrepreneurs who participate in the informal creative economy in east London. These entrepreneurs are invisible because, to borrow a phrase from Loic Wacquant, they belong to a stigmatised community, which means that in this context, they are young, black and poor (Wacquant 2007). I contend that the NEET category disguises and obscures the real and continuing activities, achievements and accomplishments of those operating in the informal sector, that is aged between 16 and 24 and Not in Education, Employment or Training (Chandler & Barrett 2013). I further demonstrate that young people, who are or who have been NEET, are creating their own employment opportunities and in many instances creating work for others through their participation in the informal music economy. These activities remain invisible on the whole to policy makers responsible for reducing youth unemployment, but highly visible in a mediated world. The data relating to young people who are NEET tells part of the story, as do the statistics relating to educational underachievement of young people from marginalised communities - see for example (LSN 2009; Office for National Statistics 2013b; Hamnett et al. 2007; Ball et al. 2012; Department for Education 2013a). However, the organising principles of this sector is an under researched area within the academy.

In *The Art of Listening,* Les Back reminds us that when we speak in the place of others, we have a responsibility to get it right (Back 2007, p.3). I have listened to the rhythms of the urban music economy in east London and I have become attuned to the story of what it means to be an artist and entrepreneur within this impoverished and stigmatised community. I have also looked carefully at how musical creative practice emerges from these inner east London boroughs and is then disseminated on a national and global scale. This is a key reason why the borderless flow of black creative expression forms a core component of my thesis. In order to do this story justice I have to consider the personal narratives of the individual artists as well as the public narratives such as youth unemployment and poverty (Back 2007, p.10) as well as the social forces that keep this

field dynamic, innovative and constantly moving is a drive for recognition, visibility and economic validation.

My research therefore constitutes an attempt to discover not only what the participants in the informal urban music economy are doing, but also how they create meaning from what they do. I also wanted to give an account that is not preoccupied with the illicit, that is, unregistered activities of those participating in the urban music economy. Therefore, I have aimed for a narrative that explores entrepreneurship in its broadest sense and foregrounds the participants understanding and control of their cultural practice (Jansson 2013, p.137). I am aware that I am speaking in the place of others so my aim is to present the participants/informants as the rounded, three dimensional individuals who met with me, spoke to me and gave their time because they wanted their story to be told in an academic arena – 'on a serious level' (from field notes).

My method therefore, is an endeavour to engage with this world differently. The only way to get to the heart of what is going on here is to go on a journey and while travelling, to look, listen, take note and give back. This journey has to capture the sounds and vibrations of this environment – urban east London – in order to provide a frame of reference with which to understand how it is that Grime music emerged from this location (Lefebvre et al. 1999). Just as important is how Grime has broken free of its east London origins to have a national as well as a global impact. It has a social and economic impact that cannot and should not be underestimated – the activities of these invisible entrepreneurs creates wealth, develops economic market places and offers opportunity for social and kinetic mobility. In other words, operating in this sphere enables practitioners to cross social and geographical borders and step into new identities as artists and entrepreneurs.

Within the urban spaces of east London municipal housing, it is possible to see the residual marks of each community that has come and gone. What remains is a complex and multi layered network of people who draw on diverse cultural and historical backgrounds. These communities operate in a landscape that is changing, but these locations continue to be sites of poverty and marginalisation. This confluence of people and place created an environment for Grime music to emerge and it is evident that the physical nature of this location has an impact on creative and cultural expression. Adam Krims suggests that urban spaces shape our everyday social and economic behaviour and that as music is embedded within this

urban life, it is evident that it delineates time and place (Krims 2007, p.xviii). It is unlikely that Grime music would have emerged from the leafy suburbs of Richmond upon Thames because there is a symbiotic relationship between music, place and community particularly as it relates to new musical practices which come out of movement and migration (Connell & Gibson 2003).

Young people from impoverished backgrounds moving between unemployment and low paid, poor quality work or training schemes, is not a novel situation. It comes out of a long term pattern that has been the lived experience for previous generations of older workers from poor areas (Shildrick et al. 2010). What has changed now is that the low paid, therefore, lesser quality work that is still available requires increasing levels of qualification. Therefore, those that do not acquire the necessary standard of qualification are more likely to be excluded from the world of work. For the young this means that they are less likely to make the transition into adulthood.

For my research purposes, I use the Llanes and Barbour definition of the informal economy which is those involved in the legal process of producing goods and services that are 'unregistered by, or hidden from the state for tax and/or labour law purposes but which are legal in all other respects'(Llanes & Barbour 2007, p.9). The informal economy is neither exclusive to deprived areas nor limited to specific groups. However, the informants for this project are people aged between 18 and 40 who operate in the informal music business in urban east London. Therefore, as this area contains some of the most socially and economically deprived areas in the country, as well as containing some of the most ethnically diverse constituencies, it considers, on the whole, the activities of those who are young, black and poor (MacRury & Poynter 2009, p.15; Mayor of London 2010, p.35; Bux Ryan et al. 2010, p.7).

When Charles Booth carried out his study into the levels of poverty in London in the late nineteenth century, east London was viewed as a foreign land situated in the shadow of the wealth of the City and populated by communities of poor people and migrants (Booth 2012). The East End has historically had a reputation for poverty and widespread dereliction (Eade 2000), it was seen as a symbol of the dark side of the nation – despite prosperity elsewhere. In the Victorian era, as the more well off workers moved out to the new suburbs of Ilford, Leytonstone and Forest Gate, new arrivals moved inwards – to

places such as Canning Town, Aldgate and Whitechapel thereby creating a residual community which was uniformly poor (Booth 2012, p.16). Furthermore, the 1944 Abercrombie Plan facilitated the flight of skilled workers to new towns leaving behind the 'unskilled, semi-skilled, old and sick' (Eade 2000, p.127).

Background to the research question

My starting point for this project was urban east London in 2007 and the primary research phase continued through to 2012. During this timescale the perceived rise in anti social and violent behaviour among disaffected youth was at the forefront of public and political consciousness. There was a heightened anxiety about gangs and turf or postcode wars, a constant flow of media reporting and government reports supported the common sense view that this was a worsening inner city problem that impacted on ordinary citizens (Curtis 2008; Rose 2008; Sherwin 2007; Panorama 2009; journeymanpictures 2008). This fear was based on real events, for example, in a six-week period in early 2007 five teenagers were killed; James Andre Smartt-Ford, Michael Dosunmu, Billy Cox, Kodjo Yenga and Adam Regis were stabbed or shot in separate incidents in London (Mail online 2007), and from 2007 to 2008, a reported 27 teenagers were killed in London (Stickler 2008). Music, particularly the lyrics from Grime music was often seen as part of the problem. It appeared that Grime offered a medium for young people to go to war with each other, activating conflicts over territory, reputation or gang membership that often ended in violence (De Castella 2007; Heale 2008; Collinson 2006).

The lyrics at the start of this chapter are from a track written and performed by Wiley, an east London Grime artist, in 2007. From the margins, he confidently articulates a particular and specific position, namely; he will say and do exactly as he pleases – he does not care who you are, there is nothing that anyone can do to him, or about him – he is invincible. Wiley locates himself firmly in a particular territory – London E3 (Bow in the inner east London Borough of Tower Hamlets). Wiley taps into and plays with a prevailing viewpoint of the time, that young people in inner city areas were fixated on postcodes and operating outside of accepted societal norms and values.

A significant and far reaching development during the primary research phase was the global recession that began 2008 and continued until 2009. The subsequent economic slowdown contributed to unemployment in the UK rising to levels that had not been

experienced since the early 1980s. Long established businesses, including financial institutions, failed and the repercussions were compelling at all levels of society. Indeed, in September 2007, Northern Rock Bank sought an emergency loan from the Bank of England, an act that precipitated images of economic meltdown in the UK as depositors with this bank queued up to withdraw their savings. There was a negative impact particularly on the retail and financial sectors. Furthermore, poor areas, such as those in east London continued to experience high levels of unemployment. Nationally, the numbers of young people in the NEET category expanded, reaching just under a million in 2008 (LSN 2009). Across Europe, joblessness among the young rose to unprecedented levels, in Greece, for example 61.5% of young people were unemployed (Taylor 2013).

The NEET category

NEET has existed as a designator and as an outcome since the late 1990s, but it has gained momentum against this backdrop of rising youth unemployment and the impact of the global economic downturn that began in 2008. Estimates of those who fit the criteria vary between 10% and 20% (Department for Education 2013c; Lee & Wright 2011; London's Poverty Profile 2013). In the report *Wasted* Harriet Sergeant presents a common current stereotype of the NEET, a detached, often criminal individual who is as far away as it is possible to be from the education and employment sphere (Sergeant 2009b). This category emerged from the lexicon of the now defunct Careers Service, it was originally used to identify school leavers who were 'Status Zero', in other words, neither Status 1 – employed, nor Status 2 – in education, nor Status 3 – in training. This category was applied to approximately 20% of school leavers in the mid 1990s (Shildrick et al. 2010). The consequence of this lack of integration into formal work and adult life has a social cost, increased criminal and anti social activity being one aspect of this. There is also, of course, a financial and economic cost, which is estimated in some quarters to be between £12 and £32 billion. It includes the cost of paying for welfare benefits and increased instances of interactions with the criminal justice system (Coles et al. 2010).

The NEET category was taken up as a defining classification by the New Labour government in 1997. Its firm intent was to increase participation by the young in all three areas because it is assumed that without work, education or training young people will not properly integrate into adult society. Reducing the numbers of those who are classified as NEET therefore has been a key youth policy for successive governments during the last

fifteen years (Shildrick et al. 2010; LSN 2009; Lee & Wright 2011; A. Cunningham 2012). Originally, only 16 – 18 year olds, that is, those of school leaving age were classed as NEET. However, with unemployment now at the one million mark among the young, it now includes 18 – 24 year olds. For the purposes of this research project, I have extended the definition to include the experiences of those participants up to the age of 40 as this will allow for an examination of how people mature within the NEET category. Nevertheless, however it is defined, it is an enduring socio-economic issue and one that the Coalition government elected in 2010 maintained that it was firmly committed to tackling (HM Government 2011). Yet, in London, the proportion of those who are NEET has not altered significantly over the last decade (Bainbridge & Browne 2010).

The constituency which inhabits the NEET category is defined as static, immobile and restricted in terms of life chances and entry into the labour market (Bainbridge & Browne 2010). A variety of factors have been identified to determine those at risk of becoming NEET, but the most significant are being poor, unemployed and living in a poor neighbourhood, being from a particular ethnic minority background – specifically African Caribbean, Bangladeshi or Pakistani and having few or no educational qualifications is also relevant (Coles et al. 2010). The east London Boroughs of Newham, Tower Hamlets and Hackney are the starting point for this research project. These boroughs contain areas that are high in socio-economic disadvantage and have some of the most ethnically diverse communities in the UK (London Borough of Newham 2005; London Borough of Hackney 2005; London Borough of Tower Hamlets 2005). Furthermore, they also have high percentages of young people who are classified as NEET (Aston Mansfield 2011).

Young people and unemployment: the impact of a supply side approach

Leaving school and the family are rites of passage into adulthood. The school to work or education into employment transition has been disrupted by structural changes in the UK economy. Whereas in the post World War Two era the majority of young people left school at the end of secondary schooling, now an increasing number stay beyond the compulsory school leaving age. These structural changes mean that there are fewer entry level jobs that are suitable for young people and therefore the youth employment market has all but disappeared (Murray & Gayle 2012; Furlong & Cartmel 2007). This led to increased levels of youth unemployment in the 1980s (Casson 1979). In 1980, youth unemployment rose

more in that year than in had for the previous decade in total (MacDonald 2011, p.429). In common with the current economic situation, the 1980s were a time of deep recession, social inequality, severe public spending cuts and civil disturbance. Today, almost one million young adults are unemployed and tackling the NEET problem has remained a key youth policy since 1997 (MacDonald 2011, p.430).

Youth unemployment, while it had been a matter of concern in the UK since the last instance of mass unemployment in the 1980s, became a more pressing political issue with the most recent global economic downturn in 2008. At the start of this project, it became evident that young people with further and higher educational qualifications were becoming NEET. In the UK, unemployment among graduates, combined with increased levels of student debt became a more acute political matter (Harrison 2013; Office for National Statistics 2013a). The detrimental consequences of young people not being able to make the transition into adulthood through the usual rite of passage of paid employment are well documented and include lower lifelong earnings as well as professional and psychological scarring (Lee & Wright 2011; Sissons & Jones 2012; Kingsley 2011a).

Mass unemployment in the late 1970s and early 1980s had a critical effect on young people who as a result experienced wage scarring and limited opportunities. They were therefore not only as individuals, facing the possibility life on the margins, but also at a societal level, large numbers of unemployed, unskilled young people posed an increased risk of creating civil disturbance as evidenced by the riots in Brixton, Bristol and Birmingham in 1981 (Scarman et al. 1982).

The Youth Training Scheme (YTS) that was introduced in 1983 was one of a number of policy initiatives that was established to address the problem of unemployment among the young. It was aimed at those of school leaving age and it offered a one-year (later extended to two years) programme of work experience and training (MacDonald 2011). It can be viewed as a precursor to the current government focus on the creation of apprenticeships for young people as a solution to increased levels of unemployment. Yet, the push to drive down the youth unemployment figures avoids one obvious difficulty – the lack of jobs generated by the economy. Instead it focuses on what young people are lacking – in terms of employability, attitude and qualifications. Nevertheless, since the 1980s, education

policy on attainment and subsequent access to tertiary education, employment and training has had a significant impact on the NEET category.

Education policy and its relationship to the NEET category

Since the 1980s, the youth labour market (entry level jobs for those leaving school once they had completed compulsory education) has been eroded almost to the point of non-existence and the Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) sectors have been expanded to absorb those who would otherwise have gone into work (Murray & Gayle 2012; Furlong & Cartmel 2007). The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) ranks the United Kingdom as one of the richest countries in the world. Britain's continuing prosperity depends on ideas and fresh talent particularly because globalisation and technological change mean that economic success in the 21st century demands 'higher levels of innovation, faster response to change and increased creativity' (Leitch 2006, p.6). Therefore, the challenge for schools and the education system is to focus on and improve economically valuable skills. The expansion of higher education is part of a wider project that sees higher education as a driver for long-term economic growth and national prosperity. Indeed, a well educated population is still viewed as a prerequisite to the UK being able to compete in a world arena (Sissons & Jones 2012).

Education is considered to be a vital institution for the development and growth of the economy, as well as a means to improve life chances and opportunities, yet, in the UK, 1 in 6 young people leave school unable to read write or add up properly (Leitch 2006, p.22; Stevenson & Jarillo 2007; MacLeod 2006). More than ten years of the national literacy and numeracy hour initiatives have had little impact on this statistic (Shepherd 2010; Sergeant 2009b). A recent OECD report ranked England and Northern Ireland 21st and 22nd out of 24 for literacy and numeracy standards respectively (Ramesh 2013). At the same time, there is an ethnic and cultural dimension to this issue in that a significant proportion of young people from BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) communities (particularly those of Caribbean descent), become NEET (Leitch 2006; Hills 2010). Furthermore, figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) suggest that black males aged 16-24 have an unemployment rate in excess 50% - a rate which has almost doubled since the 2008 recession (Ball et al. 2012).

Questions have been raised by some authors regarding the low academic achievement of white working class boys (Sergeant 2009b; Skidmore 2008; Bingham 2013) but the relative underachievement of pupils of Caribbean descent has been a matter of concern for at least two decades (Richardson 2007). Furthermore, the attainment gap between black children and their peers is still an issue (Department for Education 2013a).

State run secondary schools in England have been non-selective since the 1970s, however, a combination of factors has supported the maintenance of the status quo where young people from poor areas continue to achieve less than their middle class counterparts (Hamnett et al. 2007). These factors include ranking (development of lower tier qualifications), increased competition among schools for the more desirable pupils (those who could take and achieve the higher level qualifications) and the establishment of league tables to identify 'good' and 'failing' schools. This has helped to create what Lucey and Walkerdine argue is a construction of a middle class, masculine hegemony where it is acceptable for middle class boys to be laddish and high achievers, but this is not an option for working class or black boys (Tomlinson 2005, p.198). These 'dividing practices' (Foucault 1991) enabled schools to 'reject, neglect or lose' students who could not attain the prize of 5 grade A* - C GCSE passes leading to further ranking and class division in terms of employment and further/higher education opportunities (Tomlinson 2005, p.189). The attainment of 5 grade A* - C GCSE passes acts as a gateway to further and ultimately higher education opportunities, without them the risk of becoming NEET, particularly for those from poor backgrounds increases.

Foucault suggests (1991, p.143), that the defined space of the classroom/school helps to create an enclosure where individuals can be assessed, judged, ranked and above all supervised. Indeed each and every aspect of school life is observed, monitored and controlled and since the 1970s has variously classified growing numbers of black students as *Educationally Sub Normal* (ESN), *marginalised* and *underachieving* (Allen & Ainley 2007; Richardson 2007, p.137).

The REACH project concluded that black boys and young black men face serious challenges in every sector of society; they are less likely to do well at school, more likely to be unemployed and much more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system (Communities and Local Government 2007). More recently, the Children's Commissioner

report into school exclusions found that 'Black Caribbean pupils were more than three times more likely to be permanently excluded from school in 2010–11 than the school population as a whole' and children who are excluded are more likely to become NEET (Children's Commissioner 2013, p.28).

East London: The birthplace of Grime music

It is accepted that the east London area - specifically the inner London boroughs of Tower Hamlets and Newham – is the birthplace of Grime music (Campion 2004; Hampson 2009; Dreamers row 2012; Hancox 2013). My research project has east London as its geographical starting point, it is therefore useful and relevant to outline the specific history of this geographical area. For the purposes of this project east London is defined as the London Boroughs of Newham, Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) cites the east London Boroughs of Newham and Tower Hamlets as two of the most economically and socially deprived boroughs in the United Kingdom (MacRury & Poynter 2009; London Borough of Tower Hamlets 2005; London Borough of Hackney 2005; London Borough of Newham 2005). In 2013, significant numbers of young people in these boroughs do not achieve the 5 grade A* to C GCSE standard (London's Poverty Profile 2013).

The east London area has a long history of movement and migration from the French Huguenots who came to Spitalfields in the seventeenth century to Jewish settlement in the early 20th century. This was followed by the subsequent migration from the Caribbean, Africa and the Indian sub-contintent from the 1950s onwards (Tames 2006; London Borough of Hackney 2005; London Borough of Newham 2005; London Borough of Tower Hamlets 2005). Currently Newham and Tower Hamlets have higher populations of Asian and Asian –British (34%) than London as a whole, while Hackney's Black British population stands at 20.9% (Neighbourhood Statistics 2007). Since the 1880s the Tower Hamlets areas of Limehouse and Stepney also had a significant, but now declining, Chinese population (Benton & Gomez 2011). On the whole, east London has remained a multicultural, relatively poor part of London, despite its proximity to the city and local and national initiatives for regeneration. The *Thinkpiece Report* was commissioned by the Communities and Local Government Department with a brief to identify socio-economic problems in the five host boroughs and map out a legacy for the London 2012 Olympic

Games. It was prepared by MacRury and Poynter and it provides a historical overview and it outlines the current situation of east London as follows:

> Since the nineteenth century east London has provided the location for manufacturing industries and the city's docklands (sic). It housed the city's working classes and remained, throughout the Twentieth century, relatively poor compared to the rich west of London. When the docks closed in the 1970s, the area suffered major job losses in traditional manufacturing and processing industries from which many parts have not recovered. By the beginning of the twenty first century, the extensive regeneration of London's Docklands and improvements in infrastructure had created an area that is socially polarized, containing pockets of relative affluence within an area that has a high concentration of relative poverty and deprivation. (MacRury & Poynter 2009, p.5)

Hackney was created as a metropolitan borough in 1899 – formed out of the areas of Stoke Newington, Shoreditch and Hackney. The second half of the 19th century was characterised by rapid population growth. The current urban landscape was mainly created in the Victorian era with the railway arriving in 1840. In the 1930s the London County Council began a programme of slum clearance and the building of the large housing estates stems from this era. After World War Two, many industries began to move out of Hackney and Shoreditch. Margaret Thatcher's restructuring of the UK economy in the 1970s and 1980s led to the closure or relocation overseas of larger manufacturing firms. These firms were replaced by 'low intensity enterprises' such as car dealers, scrap dealers and cheap warehousing (British History Online & T. F.T. Baker (Editor) 2003),

Five miles to the east of the City of London and developing from a farming community in the mid 19th Century, Newham was formed from the old boroughs of East Ham and West Ham. The Royal Docks which were built in the 1850s, linked directly to the railways. They were at that time, one of the largest docks in the world and brought people from all over the world into east London. For example, in the 1930s Canning Town was home to the Coloured Men's Institute and at that time had the largest black population in London. Both the Docks and Newham experienced heavy bombing during the Second World War, particularly in the south of the borough. West Ham developed small townships, including Canning Town and Silvertown to house the workers for the new industries. In East Ham, the houses were built for professional workers and so the two areas developed in different ways; West Ham was heavily industrialised and East Ham – although it had Beckton Gasworks - had more open space; Central Park, Plashet Park and Wanstead Flats (London Borough of Newham 2005).

FIGURE 1. East London postcode areas[1] (Wikipedia 2014)

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[1] For the purposes of this project, east London is defined as the London Boroughs of Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest. It does not include the postcode E18. This postcode relates to South Woodford and is part of the London Borough of Redbridge.

Like Hackney, Newham experienced slum clearance and industrial decline, with high unemployment in the 1980s. In the last twenty years there have been significant regeneration initiatives. The London Docklands Development Corporation was formed in 1981 to regenerate Beckton and the Royal Docks, new housing was built in Beckton including Cyprus and London City airport was built in 1987. Tower Hamlets – now rebranded as Eastside – has a similar history. Its development is most recently marked by the creation and development of Canary Wharf as a new fiscal location with multinational companies such as HSBC and JP Morgan based there (FX Week 2003; Pratley 2010). All three boroughs were host boroughs for the London 2012 Olympics and are, post Games, currently undergoing another period of reconstruction and regeneration (London Borough of Tower Hamlets 2005; MacRury & Poynter 2009). In *Rebel Cities* (2013), David Harvey points out that in the social production of urban space, the creation of separate spaces and places has replaced integration – and it can be seen that places like Canary Wharf and the Westfield Shopping centre in Stratford create new spatial barriers between rich and poor. Nevertheless, place is a complex entity, it is contested and is continually in the process of becoming, it is not fixed. The production of place through music is therefore also a contested process and Ray Hudson suggests that there is a strong link with music and a sense of place (Hudson 2006).

The origins of Grime music

Grime is the lens through which the object of study – entrepreneurship in the urban music economy - will be viewed and examined. It will allow for an exploration of the NEET category and will enable consideration to be given to whether NEET holds true as a concept of deficit. Grime, has been known as Sub Low, RnG or Eski Beat - hence Wiley's self-referential *eskiboy*, in the *Nightbus Dubplate* (ross121111 2009). It draws its influences from the sound systems of Jamaica, filtered through Hip Hop, Drum and Bass and Two Step Garage. It has its origins in the hybridity of Jamaican reggae which itself grew out of the mix between American and Caribbean musical expression. Grime is a black Atlantic creative expression, the provenance of which is firmly rooted in urban east London, specifically the London Boroughs of Tower Hamlets and Newham. As a genre, it has been cited as an incitement to gang membership, criminal activity and violence particularly amongst young black men not only in inner London, but in other cities such as Birmingham (Muggs 2010; Beauman 2006; Jones 2010). Simon Wheatley, who spent ten years photographing and curating the Grime scene for his book *Don't call me urban!* concurs

with the view that there is a connection between the violence of the lyrics and the activities of the practitioners, stating:

> 'I'm not claiming that everyone who does grime is violent of course, but I've heard enough of the lyrics and seen enough of 'the roads' to detect a connection. 'The time of grime' is the era of postcode warfare and mindless teenage killings' (Coomes 2011).

Nevertheless, in *Stand Up Tall* Dan Hancox discusses the birth of Grime and argues that:

> '…while New Labour were flooding urban Britain with ASBOs and CCTV, teenagers like Dizzee looked up at the gleaming towers of Canary Wharf and contemplated their own poverty; telling stories of devastating bleakness, backed by music that shone with the futurism of a brighter tomorrow … a teenage genius with nothing to lose made the best British album of the 21st century' (Hancox et al. 2013).

It is possible that the significance and impact of Grime as a genre lies somewhere within these two positions, a creative output that metaphorically, and sometimes literally, gives expression to life at the margins as an urban outcast while at the same time offering an opportunity for exit. Hancox makes reference to Dizzee Rascal, a Grime MC who won the 2003 Mercury Music Prize. He describes growing up in Tower Hamlets in an environment that consisted of the council estates of Tower Hamlets and regular exclusions from both classroom and school (London Borough of Tower Hamlets 2005; BBC News Channel 2003b). Dizzee Rascal went to Langdon Park Community School in Poplar, Tower Hamlets and, by his own admission, was excluded from most lessons. At the time of winning, it was difficult for the mainstream music industry to categorise his creative expression, erroneously settling for 'UK rapper'. In a subsequent interview he was quoted as saying: 'I come from nothing – I come from the underground, pirate radio stations, I come from the ground man' (BBC News Channel 2003b).

Dizzee Rascal was originally mentored by Wiley (whose lyrics opened this chapter) - formerly of UK Garage crew Pay as U Go Cartel and now of Roll Deep - until artistic differences led to a parting of the ways. Roll Deep are a crew of approximately a dozen young men from east London (Tower Hamlets). Roll Deep also comprise MCs; Scratchy, Flow Dan, Trim, Breeze, Jet Li, Bubbles, Pit Bull, Jamakabi, Tinchy Stryder. The DJs in this crew are Karnage and Maximum. The beatmakers are Danny Weed and Wiley and the producer is Target (Tang 2005). Target is now a DJ on BBC Radio 1Xtra.

Slightly further east in the London Borough of Newham Marcus Nasty, Jammer and other members of the N.A.S.T.Y crew were also creating and developing a sound from the existing UK Garage genre. In east London, this sound came to be known as Grime. N.A.S.T.Y is an acronym for Natural Artistic Sounds Touching You. Founded at the turn of the 21st century by Marcus Nasty, D Double E and Jammer until an acrimonious split left Marcus Nasty at the helm, this crew is also a fluid collection of approximately a dozen young male artists. Members include: DJs Mak 10; MCs Griminal, Hyper, Stormin, Lil Nasty, Kassimo, Ghetto and Kano. Marcus Nasty is now a DJ on Rinse FM. Dizzee Rascal has also worked with N.A.S.T.Y (Hancox et al. 2013).

At the age of sixteen, DJ Geeneus established Rinse FM (a former pirate radio station) in Tower Hamlets. He stated that it was on Rinse in 2002, where UK Garage began to evolve into Grime: 'it was more like a darker side of Garage. We kind of converted the scene, into a darker sound…Grime started in east London…' (Hampson 2009). Grime had indeed emerged from the UK Garage scene of the late 20th /early 21st Century (Mason 2008, p.212). The Garage scene, however, had been dogged by violence – sometimes fuelled by postcode affiliations and soon what had started as an innovative UK take on US House music, became a highly marginalised practice – with very limited opportunities for practitioners to perform. For example, South London Garage crew *So Solid,* could not perform in London despite having national chart success. In an interview in 2003, So Solid's MC Harvey said: '…if you had Westlife in here you'd ask about the album, but people ask us about the violence…' (So Solid Crew 2006). Furthermore, in 2003, Dizzee Rascal was stabbed several times while in Ayia Napa in an alleged reprisal attack (Petridis 2003a). In the UK, particularly in London, shootings and stabbings occurred at Garage music events and these were reported with heightened media anxiety. Politicians opined on how this music – particularly the lyrical content – encouraged brutality and gang membership the regulating authorities – police and local councils – waged war on a scene that they felt encouraged criminality (Plunkett 2003; First Sight 2002; BBC News Channel 2003a; Heartless Nigga 2002). Eventually, public performance of UK Garage music became so problematic that it disappeared from view (Jackson 2005).

Grime, the later incarnation of Garage, is predominantly young, male and black, although it is not the exclusive property of the black Atlantic world (Paul Gilroy 1993, p.3). It sits outside the usual musical conventions. Sometimes, it can be hard on the ear, the beats can

be disturbing and brutal and sometimes the lyrics are lost or disguised. It is, however a means to express individuality in a public or community space (Carroll 2008, p.184). It is also a space where creative practice and commerce come together and enable the sale of black creative expression in a national and global market place (Hill Collins 2006). This creative expression/creative enterprise can take the form of live performance, staging of events, the production and sale of mixtapes and other merchandise such as clothing and DVDs, sale of studio time and the creation and distribution of publicity and marketing materials. At its heart are MCs, DJs, producers, beat makers and promoters, almost all of them male. All of these products and services are exchanged for cash, recognition and knowledge. There is a female presence in this sector but performers are a relatively small constituency (see for example Shystie an MC who has been performing for over a decade (Empire 2003) and more recent entrants to the field; Lady Leshurr, Paigey Cakey and RoXXXan (timwestwoodtv 2012).

Grime has its own avenues of distribution and promotion, for example pirate radio stations, independent record shops, club events, social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace and Channel AKA (formerly Channel U)[2], a digital TV channel. The pirate radio network, Channel AKA and YouTube form an influential and integral part of marketing and promoting urban music of all kinds, including Grime. These avenues of promotion and distribution have been made possible by advances in technology. Participation in this arena therefore requires technological skill, collaborative activity and the exchange or barter of goods and services .

Like Lovers Rock in the 1970s – a UK specific Reggae genre created by the offspring of Caribbean migrants to the UK, Grime is an 'invented UK musical expression' (Gilroy 1993, p.76) in that it draws on the cultural, political and economic history of having parents and grandparents from elsewhere. It stakes a claim to the lived experience of a specific and particular place, in this case urban east London (Gilroy 1996, p.6; Hampson 2009). It is an opportunity for practitioners to tell stories about themselves and their life events and thus assert black urban identities that are rooted in, for example, Newham rather than Africa or the Caribbean; using a persona that they have created. This mask is perhaps not a

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[2] On 24th March 2009, Channel U had a change of ownership and now broadcasts as Channel AKA.

concealment of their identity, but rather a positive act of creating a speaking subject within a context of marginalisation and silence (Ewans 2008). These stories are then communicated through the narrative performance (Labov 1997) and a wide range of themes are introduced and explored. Apart from the autobiographical output and the adversarial 'clash' element with other performers, Grime artists also discuss, for example, their success or perceived success; making money, originality of lyrics and so on but the themes also include; friendship, teamwork, love, crime and visibility. The use of street language within this genre 'asserts the primacy of the vernacular' (Gilroy 1996, p.110) and enables an oral passing on of stories and knowledge.

An overview of the urban music economy

Grime, however, is not the only urban music genre, Reggae, Dancehall, UK Funky House and RnB all share characteristics of the Grime scene with DJs, performance, events and associated merchandise being produced and promoted here in the UK and abroad. I am using urban here to denote these types of popular black musical expression, however, it is not an unproblematic category. For some the urban label is an imposition on them by commerce and the media who want to create neatly packaged and palatable version of black musical expression. Indeed, there is a significant mismatch between perceptions of black culture by outsiders as 'cool' and the often-harsh reality of being black and living on a deprived London council estate (Wheatley 2010). According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2011), urban is defined as follows:

> in, relating to, or characteristic of a town or city: *the urban population*

> (also urban contemporary) denoting or relating to popular dance music of black
> origin: *hip-hop's traditionally urban vibe*

Over the last ten years the UK music industry appears to have embraced this term *urban* as a substitute or shorthand for the majority of black musical expression. An example of this is the establishment of BBC Radio 1Xtra in 2002, with a brief to broadcast urban music which it broadly defines as Hip-Hop, Grime, Bassline, Garage, Dubstep, RnB, Drum and Bass, UK Funky, Dancehall, Reggae and Afrobeats (BBC Radio 2013). Furthermore, the Black Music Awards events took place from 1992 – 1996 and it had the same musical constituency as the Music of Black Origin or MOBO awards in 1996 (Horan 2003) as well as the Urban Music Awards (Urban Music Awards 2013). The debate surrounding the title

of the MOBOs has abated and since then urban appears to be the standard nomenclature for certain kinds of music, namely, Hip-Hop RnB, Soul and Grime.

However, it is nonetheless a contested category, which Simon Wheatley alludes to in the title of his photographic Grime project – Don't call me Urban (Wheatley 2010). At one level it is an inclusive label, enabling those who create or perform certain genres to be included, on the other it is divisive; what of black musicians who create Rock music, for example, or artists, such as Blur or Oasis whose music is by definition 'relating to or characteristic of a town or city' (Stevenson & Waite 2011). This is exemplified by the furore when Joss Stone, a white Soul singer from Devon, won best urban act in 2005 ahead of Dizzee Rascal, Lemar and Jamelia (BBC News 2005). Nevertheless, I have opted to use the term urban as a useful, albeit contested, shorthand for specific genres of black creative expression.

One key distribution and dissemination method for practitioners in the urban music economy is Channel AKA. Channel AKA, a digital television station, has been in existence since 2003. It originally started life as a station that broadcast Rock and other Popular music genres. It enables artists and aspiring artists to broadcast their videos for a nominal fee. In theory, for a small amount of money, a budding artist in the urban music economy may have a music video aired nationwide. There is also the possibility that this video will crossover, and if MTV Base or another mainstream channel takes it up, there is the potential for national recognition and perhaps monetary success as well as personal achievement. Channel AKA offers Grime artists accessible broadcasting, but as it is monitored and regulated by Ofcom[3], - the communications regulator that regulates the TV and radio sectors - rules apply. These rules impose order and conformity and as the Channel AKA identity established itself, there are less 'road'[4] videos broadcast than when it was known as Channel U.

Rules notwithstanding[5], for these artists Channel AKA offers an opportunity for visibility. The compulsion to perform is strong; so technology is mastered and bartering and exchange

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[3] Ofcom is the communications regulator. It regulates the TV and radio sectors, fixed line telecoms and mobiles, plus the airwaves over which wireless devices operate. Ofcom operates under the Communications Act 2003 (Ofcom 2013).

[4] A 'road' or 'hood' video is a music video which has been created and recorded by unsigned artists

[5] So, for example, 'accessible' broadcasting requires the completion of a video submission form as well as a non-exclusive license to broadcast. In addition, artists have to provide a vocal/instrumental mix of

takes place in order to raise the required capital to produce a video that meets the criteria. From its original target audience, Channel AKA has emerged as a prime arena where east London based urban music artists can gain prominence and recognition. Since then, Dizzee Rascal, Tinchy Stryder, Roll Deep, Wiley, Kano, Tinie Tempah, Griminal and Ghetts formerly Ghetto, for example, have come to national attention.

There is a flow to and from Channel AKA and YouTube, the video sharing website which was established in 2005. Formally produced music videos can be aired on Channel AKA and shared on YouTube. The 'collection of video pebbles' that constitutes YouTube (Leadbeater 2009, p.xvii) requires relatively few permissions and once a video is uploaded it 'opens a window on a global community' and thus enables artists to promote themselves directly to a potential fan base (Leadbeater 2009, p.xviii). A video on YouTube with a high number of views can also generate advertising revenue (S. Cunningham 2012). It also offers the opportunity for the viewer to comment or give feedback on the performance and for the artist to engage in direct dialogue with his or her audience. However, cultural production requires a steady supply of people to do the work and cultural consumption needs a steady creation of new markets (Hill Collins 2006, p.301). Rather than, as Paul Gilroy feared, the technological revolution in music making leading to a lessening in the amount of public performance (Gilroy 1993, p.5), YouTube and Channel AKA have provided a platform for a new market to be created where urban artists can be both producers and consumers of music products.

For the practitioners within the urban music economy it appears that there is a possibility to mature in this environment, but there is a question of longevity and exit. For some former DJs, their creative practice offers an opportunity for movement, transformation and the creation of a new persona. For some, instead of selling music and its by products, these former DJs sell 'right knowledge' which is based primarily on the religious and spiritual teachings of Dr Malachi Z. York (2012) and use their existing skills, experience and

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the track on CD. A biography, history, filmography, song lyrics and contact details are also required. Format is specified; videos must be submitted on BETA SP, DV CAM or MINI DV as PAL format. The broadcast quality is also tightly defined; 100% colour bars, audio should peak at -6db and NO HIGHER, participants are required to double check that vocals and pictures in sync. Avoid flashing images. The video content requires the removal al all swear words, offensive, violent and racist language. There should be no reference to drugs or solvent abuse in a glamourised way. Product placement including websites, logos, is not permitted. Participants are also to ensure that all relevant permissions have been received (Channel AKA 2013).

networks to do so. Enterprise requires innovation and the flexibility to change activity. So, performing names can and do change, collaborations and alliances shift and alter which helps to keep the product or service fresh.

The influence of sound systems on Grime music

The creative practice in this urban music scene has grown out of the Jamaican sound systems that came to the UK with the 1950s post war migrants. There is a continuity of practice within the current urban music economy in east London and the sound systems, shebeens and blues dances of the previous decades. In *Bass Culture* Lloyd Bradley outlines the development and diaspora influence of the Jamaican sound systems that often involved a 'sound clash' – a lyrical competition and talking or 'toasting' over a rhythm track (Bradley 2000; Belgrave n.d.; Goodman 2010). The clash is an antagonistic competition between two or more sound systems with the emphasis on bringing something new or original to the battle. Steve Goodman suggests that these sounds create intense vibrational movements in which the body and the technology are submerged (Goodman 2010, p.27).

In Jamaica in the 1950s, sound systems had started out playing American RnB imports, but in time this gave way to Ska, followed by Rocksteady and ultimately Reggae (McMillan 2005). Sound systems and the accompanying dances were a predominantly working class activity. The sonic emphasis was on the bass and the treble with large speakers playing the music at high volume. As well as entertainment, the sound systems provided a way for people within and outside of the music setting to earn an income and created '…opportunities for the marginalised and the small entrepreneur' (Witter 2004, p.6). These opportunities were not only as artists, distributors and event promoters (with these roles often being interchangeable), but also from allied activities such as the sale of food, alcohol and souvenirs.

This continuity of practice within the urban music economy can be traced through the mass migration from the Caribbean in the 1950s and 1960s, which brought with it particular social and cultural practices. These practices, filtered through an urban London landscape led to the emergence of the 'blues dance' and sound system as alternative creative enterprise. Sound systems did not just play records; they produced their own artists and released music on their own labels. At sound system events, the enterprise was constituted through the entrance fee and the sale of merchandise - drinks and food. In the 1970s and

1980s each area of London and every big city with a black community of Caribbean heritage, had a sound system. These sound systems played music and put on events for their followers or supporters. These events were advertised in record shops, barber shops and community settings (Bradley 2000). Some well-known examples of sound systems from the 1970s to the early 1990s are:

> Duke Vin, Count Shelly, Sir Coxsone, Chicken, the Thunderstorm, Frontline, Sufferer, Studio 1, Count Suckle, Duke Neville, Java, Shaka, Saxon, Fatman, Mafiatone, Jah Tubby's, King Tubby's, Unity, Gemi Magic, Metro Glory, Abashanti, Channel One, Virgo, One Love, Jamdown Rocker, Jah Observer, Quaker City, Wasifia, King Alfa, Trenchtown, Urban Rockers, Sir Christopher Kebra Negus, Jungle Man, Sovereign, Love Injection, Lord Koo's, Sir Higgins, […] Pioneer, CFFM, Latin Rave, AK, Sancho Panza, Gaz's Rocking Blues, Lord Sam, Rough but Sweet, Special FX, Fun Bunch, Secret Rendezvous, 4 Play, Special Touch, 5th Avenue, Hyper ESQ, Studio Express 365, Mellow Prime Time, 90%, After Dark, Gal Flex, Ill Kids, Firin' Squad, Drop Squad, Boogie Bunch, Rampage, BIPA, Tonka, Touch of Class, Pleasure Roadshow, Confunkion, Active Force, Players, Caveman Boogie, Midnight Express, Soul II Soul, Mistri, The Mistri Crew. (Belgrave n.d.)

The outdoor sound system had an adversarial element or sound clash, version excursion – where different lyrics were spoken or sung over the same rhythm tracks and invoked call and response between the performers and the audience, which was reworked and reconfigured for the enclosed dwellings of the UK. Over time, UK born sound systems emerged and started to play other styles of music: Swingbeat, RnB, Soul and Garage, but the enterprise element remained in evidence. These UK sound systems, such as Soul II Soul, sold merchandise and created branded events.

A key component of both the sound systems and the subsequent UK Garage and Grime scene was, and is, the crew. In the urban music sector a crew is a group of like-minded individuals who (usually) have been friends (possibly related) and share a common interest in this case – music. So, for example So Solid, Heartless Crew, Boy Better Know (BBK), Pay As You Go, Roll Deep and N.A.S.T.Y, contain members who attended the same schools, grew up on the same estates, are brothers or have some kind of familial relationship. Predominantly male, a crew is a space that provides an opportunity to learn your craft and develop tacit knowledge about the scene and how it operates. In the crew, roles and responsibilities are delineated and can comprise, beatmakers, MCs, vocalists and producers, however, members can, and do, cross boundaries often moving temporarily or permanently between one role and another. However, a clear distinction needs to be drawn here between a 'gang' that may or may not have 'crew' in its name and a crew in the context of urban music. A gang is seen to have come together for other activities and

usually nefarious purposes (Deuchar 2009; Bennett & Holloway 2004; Brookman et al. 2011). The primary purpose of the crew in this context is the creation, production and dissemination of music.

Now, music crew membership is less about a search for identity and more concerned with an expression and performance firmly rooted in the black diaspora experience. *Ina de Ghetto* (mattcorrm8 2009), a Grime track by Wretch 32, featuring Badness and Ghetts (formerly Ghetto) demonstrates this and also speaks to a collision/collapse of space, time and place. The words are spoken and sung by the three artists in a London and Jamaican dialect and some very lyrical wordplay is used to describe those that are focused on criminality as a way out of the hard life:

> *Wretch 32*
> *[…] Now everyone thinks they're Scarface*
> *It gets fizzy when their plans evolve*
> *And they end up in the can for coke*
> *I hope you're 7-Up (I-I-Ina Di Ghetto] […]*
>
> *Badness – Chorus*
> *[…]Life is more than rough, see you,*
> *You have to be bold and tough, yoooo*
> *You have to can hold it up? woaaa*
> *Ina di ghetto, ina di ghetto*
> *(I-I-Ina Di Ghetto) […]* (mattcorrm8 2009)

The lyrics and visuals make connections between east London, Kingston; Jamaica and Lagos; Nigeria and shows how Grime emerged from east London, but flows through and speaks to a global audience.

Conclusion

The NEET concept remains a way to categorise a section of the community by what they are not doing, that is, not taking part in formal, quantifiable employment, education and training activity. The NEET discourse is ethnically coded and gendered – NEET in the northern cities such as Hull is white and male (Lee & Wright 2011). In some sections of east London, the majority of the school population is from black and ethnic minority communities and NEET often acts as shorthand for the ongoing issue of educational underachievement and school dropout rates for black males in particular (Aston Mansfield

2011). The recent revelations regarding the number of young black men whose details are on the Metropolitan Police DNA database (Myers 2009) is an example of what could be seen as the criminalisation and stigmatisation of this particular constituency. In addition, the law of 'joint enterprise', which was ostensibly reintroduced to combat gang activity and knife crime, has had the effect of increasing the numbers of young black men serving long prison sentences. Joint enterprise in this context refers to the use of a 300-year-old law to ensure the sharing of responsibility for a crime among those that participated but also including those that were present (Warner 2009).

Creative enterprise and the creative sectors have a growing economic significance and there is a push to develop London as the creative capital of the world (Hartley 2004; MacRury & Poynter 2009; Granger & Hamilton 2010). With a specific focus on the informal urban music economy in east London, I consider how this economy is constituted and analyse the scope of the entrepreneurial activities the practitioners within this arena undertake. Given that this sector exists, I also explore the educational achievements of those within the sector and identify what learning opportunities, if any, are in evidence.

This research project opens up a dialogue with the participants in this economy and relays what they are doing in their own words and actions. They are artists and entrepreneurs and the activities and attributes they present disrupt the accepted definition of NEET as a site of immobility and inactivity. The entrepreneurs that form the core informants for this project are invisible to policymakers. This may be because they are from stigmatised communities. It is also possible that the NEET category, which has had currency in the UK since the mid 1990s disguises and obscures the enterprising activities of these individuals. Against a backdrop of rising youth unemployment and increasing concern about disaffected youth, gangs and knife crime, the problem of the NEET becomes increasingly heightened. The musical genres, such as Grime, which are created and disseminated within this context, are viewed as part of the problem.

It is evident that the ramifications, in terms of life chances and social inclusion, of young people becoming and remaining NEET are too significant to be ignored. The reduction in the numbers of young people who become NEET therefore continues been a priority for the Coalition government particularly within the context of the impact of the global economic downturn in 2008. Opportunities to partake in quality education and employment are

limited in areas of advanced marginality in the inner east London Boroughs of Newham, Tower Hamlets and Hackney. Large numbers of young people leave full time secondary education without the required five A* - C Grade GCSEs for entry into further education. Grime music emerged out of these east London areas in the early part of the 21st century. It is a black Atlantic creative expression drawing on the influences of Jamaican Sound Systems, Hip-Hop and RnB. Grime and its related enterprise is a key component of the urban music economy. It has a local, national and global reach and this is why I have used it as a lens through which to explore the category of the NEET. The creative and business practice of the artists and entrepreneurs who are the informants for my primary research disrupts the accepted definition of NEET as a site of immobility and inactivity. The impact and significance of entrepreneurship, particularly for those from marginalised communities as well as the borderless flow of black creative expression is the focus of chapter 2.

CHAPTER 2: FRAMING THE RESEARCH QUESTION: ORGANISING PRINCIPLES AND CONCEPTS

> *'Look, you can do moves on the street, I'd rather spit bars on the beat*
> *I'd rather that than nick cars every week, But jack is when I split scars*
> *with the heat. So I'm solo like the guitars and the beat, But this rhyming*
> *shit is for me. I live this, drink this, eat this, shit this, And I've even writ*
> *bars in my sleep'* Kano – Signs in Life (PoonTipEntertainment 2007)

My research question is focused on the extent of entrepreneurship and enterprising activity in the informal creative economy in east London. I also seek to identify the educational achievements of those participating in the sector and establish what types of learning opportunities, if any, are available. My hypothesis is that, in east London, the informal creative economy is a repository for young people who are categorised as NEET. The category of NEET is a political tool that has been used since the late 1990s by successive UK governments to define and identify young people from poor areas (Lee & Wright 2011; London's Poverty Profile 2013), and to justify the various actions that are visited on that constituency such as mandatory unpaid work experience (Ball 2012). The focus of this thesis is the enterprise and entrepreneurial activity among people who are operating in the informal economy and who would perhaps be categorised as NEET. The ecology of this business practice and entrepreneurship calls in to question and disrupts the established categories of both NEET and the informal economy.

Crossing borders: black creative expression

The organising framework for this project is Paul Gilroy's concept of the black Atlantic, particularly as it relates to the transnational and borderless flow of black creative expression (Gilroy 1996). The black Atlantic concept is a heuristic device that challenges existing notions of nationality, authenticity and cultural integrity and allows for an analysis of the hybrid forms of creative expression produced predominantly by those from the black diaspora. These hybrid cultural forms draw on the Caribbean, America and Africa and have been reworked for and in Britain. Through this concept, it is possible to explore the terrain between the camps of 'black' and 'white' (Gilroy 1996, p.2). The lived experience of black Britons is distinguished by the *doubleness* of looking in the direction of Africa and the Caribbean while at the same time being firmly located in Britain (Gilroy 1996, p.4).

Within this context, cultural expression does not flow in line within national borders, instead it moves back and forth crossing boundaries and changing shape. It provides a way to analyse transnational and intercultural flow of creative expression. This analysis has a global significance as it can be used to explore the remaking of ethnic identities. For black Britons, there is an intermixture of distinct cultural forms that has enabled the creation of a compound culture from disparate sources. New black vernacular creative expression and hybridised identities have been created from this intermixture. The black Atlantic acts as a counterculture to modernity in that it refuses to be bound by nation states and cultural identities.

The black Atlantic trope is therefore used to explore the origins, location and flow of Grime music. Grime is then used as a lens to examine and analyse the NEET category because as a creative practice, this musical genre and its related business activity is a cornerstone of the informal urban music economy. Its origins, practice and dissemination lie with the black Atlantic construct.

When DJ Kool Herc brought Hip Hop to the Bronx, he was reinterpreting a musical genre from his childhood in Jamaica, which had its roots/routes in American RnB (Chang 2007). The post war migrants from the Jamaican countryside adapted the sound system format for the enclosed spaces of England. By the start of the 21st century, Grime artists such as Wiley and Kano had extended the creative practice of the Jamaican sound system, and its constituent sound clash by rhyming or 'spitting' over disrupted, disjointed beats. Grime draws on the cultural, political and economic history of having parents and grandparents from elsewhere and staking a claim to the lived experience of a specific and particular place. Furthermore a cultural intermixture takes places between black and white working class youth on street corners and housing estates. Nevertheless, Grime is a genre that is predominantly young, male and black and it has a growing global economic significance. It is this social and cultural flow through inner city east London that enabled Grime to emerge.

Advanced marginality

In poor urban areas, such as the London Boroughs of Tower Hamlets, Newham and Hackney, which is the geographical starting point for my research project, people seek out opportunities in the informal sector as an alternative or a supplement to 'poverty wages with no benefits' (Wacquant 2007, p.66). As the practitioners in this sector appear to belong to ethnically coded stigmatised communities, Loic Wacquant's ideas are used to consider whether the concept of *advanced marginality* has an impact on participation in the informal creative economy. Within this context, the notion of an 'underclass' occupying a disorganised and deviant space which has dominated the discussion of race and poverty since the 1980s is rejected (Wacquant 2007).

Instead, the debate regarding inequality and marginality is situated in the dismantling of post Fordist-Keynesian economics and the intersection of poverty, racial division and post-colonial immigration. According to Wacquant a distinction must be drawn between the communal ghetto of black America that existed between 1880 and 1980 and the creation of the hyperghetto, a space which is 'closed, racially monotone and culturally unified' (Wacquant 2007, p.232).

In poor inner city areas in post-industrial Western Europe, the nexus of class, ethnicity and state does not constitute a ghetto. While these areas may appear to have similarities with areas in the United States on the surface, there are clear differences in structure, function, scale and political treatment. State policies and structures have an impact in areas of urban decline in Western Europe, urban marginality is tempered by state action, otherwise the numbers of urban outcasts would be even greater (Wacquant 2007, p.232). However, while not all poor neighbourhoods are ghettos, they are often sites of advanced marginality. This concept of advanced marginality has six key themes and while they are not prescriptive, it may be a useful way to explore the activities of the participants in the informal music economy in east London. One feature of advanced marginality is wage labour as a source of social fragmentation, particularly for those at the borders, for example those on temporary or zero hours contracts and the rise in apprenticeships that pay below the minimum wage. Another feature is that there is a disconnect from global economic trends in that whatever happens in the world, the conditions for the poor stay the same. In reality, social mobility and material conditions change very little. Advanced marginality also means the creation of

'isolated and bounded territories' perceived by both insiders and outsiders as badlands where only 'the refuse of society would agree to dwell', therefore special measures can be used by the state to manage and control these 'lawless zones'(Wacquant 2007, pp.236–237).

In the post-Fordist economic era the east London Boroughs of Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham have lost local jobs and become disconnected from traditional mechanisms of mobility such as educational achievement (Rogers 2012b; Blanden & Machin 2007). As workers, this community has been made expendable by advances in technology and some of the highest numbers of workless households in London reside in these boroughs (London Councils 2010, p.42). The loss of collective informal support, such as family or local networks that could be relied upon during hard times and social fragmentation are also features of advanced marginality (Wacquant 2007, pp.243–245).

Locating the individual

The focus of my thesis is the nature of entrepreneurship within the urban music economy, particularly as it relates to young people who are categorised as NEET. In *Discipline and Punish* Michel Foucault articulates the disciplinary techniques of power and procedures of knowledge that are used to impose order and create different kinds of space (1991). These techniques involve the control of the body at an individual level, it is both incremental and specific and involves the supervision of the smallest detail. Discipline comes from the distribution of individuals in space and the techniques that enable this include enclosure – the physical confinement of the body using structures such as schools, military barracks and factories. This has the effect of neutralising unmonitored individuals. Another technique is partitioning – each individual has his own place and vice versa, therefore groups and gatherings can be broken up, for the express purpose of knowing where people are, who is present and who is absent. Registers can be written up and logs can be kept. This functional coding of architectural space can entail the offer of a service, employment or housing perhaps, and supports the creation of the conditions and need for detailed recording and noting down. In other words, these techniques exist to pin down and partition the individual (Foucault 1991, p.144).

For example, in 2005, the Zip Oyster Card was introduced in London. It provided free or reduced travel on public transport for secondary school aged children. This technology then became a technique for the discipline, regulation and control of 11 – 16 year olds in London who registered to use the service. The movements of the school age population in London can now be recorded and tracked. The threat of withdrawal of the service is also used to curb anti social behaviour such as playing loud music, putting feet on seats or using offensive language. Anyone engaged in criminal activity may also have the Oyster Card facility withdrawn (Transport for London 2013). Technology such as the camera phone became more affordable and accessible and YouTube and MySpace provided a relatively free space for broadcast and distribution of creative output. However, this rapid increase in accessible broadcasting opportunities also provided the means for further surveillance and regulation of marginalised groups.

A further disciplinary technique was the post war slum clearance and the subsequent creation of local authority owned housing estates. A segmentation of architectural space occurred as poorly regulated private housing provision gave way to the careful bureaucracy of the municipal housing department. The high unemployment of the post Thatcher years had an enduring negative impact on working class communities such as those in inner city east London. There were deepening divisions between those that became part of the property owning democracy by buying their council property, moving up the social ladder and then moving out of these areas of urban decline. Now, a residual working class remains in situ with little access to employment and intense competition for resources such as housing (MacRury & Poynter 2009). The shared outside spaces of these housing estates provided an opportunity for the young white working class and the offspring of Commonwealth migrants to socialise and congregate thus allowing for a flow and mix of creative expression.

Creative enterprise as social practice

All social life is essentially practical and it is possible to construct a theoretical model of social practice by looking at aspects of everyday life within the urban music economy (De Certeau 2011). An exploration of the Grime music scene and its related enterprise should allow for an analysis of how people who are categorised NEET start to get a sense of what the limits and boundaries of that classification are. Despite regeneration including the

London 2012 Olympics, everyday life in particular pockets of east London continue to be sites of poverty and deprivation (MacRury & Poynter 2009; London Borough of Tower Hamlets 2005; London Borough of Hackney 2005; London Borough of Newham 2005). The participants in the informal creative economy produce creative objects, therefore the significance of the field of artistic development and the field of economic power require examination (Bourdieu & Johnson 1993). At first glance, the logic and practice of the urban music economy presents itself as occurring outside of the formal economy, which brings to mind possibly erroneous assumptions about the nature of the field and how to deal with those who participate in it. In the field of the urban music economy, what appears to be at stake is the struggle for reputation, status and recognition.

By contrast, high art such as opera, theatre and ballet does not, on the whole, operate within the informal urban music economy. Taste for the production and consumption of this type of creative expression, lies with an elite minority who can set themselves apart from the masses. These creative pursuits are preserved, nurtured and funded by the state, for example, the Arts Council funds 47% of the costs for the English National Opera as well as providing £6 million for the upkeep of the English National Ballet (Arts Council 2013). Grime music, and those who produce it, comes out of inner city east London, therefore it has little intrinsic value and like other working class creative practice is assumed to have 'values which cheapen, degrade and even brutalise the sensibilities of the masses' (Willis 2006, p.569). The contradiction is that at the same time however, Grime is consumed by the middle class youth (Hancox 2009a; Mason 2008). This formal arts establishment, excludes the majority of young people and ignores or spurns the *symbolic creativity* in everyday life where a dynamic creative practice exists (Willis 2006). The structure and format of the arts institutions lead to a situation where art - divorced from its living context - becomes a static collection of artefacts in contrast to the innovative and exciting creative expression that comes out of everyday practice (Willis 2006, p.563).

The arts establishment supports the idea of the artist in the high art sector who holds a unique position creating fine works which resist the pull of mass consumerism. On the other hand, it appears that those operating in the informal music sector have a more practical relationship with commerce. Although Willis contends disadvantaged groups may want to use their creative activity to bypass formal recognition, there does appear to be a drive for visibility and recognition for participants in the informal urban music economy (2006).

Therefore, with this research question, it is evident that an ethnographic method should be used so that the complexities of this informal creative economy in east London can be examined and acted upon. Stepping into the shoes of the participants – albeit temporarily - should allow for an account of this social world that is not a report back from reality but it can be constructed in specific and particular ways (Jenkins 2002, p.177).

A combination of a straitened economic environment in conjunction with increasing levels of youth unemployment, the continuing changes in the education sector and a revised welfare system means that it is possible to leave school aged 16, but not have access to benefits. Furthermore, paid work is not readily available and such work that is on offer requires qualification and certification even at entry level (Allen & Ainley 2007). Young people from more affluent backgrounds can afford to take on unpaid work in the form of internships, particularly in the creative sector. However, this is not an option for young people with little economic capital. It is in these circumstances that the NEET category gains currency and increasing numbers of young people begin to fall within this definition (Office for National Statistics 2013b; LSN 2009; Lee & Wright 2011; A. Cunningham 2012; Bainbridge & Browne 2010). I therefore explore and examine how those who are classified as NEET are participating in enterprising activity.

Entrepreneurship, however it is defined, is seen as a significant factor for economic growth and all the more important as the developed world endeavours to pull itself out of an acute global recession. It is almost a given that individuals with entrepreneurial behaviours are vital for economic success. To this end, much research in this area has focused on the attributes, traits and behaviours that individuals are deemed to have. A manifestation of this is the current UK policy to develop entrepreneurship skills and attributes among young people through the implementation of enterprise education in primary and secondary schools (Schoof 2006; Ofsted 2011).

Entrepreneurship has been an area for scholarly inquiry since the 1980s (Stevenson & Jarillo 2007; Aldrich & Martinez 2007; Baumol 1996; Blanchflower & Oswald 1998; Carland et al. 2002). Definitions of the term reflect the focus on who entrepreneurs are and the impact of their activities. In classical economics to be an entrepreneur simply meant to be a 'businessman'. In the nineteenth century, J S Mill brought the term 'entrepreneur' into

general use. Jean Baptiste Say extended the definition to include a person who brings together the factors of production. However, it appears that there is no unifying theme or conceptual framework regarding the question of *what is an entrepreneur* or indeed *what is entrepreneurship* (Gartner 1988) and it is often used in a very loose, generic sense (Shane & Venkataraman 2007; Gopakumar 1995). Some scholars argue that for the term to be of any use, the definition needs to be kept broad and include large organisations, management, start-ups, self-employment and small business (Aldrich & Martinez 2007; Stevenson & Jarillo 2007; Cunningham & Lischeron 1991).

Schumpeter expounded a concept focused on *creative destruction* or the method by which an entrepreneur's drive for innovation leads to new ways of doing business either within or external to an organisation (Schumpeter 1994). This is an idea that is further developed by other researchers such as Carland who point out that while there is overlap between entrepreneurs and small business owners - as both seek an innovative combination of resources for profit - it is possible and necessary to distinguish between the two because ownership is not a pre requisite for entrepreneurial behaviour (Carland et al. 2007). For Drucker, it is someone who seeks change and exploits the opportunity that that change brings about (Drucker 2006) and Baumol defines entrepreneurs as '…persons who are ingenious and creative in finding ways to add to their own power and prestige' (Baumol 1996, p.897). Nevertheless, the Schumpeterian concept of innovation has been a key aspect of the study of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship either through exploiting the value of new ideas or by carrying out new activities (Carland et al. 2002; McClelland 1967). This innovation can involve new products and services or the creation of a new organisation (Vesper 1980; Brockhaus Sr 1994). Shane and Venkataraman go further with this to suggest it is not just the creation of new organisations but view entrepreneurship as the meeting of two crucial points – the presence of lucrative opportunities and the actions of enterprising individuals (Shane & Venkataraman 2007).

Risk, or the assumption of risk is also seen as a key component and prime factor in defining the activities of an entrepreneur. Indeed, 'the essence of entrepreneurship is the willingness to pursue opportunity regardless of risk' (Peter Kilby 1971). However, the Brockhaus study found no statistical difference in the risk taking patterns of entrepreneurs and managers. Other researchers have also examined the risk propensity of business founders and concluded that start up entrepreneurs were more risk averse than non-entrepreneurs

(Brockhaus & Mo.) 1976; Xu & Ruef 2004). However, for the poor, work has always been a risky business and it has become increasingly so with the advent of zero hours, fixed term contracts and less than living wages supported by benefits (Macdonald et al. 2013). This is even more relevant now that technological change requires an increasingly skilled and educated workforce (Beck 1992).

Nevertheless, as Williams points out that we are no nearer to coming up with an agreed definition for an entrepreneur or indeed for enterprise culture – 'you just know it when you see it' (Williams 2006, p.16). For some researchers, however, this difficulty in creating a standard definition may be because, as a concept, it has no meaning and may be just an 'empty signifier' of a mythical being (Jones & Spicer 2005).

Existing research within this area has two main strands; firstly, at the individual level looking at the motivations of the person or secondly, explorations of organisations or structures which have been created. Stevenson and Jarillo add an additional category, how the actions of the entrepreneur impact on the economic system (Stevenson & Jarillo 2007). Research into the individual looks at what entrepreneurs actually do and try to identify a common set of behaviours, for example having an internal locus of control, the need for independence and the drive to create wealth. McClelland's key text *The Achieving Society* looked at what constitutes an entrepreneurial personality (McClelland 1967). Behavioural or trait approaches, attempt to understand psychological traits, attributes and socio-economic conditions and drivers of the individuals who provide entrepreneurship (Kets de Vries 1996; Baron 2000). Some scholars argue that researchers have so far failed to discover a cause and effect relationship between personality type/background and entrepreneurial success. This has added to the mythical status of the entrepreneur and the notion that he or she is not 'like us' as they have some unique characteristics which set them apart such as their higher levels of social competence which enables them to interact and adapt to new social situations more easily than others (Johansson 2004; Baron 2000).

Anderson looked at metaphors to describe entrepreneurs and concluded that across Europe the entrepreneur is a 'conflicted social archetype' who is seen as an aggressor/winner (grabbing opportunities and motivated by social and economic circumstance to do so) as well as a victim/outsider (Anderson et al. 2009).

Entrepreneurship is viewed as a process by which an economy as a whole can move forward. It is something that disrupts the equilibrium of the market (through innovation and new combinations) and creates movement. It is therefore at the root of economic improvement and the key to economic growth, productivity and the diffusion of knowledge. There is a correlation between the number of entrepreneurs and the growth rate of the economy, indeed new firm creation is seen as a driving force for economic growth (Low & MacMillan 1988; Schumpeter 1994; Baumol 1996; Stevenson & Jarillo 2007). For Henderson and Weiler entrepreneurship is crucial for long-term growth prospects as business creation can have 'significant impacts across space and time', they outline the relationships between innovation, entrepreneurship and growth and find that it has its greatest impact in the region in which it occurs but also generates positive scope for job growth particularly in dense urban settings (Henderson & Weiler 2010).

There is a large reserve of young people in Europe who are NEET and therefore outside of education and the workplace. This has been a source of concern for a number of years. Recent studies have identified the following countries where youth unemployment is especially high; Belgium, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Poland, Slovak Republic and Sweden (Taylor 2013). In the UK, the number of those that are NEET has increased steadily between 1997 and 2007 – 23.9% and 30.8% respectively - (Bainbridge & Browne 2010). Recent reports suggest that in the UK, 16 – 24 year old NEETS number around the one million mark (Groom 2011; Kingsley 2011a; Office for National Statistics 2013b). Policy initiatives to increase entrepreneurship among the young may, it is argued, promote innovation and the creation of new jobs. The creation of new small firms may increase competition and it is possible that young entrepreneurs may be more responsive to new opportunities and trends (Schoof 2006; Blanchflower & Oswald 1998).

The informal economy has been defined as those involved in the legal process of producing goods and services that are unregistered by, or hidden from the state for tax and/or labour law purposes but which are legal in all other respects, including employment relationships that are not legally regulated or protected (Williams 2006, p.5; Llanes & Barbour 2007, p.12; Gerxhani 2004; Chen 2007, p.1). These goods and services have traditionally been personal services, for example, hairdressing and catering. Lanes and Barbour suggest that the informal economy is an intrinsic part of the UK's social and economic landscape providing paid work for those at the margins of society (Llanes & Barbour 2007). Often

deemed to be backward and chaotic, this sector is defined by what it is not (unregulated and without legal status), or what is absent from it - the payment of taxes - (Grabiner 2000; Llanes & Barbour 2007; Losby et al. 2002; Williams 2006; Venkatesh 2002). Williams identifies thirty-five words that are commonly used to denote activity in the informal economy. Few of the words, including *black, invisible, hidden* and *underground* are positive and most emphasise the perceived subversive and hidden nature of the sector (Williams 2006, p.6).

Tanzi argues that since the 1960s the UK population has been subjected to higher taxation and greater government intervention, therefore the potential and possibility for participation in the 'underground' economy becomes greater. Tanzi and others suggest that within the informal sector there are those that *could* work officially, but *choose not to* for a number of reasons, including formally paid employees who work 'on the side' (Tanzi 1999, p.343; Grabiner 2000; Schneider 2004). The informal economy then, is seen as something which needs to be eradicated or brought in to line because its existence is seen to be unfair to those who adhere to all of the legal and state requirements (Grabiner 2000). It is viewed as scattered and fragmented and on the whole unregulated, leaving those that participate in it at risk of exploitation (Gerxhani 2004). It has been argued that in developing areas such as Africa, the informal sector has the potential to end poverty as it fosters growth and creates jobs, yet little attention has been paid to this (Ncube 2013). This maybe because this sector is often associated with irregular opportunities for income and few, if any, employment benefits. However, the changing nature of work in the formal sector with, for example, zero hours contracts and other employment structures that offer few benefits mean that it can be just as insecure as the informal sector (Williams & Nadin 2012).

In the developing world those that participate are mainly women and youth and the barriers to participating in formal economy include; limited access to capital, lack of skills, training and education and lack of technological skill (Ncube 2013). It is possible that all of these barriers – except the need to develop technological skill could be applied to participants operating in informal creative economy in the UK.

As societies and economies become more developed and advanced, work becomes increasingly structured and formalised. Unregistered activities therefore become associated with a throwback to less modern times and/ or the developing world. The formal and

informal sector have been viewed as separate markets, the former highly regulated and driven by enterprising individuals and the latter, occupied by the marginal activities of the less educated western poor (Grabiner 2000; Tanzi 1999; Williams 2006, p.31). Until fairly recently, this dichotomy of the informal/formal held fast and the sectors seen as separate worlds. However, research has indicated that this is not the case and it has been demonstrated that populations and companies operate simultaneously in both spheres (Round et al. 2008; Woolfson 2007).

Furthermore, in *Rethinking the Informal Economy* Chen argues that rather than withering away in developed societies, as predicted, the informal economy is here to stay and presents itself 'in new guises and unexpected places' (Chen 2007, p.7). However, the informal economy has not shrivelled as anticipated, it is a persistent and enduring feature of the economic landscape in the developed world (Williams & Nadin 2012). The informal economy is in fact an enduring sector in developed countries, but little research has been carried out to show how the underground and informal spheres are linked together (Williams 2006, p.35). It is possible that this economy is just as formalised and that both sectors are not separate and distinct but co-exist on a continuum with each sector dependent on the other.

The informal creative economy

The term *creative industries* emerged as a response to the global economic restructuring which has creativity at its core (Townley et al. 2009). Since the late 1990s, the creative industries have been viewed as a foundation for the post-industrial economy in the UK. The reasons for this include the significance of the cultural sectors for wealth creation in that they have a key role to play in economic growth (CBI 2013). Nevertheless it has been argued that as a category, creative industries implies a commodification which does not recognise the non monetary value of cultural and creative practice (Townley et al. 2009). However, this term enables the connotations and reach of these industries into a range of areas including among others, urban development and educational policy (Flew & Cunningham 2010).

Although some authors agree that the creative industries involve the production of social meaning in form of texts and symbols, what constitutes creative and cultural industry is contested (Markusen et al. 2008). In the United Kingdom the Department for Culture,

Media and Sport (DCMS) recognises eleven creative sectors: including advertising, architecture, arts and antiques markets, crafts, design, fashion, film/video and photography, software, television and radio (DCMS 2010). The creative industries definition put forward by Hesmondhalgh and Baker includes music recording and publishing (2011b). Furthermore, this list based approach does not take into account the technological convergence between sectors (Flew & Cunningham 2010; Townley et al. 2009). The Internet and digital media production are changing the relationship between producers and consumers. Media users are now able to work autonomously and, in what Yochai Benkler terms a social production model, create collaborative networks and peer production (Benkler 2006). In this model, media producers are generating new sources of competition.

Markusen et al adopt an occupation and industry approach in their analysis of the creative economy, thereby looking at what workers actually do and where their production is located. Using the research findings of *The New England Creative Economic Initiative* (NCEI) that was conducted in 1998, they utilise a broad definition for the creative economy to demonstrate that creative enterprise and individuals make a significant contribution to the regional and local economy. The NCEI also identified three components to the creative economy first, creative clusters – containing enterprise and individuals directly and indirectly creating cultural products, secondly, a creative workforce – people trained in specific cultural and artistic skills and finally, a creative community – a geographical area with a concentration of creative workers, creative businesses and cultural organisations (Markusen et al. 2008, p.30). For Peters and Besley, drawing on Schumpeter's concept of creative destruction, a creative economy, is one where ideas, rather than land or capital are the key components (Peters & Besley 2008, p.89).

In 2008, UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) carried out the first global in-depth survey into the creative economy. This has since been followed by the UNCTAD Creative Economy Report 2010 which suggests that creative industries are stimulating economic recovery through the demand for domestically consumed products such as videos, music and video games. The creative economy is a growing sector, for example, in the period from 2002 to 2008 global exports of goods and services had an average growth rate of 14% (UNCTAD 2010b). Despite the fiscal downturn from 2008 to 2009 and the subsequent economic recession, the creative sector continued to grow (CBI 2013; Newbigin 2010). There is a clear link between the development of creative industries

and economic growth and innovation (Flew 2011). The impact of technology is changing the meaning of enterprise and entrepreneurial activity and it now occurs in everyday spaces and places and develops from commonplace activity (Peters & Besley 2008).

The logic and practice of the informal creative economy in the UK has parallels with the Nigerian film industry and the Jamaican recorded music industry. Both of these sectors have achieved local and global success.

In "Creative industries and informal economies: Lessons from Nollywood", Ramon Lobato argues that although the Nigerian video industry does not meet the defined standard for a creative industry, it is achieving what formal planning strategies would like to happen in the developed world for the creative industries, that is, a film industry of global significance. Nollywood is perhaps the largest film industry in the world as it has a current annual output of 2000 films (compared to 520 in the United States and 1325 in India) both in output and in terms of audience size (Lobato 2010, p.335). However, because these films are not released in cinemas, they are for the most part not counted in the statistics for film production.

Nollywood products are available throughout the African continent, shot quickly and cheaply on VHS and distributed from a central location via peripatetic traders. The films are not made to be shown on the 'big screen', instead they are sold and rented on VHS cassette tape through informal markets where people buy other goods and viewed at home or in video parlours (and latterly broadcast on satellite channels). Nollywood distributors made use of existing pirate networks which had previously sold illegal copies of Hollywood and Bollywood movies (Lobato 2010). There are numerous magazines and websites, which promote the products and participants and provide feedback. Lobato suggests that the growth of this industry has taken place against the backdrop of weak intellectual property legislation and notes that the developed world is now considering deregulation as a way of opening up the creative industries (Lobato 2010, p.346).

The success of the Jamaican recorded music industry also has the lack of copyright as a factor. Indeed copyright law was not applied to Jamaican music until the late 1990's (McMillan 2005, p.7). From the 1950's until the year 2000, Jamaica produced over 100,000 recordings. By the late 1990's the worldwide annual sales of Reggae music was in the region of US$ 1.2 billion – which represents 4% of Jamaica's Gross Domestic Product

(GDP) (McMillan 2005, p.2). The Nollywood film industry and the Jamaican recorded music industry operate in societies where employment has to be created at an individual level. Both industries are therefore driven by a need to make money for its participants and this can only be done by meeting consumer demand for new and innovative products (McMillan 2005, p.16) .

McMillan suggests that the 'creative city' or 'creative cluster' that developed in Jamaica's capital – Kingston - fuelled this global success. Innovation, he argues, requires information transmission among the like minded as well as a density of communication and because Kingston housed an estimated 2000 artists in one small area, record producers were able to draw on a wide pool of talent. In addition, new ideas are rapidly copied, broadcast and developed which leads to new products frequently arriving on the market. As a result of this the Jamaican recorded music industry is constantly innovating (McMillan 2005, p.3).

In comparison to the structure of the mainstream music industry where the "Big Four"[6] record companies produce, manufacture, distribute recordings and licenses music rights, Jamaica, by contrast has a large number of small specialised organisations involved in the different aspects of making and distributing a recording. In addition, the recording studios were clustered in a specific area and musicians moved freely among different companies (McMillan 2005, p.15). This movement enabled the flow of musical ideas and innovation and McMillan draws parallels with the free movement of personnel in Silicon Valley in California (Bradley 2000; McMillan 2005, p.16).

Nollywood, the Jamaican music industry and the informal urban music economy in the UK comprise practitioners who appear to learn their craft by immersing themselves into the sector, while at the same time, identifying and exploiting new ways to generate income. It is therefore worth exploring how people learn to act in this entrepreneurial way and whether formal learning experiences have any significance here.

Learning theories

It would appear that there is no unifying theory of education or learning, instead there is a plurality of complementary frameworks (Dennick 2008, p.39). The ideological debates over

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[6] The big four' record companies hold a 75% global market share of the recorded music industry.
Universal 24%; Sony BMG 25% EMI 13% and Warner 13% (McMillan 2005, p.9).

the purpose of education continue. The gradual shift from the notion that a quality education for all is a *good thing* in itself to a market controlled commodity underpins the discussion about whether education means the acquisition of basic skills that are required by industry – or to understand ideas and use knowledge for broader purposes (Allen & Ainley 2007; Benn 2012; Bassnett 2007). Chris Woodhead - the former Chief Inspector of Schools - is at pains to point out the distinction between, training – teaching specific knowledge and skills and education – which does not require an external purpose (Woodhead 2009, p.46).

Malcolm Tight asserts that 'Learning, like breathing is something everyone does all of the time.' (1996:21 Matheson 2008, p.2) and yet somehow we have managed […] to transform one of the most rewarding of all human activities into a painful, boring, dull, fragmenting, mind shrinking, soul shrivelling experience.' (Rogers 1983:15 in Dennick 2008, p.63). Authors distinguish between theories that are philosophy based, psychology based and those that are underpinned with a progressive/liberal theory.

Learning theories – how people learn or acquire knowledge - can be traced back to the Greek philosophers, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. How people learn is an underlying theme for this research project. For Plato, learning took place through rational thought and new knowledge could be generated by rational though alone, for Aristotle, knowledge lay outside of us and it was acquired through our senses, and for Socrates, discussion and conversation or the dialectic was crucial (Dennick 2008, p.41; Hammond et al. 2001).

In Europe, the Roman Catholic Church in the period from 500 AD to 1500 AD was hugely influential not only in what people learned but also how they were taught. The church built universities and learning also took place through monasteries and the church school system. In these establishments, the priest could pour knowledge of the Scriptures into the empty heads of the pupils. This is known as the "jug and mug" principle and it entails the teacher adding knowledge into the student – who in this context is an empty vessel. Rote learning is a key tenet of this method and aspects of this system still in place today can be seen in current classroom based learning (Hammond et al. 2001).

The Greek idea of a liberal education – defined as an exploration of the arts and the humanities - was reinstated during the Renaissance period. By the 16th century the Catholic

Church was being challenged by, for example Copernicus and Martin Luther – who argued for secular education, that is one not based on religion and religious ideas (Hammond et al. 2001, p.3).

Descartes revived the Platonic concept of innate knowledge, believing that ideas existed within human beings before they had the experience and that the mind and the body are separate. For rationalists such as Descartes, Leibniz and Spinoza however, the human mind was an intrinsic source of reason – knowledge could be generated by thought alone. However, there is also a recognition that the environment can influence both mind and behaviour (Hammond et al. 2001, p.4; Dennick 2008).

Locke, on the other hand, recovered Aristotle's empiricism – developing and extending the concept of the child's mind as a blank slate or 'tabula rasa' that is then shaped and formed by experiences. The mind becomes what it experiences in the outside world. It gathers data using its senses and creates simple ideas from this experience; these simple ideas combine to become complex ones. New knowledge could be obtained by manipulation and experience of the external world. Jean Jacques Rousseau suggested that education should be shaped to the child; children should be allowed to develop naturally. Rousseau influenced the child centred philosophy of Dewey, Montessori and Piaget (Hammond et al. 2001; Dennick 2008).

It is not until Kant in the eighteenth century, that there is a synthesis of these two positions, sensory experience filtered through the rational processes of the mind. Our knowledge of the world is mediated by innate rational practices. In the provision of education, these theoretical positions manifest themselves in the following ways, empiricism leads to a rejection of the notion of knowledge from reasoning alone, and the individual is at the centre of the curriculum. The rationalist approach can be seen in traditional academic pursuits such as rote learning and jug and mug principle where students are empty vessels waiting to be filled with knowledge. Kant refined Plato's rationalist theory – in which knowledge exists before experience. Ideas are innate and the purpose of ideas is to create an organising structure for the data received by the senses. Kant recognised the cognitive processes of the mind; the mind is part of the thinking process (Dennick 2008).

Psychology based learning theories began to emerge in the nineteenth century with the subsequent development of objective tests to study how people learn and to discover the

best approaches to learning. These theories draw on the thoughts of Descartes, Kant and Darwin. The 20th century sees the split between cognitive and behaviourist theories – cognitive – using brain to construct knowledge and behaviourist – human as stimulus response mechanism. Thorndike offered a scientific approach – he believed that learning was incremental and that people learn through trial and error. Mental connections are formed through positive responses to external stimuli. For Thorndike, learning meant 'association between sense impressions and impulse to action' (Hammond et al. 2001, p.5).

B F Skinner extended the concept developed by Thorndike and programmed learning based on positive reinforcement – with an emphasis on reward – not punishment. Skinner felt that learning was a product of desired behaviours. For Piaget, learning was a developmental cognitive process and knowledge is constructed based on these processes. Vygotsky extended Piaget's theories by considering the role of culture and language on learning. Progressive learning theory draws on the child centred approaches of Piaget and Vygotsky. Rather than the existent jug/mug approach of teaching from experience, the purpose of the teacher is to provide guided opportunities to explore and discover. Learning is dependent on many variables including the environment. Montessori argued for learning through free expression, thorough carefully chosen activities (Hammond et al. 2001, p.9). Dennick cites John Dewey, Charles Peirce and William James who argue that the learner should be an actor rather than a spectator because they - the students - are not simply empty vessels receiving unchallenged knowledge and therefore need to participate and bring their own knowledge to the learning experience (Dennick 2008, p.43).

Festinger coined the term 'cognitive dissonance' to describe the feeling experienced when learners are presented with experiential evidence that challenges their assumptions about knowledge of the world (CIPD 2002). Kelly's adult personal construct theory suggested that individuals develop a set of personal constructs based on their life experience – which they then use to anticipate events (Butt 2008). For Ausubel (1968) an important factor that influences learning is, prior knowledge, or what the learner already knows.

Griffiths et al use the concept of *learning shock* to describe 'experiences of acute frustration, confusion and anxiety experienced by some students who find themselves exposed to unfamiliar learning and teaching methods […]'. (Griffiths et al. 2005, p.275). It is possible that those that underachieve or become classified as NEET experience learning

shock and indeed some identify school as a place to be avoided as the activities and the curriculum are of little relevance (Tanner et al. 2007, p.17).

Formal learning is still seen as a central component of post war economic reconstruction and growth (Mac an Ghaill 1996; Leitch 2006; Sissons & Jones 2012). Some authors argue that higher educational achievement leads to better outcomes generally in later life including higher earnings and a lower likelihood of serving a prison sentence (Allen & Ainley 2007; Clifton & Cook 2012; Skidmore 2008; Shepherd 2010; Taylor 2005). The current coalition government continues with what Tomlinson called the 'epidemic of policy making' that she says has beset the education sector for the last four decades. This is driven by the assumption on the part of policy makers that the key to a successful economy is increasing levels of knowledge and education (Tomlinson 2005, p.90). There is a belief that greater investment in human capital would enable the UK to compete on a global stage (Matheson 2008; Leitch 2006). Human capital theorists have argued that if the skills and capabilities of an individual are improved this will make them act in more productive ways, therefore investment in education will improve the quality of the workforce and facilitate social and economic mobility (Sweetland 1996).

Chris Woodhead refutes the suggestion that investment in education boosts social and economic mobility and argues that despite New Labour's interventions since 1997, England is a less socially mobile country than it was in the 1950s (Woodhead 2009, p.1). He asserts that successive Labour governments have also 'undermined the intrinsic value of academic study' and argues fiercely against two central tenets of education policy namely; equality of opportunity – there cannot be success for all while there are differing abilities, if all are expected to win prizes, then the prizes become meaningless. Furthermore, he disagrees that we now live in a knowledge economy and queries the 'now universal assumption that our economic competitiveness depends upon the never ending expansion of post 16 education and training' (Woodhead 2009, p.3).

For the young, the prevailing view is that continuous investment in lifelong learning is to their benefit. The notion persists that educating and training young people to the highest levels will enable them to face an uncertain globalised future (du Bois-Reymond 2004, p.7; Communities and Local Government 2007; Sergeant 2009b). As educational achievement, particularly the acquisition of qualifications, is deemed to be so important for personal and

national success, underachievement is a problem that cannot be left unfixed. A Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) Report in 1999 highlighted a clear link between low attainment, truancy, school exclusion and crime (Sparkes 1999) and more recent research shows that this connection still exists (Children's Commissioner 2013). In addition, it is argued that low qualified workers have less chance of permanent employment (du Bois-Reymond 2004, p.191).

Furthermore, low attainment and school exclusion has an ethnic and racial dimension. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation research into tackling low educational achievement looked at data on the position and progress of young black males across a range of areas including education. They looked at those who left school at 16 and concluded that low achievement was more commonly found in poor urban areas. Overall their view was that 'it is apparent that something has been arresting the progress of Caribbean students – boys in particular – [because] even if they start out well, they may come to grief later' (Cassen & Kingdon 2007, p.9). Other reports argue that black pupils do worse than white ones, and suggest that even when class is accounted for – '25% of black boys got five good GCSEs compared to 43.5% of white boys' (BBC Online 2010; Sergeant 2009b).

The Rowntree Report had the following key findings: that black boys have lower levels of attainment at GCSE than any other ethnic group, more black and mixed African Caribbean boys are likely to be excluded from school, black men are less likely to attend university at age 19 and are overrepresented in prisons and Young Offender Institutions (Cassen & Kingdon 2007, p.4).

Hamnett, Ramsden and Butler considered the effect of social background and ethnicity on educational performance and attainment in geographical areas that traditionally had poor levels of attainment, particularly east London (Hamnett et al. 2007, p.1255). In east London, the starting point for this research project, attainment levels are generally lower than in the general population and have remained so despite the many policy initiatives (London Borough of Tower Hamlets 2005; London Borough of Hackney 2005; London Borough of Newham 2005). This entrenched underachievement may appear to confirm the NEET category as a site which is static and immobile, however, for some young people there is evidence that this is not the case.

From the 1980s – neo liberal education theories were pushed to the fore at the same time as deep economic recession and intensified global competition. Free market economics began to replace Keynesian economics and education and learning needs were incorporated into free market economic principles (Benn 2012). On the one hand there was widespread discussion regarding new forms of learning and how young people now have a chance to learn in less restrictive environments but on the other hand, there was a strong emphasis on economic competitiveness, privatising of educational facilities and responsibility for learning was now pushed to the learner (du Bois-Reymond 2004). In the UK, an enduring legacy of the economic policies of the 1980s is the groups of alienated and dispossessed people mainly living in inner city council estates where jobs had disappeared (Tomlinson 2005, p.106; Hills 2010; Sergeant 2009a). The continued policy changes have been in response to the ongoing concern that the education sector is failing or in crisis and low educational attainment is a symptom of this. By the year 2000 there were 13 different types of schooling ranging from private education to Pupil Referral Units (Tomlinson 2005, p.2; Woodhead 2009). Since 1979, Conservative governments have privatised and restructured the welfare state including education.

Tomlinson states that between 1988 and 1994 one or more Education Acts were passed each year (Tomlinson 2005, p.9). The New Labour government that was elected in 1997 retained free market principles of choice and competition. However, there was a shift in terms of New Labour using education to tackle social exclusion. The latest initiative – continued by the current Coalition government - in the drive to improve achievement is the creation of academies and free schools. In these institutions, funded by the public purse, the curriculum, organisation and staffing lie outside of local authority control (Department for Education 2013b; BBC Education & Family 2012).

The Council of Europe defines non-formal education as '[…] a planned programme for personal and social education for young people designed to improve the range of skills and competencies outside, but supplementary to the formal education curriculum'. It is supposed to prepare young people for new challenges in the labour market and knowledge society and compensate for deficiencies in apprenticeships and training systems (du Bois-Reymond 2004, p.191). McGuire and Gubbins contrast formal learning that is typically institutionally sponsored, classroom based, and highly structured with informal learning,

where the control of learning rests primarily in the hands of the learner (McGuire & Gubbins 2010).

McGuire and Gubbins also argue that in recent times approaches to education and training have become more 'informal, progressive, situated, flexible and learner centred' (McGuire & Gubbins 2010, p.249). The 'sower and seed' approach expects students to become aware and evaluate their learning experience, the teacher is not an oracle but a guide. However, this approach can leave learners feeling helpless and directionless and it may not provide the adequate depth of knowledge to compete in a global market (McGuire & Gubbins 2010, p.259)

Conclusion

The borderless flow of black creative expression is an organising framework for this project. It allows for a movement of ideas, sounds and people to take place, and thus, for those from stigmatised communities entrepreneurship becomes a possibility. However, while there is no standard definition of entrepreneurship or who is an entrepreneur or even what types of traits and attributes entrepreneurs have. Entrepreneurs are seen as a 'good thing' and it is almost a given that as a society we need more of these individuals. Enterprise drives the economy forward and in the UK and much of Europe, enterprise education for the young is a key principle. How people learn to be enterprising or how they apply what they have learned generally to their business. Formal learning for young people from stigmatised communities' means in many cases low and under attainment. Leaving school at the age of sixteen with few or no qualifications propels many young people, particularly young black males of Caribbean descent, into the NEET category.

Less attention has been paid to entrepreneurs in the informal economy, which until recently had been assumed to operate in a separate sphere to the formal sector, recent research demonstrates that this does not necessarily hold true. Also, these categories are not static as there is evidence that people move in and out of them and sometimes occupy both at the same time.

The informal creative economy as it relates to music has some parallels with Jamaican recorded music industry and Nollywood particularly with relation to the innovative use of technology and the impact of creative clusters.

Entrepreneurship, however it is defined, is seen as a significant factor for economic growth. It is almost a given that individuals with entrepreneurial behaviours are vital for economic success. To this end, much research in this area has focused on the attributes, traits and behaviours that individuals are deemed to have – such as having an internal locus of control, being a risk taker and being able to create and exploit opportunities. A manifestation of this is the current UK policy to develop entrepreneurship skills and attributes among young people through the implementation of enterprise education in schools.

Yet, in the developed world, little attention has been paid to the activities of entrepreneurs in the informal economy and the activities of those deemed to be operating in the informal sector is an under researched area. At the core of my thesis is an exploration of the informal economy to discover who these individuals are, how they carry out their entrepreneurial pursuits and the economic significance of their work. In this project I will therefore use the Grime music genre to explore and examine the enterprising activities of individuals who participate in the informal urban music economy in east London.

In terms of learning, research has traditionally focused on levels of educational attainment and the impact on society of young people with low or incomplete education. The rising numbers of those in the NEET category continues to be a cause for concern. I opened this chapter with lyrics from Kano, a Grime MC from East Ham in the London Borough of Newham and in this persona he outlines the choice he made to learn to create music instead of participating in criminal activity. His strategy is to stay totally focused on learning his craft as an artist. The learning and life strategies of those who have been categorised as NEET are also a core focus of this research project.

CHAPTER 3: ETHNOGRAPHY AS DIALOGUE

Think you're a big boy cause you got a beard, Bullets will make your face look weird, Draw for the mash, quickly disappeared, Left you there cause I never cared, Into the car, slam it into gears, For what I've just done, could get years. D Double E (Newham Generals) – Frontline (Dan Brown 2006; TheStreetsOnBeats 2009)

My research question is primarily concerned with the experience of being in and participating in a particular social world, namely the informal creative economy. I had initially wanted to explore the learning choices and educational achievements of participants within this sector and I had posited a link between being NEET, educational underachievement and participation in the informal economy.

My starting point was the constant musical soundtrack that accompanied life in east London in 2007, whether broadcast from mobile phones or brought in to my office with the young people who undertook work experience at my place of business. These 15 and 16 year olds had on the whole been categorised as at risk of being NEET. The underpinning refrain of this time was the 'postcode war', guns, gangs and knives and the general terror of the hooded monster, menacing and desensitised to everyday human suffering (De Castella 2007; Glendinning 2008). In 2008, 55 young men were stabbed to death in the UK. Explicit links were made in the media to suggest a connection between the escalating violence and gang membership to Grime music (Barnett 2006; Rose 2008).

I therefore wanted to undertake a scholarly inquiry into the notion of the informal creative economy as it related to Grime music. Focusing on 16 - 40 year olds in east London, the research project had three key objectives; firstly, to identify existing formal qualifications, secondly, to explore the learning choices of those within the sector and the learning opportunities within the hidden or underground creative economy and finally to identify ways to harness the skills, talents and energy of these participants and translate that into formal qualifications and legitimate business pursuits.

My research question therefore lends itself to an ethnographic approach as it is primarily concerned with the experience of being in and participating in a particular social world – in this case the informal urban music economy. Ethnography involves being with, observing and taking part during ordinary activities over a period of time in order to write an account

of selected aspects of life as it is experienced in that world (Emerson et al. 1995; Van Maanen 2011).

The ethnographic context

A key focus of my research project is the enterprising activities of participants in the informal urban music economy who may be classified as NEET. I therefore adopted a classic ethnographic approach to establish a rapport, select informants and transcribe interviews. Nevertheless, Geertz suggests this is not the key purpose of the undertaking and what the ethnographer is actually trying to do is pick their way through structures of 'inference and implication' and bring forth a thick description of the culture being studied (Geertz 1973, p.7). That said, the task of the ethnographer is to find a way to grasp the complex conceptual structures of the object of study and relay that back to the outside world (Geertz 1973, p.10). I have therefore designed this project so that it is possible to observe, examine and analyse the complex structures of the informal creative economy as it pertains to urban music.

My research constitutes an attempt, albeit on a small scale, to discover not only what the participants in this social world are doing, but also how they create meaning from what they do. I have aimed for a narrative that explores the nature of enterprise in of the urban music economy and foregrounds the participants understanding and control of their cultural practice. Although Clifford Geertz suggests cultural research is a search for, or an analysis of, meaning rather than a quest to establish laws and rules (Geertz 1973), I began this project wanting to describe the urban music economy from an insider perspective and to provide a dense and textured description of this world (Koro-Ljungberg & Greckhamer 2005). I also want to identify the logic and practice of this economy or the rules of the game.

The US ghetto of East Harlem in the late 1980s to early 1990s is perhaps far removed from the inner city area of east London that was my geographical starting point in 2007. The sustained observation that Bourgois undertook was at a time prior to and during the crack cocaine epidemic (Bourgois 2003). Bourgeois lived with his family in East Harlem, this was his neighbourhood and the people he studied were his neighbours, he was therefore able to conduct his observation over a period of many years. He wanted to show normal

people, carrying out their everyday activities and seeking social meaning and respect in an environment of poverty. For Bourgois, an ethnographic approach allowed him to look beyond the usual focus on visible self-destructive outcomes of living in impoverished environments – such as street drug dealing and illegal drug consumption. Instead, he was able to consider structural forces that propel people to do what they do on the streets – namely poor schools and little access to jobs. My resources did not allow for the same level of observation over an elongated time period, but I live and work in the same location as my initial respondents. I was therefore able to observe the field of study over a period of time.

I also wanted to give an account that is not preoccupied with the illicit, that is, unregistered activities of those participating in the urban music economy. Therefore, I have aimed for a narrative that explores entrepreneurship in its broadest sense and foregrounds the participants understanding and control of their cultural practice (Jansson 2013, p.137). My aim is to present the participants/informants as the rounded, three dimensional individuals who met with me, spoke to me and gave their time because they wanted their story to be told in an academic arena. My participation in the field of enquiry is made transparent and explicit.

Drawing on various concepts of the role of the ethnographer, Atkinson suggests that the aim of the ethnographer is to 'make the familiar strange and the strange familiar' (Atkinson et al. 2003, p.17). This research was to take place on familiar ground – urban east London, but in a social world which was unfamiliar to me. The lyrics which open the chapter are from D Double E - a member of the Newham Generals crew and the video for the track was shot half a mile from where I live (Dan Brown 2006), however, the Newham Generals representation of that specific location is almost unrecognisable to me.

The ethnographic approach adopted by Hesmondhalgh and Baker in "A Very Complicated Version of Freedom" to examine the experience of workers in the cultural industries is of relevance here (Hesmondhalgh & Baker 2011a). Their aim was to build on recent studies of working conditions which looked at the political and economic dynamics and organisational structure of the creative sector and to address the gaps in research on the qualitative aspects of working in this sector. Drawing on the 'logics' used by Miége to model the structure of different types of cultural production, they cultivated a sample of respondents carrying out particular types of cultural work. The three models or 'logics' they made use of are

publishing, flow and written press. The interviewees are gleaned from a range of genres within these models (in music, hip-hop and electronic dance music, in flow - television and in written press – magazines). In addition, certain characteristics that represent the spread of the sector are also accounted for in their sample, such as freelance and salaried workers, corporate and independent practitioners and aspiring and established individuals. As well as the interviews, they carried out ethnographic fieldwork in a London based independent television production company (Hesmondhalgh & Baker 2011b).

The research sample for participants in my project is therefore representative of the most common roles and activities within the sector. I interviewed 40 people involved in the urban music economy, the majority of whom (32) had key roles in the sector. I also undertook participant observation in locations where this creative practice was carried out, for example, backstage at music video shoots and on location at pirate radio station broadcasts. The sample includes DJs from pirate radio, licenced radio, internet radio, MCs, Event Promoters, Model(s), a Model Agency owner, Music Producers, Vocalists, Sound Engineers, Beatmakers and the Managing Director of an online TV channel. There is representation from the 'old hands' - those who had been in the sector for a number of years some of whom had achieved a level of success and recognition, and others who had adopted different guises and/or new pursuits. Also the aspiring, and the established independent artists are represented in the study.

The combination of interview - and the fieldwork that was undertaken in a television company - enabled Hesmondhalgh and Baker to highlight the contradictions and tensions in their field of enquiry. The political and structural forces that shape the creative sector are also explored through the ethnographic method (Hesmondhalgh & Baker 2011b).

Paul Willis' influential research undertaken in a secondary modern school in the West Midlands used an ethnographic approach to uncover and analyse the methods by which non-academic white working class boys become who they are supposed to be – 'lads' destined for manual labour and factory work (Willis 1993). Willis drew his sample from a school population of 600, and although the school contained 'substantial West Indian and Asian minorities' their experiences were excluded 'for the sake of clarity and incision' (Willis 1993, p.2) . He looked at how these 12 'lads' created a school counterculture where life experience and practical ability had more value (because they had more use in their

world) than the formal knowledge that the school system was trying to impart. Although they rejected conformity and opposed authority, the counterculture that the 'lads' created actually mimicked the work environments that they would inhabit post formal schooling. Through observation, discussion, case study and interview, this study foregrounded what 'the lads' thought and felt they were doing to determine their own future. This study was conducted over a three year time period – 1972 -1975, a time which predates the rise of Thatcherism and the decline of the manufacturing sector. Since then, young people who would have gone straight into work at 16, have been absorbed into the Further Education sector and those who do not inhabit the territory of either work, education or training are categorised as NEET. This research project aims to build on the work in *Learning to Labour* (Willis 1993) in that it consider the formal schooling achievements of male and female practitioners in the informal urban music economy and foregrounds the experience of those from marginalised communities.

In *Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight* Geertz' participation in an illegal cockfight (including fleeing from the police raid) afforded him entry into a field which up until then had been closed to him. His participant rather than passive observation provided an opportunity for acceptance by the members of the community. Being able to share some common ground – in the retelling of the raid - opened up a rapport with those same villagers who had previously ignored his existence (Geertz 1973). It is clear then that being visible does not automatically provide a way in to the field, it is also necessary to participate as well as observe, therefore active participation is a core component of my methodology.

Nevertheless, immersion into the field (when that field pertains to electronic dance music and festivals) is often viewed with suspicion in academic research circles (O'Grady 2013, p.1). A *horizontal research method* where the researcher is 'situated alongside colleagues, participants, and audience members acknowledging that they are part of the transaction that is under investigation' and working to understand that creative practice from within can be useful in this context (O'Grady 2013, p.20). This horizontal research method is germane because in this object of study, creative practice is carried out in nightclubs, radio stations and film sets. This type of practice research tends to be more collaborative as it engages with ideas of space, identity and spectatorship, indeed, the relationship between the researched and the researcher is flexible and fluid (O'Grady 2013). However, this research

method is not without its difficulties, as a researcher I can never be fully immersed into the activity, there has to be, because of the nature of the task at hand some caution explicit or otherwise, in order to be able to capture what is being experienced. Also, festivals and nightclubs are dynamic and chaotic places and it is difficult to interrupt play with cameras, questionnaires and voice recorders (O'Grady 2013, p.35).

As a researcher, I am poised between intimacy and distance; I have to get close enough to see what is going on. I wanted to explore how the imposed experience of being an urban black male with its focus on, for example, being NEET, underachievement at school, contact with the criminal justice system and lack of employment opportunities contrasts with the chosen experience of being artists and entrepreneurs (Pickering 2008, p.19). I wanted to find out to what extent, if any, this imposed experience contributed to propelling young people to participate in the informal creative economy.

An ethnographic approach was more likely to make the realities of this field of study visible because, by 'being there' I would be able to see for myself and have an opportunity to 'draw up an approximation of the experience' (Emerson et al. 1995, p.28), albeit with the caveat that experience cannot just be reported 'as it happens', it needs to be explored and interpreted (Pickering 2008, p.19). This experience can be near or distant but it is not possible to be inside another's experience. Rather, the task of the researcher is to analyse and identify what the participants think that they are doing and describe events that are of social significance in that world.

For Katz, the position of the ethnographer involves 'moving between the gods and the mortals' that is, operating out in the field, observing, making notes and relationships in order to report back from a near distance to those who are even further away from the object of study (Katz 2012, p.259). It is crucial however, to look at the creative expression within the context of the social relations of production and consumption (Willis 2006, p.570) and an ethnographic approach allows for this. Therefore, this research project is designed so that it is possible to examine the behaviour that takes place within this specific social situation, and nudge open a partially closed door pertaining to how the enterprising and performing behaviour and activities of these participants is moulded by their social and economic circumstance (Drakopoulou Dodd & Anderson 2007; Wilson & Chaddha 2009, p.549).

Research design

To begin the process of immersing myself into this cultural field, I decided to use a combination of semi structured interview comprising a small number of core questions that all respondents were asked, and participant observation as this should allow me to explore the lived experience of participants in this sector. Using experience in this way as a methodology means that the researcher gains an understanding of what is important and significant in the participants' social world. It is a useful way to 'glean any sense of what is involved in their subjectivities, self formation, life histories and participation in social and cultural identities' (Pickering 2008, p.23). A literature review either alone or in conjunction with other research methodology would not provide this – it was evident that I needed to be in the world of the artists and practitioners; in order to look at their creative expression, and identify the means and media they use to produce, promote and broadcast their creative practice. It was important to talk to them about how and why they do what they do. This meant carrying out participant observation in nightclubs, cultural seminars, video shoots, model shoots and pirate radio stations.

Research parameters and participant selection

The aim was to conduct 30 semi-structured interviews with participants in what I was initially calling the *creative underground*. These participants should represent the key roles in the urban music economy. The sample size, given the fluid nature of the sector and the resources available seemed achievable. The research is focused on 16 – 18 and 18 – 40 year olds within the informal creative music economy who have a link to east London either through residence or performance.

East London was selected as a location because I am familiar with the setting as I have lived and worked in these areas for more than 30 years. Furthermore, an exploration of what I was then calling the 'creative underground' required attendance at certain unlicensed and/or unregulated venues, it seemed therefore useful to have some first hand understanding of the geographical, social and economic context that potential respondents were operating in. East London for the purpose of this research is defined as the London Boroughs of Newham, Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Waltham Forest.

Research Participants

In total, 40 semi-structured interviews were carried out over a five-year period from October 2007 to November 2012. The interview questions are included as appendix 1. The interviews took place in two locations, London and Ayia Napa – Cyprus. In the UK, 24 people who were participants in the urban music economy were interviewed. In Cyprus, I spoke with artists/performers (10), holidaymakers (6) and one business owner (a barber) in Ayia Napa. In total, the majority of the respondents (34) were participants in the urban music economy.

The research sample is therefore representative of the most common roles and activities within the sector, namely DJs from pirate radio, licenced radio, internet radio, MCs, Event Promoters, Model(s), a Model Agency owner, Music Producers and the Managing Director of an online TV channel (see appendix 3 for a detailed breakdown).

The majority of the respondents were males of African-Caribbean descent. However, I also interviewed five males of West African descent (Ghana and Nigeria), one male of East African descent (Uganda), one male of white English heritage, one male of Punjabi descent and five females (two white English, one African-Caribbean, one mixed parentage; English and Nigerian and one of Greek Cypriot heritage). All of the respondents grew up in the UK and all had a link to the east London boroughs of Newham, Tower Hamlets Hackney or Waltham Forest, either through residence, performance or collaboration with east London creative practitioners.

The respondents had grown up in a variety of urban geographical areas including, in London; Plaistow, Walthamstow, Hackney, Forest Gate, Manor Park, Tottenham, Custom House, Beckton and Chiswick. One person had grown up in a relatively affluent area in Surrey. Outside of London, Manchester - Moss Side, Wolverhampton, Birmingham and Reading are represented.

Of the 24 interviews that were carried out in the UK, 19 could be categorised as having been NEET or currently NEET. Three out of the remaining four respondents from the UK cohort had a Bachelors degree. One had both a Bachelors degree and a Masters degree.

How the study sample was obtained

For the purpose of reporting the research findings all respondents' names have been changed to provide anonymity. However, it should be noted that as the informants creative output is in the public domain, some identifying features might still be evident.

My occupational background is as a teacher and trainer in the further education sector and within this context I often met young people who were disengaged from, and disillusioned by, formal education. As a business owner, over a five year period I had taken on a number of school students aged 15 and 16 on work experience. I had also been invited to participate in Enterprise Week at various secondary schools in the London Borough of Newham. Enterprise Week consisted of a variety of activities for 15 and 16 year olds to enable them to experience a taste of the business world. Enterprise Week – now known as Global Entrepreneurship Week – is national government initiative which was set up to encourage young people to be more enterprising as enterprise and entrepreneurship are seen as key to economic success (Department for Children, Schools and Families 2010).

On the whole, the majority of students placed with us were those that their school deemed to be difficult to manage or low achievers and therefore at risk of becoming NEET. Andrew, who later became one of my key informants, was one of those students placed with us who, according to his Head of Year, was at risk of becoming NEET. It appeared that most of these young people, whatever their ethnic or cultural background, were interested in music – listening to it, sharing it or watching it on MySpace. Indeed, most were more likely to have headphones than a pen while on work placement.

I did not, however, recognise the sound that these young people engaged with, listened to and performed. Further discussions with Andrew, one of my key informants, identified this sound as Grime. Once I had the name of the sound, I could locate it, and listen to it on Channel U (a digital TV channel), YouTube (an online video sharing site) and pirate radio stations. After several months of careful listening, I was then able to map current key practitioners and locate Grime in its geographical and historical context.

To find respondents, I used a snowball sampling method and was also guided by my key informants who made suggestions about who else to interview. For example, Andrew

suggested his brother; James (former Grime DJ, now a funky house DJ) and James put me in touch with Ian (DJ). Fred introduced me to Brian (a Reggae DJ whose father was one of the 1970's sound system pioneers). Given that this target group is fluid and can be difficult to locate, a snowball method was the most appropriate method to identify respondents.

I also used word of mouth and chance encounters. For example, once word got out that I was 'writing a book about Grime' people soon self selected and started to contact me directly. This is how I met George (a music producer) one of only four respondents who had gone on to higher education and Helen - a singer/songwriter, with a stage school background. Sam had come to my office to meet up with a friend of his who was working with us as a graphic designer. Sam was a former MC who had become a filmmaker – his films and videos have appeared on Channel AKA and YouTube and featured some of the artists who I had already interviewed.

I also used a direct approach – with a request for interview via email, which had some limited success. These contact details were widely available through social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter and the video sharing website – YouTube. Fiona, a twenty four year old music video director was one of the interviews that came about this way. Fiona had created videos for a number of the artists on Channel AKA as well as shooting videos for some of my informants.

She agreed to be interviewed and I went to meet her on set at a digital TV station in Hoxton where she was filming a music video. While I was there, her video over ran (waiting for lead artist) because the lead artist had been held up. During this time Fiona introduced me to her make up artist (female) and she agreed to an interview. At that shoot, I interviewed five people in total (when I had only planned to meet one), because the opportunity presented itself while I watched and waited for several hours. These chance encounters offered not only the opportunity of an interview but also a discreet method to capture the experience of being behind the scenes.

In terms of informants, by mid 2011, my sample still contained no female performers, so I contacted a female MC Mary, by email. I also emailed two other female MCs but had no response. Mary was an independent MC who had recently made a comeback after a quiet period in terms of her creative output. She agreed to an interview, seeming very keen at

first, she then referred me to her agent, who then gave me the brush off. This process went back and forth for several months, locations and venues were identified and agreed then changed, or cancelled at the last minute. Finally, Mary had tour dates in Sweden and there comes a point when persistence is futile, so I gave up on her. In 2012, while reviewing the transcripts from the field research, I realised that I had a gap in terms of respondents from the online television channel sector. I therefore sent an email request to one of these channels and Steven kindly responded and offered his time. The final interview was with Steven, the Managing Director of a TV channel that had broadcast the creative output from the majority of my research informants.

Getting started: Key informants

Andrew - 18

Andrew was one of the students who had undertaken work experience with us in early 2007. Later that year his Head of Year called and asked if we could take him on an extended work placement (one day a week for a term) because his placement with a construction firm had broken down and it was felt that without time out from school, Andrew was at risk of becoming NEET. So he came to us, initially for a term and eventually for a full academic year. During this time, Andrew revealed that he was an MC, performing as an individual and also as part of a crew. He spent some of his time with us updating his MySpace site, when I asked if I could take a look, a wide range creative and technological skill was revealed. Throughout the next few months, Andrew and I had many conversations, about his creative work, his school life and his expectations for the future. He would bring in flyers and other promotional material from events that he had taken part in. If you asked Andrew a question, he would answer it, if he was asked to do something he would do it, on the whole he was quiet but articulate, technologically savvy, confident and willing. It was difficult to recognise the young man that his Head of Year had described as troublesome and challenging. Indeed on his monthly monitoring visits he always expressed surprise that Andrew was not only present but also working hard and taking part. Andrew now has a significant online presence that includes; two individual YouTube videos that have over one million views and a collaboration with three artists that has two and a half million views. He also has, at the time of writing, 46,000 followers on Twitter. He has performed at major music festivals such as Lovebox and Glastonbury. In 2010, Andrew was signed by one of the major music labels. He is now an independent recording artist and has set up a limited company to house his creative business activities.

Victor - 31

As business owners, we also published a business magazine and in the true spirit of small enterprise, I conducted interviews for this magazine. (In small or micro business, you have to be able to try your hand at everything – so in this instance I acted as one of the writers). In late 2006, for a feature on young entrepreneurs, I interviewed a DJ and talent scout – Victor. Victor was at the forefront of the urban music scene and subsequently became a key informant. I interviewed him twice, once while he was working on location in Ayia Napa and the following year when he came to my office because he wanted some photos for his website. In the early days of the project, I also attended an event in Shoreditch as a participant observer where Victor was Djing. Victor also has a substantial online profile, both nationally and globally, performing all over the UK, as well as, among others, Greece, Cyprus, Switzerland and the Gambia. Having started out as one of the founder members of an east London Grime collective, it also emerged that Victor was a key player in the Ayia Napa scene. He is now a DJ on a legal (former pirate) radio station and is co-owner of an Internet radio station and a record label. His Soundcloud downloads have been cited for motivating members of the Great Britain athletics team (Lamont 2012). Victor has 16,000 followers on Twitter. Victor put me in touch with Diane, a woman who had provided models for one of the videos that was getting enormous airplay on what was then Channel U - *Girls Luv Nasty* (alexgowers 2006). Victor hailed from an east London borough, where he had attended, and been permanently excluded from, several secondary schools. He would have been classified as NEET.

Diane - 29

Victor had introduced Diane to me. When we first met, she was a former model (a Miss England finalist) who at the time ran an events promotion and artist management company. Diane also provided models for a number of urban music videos. Now, Diane has shifted her business focus to running the model agency and putting on events that promote her agency. Diane has a lifelong interest in music and more recently has developed her career as a DJ. She writes a music page for an online magazine. This summer she is booked to appear in Italy, Ibiza and Ayia Napa. She has three thousand followers on Twitter. Diane had left school at 16 and had always been self employed – formally or informally.

Fred - 40

Some years ago, I met the Relax Sound System DJs through a business associate. One of them, Fred, was still a pirate radio DJ on a station that had been existence for a number of years, but had not been broadcasting for a while. Now that the station had been relaunched, Fred had a Saturday morning show - talk and music. Fred used the show to promote his other business activities; organising cultural seminars and events. It later transpired that two of the other teachers at these seminars were also former pirate radio and club DJs. I discussed with Fred the nature of my research and that I was interested in what he did as part of his creative enterprise. Eventually, he invited me along to a forthcoming Saturday radio show. Over the next 18 months, Fred and I got to know each other better, a mutual respect developed as we both had a background in teaching, although in Fred's terms, he did not require university approval as he already had '360 degrees of knowledge' (from field notes). Fred added me to his mailing list, so that I got a text notification if an event was being staged. Fred continues to have several performance identities; as a Master Teacher – promoting the concepts and teachings of Dr Malachi Z. York (York 2008; Christenson & El 2009), as a pirate radio DJ and as a community activist campaigning for equal rights and justice. Fred has moved between informal paid and unpaid creative activity since the age of 16. He has rarely participated in formal paid employment.

Edward - 20

Andrew introduced me to his brother, Edward. This young man, who was 18 when I first interviewed him, had started out as a DJ and then become an MC a few years later. He was a well-known and well-respected unsigned artist with a high profile local, London-wide and national presence. I interviewed him twice; once on tape and once on film. I have also filmed behind the scenes at one of his video shoots. Since our first meeting, Edward has released two EPs. He continues to perform in the UK and abroad and in particular has built a strong fan base in the Czech Republic in particular. He is known for collaborating with a number of recording artists both signed and unsigned. After I had interviewed him, Edward worked with me as a mentor on one of our London Development Agency funded programmes that targeted 16-19 year olds who were NEET or at risk of becoming so. Edward also voiced a radio advertisement for the programme (White 2013a). Edward has now developed a website and a range of branded merchandise (hats, hoodies and T Shirts) which is being sold online. Edward left school at 16 without qualifications having attended two secondary schools and a Pupil Referral Unit in an east London borough. Edward has been classified as NEET.

Field Research in Cyprus: Ayia Napa

During the initial research it became apparent that the enterprise activity had a global reach that I had not anticipated. This led me to undertake a field trip to Ayia Napa in Cyprus. The marketing campaign in the UK for the musical scene in Ayia Napa begins several months before the season begins (late June – early July) with pre-parties, events and reunions happening all over the UK. So, armed with an HD film camera and a friend I decided to record the journey from east London to Southern Cyprus, to make and experience the movement that the artists had made and to talk to people at different stages of the journey. From my initial research, it was evident that there are distinct segments to 'the vibe'; the beach, the club and the after-party and my intention was to talk to artist and creative practitioners in each location.

The ones that got away

In 2010, new tenants moved in to one of the downstairs offices in the building where I work. I spoke to the young man, Colin, who ran the business, watched him during set up, soundproofing the room and so on and established that he would be running a recording studio. Over time, I outlined my research project, as a music producer, he was happy to be involved, so I interviewed him. By this time, I no longer recorded on audio, because I had become aware that the minimum expected was a filmed interview, therefore this encounter was recorded on my laptop.

Colin's business operated mostly in the evening and through the night so we did not often bump into each other during the day. One day though, he was recording with three south London based MCs - Krept, Konan and Cashtastic (RealCharlieSloth 2011). I was able to have a brief unrecorded discussion with them about their current creative output – Krept and Konan had just uploaded their version of *Otis* by Jay Z and Kanye West (playdirtymusic 2011) and had achieved 4 million views in four days. I was keen to talk to them about this, however, I only had time to take some photographs and then we all had to go back to work. YouTube has now removed this video amid claims that it violated their terms and conditions of service. Also, I met Wiley – the self styled 'Godfather of Grime' when he was on his way to a meeting with Colin – one of my informants. Unfortunately, I had no phone with me, so I could not take a photograph and even though he initially agreed to an interview, when I went downstairs to the recording studio at the agreed time, the

creative tension was heightened and overwhelming so the interview had to be abandoned. I later learned from Colin that the track he had produced that day with Wiley involved collaboration with featured artists who had a long history of animosity (NEWUNRELEASEDGRIME 2011).

HOW THE STUDY WAS CONDUCTED
Timeline for primary research activities

December 2007 – March 2008	Listening to approximately 50 of the 123 of the pirate radio stations[7]	Identifying and reading relevant publications Watching YouTube and building a database of urban music videos with an east London connection [8]. Watching Channel U – now Channel AKA – identifying key practitioners and familiarising myself with urban music genres. Watching the urban chart every Saturday on Channel U. Watching films which had urban music as a soundtrack, for example, *Kidulthood (Menhaj Huda 2006) Adulthood (Noel Clarke 2008), Life & Lyrics, (Richard Laxton 2006), Bullet Boy (Saul Dibb 2004), Rolling with the Nines* (Julian Gilbey 2006) and *Dubplate Drama (Luke Hyams 2005)*
January 2008	First contact with Fred DJ, event promoter and promoter of cultural seminars Attendance at cultural seminar in east London	
February 2008	First contact with Andrew – former work experience student and MC. Meeting with Andrew's parents to obtain agreement for interview	
April 2008	Participant observation at cultural seminar in east London Participant observation at model shoot in east London	
May 2008	Participant observation at nightclub – East Village - Shoreditch	
August 2008	Participant observation at Rinse FM 14th birthday celebrations – London – West End	
July 2008 – July 2009	Tape recorded interviews with practitioners in the urban music economy Participant observation at pirate radio station in east London	
July 2009	Participant observation at a cultural seminar in South	

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[7] The pirate radio stations referred to are those listed in October 2008 on the following website: http://www.transmissionzero.co.uk/radio/london-pirate-radio/

[8] See also Westwood TV archive and others such as Mayhem TV, Risky Roads and SBTV

	London – from Marcus to Malachi – hosted by Fred – one of my respondents
August 2009	Participant observation and filmed interviews in Ayia Napa – Southern Cyprus
October 2009	Additional tape recorded interview with internet film producer
November 2009	Filmed interview and observation at pirate radio station
November 2009	Filmed behind the scenes at a model shoot/fashion show
April 2010	Filmed behind the scenes at a video shoot – Nasty By Nature
July 2010	Filmed behind the scenes at a video shoot – Supa Dupa. Interviewed Andrew, Bernard and John
July – September 2010	Worked with Edward on London Development Agency funded project for young people aged 14 – 19 who are NEET
October 2010 - ongoing	Identifying YouTube and Twitter presence for informants
March 2011 – July 2011	Filmed interviews - Adam, Victor, Quentin and Colin
November 2011	Behind the scenes at video shoot – Leave it Yeah. Filmed interviews with David, Eric, Fiona, Gillian, Harvey
November 2012	Filmed interview with Steven

Reciprocity and collaboration

Once I had immersed myself in this world, I became increasingly aware that I had a responsibility to articulate the context of the setting and also to ensure that wherever possible informants were not put at a disadvantage by participating in this research. They were, after all giving up their time. This is a sector that operates on shoestring budgets, and

as a business owner and an academic, I had access to resources and could draw on skills and experience that could support the business activities of my informants. Reciprocation in this context meant giving back, if requested, for something that I had received. So, if I had conducted an interview and the participant then asked for a service that I could provide, then I did so. In terms of collaboration, this involved working together and ongoing discussion to produce a piece of work (Lassiter 2005). Examples of this are the radio advertisement which Edward created for the Flex project I was working on for the London Development Agency (White 2013a). I had developed Flex in 2010 as an innovative response to a request from the now defunct London Development Agency. It was a project that aimed to prevent young people from becoming or remaining NEET. It was delivered in a variety of locations, mainly in the inner east London boroughs. Young people had the opportunity to undertake work experience and work placements, enrol on apprenticeships, undertake further training and develop business or self-employment opportunities. The monthly newsletters (see appendix 5 and appendix 6), which four respondents contributed to the production of, and which was distributed to approximately 1000 members on the Flex database, also formed part of this project.

The starting point for the reciprocal arrangements was when Diane asked me if I knew of a venue where she could shoot her 2008 Christmas calendar. I had some spare capacity in my office. In return, she let me go behind the scenes and take photographs as she prepared to shoot her calendar. Victor also invited me to an event that he was performing at in east London. Victor asked for, and was provided with a set of photographs that he could use for promotional and marketing purposes. In addition, I created a behind the scenes film of a music video shoot, an edited version of which was used on the informants website. One artist needed a biography for the website he was creating for his business, so I drafted this for him. In addition, I proofread a Companies House application to establish a limited company for Andrew. Since the start of this research project, I have arranged various photo-shoots and provided the respondents with professional quality photographs.

Several months after his interview, Adam asked if one of our graphic designers could create a logo and design a CD cover for his forthcoming album and I arranged this for him. I also introduced this same MC to DV8 - a Training Provider that works directly with Channel AKA and offers much sought after music courses and provided a reference to support his application.

Images from the field: Hoxton and Silvertown

FIGURE 2: David, Gillian and Joy – on the set of a music video shoot in Hoxton

FIGURE 3: Diane and her models outside my office at Waterfront Studios - London E16

 FIGURE 4: Diane's models preparing for the 2008 calendar shoot – London E16

FIGURE 5: Diane's models backstage at the Embassy Club – London W1

Conducting the interviews

I planned to interview the respondents at two local community centres in Newham and this was sometimes possible. But, I realised that I had to act immediately once I had permission for an interview. The respondents' mobile telephone numbers and contact details changed frequently. As a consequence, I missed two interviews (one with a singer and one with an MC) because I was arranging a time slot at the community centre. I became aware that a flexible approach was paramount and I had to be willing to carry out the interviews in whatever location the respondent wanted. I was accompanied on every visit that was not at the community centre.

From the literature review and the other research activities, it was possible to establish a basic list of questions for the semi-structured interviews. It became apparent that the interviews could not be too long (for fear of coming across like an official interview (Jobcentre, police or teachers). A questionnaire (see appendix 1) and participant consent form (see appendix 2) were devised and the purpose of the research was carefully explained. The set questions were kept to a minimum in order to make the interviews less formal. The aim was to undertake a 10 – 15 minute interview with each respondent. Respondents were not restricted to answering the questions listed. If something interesting arose, then it was explored further, for example, the concept of getting paid and making money was a key motivation – not just for its own sake but also as an outwardly visible measure of success. While I did not have a specific question about this, I ensured that where possible it formed part of the discussion, without asking the respondent to reveal detailed information about their income.

I also made sure that I knew something about the respondent and/or their work prior to the interview as this helped the flow of the conversation, particularly as I do not fit the usual demographic for a Grime fan. Direct, simple questions were asked and before the start of each interview all respondents were reminded that they did not have to answer any question that they felt uncomfortable with and that the interview would be tape-recorded. Some respondents chose to have a friend with them.

A digital tape recorder was used for the first eleven UK interviews. Each file was then downloaded to a laptop and the interview transcribed verbatim with identifying details

removed from the transcript. At the end of each interview, biographical details, context and location were recorded. Each transcript was then analysed and coded for key motivations.

The Ayia Napa interviews were undertaken in the field recorded on film, and transcribed verbatim. The purpose of the fieldwork was to try to get a sense of what was going on, the research strategy had to change slightly, because it was not appropriate, in this setting, to ask questions about experiences of school, so these were omitted (Wolcott 2005). The film from the Ayia Napa field trip was edited into a forty-minute documentary - Making it Funky (White 2013b).

Conducting participant observation

The idea for participant observation arose out of the initial literature and video research. As Geertz suggests that the aim of participant observation is to produce a 'thick description' of social interaction in natural settings (Geertz 1973, p.1). It was therefore important to be in the places where the music was played, performed and enjoyed as well as observe how this creative practice such as videos and radio programmes are crafted and assembled. Participant observation can provide a flexible approach that enables the researcher to react to events and follow leads. Over a period of time it became apparent that a key focus for the participants in this social world was the summer season in the resort of Ayia Napa in southern Cyprus.

It was not possible for me to accept a role within the social situation being studied, as this social realm appeared to be predominantly male and under the age of forty. It was also important to consider the interviewer effect – as a forty-something year old female, who was older than all participants. Also, the social position of the researcher could enhance or inhibit rapport depending on the background of the informant (Skeggs et al. 2008). Furthermore, I had to demonstrate a shared knowledge of the subject – in order to establish a relationship and have enough credibility with the respondents so that they would want to talk me and answer my questions.

Many months were spent identifying and talking to key informants, becoming visible, allowing people to get used to seeing me around, before I could even start to ask any questions. I had to develop, nurture and maintain relationships with the respondents. In

time, respondents made suggestions about who I should talk to and where to go next. Wherever possible and with permission, I took photographs and collected promotional material. For example, during the period of carrying out the primary research, I started to be invited to various events, where my respondents were performing or participating. At the start of this project the interviews were audio recordings, over time though it became apparent that this is an industry where participants expected to be recorded on film, therefore interviews number 1 to 11 are audio and all subsequent interviews are filmed. All of the Ayia Napa interviews were recorded on film that was then edited into a forty-minute documentary.

Writing ethnography

The role of the ethnographer is to study the group under observation and then translate or interpret what is going on and report back. Once this is done, writing up follows and the ethnographer needs to decide how to tell the story. How does the researcher represent what has been observed and recorded? In this project, field notes were made, photographs were taken and films were made. I have reflected on what I think I have observed and made a decision about what to include and what to omit. I have also reflected on the impact of my presence in the field.

What is included and what is omitted as well as the target audience are key considerations at the writing up stage. According to Van Maanen, whether the target audience is academic or for the general population will have an impact on the format of the writing up but common configurations include, realist tales, confessional tales and impressionist tales (2011). Realist narratives offer a representation of the culture that is being studied that is a documentary style claim for authenticity. In this model, quotes from transcripts are offered straight form the horse's mouth. The inhabitants of the culture under study have their say through the author's pen. Confessional tales, on the other hand, offer stories of infiltration and demonstrate the process by which rapport was established with the respondents. The confessional tale is a blurred account and the nature of the object of study cannot be taken for granted (Van Maanen 2011).

The ethnography in this research project utilises aspects of both these positions – realist and confessional. However, the documentary *Making it Funky* makes no claims to authenticity.

It is an attempt to allow the respondents to give an account of themselves using different modes of articulation (Skeggs et al. 2008, p.7).

Reflections on method

It has not been possible to simply observe what the participants are doing and how they are doing it as this suggests a detachment that would have hindered the collection of data. My informants warmed to me because I understood the genre, without judging and the interest and regard I had for their work was genuine and not for academic purposes only. One of the activities that still separated us was the dissemination of creative output. I wanted to explore what it felt like to create and broadcast a piece of film and then hope that people would watch it. I therefore created and uploaded a YouTube video of a conference presentation at Stanford University on my research area (MrCordice 2011) and asked for comments via Twitter. I hoped that the people that I interviewed would watch it and anticipated 40 views. What I had not expected was that some or all of the respondents would retweet the video link because they wanted to broadcast what they saw as a history of Grime. I even had comments from a Grime MC in Italy. At the time of writing this video has been viewed 880 times.

Getting in, finding out and then relaying that to those deemed to be 'outside' of that particular social world is a key component of the fieldworkers task, whether it was in the company of the former DJs who now sold the 'right knowledge' expounded by Dr Malachi Z. York instead of music and its by products or at a video shoot or nightclub event. Nevertheless, the types of events that I was able to participate in with this group who considered themselves to be teachers, was because I was viewed as a 'sister' by that group. Even though I did not conform to their sartorial norms – I have dreadlocks but I do not cover my hair – also, the women in this setting always wore long skirts or dresses. This group allowed me in because I had been invited by Fred and because I paid the five pounds entrance fee, but the audience and teachers remained wary of my presence.

The use of video to record interviews and field research was a methodological turn that started in Ayia Napa, when it became evident that my informants were operating in a world where film was the standard currency. A transition therefore occurred from audio to a variety of video methods; large HD camera, mini HD camera and a laptop. These videos are supplemented with a written transcript for each interview. Like Sarah Pink, I make no

distinction between 'old school' video – which is traditionally used as archive to be viewed by academic audiences and 'cinema' or 'creative' film – which tells a story, because this difference, according to Sarah Pink, is not clear-cut (Pink 2006, p.170). A realist reading of the facts does not hold true because an objective reading is not possible. Throughout the field research phase, I created different types of film, for example, 'behind the scenes' or backstage documentaries and short clips that informants could use for their own creative purposes.

I did not just want to collect data, I wanted to be a part of this social world that was the object of study and work in partnership with the participants and creative practitioners even if it was temporary. My films and photographs are not objective records; I cannot take myself out of it. My presence alters the dynamic of the situation whether I am asking questions or not.

The hierarchy between words and pictures is disrupted here. As Pink eloquently argues, academic meanings given to visual images are arbitrary and ethnographers are subjective readers - personal experience and knowledge inform meaning. The visual data that I have collected is not a representation of the field of enquiry; rather it is one aspect of an articulation of the experiences and contexts of being a participant in the urban music economy. The interviews and the tangible artefacts combined with the visual data is an attempt to situate and communicate the feel of this social world.

Conclusion

I have outlined the methods that I used to design and undertake this research project. I began by rearticulating the original research question and examined why an ethnographic approach of semi structured interview and participant observation was deemed to be most suitable. I proceeded with an account of the research participants/informants in the study. Finally, I outlined how the study was conducted, detailing activities and timescales. My participation in the field of enquiry is made transparent and explicit. I am clearly creating, adding and ascribing meaning to activities.

It was important to see at first hand how the participants operated in this field. I was researching familiar ground, urban east London, but through an unfamiliar lens. Paul Willis excluded the experiences of the 'substantial West Indian and Asian minorities' in his study

Learning to Labour. In this project, I have foregrounded the experiences of those young people from marginalised communities. I shared common ground with my informants in terms of business activities, and I reciprocated where requested and where I had the necessary and relevant resources to do so. My research is designed to explore a wide spread of activities and roles and elicit a personal account of what was important to them, thus ensuring that there is dialogue between me and the respondents.

The forty people that I interviewed during five years of fieldwork were participants in the urban music economy as practitioners and/or consumers. Their practice disrupts accepted notions of what it means to be an entrepreneur and challenges the accepted notions of the NEET category. The tales from this field are detailed in the next section – Part Two: Encounters and Discovery.

PART TWO: ENCOUNTERS AND DISCOVERY

CHAPTER 4: NARRATING THE URBAN MUSIC ECONOMY

'What d'ya mean that ya can't find Griminal, Greengate, 6ft, light skin,
slimmish…' (TimWestwoodVideos 2009)

Over the last decade inner east London has undergone a marked and visible shift from being a post-industrial wasteland scoring low on most economic and social indicators into becoming four of the five host boroughs for the London 2012 Olympics (BBC London 2008). Nevertheless, the three most deprived boroughs in London continue to be Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham – in that order. Newham remains sixth (out of 354) on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (HM Government 2007). From 2007 – 2012, I undertook field research to examine the nature of the informal urban music economy in these boroughs. Specifically, the geographical locations for the fieldwork in east London were Canning Town, Beckton, Plaistow and Manor Park (in the London Borough of Newham); Hoxton, Shoreditch and Limehouse (in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets) and Dalston (in the London Borough of Hackney). This fieldwork took the form of semi-structured interviews and participant observation.

These localities contain some of the poorest areas in London, and yet they exist in juxtaposition and contrast to the old wealth of the City of London. The prosperity of the financial sector at Canary Wharf is visible but beyond reach of the majority of my respondents. For the young men and women who were the respondents for this research project, the city and Canary Wharf are not places where they take up employment or other opportunities. The young people who congregate on street corners and council housing estates in these boroughs (and in other impoverished areas) have been described in melodramatic terms as a feral underclass operating outside of the society's norms (Sergeant 2009a). For other writers, these young people are NEET and therefore face a continuing struggle to make the transition into adulthood and everyday, adult life (Bainbridge & Browne 2010; A. Cunningham 2012; Lee & Wright 2011).

In *Growing Up Bad*, Gunter offers a less sensational distillation of the discourse surrounding urban youth in east London. The interstices and interplay between social class, spatial locality, race/ethnicity and gender are considered and their combined impact on young peoples lives is explored as he endeavours to unravel the stereotypes surrounding black British youth (Gunter 2010, p.xviii). Nevertheless, beneath the hyperbole, it does

appear that black boys and young black men face 'serious challenges in every sector of society; they are less likely to do well at school, more likely to be unemployed and much more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system' (Communities and Local Government 2007). It also became evident, through my initial research activities, that young black men from poor communities were also key participants in the informal urban music economy. These young black men, it has been argued, constitute a stigmatised community (Wacquant 2007), and their invisible presence gives cause for concern, arouses fear and demands the need for action plans and task forces (Sergeant 2009a; Ryder 2009). Yet, it also appears that many are able to make the transition from troublemaker to role model and from NEET to entrepreneur.

My starting point for the research project was to locate creative practice within a specific area of the informal economy – that is, the hidden or underground creative economy. However, due to its participant's innovative use of technology, creative output in the urban music economy is highly visible. In the lyrics quoted above, Griminal, an east London Grime artist offers clear, biographical and geographical detail that should enable anyone to identify who he is and where he is[9]. Yet in this economy, the enterprising activities of these participants remain, on the whole, invisible. This may be because they belong to an ethnically coded, stigmatised community in that they are young, black and poor. It may also be because they if they are categorised as NEET and therefore ostensibly, not in education, employment or training, they are classified by what they *are not* doing. Therefore what they *are* doing is not recorded. This chapter therefore constitutes a record – albeit a partial one - of the wide range of activities that are being carried out in this sector. This record is based on the interviews and participant observation that was carried out in east London during the primary research phase.

An ecology of the urban music economy

The ecology of the urban music economy is formed out of a complex series of interactions with and between practitioners and their environment. It is a repository for a multiplicity of interconnected activities and these are indicated in Figure 6. As a constituent component of the popular music industry, this economy has benefited from the technological advance of the last decade. The recorded music industry is dominated by four record companies; AOL

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[9] Greengate is a location in Plaistow in the London Borough of Newham.

Time Warner, Sony/BMG, Universal and EMI commonly known as the *Big Four* (Baym 2010; McMillan 2005). Now however, due to the impact of digital file sharing and the emergence of a customer base that is reluctant to pay for downloaded music, these organisations are facing a steep decline in sales of recorded music (Baym 2010; Leyshon et al. 2005). In the adapted diagram below, the roles and activities that are carried out in the urban music economy are illustrated. Zone A details the range of roles in the informal urban music economy while Zone B highlights the reproduction services that are available to the artists. Zone C is concerned with the dissemination of creative and media products and Zone D is where consumers can access and purchase the products.

Although Leyshon et al. identify changes over the last decade that has prompted these organisations to reorganise into new business models, they still locate the recorded music companies in a dominant position at the centre. The recording companies control the reproduction and distribution of the music that is made and performed in the creativity network (or Zone A) (Leyshon et al. 2005). However, in the urban music economy a range of creative practice such as MCs, DJs and beatmakers is still produced in Zone A, and the Big Four recording companies have little, if any, control over the reproduction and distribution in Zone B. I have therefore reworked the Leyshon model (Figure 6) to illustrate the ecology of the urban music economy, identifying the overlapping and interconnected aspects that allow for the production and commodification of their creative practice.

Zone A - CREATIVITY - Artists - MCs, DJs, Vocalists, Beatmakers, Models, Make Up Artists, Stylists, Performance Venues, Artist Management, Talent Agencies, Legal Services

Zone B - REPRODUCTION - Studio Musicians, Recording Studios, Recording Companies, Music Publishing

Zone C - DISTRIBUTION - Manufacturing, Event Promoters, Pirate Radio, Video/Filmmakers, Merchandise
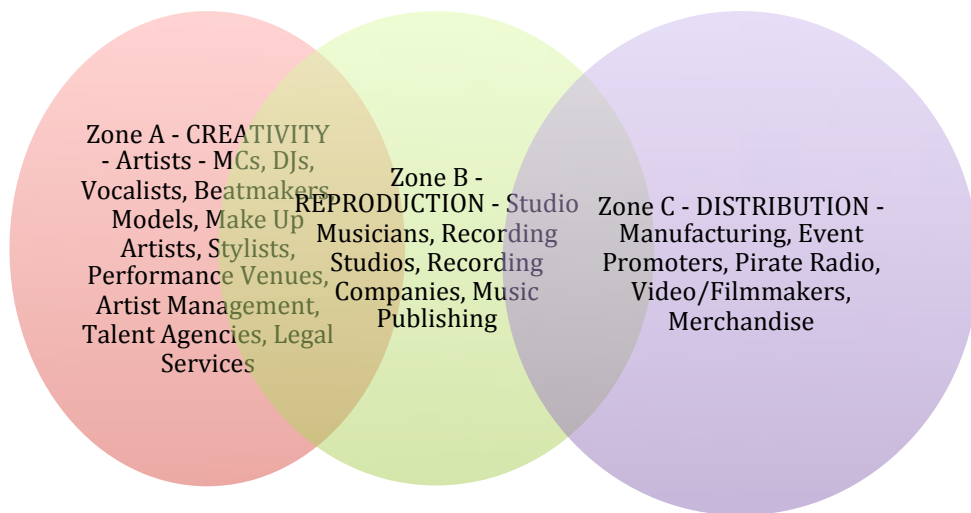
FIGURE 6: Roles and activities which take place in the informal urban music sector - adapted from Leyshon (2005, p.186)

Artists and entrepreneurs: In their own words

Once I had carried out the first semi structured interviews, it soon became apparent that many of the research participants occupied more than one role in the urban music sector and there was movement to, from and in between these different identities. The movement is also physical, a move from urban east London, for example, to other parts of the UK, to Europe, Africa and North America. Ian, a 22-year-old DJ from east London went to Ayia Napa in Cyprus for the first time in 2008. He had started out in his DJ career at the age of 14 'playing Jungle, Garage, Grime – now Funky House – a bit of everything really' (Lines 15-16). This work had taken him all over the UK '[…] even Glasgow, all the way down to Portsmouth…'(Line 21). Ian continues to work as a club DJ and now has a regular show on a licensed radio station.

There is also movement in terms of the type of activity that the respondents engage in, for example, from one genre to another, from pirate radio and to legal radio, from being a DJ to becoming an MC, from being a model to becoming an event promoter and so on (**see** appendix 4 for further breakdown). During these interviews, Ayia Napa emerged as a significant location for my informants to promote and disseminate their creative practice. The Ayia Napa context is examined in detail in Chapter five. However, one of the initial questions that I was able to ask the respondents both in London and in Cyprus was "Who are you?" In response they identified themselves as artists, performers and entrepreneurs (see appendix 3 for a more detailed breakdown). Nevertheless, whether in east London or further afield, music seemed to be a key driver for enterprise and entrepreneurship in these locations. Therefore our first stop is a pirate radio station in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

Old hands/new pursuits: A pirate radio station somewhere in Tower Hamlets

On a side street in Tower Hamlets, a few miles from Canary Wharf and the City, the latest location for Giant FM is a run down partially occupied business centre. This radio station has operated under two different names in east London on and off for a number of years. Giant FM, in common with other pirate radio stations has been a training ground for DJs and radio presenters from disadvantaged backgrounds for decades. Kiss FM, Choice FM and most recently Rinse FM are all former pirate radio stations that are now licensed and regulated by Ofcom (Goddard 2011; Dee 2013; Hancox 2010b) One of my respondents,

Eric, had started out as a DJ on pirate radio and in his interview he talked about his experience of being headhunted by the BBC when they were setting up a new urban station ten years ago. Eric still has a regular weekly show on this station. He also stages and promotes his own club events in the UK and Europe, including Ayia Napa.

However, on this cold Saturday morning in January, I am going to see Fred, an old school DJ who has worked on pirate radio for almost two decades. His current programmes have a magazine format, with music, listener phone ins and interviews. Fred has another performing identity, as a student of the teachings of Dr Malachi Z. York, therefore he also uses his shows as a platform to promote the events and seminars that he runs in relation to this.

Parallels can be drawn with Hill-Collins analysis of the relationship between black American youth and hip hop and UK black participants in the urban music sector. She argues that ' […] African-American youth […] no longer needed for cheap unskilled labour in fields and factories, poor and working class black youth find few opportuntities in the large urban areas where most now reside' (Hill Collins 2006, p.297). In the UK, the parents and grandparents of many of my respondents had come from the Caribbean and Africa to fill manual labour gaps. Those subsequently born here had fewer gaps to fill and the existing white working class in poor areas such as the east end of London had less opportunity for semi skilled and unskilled work. These are the people who were hardest hit by the sturctural economic changes of the 1980s and the subsequent negative impact on youth employment levels (Furlong & Cartmel 2007; Murray & Gayle 2012). As Wacquant argues, these young people therefore '[..] occupy unstable positions on the margins of the wage labour sphere' (2007, p.51) .

Fred has always occupied this unstable position, apart from a brief placement on a Youth Training Scheme (YTS) in his early teenage years, he has rarely participated in formal paid employment. At the time of the interview, Fred is a forty-year-old man who has inhabited the NEET category for most of his adult life. Fred operates in different guises and in a number of spheres; as a voiceover artist for pirate radio, a radio presenter, a teacher and an event promoter. Today, Fred is in pirate radio DJ mode. He learned his craft by working his way up through a key north London sound system in the 1980s. In his own words he was a

'pioneer, and a whizz kid […] we paved the way for these young guys now'. At the first visit to the radio station I was able to observe Fred at work:

It is a Saturday morning mid January. I'm waiting in my car on the corner of a main road in east London (London Borough of Tower Hamlets). I have arranged to meet a friend who will take me to meet Fred. Fred has a Saturday morning talk show on a pirate radio station that broadcasts throughout north and east London.

Fred has agreed that I can sit in while he broadcasts his show. I meet up with my friend and he directs me to the location – a semi occupied warehouse type building. There is a small car park where we leave the car. Once we arrive, my friend calls Fred on his personal mobile (radio station has its own mobile number).

Fred says it's ok to come up, so we get out of the car and walk to a reinforced steel gate. We walk up three flights of concrete steps. We pass some other occupied rooms on the way – the doors are labelled with various business names – including a cable TV channel. There is one toilet, no chain, and no door.

We arrive at the room that the radio station operates from. It is about 6' by 8' maximum. It is very cold in the room. Fred, dressed in a tracksuit, baseball cap and a bulky bomber jacket, greets us, indicates for us to come in and sit down while he carries on lining up the next few tracks to be played.

While we wait – I look at his equipment, the tools of his trade; pc, large microphone, decks, old Nokia mobile phone, cigarettes, cigarette papers, a blue energy drink, four cheese rolls and a Toblerone chocolate bar. There is a tall stool for the DJ, two small folding chairs (for guests), Saturday's edition of the Times newspaper and a black dustbin bag. The room has a security gate and the key to the gate is attached by a metal chain to the wall.

Fred is in full flow – playing a selection of music and indicating the discussion/ themes for today's show. For this week only he explains to the listeners, he will cover the 9am – 12pm instead of his usual slot.

Fred is moving gracefully in the small, tight space he does not bump into anything. He expertly cues the music while, taking requests, reading out texts, working his way through the cheese rolls, and the cigarettes.

For this week's show the theme is business – black business and equanomics (Jesse Jackson's - Rainbow Push) Fred invites people to discuss economic power – especially for the black community. One listener however, texts in to ask about the devil – Fred reassures her and his other listeners that this issue will be addressed in next week's show.

Throughout the hour- ad breaks are played – forthcoming events, community activities and raves. Fred moves easily from discussion to music (Soul, R&B, Reggae) and back again. Although Fred keeps telling his listeners that the 'phone lines are blowing up' in response to the questions he is posing about black business, in fact the phone rings only once. It is the owner of the radio station.

The walls in the room are covered marketing and teaching materials. There are posters exhorting the teachings of Marcus, Malcolm and Marley alongside flyers for a forthcoming event: 'Beg Yuh a Dance Nuh".

The studio number has to be read out at regular intervals. At one point the station owner calls in to congratulate on the content and to ask for the mic to be turned up a bit louder.

At five to 12, it is time for us to go. The next DJ – Lady X has arrived to play her set (Soca only). Lady X is a black woman in her late forties, early fifties, she has a strong Bajan accent.

Fred unlocks the door for us and we make our way back to the car park downstairs. I turn on my radio, Lady X can be heard loud and clear […]

After nearly two years, I had developed a solid enough relationship with Fred to be able to interview him at his radio show. This time, I was able to take pictures and film him at work. The unedited film forms part of my archive. On the pirate stations the DJs pay subscription fees to the station owner, they are also required to read out or broadcast the paid-for advertisements. These advertisements were for not only for local events, but also for official government bodies such as the Police Crimestoppers initiative and the Department of Health anti swine flu campaign. On Fred's regular morning show, he used a different performing name, because, 'on weekday mornings, I'm the vibemaster' (from field notes).

Cultural seminars: Dalston

I went to three of the cultural events, that Fred was partly responsible for organising and promoting. The seminars took place in a room in a basement below a bookstore in Dalston in the London Borough of Hackney. The seminars were based on the teachings of Dr. Malachi Z York a minister for the Holy Tabernacle Ministries (Christenson & El 2009). At the first visit, it was it was only possible to take the briefest notes during the seminar. This social community was very tightly contained, everyone knew each other and they were wary of newcomers. Initially, I was questioned very closely about how I had come to be there. Once I said that Fred had invited me, the atmosphere relaxed, but there were still furtive glances from around the room. During this initial session, I made a mental note of as

much detail as I could remember and then wrote up the notes outside, my notebook was too large and 'official' looking to be used comfortably in that setting. I noticed that many members of the audience were accompanied by their children, the ages of the young people seemed to be from about 10 – 16. The main speaker at this event was also a former pirate radio DJ. At the seminar, he used a call and response technique – asking the audience to repeat the unfamiliar words back to him. The setting was very formal – we sat in rows facing the lectern while the lecture was given and students raised their hands if they had a question. All of the teachers were male and their full name – including their title.

For the subsequent visit, I was more prepared. I took my 16 year-old daughter with me, and made sure I arrived early enough to be as unobtrusive as possible. I paid the entrance fee for both of us and we took our seats at the back. This time when I opened my small notebook in readiness for the lecture, I was hardly given a second glance. The theme for this session was 'The Reptilian Gene'[10].

Once again, the room was laid out in the style of a lecture theatre, with a lectern and flipchart stand at the front of the room. About forty students – paying customers – sat in rows, listened avidly and asked questions. Most of those in attendance wore various items to denote their belonging to this group – cloth made of African prints, jewellery with ancient Egyptian symbols and the women were modestly dressed in flowing dresses had either 'natural' hair - hair that had not been chemically treated, or covered their head with scarves or wraps. This time I blended in more, because although my hair was still uncovered, my jumper was long enough and loose enough to disguise the fact I was wearing denim jeans.

The lecture was delivered at a fast pace utilising unfamiliar words from various languages. I managed to write down some of the words and the references to bible passages (see appendix 7). The theme was dense and complex and the teachers again used a 'repeat after me' call and response to reinforce the key points to provide evidence that he reptilian gene was responsible for gang related violence and youth crime. These teachers were skilled

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[10] These lectures appeared to be an amalgam several ideas and concepts brought together in this context to offer a reason for what they saw as 'monstrous' human behaviour. These concepts included the scientific; in terms of the reptilian brain which is innate to all human beings and is a response to a perceived hazard (Lieberman 2002; Roberts 2002), biblical references (also see field notes at appendix 7**)** and conspiracy theories such as those expounded by David Icke (Icke 2013).

orators and drew on their existing skill set to articulate a perceived link from ancient Egypt to explain the absence of chicken shops in Hampstead. By way of contrast, the teachers pointed out a connection between the surfeit of chicken shops in areas where there were significant black populations and what they saw the increasingly monstrous behaviour of young people from these 'ends'. As each teacher spoke, students took notes and affirmed their agreement. From my vantage point at the back of the room, I was not able to ascertain any dissent among the audience.

The teachers made reference to the books that were available for sale during their lectures and encouraged people to buy their own copies in order to verify the sources used and to expand their knowledge of these theories. The enterprise at the seminars was conspicuous, participants paid five pounds cash entrance fee - no discounts for children. Furthermore, a wide variety of books, food and other merchandise was on sale in the adjoining room.

Pirate radio stations and nightclubs are seen to be repositories for criminal pastimes and therefore interfere with legitimate actions (Day 2005; Wroe 1993; BBC News Channel 2007). These areas or 'ends' are where race and poverty intersect and create an alien space populated by the dangerous, the violent and the poverty driven. However, Wacquant eloquently articulates that these areas actually consist of ordinary people, doing ordinary, everyday things to make a life and improve their lot. From an outside perspective, he argues, it might appear to be outside of the norm, in other words, 'peculiar, quixotic and even aberrant' (Wacquant 2007, p.50) but there is in fact a rationality, a meaning, a motivation and a purpose for what people do and how they go about it. How else is it possible to survive the privations of the social and economic landscape other than look for a niche, find something that you are good at and above all establish a way to make money. Indeed, making money is a prime motivation and the pursuit of it aids transformation and mobility (this is explored in detail in Chapter 6). There is a tension here, however, in that although the developed world appears to have little room for the unskilled, the unschooled, the criminally recorded and the financially excluded, particularly in economies that rely on a highly certificated work force, the formal economy is, to some extent, reliant on the activities of those in the informal economy.

Another 'old hand' in this setting was Victor, like Fred he had operated outside formal paid employment for many years. He had left school before the age of 16 without formal

qualifications and now earned his living as a club and radio DJ (both pirate and legal). Victor had been a pioneer of the Grime scene was unable to perform as a Grime DJ due to concern from the regulating authorities about public order. A south London rap artist Giggs is currently experiencing this same type of curtailment and partitioning of his activities and his live shows are often cancelled (Wolfson 2013). As a result, Victor became a forerunner of a new musical scene – UK Funky or Funky House and was his current occupation.

A nightclub in Shoreditch

Victor invited me to a club in Shoreditch in the London Borough of Hackney, where he was DJing on the same bill as David Rodigan – a Kiss FM radio DJ. David Rodigan is a white man, in his early sixties and a veteran of the Reggae scene. This is not a sound clash, where a number of DJs or MCs will use new music to battle and win over the crowd. This is a standard nightclub format with a number of DJs playing a set on the night, with the most well regarded situated at the top of the bill. Victor had asked me to come to this event because he wanted me to not only see him at work but he also needed some photographs taken for promotional material. Just before midnight, I met up with my friend near Great Eastern St, walked down the road and joined the queue outside. The crowd was mainly white and under 30, so we were a little conspicuous, but fortunately there are a few other older heads that have come to see David Rodigan perform. Once inside, I realise that I have been to this place before, when it had another name. Downstairs, there were the usual low ceilings with a long bar situated at the back of the room. My friend and I agreed in advance that we would take it in turns to take photos. When we first arrived, the DJ was playing 80's Dancehall and there was a mellow, friendly atmosphere. On the stroke of midnight, David Rodigan began his set and he played his first track with the announcement that ' this is the first track I played when Kiss went legal' – *Pirates* (AndyManch 2011) - and the place erupts. We moved closer to the DJ box to get a better view of what was happening on the dancefloor from the DJs perspective. The club filled up quickly and soon the dancefloor was replete with revellers. Victor and his two MCs positioned themselves at the back of the DJ booth. They watched while Rodigan played, and clearly enjoyed what they saw and felt – a time served veteran is being observed by old hands from the Grime scene. Once Rodigan finished his set, Blaise Belleville DJed in the interim playing mainly Dubstep and warmed the audience up for Victor. I wondered how the genres would work together – Dancehall and Funky House, however, once Victor started to play, my doubts disappeared.

Victor's two MCs worked the crowd, they took it in turns to hype them up, invoked call and response, while he mixed and chopped up the beats. The atmosphere remained electric, excited and lively, people danced until the night ended. I left at roughly 2am with chants of 'oggi, oggi, oggi' [11] ringing in my ears.

A music video shoot in Hoxton

Both Fred and Victor have been practitioners in the urban music economy for a significant amount of time. Others in the sector, have advanced from the first steps and continue to work hard to build a level of self-sufficiency. Harvey, an early Grime pioneer, was a member of a Walthamstow based crew who achieved national chart success while he was an unemployed teenager in 2001. I met him in November 2011 while he was with his current crew shooting his latest music video in Hoxton. He described the place he grew up in as a rough council estate, but he says 'it inspired me, gave me a drive, seeing poverty made me want to get out'. For Harvey, his music was his passion as well as his livelihood. As well as creating and releasing his own tracks, he is paid for individual live performance in clubs and universities. He still has a career as an independent unsigned recording artist but had recently developed a street clothing brand, selling caps and T-shirts. Harvey is using his music activities to promote his brand. This brand is sold online and in major retail outlets such as JD Sports and Selfridges. At the time of the interview, Harvey had engaged Dame Judi Dench to promote his clothing line. Harvey is a consummate performer, perfectly at ease while in front of the camera. Midway through our interview, someone came in to let us know that cars were being ticketed and towed away outside, Harvey rushed out, dealt with the situation, made sure his car was moved and then returned, picking up the conversation exactly where he left off. Harvey was 28 at the time of the interview and he had spent a decade establishing a solid base for his creative practice and his enterprise. Many of my younger informants, whilst they had less years experience, they were rooted in their identities as artists and had started to make their mark in the urban music economy.

Making their mark: A music video shoot in Beckton

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[11] This is an English and Welsh football chant – the usual response to which is 'oi, oi, oi' – which has been adapted for other crowd occasions. See MC Dynamo for an example (Livvy Cates 2009).

In July 2010, I was also to observe and carry out a brief interview with Andrew on the set of his music video shoot. This took place approximately two miles from City Airport, on an industrial estate in Beckton, Andrew was filming his latest video for a digital TV channel. Edward was due to feature in a 'hood' video that was also planned to be filmed on the same set later on that evening. I recognise one of the many young men who are on set[12] – he was a pupil at a primary school where I had been a school governor in the late 1990s. I located Andrew's personal assistant - PA and the owner of Channel AKA who was funding the video. Andrew was being styled for the first scene and I managed to have a few words with him before he went into performance mode.

While the PA, runners and director prepared for the shoot, the young men who were waiting to participate in the hood video relaxed with a few drinks and some impromptu freestyling. The model for the main video waited with them and one of the young men approached her. She was clearly much older than him but he confidently assured her that he was 22. The badinage went back and forth until one of the other young men announced loudly, 'he's only 16', this prompted raucous laughter from the crowd and the young woman walked away shaking her head. For a while there was a certain amount of tension in the air, the banter became more heated and the would-be lothario started to remove his jacket, in preparation for a physical confrontation. The other young men, stepped in and calmed him down. Then there was a different laughter and the mood lightened. As the evening wore on the freestyles became more strident, bawdy and explicit and the language took on a tougher turn. Finally, at about 1am, fully energised and refreshed, this group went outside to start filming their video. Meanwhile, at the other end of the warehouse, Andrew continued shooting take after take unperturbed by the other activities on set. He was focused, professional and got on with the job in hand. A runner was called to apply petroleum jelly to his lips to stop them drying out and to bring water to stop him dehydrating. As I observed him, I reflected on how far he had travelled from the quiet boy who was on work experience in my office.

I also observed that the video director was a young white woman called Fiona, and make a note to follow this up to see if she would be willing to be interviewed. I had a brief conversation with John, an independent recording artist who came to provide a cameo for

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[12] Hood videos usually require groups of young men (sometimes women) to populate the background scenes.

the main music video. John was a former member of an east London Grime crew who had been signed and then dropped by a major record label. John grew up in Plaistow in the London Borough of Newham and he told me how his career as an MC had taken him out of the 'ends'. But he explained, that although he was tired – he had just flown back from a performance in Atlanta that day – he could not miss this video shoot in east London because 'this is my ground, it's where I started out from'.

Making their mark: Interviews in Silvertown

Another respondent who was making his mark was Colin, a 24-year-old beatmaker and music producer. I interviewed him at the recording studio that he had recently set up in Silvertown in the London Borough of Newham. Colin, a confident but humble young man, described the journey his father had made in order to finally arrive in east London in 1981:

> '[…] my dad came first, from India to Pakistan, onto Afghanistan then on
> a bus to Iran, he crossed the river to Dubai and then from Dubai to France,
> then here – crazy [..]'. (Colin – Music Producer – 24)

In his own words '[…] I make beats which can then be sung over by an MC or vocalist'. Colin worked with unsigned artists in the informal music economy as well as creating soundtracks for Bollywood films and touring with signed artists such as Wiley and Dizzee Rascal. He had also worked with recording artists such as Giggs, D Double E, Griminal and Ghetts. A trained classical musician – he plays the keyboards, tabla and harmonium. Despite achieving an A grade GCSE in Music in Year 9, he left secondary school in Newham with few qualifications. He had been drawn into life in the 'ends' and become NEET. His east London was one where you 'grow up doing wrong things, thinking it's normal […] on a good day it's vibrant, on a bad day, it's red'. Colin told me that his career break came from selling 80,000 copies of a mixtape that he had produced for an unsigned urban artist.

From the interviews, it was evident that learning how to adapt cultural and creative practices in order to create and maintain sustainable businesses was key. For example, Sam was 24 years old, operating solely on a cash-in-hand basis, when I interviewed him in 2009. He had started out as an MC and was now a video director – creating videos for artists and performers who wanted to showcase their work on Channel AKA and YouTube. Sam grew up in south London and described himself as 'the black Chris Martin' [from the band Coldplay]. He explained how he soon learned that everyone wanted to be in front of the

camera as a performer, whether they were skilled or not, but that there were few that could actually make a film of the proceedings:

> 'Alright, basically [inaudible] everybody wants to be a star, erm, but there's loads of people wanna be artists, but there is not enough people doing like doing like the video directing, the creative designing, and so when these people do come around it's in high demand, innit, so I realised this and thought to myself, if I was just doing the Rap and [inaudible] yeah, I wouldn't get so far' (Lines 73 – 77). 'People didn't rate me as a rapper, innit […] I was a bit different from everyone else, I believed in myself [created] mixtapes and I sold, I ended up selling, the first year sold about 3,000 copies in the first year, enough money for me to invest in my first DVD and buy better studio equipment as well […]'. (Sam- Video Maker – 24)

Sam then went on to learn how to film and edit music videos by trial and error and also by watching the practice of others. He promoted his service through social media sites and by adding his logo and contact details to the videos that he had created. These videos had been subsequently broadcast on YouTube.

By contrast, George who was also 24, was a graduate with a full time job with Transport for London, and he had established a music production business working with a similar target market and customer base as Sam. He had also worked as a sound engineer for mainstream artists and recording studios. Nevertheless, George had to conduct his business activities alongside his day job. '[…] I have to do this on the side as well, but if there was a way of incorporating it to become my main job, I'd be more than happy' (Lines 157 – 159). George grew up in Beckton an area in the south of the London Borough of Newham, but had since moved out to a suburban east London borough because 'people leave you alone'.

Starting out: The new entrants

I also interviewed a number of young people who were trying to establish themselves in the urban music sector. Adam was one of the new entrants to the field. He described himself as an 18 year old 'rapper, upcoming artist, I write, produce, create instrumentals […]'. The east London that Adam occupied was a violent place, where '[…] crime pays, but I don't really watch that no more, if you've got a motive in life you can escape it, even if you still live here'. Adam had set up a recording studio in his bedroom at home to apply what he was learning at college on his music technology course. He didn't attend college often, just enough to get the information and knowledge that he needed to pursue his own projects. At

the time of interview, he was working on his first EP 'trying to put my best work into my first project'. Adam left school at 16, but 'could have got kicked out earlier'. Music had helped him to drift away from the more negative activity that he was surrounded by. In his own words 'I was one of them troubled kids'. During his interview, Adam was wearing a T-shirt with the name of his own brand emblazoned across the front.

Helen, a singer-songwriter was also from east London, a former stage school student who wanted to break into the music industry and felt that working with urban artists was a way in:

> 'Yeah, well, I've already done kinda like theatre work since I was little, and at the moment I'm working like pantomime and you know, doing drama in college, like studying Theatre and Drama (Lines 11 -13). Basically I've always done singing, when I was younger I done theatre, then went into kinda singing […] and done a few competitions round London which I was successful getting to the final two and then later on, when I was about fourteen, like my brothers, I've got two brothers, they was kinda really into Garage music and I started singing that just in my bedroom and I realised it really suited my voice, and then getting to about, say a year ago I realised that, you know, the people that were singing the club music wasn't, you know, just aimed at black people anyway, it was kinda just, written their own stuff, recorded […]'. (Helen – Singer/Songwriter – 18)

Helen described how she had tried to break into this market by creating 'specials' - a one off recording of a popular track with the DJs name sung throughout, for Hotsteppa - a Radio 1Xtra DJ and Marcus Nasty – a pirate radio and club DJ. However, Helen's experience of east London differed to that of Adam and Harvey:

> 'You know, it's (Walthamstow) a lovely area, you're always meeting people, kinda, you know, I talk to people from America or South Africa or you know, Pakistan then they come to live here for a few months and then moving on, you know […], a worldly place to live in, with all these opportunities, […]'. (Helen – Singer/Songwriter – 18)

The urban music economy in evidence

At its heart, economics is about the invisible hand of supply and demand. It is concerned with the decisions that people make and the impact that those choices have on wider society. The informal economy has been defined as those involved in the legal process of producing goods and services that are legal, but not registered for tax and and employment law purposes (Llanes & Barbour 2007, p.12; Gerxhani 2004; Chen 2007, p.1). However, the informal/formal distinction is used here as an heuristic device, as a way to explore how

the urban music economy manifests itself, the activities do not fall easily into one category or the other. The goods and services that have been traditionally identified as likely to occur in the informal sector are personal services such as hairdressing and catering. Nevertheless, it can now be argued that the urban music sector is also a significant economic area.

All of my informants participated in the informal music economy to a greater or lesser extent while simultaneously having a business or artistic reach into the formal sector. This informal music economy may appear, at a first glance, to be a chaotic collection of individuals creating a niche genre of music for a very specific urban audience. It may also seem to operate in a way which is not visible or accessible to everday, ordinary folk. This is not the case. Of the forty people that I interviewed, twenty two had a booking agent and/or a manager. Two of my informants, George and Diane, acted as agents for others. The events that I attended were subject to all of the usual regulation in terms of health and safety and licensing. If it was a ticket event, tickets could be bought online, in retail outlets or from the promoter. Only the cultural seminars operated on a strictly cash at the door basis. The urban music economy is not an unregulated sector, and if, as Will Straw states in the *Club Cultures Reader* 'DJing is now a proper job' (Redhead et al. 1998, p.161), then the same can be said for being an MC or an event promoter.

A further illustration of how the respondents participated in both the formal and informal economy was the fashion show that Diane organised to raise money for the BBC Children in Need appeal in November 2009. I had first interviewed Diane in 2008 and this fashion show was an opportunity to watch her at work on a substantial project. Diane had started out in this sector acting as an agent and event promoter for urban music artists. Diane also ran an agency providing models for music video shoots, such as the one that Andrew had participated in when he was fourteen. Since then her focus has shifted to the model agency aspect of her business and she no longer represents artists.

This event was hosted by Chico – a finalist from the 2005 X Factor TV programme and was held in a nightclub in Mayfair. Diane also used the event to promote her model agency and had secured the services of Sophie Anderton a former UK supermodel who had fallen from grace and who was attempting to re-establish her career. Prior to this event, Diane had asked me if I would interview Ms. Anderton, so that she could have a filmed interview for her website. Before this was able to happen, I had to be introduced to her manager/minder –

so he knew my face and had an indication of the type of questions that I wanted to ask. While I waited to meet with him, I took some photos of the models who were getting ready backstage. Diane coordinated the activities of 10 models – male and female, she organised the runway layout and made sure that her agency banner was put up in a prominent position once the previous event has finished. The clientele at this event was very image conscious and self-aware, but I had to adapt to these surroundings, so this time I kitted myself out in a cocktail dress and high heels. Participants in this event included two former reality TV stars who sat, uninterested, as members the audience but produced full beaming smiles once the camera was on them. At home the next day, I watched Diane present her big cheque to the Children in Need hosts on television on BBC1.

This is just one example of the high level of collaboration with artists, promoters and producers from the formal and informal sector working together to create a product, in this case staging an event. The respondents in this study had worked with a wide range of artists both signed and unsigned. As well as her efforts for Children in Need, Diane for example, had also worked with Griminal, Lil Nasty, Marcus Nasty, Giggs, and participated in the Snoop Dogg - Puff Puff Puff Tour. However, the view that the informal economy is a separate, chaotic – or less ordered – sector, while it still has currency (Grabiner 2000; Llanes & Barbour 2007; Williams 2006; Venkatesh 2006), is contested by recent research as well as the empirical evidence presented here (Round et al. 2008)

Consider these comments made by Marcelli, Pastor and Joussart; 'Selling oranges in a grocery store is a formal economic activity. Selling them on a highway exit ramp in Los Angeles County to passing motorists is an informal activity' (cited in Losby et al. 2002, p.5). This view suggests that perhaps the grocery store will always be in the same place and that the person who sells the oranges in the store will have all of the required permissions. On the other hand, the unregulated seller, positioned on the highway exit ramp, might be in different location tomorrow; also there is no guarantee about the quality of the product or the validity of the seller (does the informal orange seller have a contract of employment?). In reality, though, it is possible that the grocery store uses 'cash-in-hand' labour and that the grocery store owner does not pay all of the necessary taxes.

The urban music economy operates at a formal and informal level, it is a new guise for a longstanding sector (Chen 2007, p.7) and its practitioners acquire the necessary skills and

knowledge to create businesses and generate self employment. Grime music and its by products can therefore used as a tool to discover how this economy operates and who participates in it. While some of the respondents are not working within this musical genre *per se* they do occupy positions within the same economic ecology, such as pirate radio stations, music videos and nightclubs.

The discussion regarding the informal urban music sector often centres on ethnicity and underachievement, underpinned by the negative impact of aggressive behaviour and violent lyrics in what is often erroneously termed 'rap music'. Recent studies have pointed out that research into African-Caribbean youth has been largely confined to the problematic of young black men, namely a socio-political concern about rioting, knife crime, gun crime and gangs (Gunter 2010). This is underpinned by the use of the hyper masculinity of the scene as as evidence of violence and negativity and augments a categorisation of young black men as powerless and marginalised (Collinson 2006; Keyes 2004; Muir 2006; Wolfson 2013). Yet, at the same time this same community is over represented both as victims and as perpetrators of violent crime (Rose 2008; Stickler 2008).

For example, in his investigation into *Britain's gang culture'* (*see Chapter 1: From Hackney to Chingford: Welcome to Gangland*) Heale retells the story of the escalating incidents between two musicians from east London which eventually resulted in a murder and accepts that the lyrics are a key factor in the subsequent crime (Heale 2008, p.1). The incident – reported in 2006 - relates to Carl Dobson, also known as Grime MC Crazy Titch, who was jailed for 30 years for his involvement in the shooting of a music producer. The Guardian reported that the fatal incident started with a row over song lyrics that were deemed to denigrate Crazy Titch and his brother. Furthermore, it is difficult to speak of a creative underground particularly in terms of music, as technological change means that this creative practice leaves a significant online audit and activity trail.

Images from the field: Limehouse, Dalston, Shoreditch and Beckton

FIGURE 6: Fred – Pirate radio and club DJ on location at a radio station in east London.

FIGURE 7: A noticeboard at the pirate radio station – displaying the rules
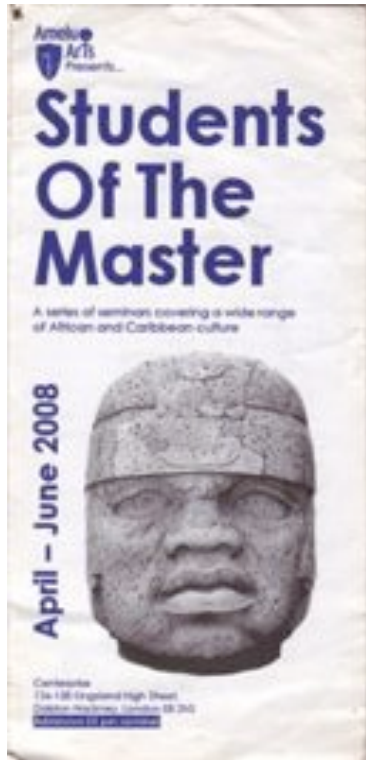
FIGURE 8: Event flyer for a 'Students of the Master' Workshop

FIGURE 9: Victor and MCs at East Village nightclub – Shoreditch – London EC2

FIGURE 10: East Village nightclub – Shoreditch – London EC2

FIGURE 11: Behind the scenes at a music video shoot – Beckton - July 2010

FIGURE 12: Waiting to shoot the 'Bounce' music video – July 2010

FIGURE 13: Joy and John at a music video shoot – Beckton - July 2010

FIGURE 14: Joy, George and Helen – Silvertown E16 – September 2009

Conclusion

In this chapter I have focused on the findings from the fieldwork - semi structured interviews and participant observation which I carried out in various locations in east London. The informants in this research project have used urban music to articulate their living conditions, to speak of the lack of opportunity and at the same time create a route to employment through enterprise. Through apprenticeships with sound systems and Grime crews, honing their craft by watching and working with others, these practitioners have used their creativity to establish ways to learn and earn. Bourdieu suggests that people attempt what is possible and what is deemed possible is based on what is in evidence (Jenkins 2002). By participating in the urban music economy as a producer or as a consumer these young people see and experience a bigger world, therefore, the possiblities for improvement and exit increase. What Thrift calls 'the crushing weight of economic circumstance' in the 'cramped worlds in which many people are forced to live their lives' (Thrift 2007, p.20) has been disrupted by this participation in the informal music economy.

In '*Urban Outcasts*' Wacquant warned against the hurried glance of the casual observer (Wacquant 2007). My project, therefore, is a scholarly effort to do just that, that is, to examine the complex layers, networks and connections of what initially appeared to be an underground or hidden creative economy. Uncovering the workings and activities of the practitioners in the informal urban music economy in east London, questions the NEET category as one of deficit and inactivity. In my examination of the ecology of the urban music economy, I have demonstrated that young people from stigmatised communities occupy and inhabit a range of roles; as recording artists, filmmakers, producers and sound engineers, for example. Despite, or perhaps because of, predominantly low educational attainment, through their practice they develop useful skills and knowledge that they then utilise for self-employment. It is possible for practitioners to mature in this environment, 'old hands' such as my informants Fred and Victor, have used music and its by products to emerge from the repercussions of the chronic underemployment of the 1980s. I have placed on record how young people from impoverished communities, rather than conforming to a stereotype of a feral underclass (Sergeant 2009a), are making or have made, the transition to a highly visible creative practice. Music is a key driver in this context and is a locus for enterprise and entrepreneurship. Moreover, due to advances in technology, this practice

does not require an intermediary such as a record company, instead, artists build a direct relationship with their audience.

Through my primary research, I have identified that there is a national and global reach for Grime music and its practitioners that has created opportunities for participation in the economic arena. The urban music scene in Ayia Napa is a case study for the global reach of the UK urban music economy and this is explored in detail in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5: MAKING IT FUNKY - HOW THE FORMAL MUSIC ECONOMY IS EMBEDDED WITH INFORMAL ENTERPRISE

Far from being a highly localised, niche creative practice, the act of creating Grime music propels its practitioners out into the world and away from 'the ends'. During the interviews and while exploring the artistic output of the Grime scene online and on radio, it became apparent that although the respondents were grounded in east London through residence and/or performance, their reach and influence extended far beyond this locale. In the UK I found evidence Grime had an audience and a steady demand for live performance outside of London. In Swindon and Bristol, for example, the Sidewinder events provided a platform for MCs and DJs (Sidewinder 2007; Sidewinder 2006)[13], and Eskimo Dance occasions took luminaries of the Grime scene to Watford and beyond (NuthingSorted.com 2006). In this chapter, the Ayia Napa experience is used as a case study to explore how urban music has further enabled markets and primary and secondary business activities to be created and developed in a national and global context.

From the initial research, I knew that I needed to be in the world of the artists and performers; in order to look at their creative expression, and identify the means they have at their disposal and media they use to produce, promote and broadcast their creative practice. It was important to talk to them about how and why they do what they do. Over a two-year period, I spent many months identifying and talking to key informants and becoming familiar with the creative output of this sector. This familiarity enabled me to ask questions that were relevant and which enabled the informant to articulate their activities and experiences. I had to develop, nurture and maintain relationships with the respondents. In time, some of my informants made suggestions about who to talk to and where to go next.

Once I had carried out the first interviews, I was subsequently invited to a variety of events by the respondents. These activities took place in nightclubs, cultural seminars, music video shoots, model shoots and pirate radio stations. Out of this initial primary research, it became

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[13] MCs and DJs from London who performed at these events include in Swindon: Cameo, Mac 10, Marcus Nasty, Logan Sama, and Heartless Crew. Hyper Fen, Stormin, Ghetto, Scorcher, Ultra, Cheeky, Bearman, Viper, Wiley, Skepta, Donaeo, JME
In Bristol; Cameo, Snakeyman, Semtex, Ras Kwame, Broke 'n' English, Doctor, L.Man, Hypa Fenn & Marcie Phonix, Wiley, JME, Skepta, Faith SFX

apparent that a key location for the participants in the informal urban music economy was the summer season in the resort of Ayia Napa in southern Cyprus.

The interviews conducted in Ayia Napa were recorded on film because the nature of the setting meant that artists expected their contributions to be recorded as this was part of their everyday reality. However, the questions had to change slightly because it was not appropriate to ask artists about their experience of school, as it was not in keeping with the setting. Instead, I had to feel the way and ask questions as they naturally occurred, but it was still possible to enquire 'who are you?' and identify those operating in the urban music economy as artists and as entrepreneurs.

Charting the journey from Garage to Funky House[14]

The current musical scene in Ayia Napa is the latest stopping off point on a ten-year journey that takes us from Garage to Grime and from Grime to UK Funky, underpinned by, and sonically connected to, Dancehall, Bashment and Bassline. This musical scene is a cultural space which contains a wide range of co-existing musical practices each impacting and influencing the other (Will Straw in Redhead et al. 1998). The genres shift and change but the enterprising activity remains. These urban music genres are rooted in and have developed out of black diaspora music culture. The Grime scene is a cornerstone of the current informal music economy, it is a particularly London based urban creative expression. Grime, sometimes known as Eski beat, Sub Low or RnG, draws its influences from the sound systems of Jamaica, filtered through the last few decades of Hip Hop, Drum and Bass and two step Garage. In the early years of the 21st century, it rose from the gritty terrain of inner city east London. As a musical genre, Grime has its origins in the hybridity of Jamaican Reggae, American RnB and Hip Hop – which itself grew out of the black Atlantic exchange between American and Caribbean musical expression. This urban art form is an 'invented musical expression'(Gilroy 1993, p.76) which draws on the cultural, political and economic history of having parents and grandparents from elsewhere and staking a claim to the lived experience of a specific and particular place, in this case urban east London.

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[14] *Garage* and *Funky House* are urban music genres, as are *Grime, Dancehall, Bashment* and *Bassline*.
All are rooted in and developed out of black diaspora music culture (Gilroy 1993; Bradley 2000).

Now, there is a specific and particular audience from the United Kingdom who come to participate in a musical scene that has been temporarily transplanted from the urban environment of inner city London to the third largest island in the Mediterranean – Cyprus. For approximately three months every summer, the resort of Ayia Napa in Southern Cyprus is transformed from a sleepy village into a thriving holiday resort. Tourism is a key part of the Cypriot economy and every year roughly two million holidaymakers arrive from all over Europe. The majority of those that come – 56% - are British (Ministry of Finance 2010). Britain shares a long colonial past with Cyprus and still has two Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs) situated on the island (The British Army 2013). In the London Borough of Newham in east London there is an area called Cyprus that is so named to commemorate the United Kingdom taking over government of the island from the Ottoman Empire in 1878. Over the last ten years, the urban music genres detailed above have established themselves in this location thereby creating a vital market for events, merchandise and performance.

'What happens in Ayia Napa is broadcast on YouTube…'

I knew from my initial research that the urban music community is constantly recording and being recorded - on cameras, camcorders and mobile phones - filming is a standard and quotidian activity. So there I was, a forty something year old woman, equipped only with an HD camera and a friend, trying to find a way to be a participant observer in a musical scene which is predominantly the domain of the under 30's.

As participants and as practitioners, technology is used to create a significant and highly visible public presence. Channel AKA (a digital TV channel), YouTube (an internet video site), Facebook and MySpace are used extensively to promote creative output, goods, services and experiences both in the UK and throughout Europe. For the London interviews, I had used a digital tape recorder and, where possible, taken photographs at the events that I had attended. During the interviews, it also became apparent that there was one particular DJ, Victor, who many of the respondents had collaborated with or aspired to work with. Starting out as one of the founder members of an east London Grime collective, it also emerged that he was a key player in the Ayia Napa scene. I had listened to Victor's regular show on pirate radio and been a participant at one of his London events. Now, the search for him in Ayia Napa became the bassline for my field research in this location.

The marketing campaign in the UK for the musical scene in Ayia Napa begins several months before with pre-parties, events and reunions happening all over the UK. So, in August 2009, armed with an HD film camera and a friend I decided to record the journey from east London to Southern Cyprus, to make and experience the movement that the artists had made and to talk to people at different stages of the journey. Prior to leaving, I interviewed Edward and Andrew again because both of them had recently returned from performing in the clubs there. From my initial research, it seemed that this is very much a raucous party resort. It was also evident from existing footage that there are distinct segments to 'the vibe', the beach, the club and the after-party and my plan was to observe the activities and speak to people in each setting (ASITISTV 2006; bushbashents 2008; NSCProductions 2009).

At the airport(s) – Gatwick and Larnaca

The cost of the journey is a factor as Cyprus is relatively expensive when compared to other Mediterranean destinations, such as Spain, that are popular with UK travellers. Holidays in this resort are at a premium and therefore all of the experience counts and needs to be savoured. The holidaymakers I spoke to had come from all parts of the UK and they had gone to Ayia Napa for 'the vibe'.[15] And it is 'the vibe' as a concept constructed by these urban artists that is a key organising principle of the music scene and economy in Ayia Napa. 'The vibe' is centred on DJs, MCs and various events promoted and coordinated either by the artists themselves or by specific promoters. Getting on the plane at Gatwick, I spoke to three young women (two from Birmingham and one from Chiswick in west London) who were going to Ayia Napa for the first time. Once I landed I also had a brief conversation with two girls from Tewkesbury. All of these young women were going for the music, they wanted to see JME and Skepta and listen to Grime and UK Funky. For Tom, a Dubstep event promoter from New Cross in south London, it was the whole package '[…] music, cheap drinks, cheap drugs […]' (Making it Funky: field video 06:00 – 07:32).

I had planned to take a taxi from Larnaca airport but realised that most of the holidaymakers were on a package which included a shuttle transfer from the airport to their respective

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[15] 'The vibe' is a sensation, a collection of moments and feelings that shape an individual's personal experience of the event. It includes, in this context, a dynamic relationship between the audience and the performers

hotels. When I disembarked from the plane, I managed to interview Tom, the event promoter from New Cross before being asked by the Cypriot police to turn the camera off. The holiday rep agreed that we could get on the bus and I almost got to film a female MC 'freestyling'[16] but again we were told to turn the camera off. For the participants, the camera offered an opportunity for their performance to be recorded and broadcast. However, for the police and the holiday company, the camera appeared to represent a threat either to security or to company reputation.

At the hotel

I had chosen this particular hotel as it appeared to be a popular destination for the young tourists from the UK. I arrived in the early hours of the morning, while a small group of us waited to check in, a young man staggered in to the lobby, clearly very intoxicated, he asked each of us in turn, if we knew which hotel he was staying in. After a few minutes, his friend came in to collect him and took him away. While I waited to check in, I noticed a pool of vomit by the reception desk, next to the public phone. The receptionist who became aware of it at the same time that I did, left her desk, placed a stool in front of the now congealing puddle and then returned to her desk and carried on with her work. I wondered how I was going to survive this experience.

In the morning, I sat on the balcony and as my room was on the ground floor, I was able to watch people going to and from the pool, it was fairly quiet as most people did not wake up until early afternoon. So, I went for a walk and identified the main locations (and the car hire, buggy hire and 'ped hire spots) on the streets that constituted 'the strip'. By late afternoon, more people surfaced and made their way towards the pool. Initially, I spoke to three young men of Greek Cypriot descent who had travelled from Palmers Green. They told me that they stayed for six weeks every year as they had family there. I explained that I was looking for Victor. There was an immediate recognition: `I saw him two days ago, when I was in the barber's getting my hair cut' (from field notes).

I spoke briefly to other people at the poolside to find out what had brought them to the resort, the majority are under the age of 30 and have come for what they are calling the vibe. It is the music and the atmosphere that it creates which is the main draw for these

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[16] 'Freestyling' is an impromptu or unplanned performance

holidaymakers. While I was talking to a group of ten girls from the west Midlands, Xavier, a secondary school teacher from south London introduced himself to me. Xavier had been in the resort for several weeks, this week he was promoting his event – 'Funkie Junkie' - at Drench. Just before we sat down to talk, Xavier and his colleague had been distributing promotional flyers around the pool. All of the billed artists are from the UK and I asked Xavier where I might find Victor who I notice is the headline act on the flyer. He suggests Nissi Beach – where most of the artists are during the day, otherwise later on at Drench. Xavier is relatively new to the events market in Ayia Napa, but he has experience as a promoter in London. He is relying on the billed artists to be a big enough draw to fill the club. When I ask him what motivates him to do this he says: '… well, it's basic maths – six hundred people per venue, times ten pounds, equals six thousand pounds' (Lines 32-33). During our talk, Xavier tells me that is the 'boss of the 'Funkie Junkie' team'. I say something which I think is non-committal and unassuming in return but he starts to bristle. He asks me why I look surprised, I was not aware that I had expressed such a reaction, but then I realised that he had an audience to play to (the young women from the Midlands) and, not wanting to offend him, I offer by way of explanation that he looked young to be a boss. He seemed satisfied with this and, ego intact, proffered me smile and a flyer and suggested I come to the club later.

On the beach

Nissi beach hosts the daytime activities for many of the holidaymakers. So, we hired a buggy and drove for a very bumpy ten minutes to the beach. Today, a north London crew – Animo - , provides the beach entertainment. Although each of the three members of this crew are just thirty years old, they have been performers, artists, MCs and DJs for more than fifteen years. Starting out performing in house parties and clubs, Animo now command a business that draws its audience from all over the UK and Europe. When I look around the beach, very few artists are wearing or displaying a brand that is not theirs – and Animo are no exception, they and their workers wear T Shirts that promote their regular Thursday night event at Sugar. These young men are at the top of their game; selling their own branded merchandise, pre-booked by club owners throughout the summer season and also promoting their own weekly events. The presence of a good quality HD camera meant that people were more willing to speak to me. For example, when seeking permission for the first interview on Nissi Beach, Kevin; an MC and event promoter with Animo said: "If it

had just been any youth wanting me to jump in to one of their road videos, I would have said no, but I can see you're serious (from field notes)."

Throughout the interview, Kevin was polite, charming and articulate. He was clearly used to telling his story and narrated his personal history with ease. His crew, Animo, have worked through and with a variety of urban music genres. I have also seen them provide cameo roles in recent films with an urban theme (Julian Gilbey 2006). At the end of our interview, Kevin excused himself and asked me to stay around for the entertainment in about fifteen minutes time. Once the performance starts however, Kevin is transformed (Making it Funky field video – 06:36 -07:24). While another member of the Animo crew plays the tracks, Kevin hosts a variety of ever more spirited and entertaining beach games for the tourists on the beach.

Haircuts and Curry Goat: Finding a gap in the market

After this first interview with Kevin on Nissi beach, respondents were, on the whole, self-selecting. Kevin is relatively well known in the urban music economy, so once people had seen him talking to me, they asked to be interviewed as well. Some respondents also wanted to promote themselves and their business activities. Lionel was one of them.

Lionel was in Ayia Napa promoting his latest business venture and asked if he could be interviewed. Lionel had come to the resort the previous year as a holidaymaker. He realised after a couple of weeks that his hair was starting to look untidy – and not how he liked it. So, after discussion with his business partners he returned this year and set up a barbershop 'specialising in fades and shape ups'. Lionel gave me his business card and a leaflet (Figure19) and told me that his barbershop could be located 'around the corner' from the Caribbean restaurant.

For Lionel, enterprise and being an entrepreneur meant spotting a gap in the market and acting on it. In response to my question about whether he had a background in the music industry, he replied: 'No, I'm just an entrepreneur, I'm someone that sees an opportunity and I go for it. I've also got a T-Shirt company back home called 'My Hood' just launching'. (Lines 17 – 20 interview with Lionel on Nissi beach). During his interview, Lionel also took the opportunity to announce the details for his website.

He was also keen to point out the breadth of his client base:

> So here we are, yeah *Fades and Shades* barbershop, official barber shop of Ayia Napa and we got all of the top DJs coming through now; Martin Larner, Marcus Nasty, DJ EJ from up North. We got a lot of people coming and the locals as well, we don't just cut black peoples hair, we got white, Cypriot…'. (Lionel – Barber – 30)

After I had finished talking to Lionel. I bought a drink and sat down in the shade. Oliver had positioned himself so he was seated on the wall behind me, he made sure that I knew he had something to say, by conducting a detailed and fairly loud phone conversation. He made sure that all those around him knew that he was checking the progress of the distribution of his product. Once he had finished with his phone call, I introduced myself, explained what I was doing in the resort and asked him if he would mind talking to me on camera. Oliver, an MC and DJ with many years experience had no doubts about his reasons for being in this location: to promote himself and his products and services:

> Yeah, I'm from that crew [Pay As You Go] originally; I got a tune out at the moment called 'Funky Rush'. Yeah I'm just in Ayia Napa working, I'm going out to the northern part of the island and then I'm coming back here on Monday. Yeah, I'm promoting my tune 'Funky Rush', and I've got a drink coming out called 'Funky Rush' – an energy drink…'. (Oliver – MC/Producer – 30)

Oliver felt that his reputation was such that he did not really need the Ayia Napa exposure to heighten his visibility or his credibility:

> 'to be honest, I'm not one of them guys who need Ayia Napa to make money[…] but it is vital to be seen […] I'll be real with you, this island is not much of a business […]' (Oliver – MC/Producer – 30)

A few weeks later, back in London, I was able to locate the website and the Facebook page for 'Funky Rush' – both the track and the energy drink. Oliver, saw himself as an old hand because of his past experience as a member of a relatively successful Grime crew[17]. He had been coming to Ayia Napa for many years and in various guises, and while we talked, he pointed out someone who, in his opinion, was a rising star – a young man called Richard. This young man was 18 and had not left the UK before, he told me that what brought him here from an estate in Harlesden (in North West London) with a poor reputation, was the chance to promote himself to a relevant audience and become more recognised. As an unsigned artist his video had received 800,000 views on YouTube. Richard slipped into his

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[17] Since this interview, his performance on one track has been featured in the soundtrack of a Hollywood film - *Ted* (MacFarlane 2012).

performance persona and gave an impromptu rendition of his current track to a gathering audience. Oliver, who was still sitting on the wall provided the ad-lib input[18] for the act (Making it Funky: field video 17:11 – 18:07). One of Richard's companions did not want to be seen in the video, so he covered his face and moved out of shot. Once Richard had finished, he said that in his opinion, Ayia Napa 'wasn't all that, just a hype ting with the same hood people'. He disappeared into the crowd, so I did not get an opportunity to explore this further with him.

I was not able to locate Victor on Nissi beach, instead I met one of his MCs, Quentin, who told me that Victor was playing at a pool party in one of the hotels. Quentin, like the others, wanted to be interviewed ' …oh, you should talk to me…' (from field notes) but by now we had run out of film. Quentin told me that he and Victor would be at Drench later on so I agreed to interview him there.

At the club

At about midnight, we made our way to Drench, where Victor is the headline act tonight. To get to the square where the clubs are situated, I have to walk down 'the strip', which because of the camera involves negotiating brief interviews at roughly two-minute intervals. Therefore, a journey that should have been of 15 minutes duration, took 45 minutes. Nevertheless, while walking I met people who had come from all over the UK, some are working – for example Candy, a young woman from Sheffield is doing PR for Animo – distributing flyers for tomorrow night's event. Others are in full party mode, carousing in the street. Outside Drench we filmed some for about ten minutes to try to capture the feel of the scene. It is very, very loud and bustling with people (Figure 20).

In the bar adjacent to Drench, three dancers dressed in skimpy bikinis hung loosely from poles. I gradually became more accustomed to the noise. And then, I spotted Victor emerging from the crowd, his headphones are around his neck and he is carrying a small CD case. I introduced myself, and he laughed and said that he had already heard that there was a film crew looking for him. I gave him a brief outline of what I was doing and then asked him whether I could interview him on camera inside the club. He asked me to hold on and then went over to speak to the club owner: 'this is my film crew', he said, 'is it alright

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[18] An ad-lib in this context means contributing additional words or sounds to emphasise words and phrases.

for them to come?' The club owner agreed, Victor beckoned us inside, the club had not opened yet so we were able to take the time to select, and set up in, a good location in the bar area at the back.

The doors opened at 1.00am and the club was soon at full capacity - with approximately 600 people and the entrance fee is ten Euros, so Xavier's calculations were correct give or take the Euro exchange rate. If it was loud outside, the volume was even greater in the club and even though we positioned ourselves at the back of the club, it was still a very noisy space. Once the camera was set up most respondents put themselves forward for interview, except William, who was a little hesitant, so Victor brought him over and made the introduction. I spoke to all except one of the artists who were performing on that night. Some of the artists had taken time off work and had fit this particular enterprising activity around their everyday – that is formal, regulated and taxed identities of, for example, the electrician or the secondary school teacher, others were operating entirely off the books but one respondent, who was also playing that night, had a regular show on BBC 1XTRA (he had started out as a member of a UK sound system, playing a variety of urban music some fifteen years before). Another, William, the 19-year-old music producer from Reading, had left the UK for the first time to come to Ayia Napa. When I spoke to him he had been in Cyprus for a week and was planning to stay for one more, depending on the work offers he received. Michael, a DJ had taken two weeks off work in Wolverhampton to come to Ayia Napa to promote the Bassline sound. He described his journey from being an MC to becoming a DJ that played old school Garage, Grime, Funky and now Bassline. Quentin, who I had met on the beach earlier that day, was going to be the host tonight for Victor's set. As an MC/host his job was to 'pick up the vibe that the DJ is trying to create' (from interview transcript). Quentin had also take time off work to be here.

An older hand in this setting is Peter, he has come for the weekend only because he now has a show on a national radio station for five nights a week. Peter has learned his craft through the sound system and pirate radio route, he has also played a variety of genres throughout the years including Garage and Dancehall.

Finally, at Drench, I interviewed Victor, the DJ in the informal music economy, who I had been trying to get an interview with for two years. Victor described himself as a DJ and talent scout. Like Kevin, the MC from Animo crew who I had met earlier that day on Nissi

beach, he was polished and at ease in front of the camera. In response to my question about ' what next', he laughed and said: 'hopefully, some TV presenting. He outlined how he started out in an east London Grime crew some 10 years before and identified some of the artists from that crew that had achieved mainstream success. Since then Victor explained that playing music had taken him to locations in the UK and abroad as diverse as The Gambia and Berlin. This activity had enabled him to establish fan bases in countries that he had not yet been to. He also described how, four years before, he had anticipated a shift in the urban music scene and outlined the activities he undertook to ensure that a market was created for this new musical style:

> 'And I introduced it [UK Funky] to all the DJs, it's pointless me being the top guy in a small scene, I need to be the top guy in a big scene, the only way to make the scene grow is to get everyone involved and that's what I'm trying to do right now. All the producers from *Versatile* to *Donaeo* to *Kyla*, they'll tell you that I've marketed them myself for nothing, no personal gain, but for the scene to grow, do know what I mean, and now this is what it is, if you go anywhere along this strip in Ayia Napa you'll hear Funky…'. (Victor – DJ/Talent Scout – 33)

Victor was clearly proud of his achievements and how he had used his influence to create a growing market, and therefore employment for many, in this emerging musical genre. As a participant enjoying music and the whole club scene, I had not really taken too much notice of what the DJ or the sound system did. As a participant, I just knew if they were skilled at their task or not. The best ones could stir you up or mellow you out, they took you on a journey and let you know when to head for the bar, strut your stuff on the dance floor and when it was time to go home. However, as a participant observer, I became increasingly aware of the multiplicity of skills that are involved in working in that confined space, judging the mood in order to select and play the right track, coordinating with the actions of the MC or host, and communicating what is coming next, often in a non verbal way. When I observed Victor perform at his Drench set, I watched as he indicated to his MCs, sometimes with just a look or a nod of the head, what track he was going to play next. At the same time, there was an intensity to the performance that was insistent and compelling making it is impossible not to join in (Making it Funky: field video 39:00 – 40:20).

After the after party

Once the clubs close, the after party is another key business activity. At seven o clock in the morning as the refuse collectors cleared up the debris from the night before, I met

Neville, an event promoter who started his career as an MC – who had been coming to Ayia Napa for ten years (see Figure 22). Neville, stays on location for the whole season – six to eight weeks - promoting his weekly after party event at a another popular club called Ravine. This event had an entrance fee of ten Euros and customers are given a free T Shirt with every ticket.

I also met two Bassline MCs from Birmingham, driving round on a quad bike. They had come to Ayia Napa to raise their profile as artists. They said, 'You can't be a part of a scene and not *merk* out of Ayia Napa' (Making it Funky: field video 18:38 – 18:40) - to merk means to lyrically kill the opposition or the competitor. They too were happy to deliver a polished, freestyle performance for the camera (Making it Funky: field video 18:50 -19:20).

I ended my visit to the island with a trip to the Caribbean restaurant that Lionel had told me about a few days before and while there enjoyed the national Jamaican dish - ackee and saltfish - washed down with a traditional fruit punch. The restaurant had a Jamaican chef – who now lived in Wales for the rest of the year. I talked with the owners and asked them what brought them to Ayia Napa. They confirmed that they came because they were aware that there was a more substantial market for their services and products during the summer season in this resort than if they stayed in Barry Island in Wales.

The Ayia Napa experience offers some evidence that the urban music economy, far from being hyper local, actually conducts its business over a wide geographical reach, both in the UK and globally. Figure 15 illustrates where the practitioners and holidaymakers that I spoke to had travelled from in order to participate in this market.

There perhaps was a time when it was possible to speak of a 'creative underground', as Bradley suggests: 'A blues dance, late at night, in the heart of the black neighbourhood, publicised by word of mouth, or flyers in record shops or other blues, were about as underground as you were going to get in mainland Britain in 1970' (Bradley 2000, p.378). Now, however, almost all urban music events happen in highly regulated venues with a plethora of related laws and regulations, for example licensing and Health and Safety laws. The shebeen, blues dance and nomadic rave event, once subjected to the 'disciplinary procedures which organise social space' have been legislated out of existence (Stanley-

Niaah 2004). Nevertheless, it is possible that these disciplinary procedures, combined with the discourse regarding urban creative expression, have enabled a countermovement – a musical scene where urban youth and young black men in particular can create a new persona as perhaps an artist or an entrepreneur. This in turn allows entry into a different assemblage – that of the economic market place. This black Atlantic trajectory takes us to a space twenty-five miles from Africa where a market place has been created through the entrepreneurial activities of young men of Caribbean descent travelling from predominantly urban environments in the UK. The black Atlantic in this context is a cultural construction that goes beyond the geographical and physical boundaries of Africa, the Caribbean and the United States. When Animo perform on Nissi beach in Ayia Napa – creating 'the vibe' using all styles of urban music (and including Jamaican Bashment*),* we experience what Soja calls that 'triple dialogue of space, time and social being' as young people from the UK participate in the urban music economy both as producers and consumers (Hubbard et al. 2004, p.270).
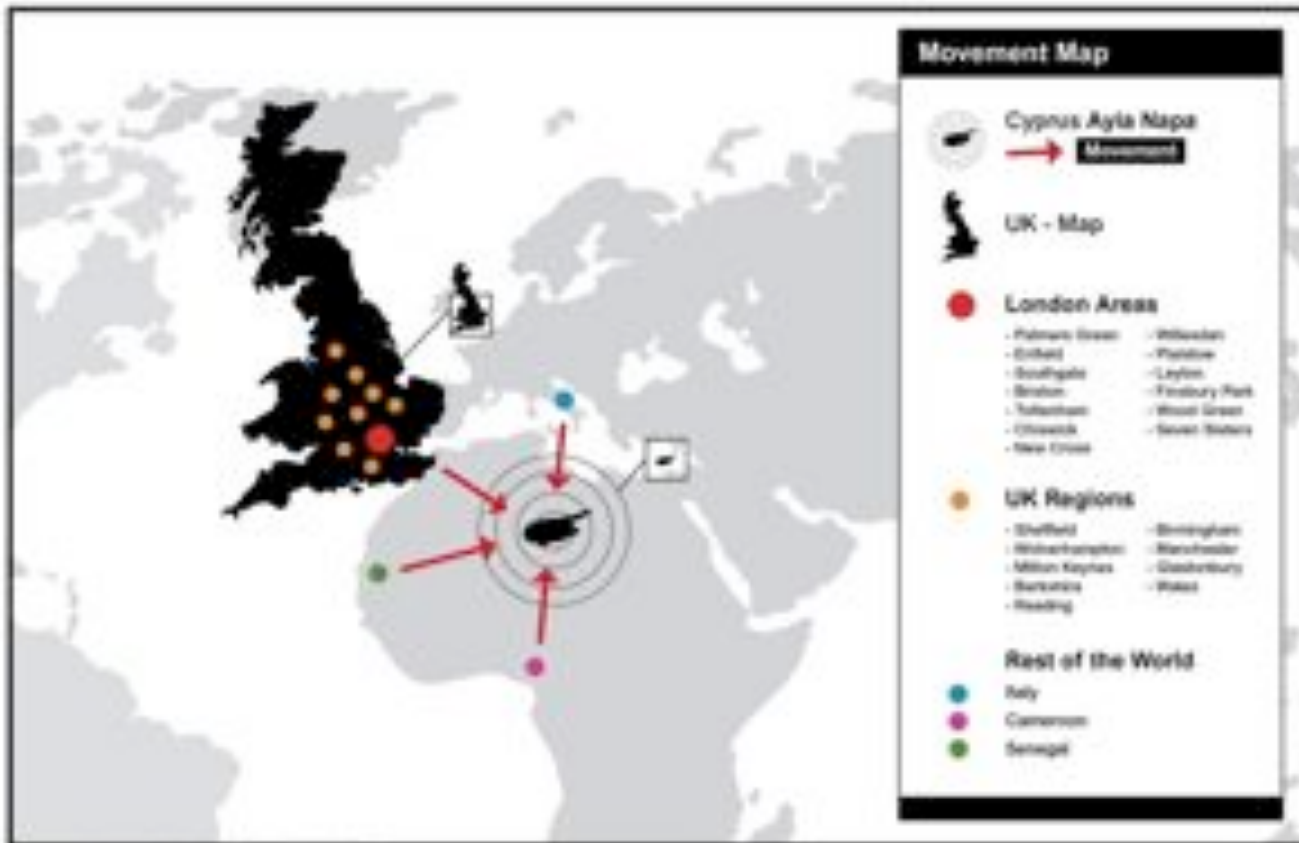
Fig. xx 'Movement Map' © Joy White 2010.

FIGURE 15: Movement map: Origin of visitors to Ayia Napa

Images from the field: Ayia Napa

FIGURE 16: DJ booth - Nissi Beach, Ayia Napa. The notice in the DJ box states 'CDs for Sale'.

FIGURE 17: Street team Ayia Napa, promoting Animo's weekly event

FIGURE 18: Nissi Beach - holidaymakers wearing promotional material

FIGURE 19: Flyer for Lionel's barbershop – Ayia Napa

FIGURE 20: Outside Drench nightclub, Ayia Napa

FIGURE 21: Victor on the decks at Drench

FIGURE 22: Joy and Neville – after the 'after party'

FIGURE 23: Banner in Ayia Napa advertising a club night featuring pirate radio and legal radio DJs

Conclusion

The market for 'the vibe' in Ayia Napa is evidence of how the informal sector exists in a symbiotic relationship with the formal economy. Event promoters make no distinction between 'underground' DJs and MCs and 'legal' DJs, their concern is to attract a paying audience**.**

In the UK, one of my respondents was George, a music producer who operated primarily in the informal economy. While George was talking about trying to get his tracks played on the radio he said: 'if you like there's an executive board with Hotsteppa, Marcus Nasty and Supa D at the top'. Getting your tunes played by these DJs guaranteed exposure and therefore success becomes more likely - the point is that Hotsteppa is on a legal radio station and Supa D and Marcus Nasty were on pirate stations, yet all three have same value in terms of influence and impact in this market. Since this field research was undertaken in 2009, Rinse FM has now become legal, after 14 years as a pirate station, it now has a licence to broadcast from Ofcom (Topping 2010; Hancox 2010b).

Rather than shrinking, the informal sector adapts and appears in novel formats. In the urban music economy, the customer and the procurer of services make little distinction between those that are provided by participants in the formal or informal sector. Often, the activities are so embedded there is little to separate them, for example artists and entrepreneurs in the informal economy use officially registered social networking sites and websites to advertise their services and products and at the same time official agencies, such as the Metropolitan Police and the Department of Health, regularly run advertising campaigns on pirate radio. These radio stations operate from unlicensed venues under the watchful eye of regulatory bodies such as Ofcom.

The enterprise in the UK and in Ayia Napa takes the form of events, performance and merchandise, for example, CDs/mixtapes and clothing. At the core are MCs, DJs, music producers, vocalists, beat makers and event promoters. All of these products and services are exchanged for cash, recognition and knowledge. My informants had travelled from their urban environments to promote themselves and the creative practice in a different setting.

Yet, the prevailing discourse regarding the urban music economy, still assumes that it is never part of the mainstream and that it operates in some distant and unreachable place. Generally, enterprise culture is seen to take place in a 'clean and sanitised way' (Williams 2006, p.16) and Williams points out that this might be a key reason why literature and research into enterprise has not, on the whole, included the informal economy.

My field research in Ayia Napa provides evidence of the borderless flow of this creative expression and makes it clear that these sectors (informal and informal) do not operate side by side or on the ground/underground, but are inextricably linked as each sector requires the existence of the other. A key aspect of this field research is the movement between genres, activities and identities and this is explored in chapter 6.

PART THREE: BECOMING ARTISTS AND ENTREPRENEURS

CHAPTER 6: CROSSING BORDERS: MOVEMENT, IDENTITY AND TRANSFORMATION

Evolving, how many days will it take to hit another level? I'm a short term wrangler, won't take long, there is not another spitter that I won't take on. If you lose well then get off, Winners stays on, winner plays on, winner like the Malmaison [...] Wiley – Evolve or be extinct (BigaDada 2012)

At the start of this project, I had assumed that my object of study was fixed in a particular geographical location and social world. This economic sector appeared to operate at an underground level and was therefore only partially visible to everyday view. It seemed immutable, an endless performance of little known activities carried out in unreachable places. Slowly but surely, however, it transpired that operating in this sphere enables a movement out of environments and identities, which were restrictive to say the least. This mobility is illustrated by using three events as a starting point. Firstly, Chipmunk is a 20-year-old Grime MC from north London whose track '*Champion*' features Chris Brown, a US artist (ChipmunkVEVO 2010). At a first glance this is simply another record company deal. But, how is it possible that a young man from Tottenham in north London – working within a genre that appears to be particular to the UK, creates a soundtrack to the World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) 2011 Tough Enough series. Secondly, DJ Marcus Nasty – a founder member of an east London Grime crew, is interviewed in 2009 by an online magazine. While talking about the various countries he has visited throughout his DJ career, more recently playing UK Funky – again a genre which is specific to the UK – he states 'they [the Gambians]…just get it […] they went crazy. […] they were well into the music straight away […] (Clark 2009). Finally, my respondent Fred, erstwhile pirate radio DJ of 20 years standing and now a 'student of the master' - the master being the self-styled Nuwabian prophet Dr Malachi Z. York (Christenson & El 2009). In his new guise, Fred has created a market where he has paying customers for his seminars teaching (and selling) the concepts of York's 'right knowledge'. All three of these young men came out of 'the ends', in other words areas where the nexus of class, race and poverty creates urban outcasts (Wacquant 2007).

The contradictions of 'the ends'

During the primary research phase, I interviewed Victor, a 33-year-old DJ who had grown up in east London, and Fred a pirate radio DJ who now also hosted cultural seminar events.

Despite the focus on what is lacking in 'the ends' in terms of material goods and socio-economic aspiration, it can also be argued that these areas actually provide comfort zones and allow those people resident within them to acquire social capital. They are places that provide validation, recognition, stability and safety as well as the more commonly posited repressive geographies (Reynolds 2013).

> […] If I'd allowed, you know what, your ends does kind of dictate how you behave and how you are in life, but then it's up to you as you grow older to think "I don't want to be a part of that". It corrupts you from an early age […]. (Victor – DJ/Talent Scout – 33)

> [I grew up in Tottenham] 'extremely multicultural, over 180 languages spoken, erm, an area where people try to look out for each other, very much the centre of the community, getting involved and making sure that everything that takes place is fair and equal, ok, we have more black people […] you hear a lot of negative things but there's a lot of talent […]. (Fred – DJ/Event Promoter – 40)

The impact of urban poverty in the UK has been a matter of public concern for many decades (Hills 2010; Elkes 2013; Randhawa 2013). It is not just a material poverty; it is also a poverty of hope and aspiration. Social mobility in the UK is at its lowest level for decades and therefore opportunities for a way out of these environments are limited (Blanden & Machin 2007). In previous chapters, I have described a realm of material, social and economic constraint. The east end of London is a microcosm of other pockets of urban poverty and advanced marginality in as much as this area is often defined and measured by underperformance, underachievement and social immobility, yet at the same time, great wealth is in plain sight (London Borough of Tower Hamlets 2005; London Borough of Hackney 2005; London Borough of Newham 2005).

The City of London - one of the major financial districts in the world looms large in the midst of some of the poorest wards in the United Kingdom. Despite redevelopment and regeneration such as Canary Wharf, young people from Newham, Tower Hamlets and Hackney remain relatively socially and economically immobile (MacRury & Poynter 2009). Locality matters, it contributes to ones sense of self, and it informs the way that people present themselves to others. In the east end of London and in other inner city areas, swagger, gesture and pose offer a protection from possible local difficulties as well as an indication of belonging. In poor communities with little or reduced economic capital, life is organised around the practical aspects of getting by (Bourdieu & Johnson 1993). Within this habitus, there is a pervasive theme of making money and being able to provide for

oneself and others. The drive to be seen to be a success leads to the pursuit and acquisition of recognition, reputation and cash.

The established way for young people to achieve this recognition is by undergoing programmes of learning leading to educational attainment subsequently followed by paid work in the formal economy. Education, training and the acquisition of skills have long been viewed as a fundamental pillar of post war economic reconstruction and growth. Indeed, in the UK it is deemed to be one of the key components of the welfare state (Willemse & de Beer 2012; Mac an Ghaill 1996). Some authors also argue that higher educational achievement generally leads to better outcomes in later life including higher earnings and lessening the chances of falling foul of the criminal justice system (Allen & Ainley 2007; Clifton & Cook 2012; Skidmore 2008; Shepherd 2010; Taylor 2005). The current coalition government continues with what Tomlinson called the 'epidemic of policy making' that she says has dogged the education sector for the last four decades. This is driven by the assumption that increased levels of education is the key to a successful economy (Tomlinson 2005, p.90). More recently, the *Leitch Review of Skills* contended that Britain's continuing prosperity depended on ideas and fresh talent, particularly because globalisation and technological change mean that economic success in the 21st century demands 'higher levels of innovation, faster response to change and increased creativity' (Leitch 2006, p.6).

Since the 1980s, there has been a climate of certified educational achievement in the UK and success for young people is measured by the acquisition of qualifications. Specifically, the attainment of five grade A* - C GCSEs provides a gateway to further and ultimately higher education opportunities. In these conditions where there is an expectation of increasing levels of qualification, young people exist who do not fit the mould and who have not achieved the academic or vocational qualification levels that open the door to these wider opportunities. The challenge for them is to try to establish themselves in a world that is closed off to them particularly if they are placed in a NEET category (A. Cunningham 2012; London's Poverty Profile 2013). In this context, locality is an actively created, mediated space where young people, supported by technology use the cultural construction of 'the ends' to create personas that have purpose, power and meaning.

It has been suggested that centuries of exposure to racial oppression leads black men to use 'the streets' or indeed 'the ends' as an alternative method of socialisation (Oliver 2006). This in turn leads to the construct of masculine identities that emphasise toughness, sexual conquest and street hustling (Gilroy 1996). Even while incarcerated, it seems that locality and place continue to be of significance. Recent research carried out in a Young Offenders Institute in Rochester considered how young men from inner city areas talked about their lives prior to and during their prison sentence (Earle 2011). All of these young men were from 'the ends'. In this context 'the ends' are the socio-economically disadvantaged areas where race and poverty intersect (Gunter 2010). The prison population is perhaps the furthest it is possible for a young person to be from the labour market. While not counted as such during their confinement, evidence suggests that those who have experienced a period of incarceration are more likely to have been NEET before sentence and more likely to remain so after release (McNally & Telhaj 2007).

Indeed, there are elements of truth in this and yet on YouTube generally and on niche online channels such as SBTV in particular, this same stigmatised community use performance to construct masculine identities that showcase and highlight excellence, oratory and humour. See for example the YouTube film of an east London Grime artist – Crazy Titch – 'merkin' or lyrically clashing with a mini cab driver.

The majority of the film takes place in a mini cab, somewhere in east London; Crazy Titch is positioned in the front passenger seat and is having a discussion with the cab driver about why he is being overcharged for the fare. The whole performance is filmed on a mobile phone while the cab driver is mostly out of shot. Crazy Titch performs the role of the angry young black man and insists that because the cab driver has tried to overcharge him (four pounds fifty instead of the agreed three pounds fifty), he will only pay what he thinks the fare is now worth. He tells him 'How about I give you nothing, how about I give you fifty pence?' Some basic social and economic principles are at work here about making assumptions and about the performance of categories. In the film, it appears that the cab driver attempts to extract additional funds because he has observed that this young man has a bundle of cash. In the words of Crazy Titch; '[…] just because you see a couple pinkies [fifty pound notes], you get excited […]' before dropping a fifty pence piece in the side of the door and leaving the vehicle.

FIGURE 24: YouTube Screen Shot: Crazy Titch Merkin Da Cab Driver (chocdip 2006a).

This film was uploaded on YouTube in 2006, it has been viewed approximately half a million times and is still being commented on today. It is worth noting that in 2007, Crazy Titch started serving a minimum 30-year prison sentence under the joint enterprise legislation. Joint enterprise in this context refers to the use of a 300-year-old law to ensure the sharing of responsibility for a crime, not only among those that participated, but also including those that were present (Warner 2009). It serves to illustrate the discourse about young black men being a community to be feared, controlled and contained. Yet there is something about the nature of these 'ends' or toughened environments that encourages and nurtures at the same time as it represses.

In these marginal communities, the condition of being 'on road' is constituted through the act of hanging out on a street corner or housing estate, and more than likely participating in some low level illicit or illegal activity. It is often read to go hand in hand with being in 'the ends'. While some writers suggest that being 'on road' is a liminal space where there is sovereignty and agency as well as freedom from a hostile society (Gunter 2010), it has also been argued that it can be a collection of 'panicky, chaotic, adrenalin filled experiences' where young people exist in a heightened state of anxious awareness (Earle 2011, p.134). The notion of a 'kinetic elite', for whom the road is less hazardous, is posited by Earle, this includes comfortable travel, mobile working, secure income and multiple domestic possibilities. This kinetic elite, enjoy a 'comfort of certainty of arrival as well as departure', their journeys are not obstructed or curtailed by the state. On the other hand, the 'kinetic underclass' has a motto 'live fast, die young/get rich or die trying' which armours them against a world where they are under surveillance by the state and a formal economy that has no place for them (2011, p.135). Even while incarcerated, it seems that this sense of localised belonging continues to some extent.

However, the majority of the informants who participated in this research project did not specifically allude to being 'on road'. Instead, they talked about their areas as locations of comfort as well as difficulty. In this context, 'the ends' were places that gave the informants a grounding in real life as well as a motivation to move on. Andrew, an independent recording artist who had been categorised as at risk of becoming NEET, thought long and hard after being asked to describe the area that he grew up in:

> '[east London area] Not the greatest area, a lot of negative things about
> that area but it's not about that really, I just want to, I don't want to be a

product of my environment, if you know what I'm saying […]' (Andrew – MC – 18)

David, a recording artist and business owner, responded to the same question as follows:

> 'I grew up in [an area in north London] – 'it's as real as it gets for street life, you know what I'm saying, you see things like…that you might not want your children to see, like obvious negative things – growing up. It's not a wealthy area but there are so many more positive things that I took out of it […] whole way of life, the way it makes you think and the way that when you do better in life, how you appreciate it and what you take from it as well because you know what cards you were dealt in the first place. I don't know man, it's like a double-edged sword, both sides to it. So I would never say it was bad, I would never say it was definitely good because maybe I might not want my children to be brought up the same way.' (David – Recording Artist/Business Owner - 26)

Prior to this, he had been animated in his responses, but this question made him pause for a while. As he spoke, his voice was lowered and he clearly gave this particular line of inquiry a great deal of thought. Both Andrew and David were making their mark in the urban music economy and they inhabited identities as artists and entrepreneurs 'the ends' mattered because of the grounding they felt it gave them, but there was also an aspiration for exit and for a recognition that they were more than their environment. Tracey Reynolds uses the concepts of getting on, getting by, getting stuck and staying put to articulate the desire to validate their original locations but at the same time not wanting to be stuck in a landscape of limited possibility. In particular, staying put to get on is seen as a specific choice that young people from these areas make (Reynolds 2013).

It can be argued that it is possible to 'get on' by taking your creative practice elsewhere and music provides the vehicle to do this. This is examined and explored through the Ayia Napa case study in Chapter 5. However, once this movement has been made, there is the potential for transformation to occur, not only of the environment that has been left, temporarily or permanently but also of the individual who is in some way altered by this process. It is evident that participation in the urban music economy enables a transcendence of the boundaries of the ends. It is also conceivable that if you do not get on, you have the comfort and security of the ends to fall back on. But, this movement is not in one direction only, people get by, get on and return – it is a continuous movement. I interviewed Quentin, a 32-year old MC/Vocalist twice, once in Ayia Napa in 2009 and in the following year in 2010 in east London. His movement is from pirate radio to licensed (Radio 1 - as part of the Dream

Team) and he has worked through a range of musical genres over the last ten years; Jungle, DnB, Garage and Funky. Quentin is still a club host and has a fairly regular stint on a licensed – former pirate - radio station. Having started out working mainly in the informal music economy, he is now in formal paid employment and music has become an additional extra:

> '[…] I used to do this [MC/Vocalist] as my nine to five but now I'm a financial consultant and it's the other way round […]'. (Quentin – Vocalist – 34)

Participation in the urban music economy enables these young people to break free of existing identifications, such as NEET, that appear to be an enduring condition of 'the ends'. Indeed, a significant proportion of young people from BAME communities (particularly those of Caribbean or Bangladeshi descent), become NEET (Leitch 2006). The drive to be visible, not just as underachievers and NEETs lacking in qualification, certification and aspiration but as entrepreneurs, business owners, artists and performers requires an ongoing effort. From an outlier perspective visibility and recognition are crucial for a positive sense of self. There is a continuing debate regarding men in crisis, with boys underachievement in education and overrepresentation in crime at the forefront of this discussion (Bingham 2013; Bainbridge & Browne 2010; A. Cunningham 2012; Hills 2010). It should be noted that this debate has a racial and ethnic dimension, for example, the REACH project concluded that black boys and young black men fare 'serious challenges in every sector of society; they are less likely to do well at school, more likely to be unemployed and much more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system' (Communities and Local Government 2009, p.6). However, it is not the purpose of this project to dwell on the often-repeated pathologies of masculinity in general and black masculinities in particular, rather the aim is to locate this creative practice in its national, global and socio-economic context.

Wage labour is a rite of passage from adolescence to adulthood and if one exists on the margins of the paid labour market it is possible that one will remain in a state of quasi-adolescence where agency is curtailed and decisions are made on your behalf (Wacquant 2007, p.51). In areas of high unemployment, even basic occupations require a level of qualification for entry and progression. The low incomes afforded by these jobs do not on the whole provide a living wage and are therefore subsidised by the government in the form of welfare benefits. In "Culture Class Art Creativity Urbanism" Martha Rosler suggested

that regenerated cities or districts of cities benefit some (usually the middle classes) but damages others (usually those who are already at a disadvantage) (Rosler 2011). In the discussion regarding creative clusters and creative cities that relates to the east end of London what is often being talked about is the presence of new white middle class occupants (Mayor of London 2010; Pratt 2009). There is perhaps a hierarchy of achievement that negates and obscures the activities and contributions of the urban poor while the regeneration of disadvantaged areas seems to primarily benefit property owners and developers (Evans 2009). Furthermore, in the creative sector, the white middle classes can afford to work for nothing as interns (or next to nothing as apprentices) without it diminishing them socially or economically. This is against a backdrop of increased unemployment among young black men (Ball et al. 2012). In east London, for example, little reference is made to the existing creative practice of Grime artists, when expounding the virtues and significance of the new creative hubs in Shoreditch and Hoxton. Here it is evident that the powers that be try to hang on to working class 'authenticity' and 'grit' while at the same time eradicating it from its place of origin, such as inner city east London (Zukin 2010).

An ecology of the Grime music scene

The ecology of the Grime music scene is formed out of a complex series of interactions with and between practitioners and their environment. Grime music emerged out of the east London areas of Tower Hamlets, Newham and Hackney at the start of the 21st century. It is a black Atlantic creative expression drawing on the influences of Jamaican Sound Systems, Hip-Hop and RnB. Grime and its related enterprise is a key component of the urban music economy. It has a local, national and global reach and this is why I have used it as a lens through which to explore the category of the NEET. The creative and business practice of the artists and entrepreneurs who are the informants for my primary research disrupts the accepted definition of NEET as a site of immobility and inactivity. The impact and significance of entrepreneurship, particularly for those from marginalised communities as well as the borderless flow of black creative expression is the focus of chapter 2.

In the early part of the 21st Century, Roll Deep, from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and N.A.S.T.Y crew, from the London Borough of Newham had emerged as forerunners of a new urban scene – Grime (Tang 2005; Hampson 2009; Petridis 2003b). DJ Geeneus, started Rinse FM - a former pirate radio station- when he was 16 years old (Topping 2010). He stated that it was on Rinse in 2002, where UK Garage began to evolve

into Grime: 'it was more like a darker side of Garage. We kind of converted the scene, into a darker sound…Grime started in east London…' (Hampson 2009). Boy Better Know (BBK) are also viewed as Grime pioneers. BBK are a north London based crew established by two brothers, Jamie and Joseph Adenuga. They also perform as individual artists - JME and Skepta respectively.

The internecine acrimony within and between Grime crews and their individual members is well documented, for example Bashy, a north London artist launched a vitriolic verbal attack on Ghetts, an east London artist, accusing him of 'talking loose on [the set of] Mr. Wong's video shoot', Ghetts response is to let Bashy know in no uncertain terms that he is at 'the bottom of the food chain' (streetzinctv 2008). Furthermore, Wiley is verbally challenged live on air at a pirate radio station by MC God's Gift and members of the Mucky Wolfpack crew (KicksAndSnaresUK 2010; viceland 2006) and there is the now infamous clash between Crazy Titch and Dizzee Rascal on a rooftop at another pirate radio station – Déjà Vu (chocdip 2006b). This chaotic conduct left the authorities anxious as to how to implement strategies to manage and restrict this new domain. Pirate radio stations that played this type of music were also seen as a threat which needed to be eradicated or curtailed because they were presumed to be sites of illegal drug use and their activities interfered with the legitimate pursuits of the emergency services (BBC News Channel 2007; Sherwin 2007; Wroe 1993).

Yet while pirate radio stations are also viewed by the authorities to be a front for illegal activity – particularly drug dealing, these same official bodies use these stations for 'community interest' broadcasts, such as Operation Trident, Crimestoppers and even the Department of Health Swine Flu initiative. In November 2009, in the initial primary research phase, I filmed behind the scenes at a pirate radio station. These radio advertisements were being broadcast at the time of my visit. It speaks to the contradictions of the desire by the authorities to eradicate this activity while at the same time finding a use for it.

The fact that Grime could not be performed live is perhaps why in *Pirates Dilemma,* Matt Mason – called this genre a meme without a scene – because it could not be played publicly and therefore had nowhere to go (Mason 2008, p.211). However, unlike its predecessor Garage, Grime did not vanish, instead the performance locations for this creative expression

spread outwards. Advances in technology allowed for audiences to be established first in the London suburbs, then across the UK, to Europe, North America and Africa.

With a distinct sound and the opening up of new locations, participants activities began to disseminate outwards; first in the UK and then across Europe. At the same time, Rinse FM, the pirate radio station which pioneered Garage and then Grime since its first broadcast – became legal (rinsefm 2012a; rinsefm 2012b). This made it possible for Grime and other emerging urban music genres to be accessed by a wider audience. It also provided a route to regular paid work in the formal economy for some former pirate DJs including Marcus Nasty.

Grime is traceable to a specific and particular location, namely urban east London. This genre has been created out of what Gilroy calls the '[…] displacement, relocation and dissemination of black creative expression' (Gilroy 1996, p.80). The practitioners in this field are predominantly, but not exclusively, young, black males. The consumers of it however, are from all over the UK, Europe and increasingly Africa and North America. At surface level this creative expression mediates and sometimes appears to transcend racialised and ethnically coded boundaries (Gilroy 2004, p.248).

Grime comes out of an inner city environment where the offspring of Caribbean migrants intermingle with a white working class population and its linguistic canon reflects this. White MCs are afforded the same recognition for their creative practice, as skill and proficiency in the craft is of paramount importance. Furthermore, partnership and collaboration is a key organising principle for this sector and this has enabled simultaneous operation within the formal and informal sectors. For example, some members of Roll Deep are now embedded firmly into the mainstream music industry, for example DJ Target presents a radio programme on BBC 1XTRA (BBC 1Xtra 2013) and N.A.S.T.Y has a record label and an internet radio station which has DJs broadcasting from a wide geographical area including Malaysia, Italy, Toronto, Rotterdam, Montreal, San Francisco and the Czech Republic as well as across the UK (Anon 2010).

Boy Better Know (BBK) is a north London crew and its stable comprises MCs, and various business activities such as a SIM card for a mobile telephone network and a clothing line (Boy Better Know 2011). In addition, BBK often work in partnership with artists from Roll

Deep. Furthermore, artists in and out of these crews work together – often for no payment - in order to disseminate their creative product to a wider audience. This collaborative practice is clearly illustrated by Boy Better Know's track '*Duppy*', released in 2006 (emorangers 2006). It was produced by Skepta and is an exemplification of the collaborative work in this sector in that it features vocals by Skepta and JME from Boy Better Know, Wiley from Roll Deep, Jammer formerly of Nasty Crew, Footsie from Newham Generals, Bossman out of Meridian Crew, a South London MC, Bearman, as well as former Roll Deep member Trim and a veteran Garage music artist by the name of MC Creed. This collaborative approach appears to run counter to the suggestion from Gilroy that UK urban music has a 'ghetto centric individualism' that simply adapts and possibly mimics the US creative expression and feeds into the panic over black culture (Gilroy 2004, p.266). A more recent example of this collaborative practice is in evidence when Tinchy Stryder, an east London MC of Ghanaian origin, produced a track in 2010 called *Game Over* (tinchystrydertv 2010a). It features six other artists; Giggs, Professor Green, Tinie Tempah, Devlin, Example and Chipmunk from a range of cultural backgrounds including Jamaican, white English and Nigerian. Each performer takes their spot in front of the camera and delivers their lines in the allotted time, putting their individual style and lyrics over the beat. The remix for this track was released shortly afterwards and it featured both signed and independent artists[19].

However, in the same year, Professor Green, a white MC from Clapton in the London Borough of Hackney released a video for the award winning track *Jungle* (NME 2011) featuring the vocals of a white singer, Maverick Sabre (professorgreentv 2010). Verse one begins with Professor Green announcing – 'welcome to Hackney' and then what follows are looping images of hooded and sometimes masked black men perpetrating acts of criminality and violence. The two artists are detached observers throughout, showing an unwitting and probably terrified public what 'real life' is like this jungle called Hackney. It is not clear whether Professor Green had artistic control of the visual rendering of the track, but the lyrics where he likens certain members of the Hackney population to hungry apes are firmly credited to him:

> Welcome to Hackney, a place where I think somebody's been playing

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[19] The Game Over Remix featured: Ghetts, Slix, Griminal, Dot Rotten, Fuda Guy, Wretch 32, Roachee, Maxsta and Tinchy Stryder (tinchystrydertv 2010b)

> Jumanji[20]. A Manor where man are like animals, an' they'll yam on you
> like they yam on food. Cats with claws that'll stab a yout', act bad an'
> catch a slap or two. We don't applaud success, all we clap are tools.
> London ain't cool to cruise through where the hunters prey, Looking
> lunch today, and your chains looking like fresh fruit to a hungry ape.
> They'll eat on you, then laugh about it like Hyenas do, so stick to breezing
> through, like cheetahs do or be a piece of food. (professorgreentv 2010)

Professor Green uses black street vernacular to speak from a position as a cultural insider and urges 15 million YouTube viewers to look, but keep moving, because 'it's wild out here'. This track was subject to commentary from black artists including Akala, an MC who highlights and articulates the racial mechanics of this gaze and locates *Jungle* in its economic and political context (IAmBirmingham 2012). Akala asserts that the UK music industry cannot be free from racism even if, as Professor Green later insists, it is a misreading of both the song and the video, he is simply presenting his truth from the perspective of his upbringing on an estate in that geographical location (Galea 2012). The debate illustrates that black practitioners in this sector are still subject to the ethnically coded stereotypes that accompany belonging to a stigmatised community and the territorial fixation that views the spaces they occupy as the badlands by both insiders and outsiders (Wacquant 2007, p.236).

Historically, the public performance of black Atlantic creative expression such as Grime and its predecessors has always been problematic in England. For example, in the 1970s and early 1980s, Reggae music had little public presence and was not played on licensed radio. Therefore, to listen to it, one had to go out into the public sphere, to a blues dance (an unregistered nightclub – sometimes hosted in a domestic dwelling where on payment of an entrance fee, it was possible to dance the night away) or a legal nightclub that specialised in that type of music. As Bradley says:

> A blues dance, late at night, in the heart of the black neighbourhood,
> publicized by word of mouth or flyers in record shops or in other blues,
> was about as far underground as you were going to get in mainland
> Britain in 1970 (Bradley 2000, p.378).

Sound systems formed an integral part of both the blues dance and the legal rave. It was the presence of a sound system that attracted a paying audience to an event. These events were held indoors and because the bass was heavy, often supplemented by whistles, foghorns and

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[20] Jumanji is a film about children becoming trapped in a board game. Wild animals are released into their modern city environment (Johnston 1995).

exhortations for the crowd to 'lick wood'[21] it was loud, very loud. In 1970s Britain, Sunday was still a day of rest, thus the conditions were created for a site of conflict between the participants, the event promoters and the regulating authorities. The policing of sound systems and Reggae club nights formed part of an overall project, including 'sus'[22] laws to contain and control black youth at that time. Police raids on the pretext of illegal drug possession and consumption were common (Nelson 2000). Participants at Reggae events became an easy and lazy shorthand for 'dangerous individuals smoking illegal substances' (Bradley 2000, p.428). There is trajectory from the Mangrove Nine trial at the Old Bailey in 1971 (Vince Hines 2010; themneverlove 2012; Bunce & Field 2010) to the control and curtailment of Grime and other urban music events through the use of Form 696. The Mangrove Nine trial centred on a group nine people who had been arrested in one of a series of 12 police raids. These raids occurred over an 18-month period, and were focused on a restaurant/community centre – the Mangrove - in Notting Hill Gate. The reason given for the raids was suspected illegal drug use. The trial and subsequent demonstrations highlighted the extreme force that was used to police black communities in Notting Hill, with public playing of particular genres of music.

In 2009, the Metropolitan Police introduced the Promotion Event Risk Assessment Form (or Form 696), ostensibly as a mechanism to reduce serious crime (Metropolitan Police SC9 Proactive Intelligence Unit 2009). Event promoters were being asked to provide the name, date of birth and contact details of every artist performing at an event. This form is comprehensive in its scope - the details below are taken from Form 696:

Recommended guidance

To music event organisers, management of licence premises or event promoter on when to complete Form 696 is where you hold an event that is:
Promoted / advertised to the public at any time before the event, and predominantly features DJs or MCs performing to a recorded backing track, and runs anytime between the hours of 10pm and 4am, and is in a nightclub or a large public house

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[21] Beating the walls and doors with your hands as a sign of appreciation

[22] The 'sus' laws, as they were commonly known was actually Section 4 of the Vagrancy Act 1824 that the police used to stop and search those they suspected of committing a crime. It was held to be a key factor in the Brixton and other inner city riots in 1981 (Scarman et al. 1982). The law is no longer in use has been replaced by Section 1 of the 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE), which requires a reason – not based on personal characteristics such as skin colour or style of dress to stop and search. However, current evidence suggests that young black men are still up to seven times more likely to be subjected to stop and search (Van Bueren & Woolley 2010).

On page two of the five page document, the promoter or event organiser is required to provide the following:

Please list below all DJ's, MC's, featured Artistes / other promoters performing

The police need the minimum of name and date of birth to cross-reference with their systems and data sources. An address is needed for confirmation of identifying the individual. It is recommended that the data submitted on the Form are verified by the person submitting this Form.

Promoters were also required to specify the genre of music that would be played. This led to a large number of cancellations for urban music events of any kind – particularly Grime (Hancox 2010a; Hancox 2009b; Izundu 2010). In Foucauldian terms, crime prevention procedures and processes were being used to pin down and partition those who wanted to perform at or attend urban music events (Foucault 1991, p.143). The regulating authorities, such as the Metropolitan Police experienced these urban music events as troublesome and therefore something that needed to be contained and controlled. This is even more apparent with the UK Garage music scene, from which Grime emerged in the late 1990s/early 21st Century (Mason 2008, p.212). However, the Garage scene had been dogged by violence – sometimes fuelled by postcode affiliations and soon what had started as an innovative UK take on US House music, became a highly marginalised practice – with opportunities for practitioners to perform severely curtailed. For example, South London crew *So Solid,* could not perform in London despite having had national chart success. In an interview in 2003, MC Harvey of So Solid said: '…if you had Westlife in here you'd ask about the album, but people ask us about the violence…' (So Solid Crew 2006). In the UK, particularly in London, shootings and stabbings occurred at Garage music events and these were reported with heightened media anxiety. Eventually, public performance of UK Garage became so problematic that it disappeared from view (Jackson 2005). However, changes in technology allowed artists in the ensuing Grime scene to disseminate their creative output more easily.

The impact of technological change

The traditional recorded music industry is based on a centralised model and it relies on a tight control of the distribution of its product. Also, this industry has evolved from a local and personal activity – shared with co present others, to a space where – due to technological advance – immediate audiences can be established for creative expression. Urban music artists create and sell online personas in exchange for recognition and feedback. This exchange between artist and audience can be reciprocal or circular (Baym

2010). Since 2005, Nancy Baym has been researching the process by which independent music artists and labels in Sweden interact with audiences and potential audiences. In *Embracing the Flow*, Baym argues record companies can no longer control the distribution of digital material (Baym 2010, p.2), and it is evident that independent artists in the Grime music scene have used the Internet to establish national and global audiences for their creative output.

Therefore, what the Internet has done is empower the artist, allowing them to transcend distance and reach large audiences without the intervention of the big four record labels. A space has been created where it is possible for UK urban music artists to match the creative and economic success of the Jamaican recorded music industry. Jamaica punches way above its weight in terms of the outward global impact of its recorded music industry and by the late 1990s, annual sales of Reggae music represented 4% of Jamaican GDP (McMillan 2005, p.2). Innovation in this sector came through the 'creative city' or 'creative cluster' of Kingston that housed an estimated 2000 artists in one small area. Record producers were therefore able to draw on a wide pool of talent. The Internet has enabled the Kingston model to occur locally and be disseminated on a much bigger scale, without the need for intermediaries. It is entirely possible for independent recording artists in the urban music economy, such as JME and Griminal to establish an audience and a fan base through having an online presence (ManBetterKnow 2011; 360records09 2009).

The creative cluster, in this context, is a street corner or a housing estate in 'the ends' rather than the creative hubs of Shoreditch or the Silicon Roundabout (Kingsley 2011b). In these clusters, ideas and resources are shared and a collaborative and partnership approach is often used to create and disseminate an artistic product.

Participants in the urban music economy were early adopters of emerging technology particularly social media. Grime came of age in the YouTube era (and the time of the camera phone). It therefore became easier and more accessible for people to film and broadcast their own videos. The early Grime days on YouTube aired and played into some of the existing stereotypes and the threat of violence was never far from the surface. In a now notorious clash, Dizzee Rascal, a Grime MC from Bow who won the Mercury Music Prize in 2003 for his album *'Boy in da Corner'* and Crazy Titch battle lyrically and then almost physically at Deja Vu – a pirate radio station based on the rooftop of a tower block

in east London (chocdip 2006b).

At the same time as being a reciprocal activity, where performers could interact directly with their audience (Lange 2010), YouTube also became a mode of surveillance and intelligence gathering for the regulating authorities. Videos were viewed and analysed while at the same time the lyrics were scanned for evidence of wrongdoing (Buckland 2011; Hosken 2012). The racial mechanics of this gaze mean that the YouTube space becomes a location that is ethnically coded. Recently, the London Borough of Newham appointed a member of staff to monitor and remove videos they felt had evidence of criminal or illegal activity (Isokariari 2013). One online TV channel has responded by adding a disclaimer to their output, in an attempt to keep their videos available (RapcityTV 2013).

Pirate radio stations, club events, social media such as MySpace, Facebook and now Twitter, Keek and Instagram; as well as Channel AKA (formerly Channel U), a digital TV channel form an influential and integral part of the marketing and promotion of urban music of all kinds, including Grime. These avenues have been made possible by advances in technology. Research has traditionally focused on real or potential losers in a knowledge economy including young people with low or incomplete education. While it is important to establish which measures to adopt to help young people become more included in societal institutions and life, it is also important not to lose sight of the young people who react to the crisis of formal education by developing new learning and life strategies (du Bois-Reymond 2004, p.193). These learning strategies include mastering new and emerging technologies, particularly within the field of social media, and thereby developing a marketable skill set. Participation in this arena therefore requires learning and updating technological skill, working in collaboration and an understanding and application of economic exchange or barter of goods and services. Combined with accessible broadcasting through first Channel U and subsequently Channel AKA a unique opportunity is created to record a story and share it with the world. The street has found is own uses for this technology and the informants in this study have used it as a way to reinvent themselves.

Movement, identity and transformation

While it is perceived to be a taste that is acquired by young people from impoverished backgrounds, Grime as creative practice appears to have little value (Collins 2004). That is until it finds an audience in the mainstream. Then a flurry of activity takes place to bring

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these artists into the auspices of the formal recorded music industry. Between 2007 and 2010, a steady number of Grime MCs including Chipmunk were signed by one of the 'Big Four' record labels. One by one, these artists have relinquished these agreements. Instead, many are getting by on their own terms, recording and releasing music, travelling extensively and establishing concurrent careers[23].

This movement therefore, is not only within and outside of genres, but also between activities and geographical locations. In his black Atlantic trope, Gilroy uses the ship as a metaphor for the movement, transformation and relocation, a concept that, he argues, is an intrinsic factor in the creation of black identities. This concept can be used for a complex reading of the black male experience as it pertains to the urban music industry. Chipmunk, Marcus Nasty and my informant Fred have all reinvented themselves within and outside of genres, roles and activities.

Chipmunk – now known as Chip - is an MC from Tottenham, an area with a troubled history exemplified by the 1985 civil disturbance at Broadwater Farm as well as being the starting point for the August 2011 riots (Gilligan 2011; Gifford 1986). Chip was already an established artist with several successful tracks and album releases. Since the aforementioned collaboration with Chris Brown as well as a number of other artists, he has reclaimed his identity as an independent recording artist.

Marcus Nasty, a former leader of a Grime crew is now a sought after DJ in both the formal and informal economy. His transformation is foregrounded here because his transcendence of boundaries is one of the most marked. In his own words, he became a DJ because 'he'd been away for a while […] and when he came back he wanted something to do' (Sigel 2011). His early reputation is tied up with the more difficult aspects of Grime and its discontents. An unintended consequence of the disciplining and control of the Grime scene was the creation of not only of a wider audience but also an opportunity for participants to navigate out of their local environment. Marcus Nasty, however, had to find a different route because he simply was not allowed to play Grime in any public venue. The

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[23] Since 2009, following the success of Tinchy Stryder, several Grime MCs were signed by the 'Big Four'. For example, Scorcher – signed and then released by Geffen. Scorcher continues to release music independently – see Rockstar (SBTV: Music 2012). Scorcher also appeared in the first series of UK television drama Top Boy, along with Ashley Walters (Asher D) – formerly of So Solid Crew and Kane Robinson (Kano) – former member of N.A.S.T.Y crew (Bennett 2011). In addition, the following artists were signed and then left major labels Chipmunk - Columbia Sony (Philby 2009), Griminal – Universal (Tootill 2010), Devlin – Island (Fox 2013). All continue as independent recording artists.

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combination of his background and the perception of the Grime music scene as a volatile and potentially dangerous creative expression, meant that he was subjected to the many disciplinary procedures which organise social space (Stanley-Niaah 2004). So, because many of these avenues were closed off or severely curtailed, Marcus Nasty continued to scout talent for NASTY crew and as a new music scene – UK Funky - began to emerge, he found his metier in increasing the audience for, and participation in this scene.

This fresh sound travelled to many other locations including Ayia Napa in Cyprus where there is a specific and particular audience from the United Kingdom. This audience come to participate in a music scene that has been temporarily transplanted from an urban environment, a market place that has been created through the entrepreneurial activities of young men of Caribbean descent. It is a long way from the council estates in east London, where Marcus Nasty and so many artist/entrepreneurs like him established their ground. For example, his 2013 performance at the Snowbombing Festival in Austria temporarily locates Marcus Nasty, a pioneer in three musical genres, Grime, UK Funky and now Jackin' Bass, in a world that is far removed from clandestine pirate radio broadcasts[24].

Furthermore, my informant Fred, a pirate radio and club DJ who has now reinvented himself as a Doctor of Divinity. In his interview in 2009, Fred describes his transformation as follows:

> 'I started out on community radio – [north London Pirate Radio Station] which then became [----] and then [----]. I started out on a Sound System, learned how to be a selector, the difference between a selector and a DJ […] From that point 20 years ago […] the journey has been tremendous, it has taken us around the world, taken us into areas we maybe wouldn't have been able to get into and managed to keep us out of trouble to a degree […]' (Fred -DJ/Event Promoter – 40)

Fred has now also created a niche where he offers cultural seminars to young black men who are so hungry for knowledge that they are willing to pay him and his fellow teachers for it. These seminars come out of the flow of black Atlantic expression between the US and the United Kingdom and offers for sale an absolute construct of an essential black identity (Gilroy 1996, p.31).

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[24] In an interview to mark 18 years of Rinse FM – a former pirate radio station – Marcus Nasty describes sneaking out of his house as a school aged teenager in order to be at the radio station – which was at one point broadcasting from a treehouse on the A12 (rinsefm 2012b)

Due to technology, Grime can travel unaccompanied by the participants. The practitioners can go or not go to where their creative expression is being heard. Yet when its practitioners perform on a global music stage they operate within different genres, for example, Chipmunk becomes an RnB artist and Marcus Nasty becomes a DJ who plays UK Funky. Ethnic absolutism, such as that being packaged and sold by Fred and his counterparts does have certain glamour in terms of offering straightforward accounts of an essential blackness (Gilroy 2004, p.271). This is in contrast however, to the impact, influence and trajectory of black Atlantic creative expression, Grime, in particular has a global reach that includes Japan, Croatia and Canada. For example, there is YouTube footage of a Danish MC, spitting his lyrics and adopting the gesture, swagger and pose of the early Grime canon while wearing a Slew Dem T Shirt[25] (ObiEsDK 2012). Grime music does not fit neatly into national borders but it also retains its specific and distinct sound.

Conclusion

In the UK, it is evident that black boys and young black men face 'serious challenges in every sector of society; they are less likely to do well at school, more likely to be unemployed and much more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system' (Communities and Local Government 2009). There are parallels with the US where young black men can constitute a 'threatened and unwanted community' (Collins 2006, p.298), whose invisible presence gives cause for concern and fear and demands the need for action plans and task forces. Operation Trident, NUT Charter 2007 Breaking Down Barriers, and the Reach Project are examples of some recent well-documented concerns regarding the 'trouble with black boys'. In December 2008, the Home Affairs Select Committee Inquiry published a report: *Young Black People and the Criminal Justice System*, which focused on the reasons for the over-representation black people in the criminal justice system. Yet, it is evident that some young people from this same constituency are able to make a transition from, for example, a postcode enclosed resident of urban east London to an artist operating in southern Cyprus or from NEET to entrepreneur.

In the UK, the urban music economy, particularly as it operates in the informal sector may appear to be chaotic and hidden, but it is not. It has an order and a logic of practice, for example, artists have booking agents, managers, official websites and other mechanisms for

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[25] Slew Dem are an East London Grime crew.

business promotion. This participation in the urban music sector also has a significant fiscal impact as it is a key component of the creative economy. In London, which was the starting point for this project, the creative industries are the second largest economic sector. The *UNCTAD Creative Economy Report 2010* suggests that creative practice is stimulating economic recovery through the demand for domestically consumed products such as music and video games. It is a growing sector, attested to by the fact that in the period from 2002 to 2008 global exports of creative goods and services had an average growth rate of 14% (UNCTAD 2010b). Throughout the global economic downturn since 2008, the creative economy - which includes recorded music as well as live performance - has continued to grow (UNCTAD 2010a, p.xxv; Greater London Authority 2012; Newbigin 2010; DCMS 2010).

The creative economy as it relates to urban music involves artistic creativity, imagination and the capacity to generate original ideas and novel ways of interpreting the world as well as a willingness to experiment. Everyday practice in the urban music sector warrants dynamic business methods and can lead to innovation as well as competitive advantage. The innovative business practices of participants in the urban music economy are highly visible to young people from impoverished areas and present a model that can be implemented and adapted. As Wiley states in the lyrics that open this chapter, in order to stay in the game and reach another level, one has to evolve.

The social conditions of production are of specific relevance in this field, particularly if as Bourdieu suggests that people attempt what is possible and this possibility is based on what is seen around you (Bourdieu & Johnson 1993). By participating in the urban music economy as a producer or as a consumer, the possiblities for movement, improvement and transformation expand and become increasingly clear as practitioners position themselves in a broader public sphere (Jenkins 2002). Economic and social circumstances aside, the meagre worlds which young people who are classified as NEET are forced to inhabit have been disrupted by a participation in the informal music economy which allows for the creation of new identities which evolve and adapt (Thrift 2007, p.20).

During a five-year period, I have encountered young men and women who have used their creative practice to uncover a different way of being in the world. In so doing, movement and transformation become real prospects, despite the material constraints of the economic

and social poverty of 'the ends'. In the UK, the shebeen, blues dance and nomadic rave event, have been all but legislated out of existence (Mason 2008; Bradley 2000; Hancox 2009b; Izundu 2010). Yet, it is possible that these disciplinary procedures, when combined with the discourse regarding urban creative expression, have enabled a countermovement – a musical scene where urban youth in general and young black men in particular can create a new persona as perhaps an artist or an entrepreneur. This in turn allows entry into a different assemblage that had hitherto been closed off or restricted - that of the economic market place.

Through enterprise and enterprising activities in the urban music economy a seismic shift is taking place. Young black men, including those who are categorised as NEET, marginalisation notwithstanding are drawing on a continuity of practice and creating meaningful work for themselves and others, And having something to do, is key because if one is *doing* something, then it opens up the possibility of *being* something.

These participants have used urban music to articulate the nature of their living conditions, to speak of the lack of opportunity and at the same time create a route to employment through enterprise. Through apprenticeships with sound systems and Grime crews, by watching and working with others, these practitioners have used their creativity to establish ways to learn, earn and reinvent themselves.

Furthermore, participating in the urban music economy enables a performance of identities that thus far have been rendered invisible by a NEET category that is entirely focussed on what these young people are not doing. These identities include artists, performers and entrepreneurs. At the same time as offering a mechanism for reinvention and exit, participation in this economy throws up a whole host of negative stereotypes. Nevertheless it is evident that for the artists and practitioners there are distinct possibilities that are enabled by their musical practice.

The informal economy has always provided stopgap employment and a way to supplement income. Although young people who are NEET and/or from impoverished areas are on the whole disconnected from education as a mechanism for mobility, this has been disrupted by the activities of artists/ entrepreneurs in the urban music economy. This economy is a complex fabric of ethnically stigmatised groups and the white working class and it affords

opportunities for employment, self-employment and business creation in a diminishing labour market.

Operating in the urban music economy enable opportunities for movement and transformation. As a nexus where class, ethnicity and poverty intersects, 'the ends' are more often than not sites of advanced marginality (Wacquant 2007). The mechanisms to mobilise out of these environments are limited. In the past perhaps it was possible to use the acquisition of certain skills and qualifications as a way out and a way to climb the social ladder. Now, however, social mobility is at its lowest for two decades. A significant number of young people from poor areas, still leave school without the required qualifications for entry into further education or other wider opportunities. Within a few miles of one of the wealthiest areas in the world, young people in east London remain socially and economically immobile. Grime music is a product of these communities and therefore it is subject to the same disciplinary techniques as its practitioners (Foucault 1991), techniques which include monitoring, recording and surveillance such as the Metropolitan Risk Assessment Form 696.

Creating music and its by products allows young people, many of whom are categorised as NEET, and many of whom are young black men to cross borders. This border crossing is between genres, roles, locations and identities; Marcus Nasty, Chip and my informant Fred have travelled in and between all of these categories. This movement is continuous and it enables transformation to take place and it allows for a shift away from categories and identifications such as NEET that are imprecise and potentially damaging. The impact and significance of Grime and other urban music genres, socially and economically, has been rendered almost invisible because it is the creative practice of the urban poor. While I do not wish to diminish the very real demonstrations of aggressive and sometimes violent actions within this scene, I contend that the predominant focus on this aspect obscures the fact that operating in this sector enables young black men, in particular, to develop marketable skills and knowledge and that this in turn enables movement between different identities for example as artists and entrepreneurs.

CHAPTER 7: BUSINESS STUDIES FROM 'THE ENDS': LEARNING THE RULES OF THE GAME

'I'm not Judi but I am dench. Don't know German, little bit of French'
Lethal Bizzle – They Got It Wrong

'...and it's Nasty by Nature […] *cos while your sleeping, I'm awake, cos I believe it's mine to make […]'* Lil Nasty Ft Rootsman & Ken Kodie - Game By Storm[26]

In a landscape where entry level jobs that are suitable for young people have been all but eradicated and youth unemployment figures are on the rise (Murray & Gayle 2012; Furlong & Cartmel 2007), I have identified young people who have moved in and out of the NEET category to become artists/entrepreneurs and business owners. During the primary research phase of the project from 2007 - 2012, I met informants who had key roles in a number of enterprises including; an online TV channel, music video production, clothing lines, a SIM card for a mobile phone network, record labels, event promotion and an internet radio station. It was evident that these individuals had established businesses that have afforded a move beyond the boundaries of their inner city environments to create meaningful work for themselves and others. The fact that they have developed, through informal learning, the necessary skills, knowledge and capabilities to be legitimate players in the urban music economy, disrupts the accepted definition of NEET as a category of deficit. The businesses and individuals that I feature here are at the forefront of a push for a reconfiguration of the existing definitions regarding who is an entrepreneur and what constitutes entrepreneurship.

A key focus of my research project is the extent of entrepreneurship within the urban music economy. Therefore it is crucial to consider the complexities and interconnectedness of these business activities. As I have shown in chapter 4, the formal and informal urban music economy is a complex fabric containing a number of activities, with no clear distinction between the two sectors. Practitioners operate within and across the sector as artists and as entrepreneurs. In this chapter, I have used a narrative approach to provide an enhanced reading of what motivates young people from impoverished backgrounds to establish their own business and the process by which become enterprising (Johansson 2004).

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[26] These artists, Lethal Bizzle and Lil Nasty have both referenced their own clothing brands *'Dench'* and *'Nasty by Nature'* respectively in these songs (bizzlevideos 2013; Link Up TV 2011). See also the *'Star In The Hood'* clothing line created by Tinchy Stryder (BBC Newsbeat 2010) and *'Disturbing London'* brand from Tinie Tempah (Millar 2012).

Why does entrepreneurship matter?

Since the 1980s, the pursuit of enterprise has been seen to provide a solution to a profusion of social and economic problems including youth unemployment (Anderson & Warren 2011; Blanchflower & Oswald 1998). Entrepreneurship is seen to be the process by which the economy as a whole moves forward. It disrupts the equilibrium of the market (through innovation and new combinations) and creates movement. It is therefore at the root of economic improvement and the key to economic growth, productivity and the diffusion of knowledge (Drucker 2006; Low & MacMillan 1988).

It has been argued that there is a correlation between the number of entrepreneurs and the growth rate of the economy, and indeed new firm creation is seen as a driving force for economic growth (Low & MacMillan 1988; Schumpeter 1994; Baumol 1996; Stevenson & Jarillo 2007). Furthermore, enterprise culture is posited as an alternative to a culture of dependency, and in the UK over the last fifteen years there has been a rise in self employment and new, small firms (Macdonald et al. 2013). In dense urban settings such as inner city east London which was the starting point for this project, enterprise generates opportunities for growth and employment (Henderson & Weiler 2010). Nevertheless, although the concept of entrepreneurship can appear to be undefined, the entrepreneurial process complex and often beyond reach, entrepreneurs are real people from existent social and cultural contexts, and yet this is often overlooked (Drakopoulou Dodd & Anderson 2007, p.348).

For my informants, their social and cultural context was, on the whole, one of underachievement in formal education underpinned by a passion for their particular craft. This ability was honed by the acquisition of the relevant skills and knowledge, usually through mentoring, shadowing and trial and error. For example, Gillian was a 27-year old Law graduate at the time of our interview in 2011. She grew up in Manchester Moss Side and had recently set up her own limited company. Gillian provided services as a make up artist and stylist for photo-shoots and music video shoots. She told me she had been networking and shadowing for five years to get the required level of knowledge and skills. She now works with corporate clients such as Adidas as well as urban artists – '[…] most of them really, […] Firecamp, Kano, Ghetts, Ny, Mz Bratt, Wiley, Scorcher, Wretch 32'. For Fiona, the gift of a camera from a family member when she was 15 was the start of her

interest in filmmaking. Fiona said that she had been a music video director for eight years, since she was 16 when:

> '[…] I wrote to every production company, I had a Saturday job [in a newsagents] and I would look though the magazines to find contacts […] eventually I found a production company that would take me on as a runner […] on the set of a music video I realised that for a small amount of time [you could be] taken into the world that belongs to the artist'.

This propelled her into the world of music video production at a time when urban music artists needed cheap videos to promote their artistic output on fledgling online TV broadcasters such as SBTV on YouTube and Channel AKA, the digital TV channel.

In the urban music economy, the concept of the 'bring in' is key, in other words collaboration is actively sought and possibly expected. This partnership and collaborative activity enables the establishment of creative clusters where ideas and resources can be shared thus stimulating innovation and novel combinations. These entrepreneurs understand their target market and recognise that their customers do not have high levels of disposable income therefore some products and services are provided free or at low cost. The free music download or mixtape for promotional purposes is a central feature of the supply side of the urban music economy.

At its heart, economics is about the invisible hand of supply and demand. It is concerned with the choices that people make and the impact that those choices have on wider society. Being NEET excludes, or positions you further from the labour market, therefore self employment and enterprise can be a way to combat this (Gudmundsson 2013). Although their employment choices were curtailed and constrained by circumstance because they originated from and were located in areas of high unemployment and low social mobility, my informants wanted their creativity to be viewed by the widest possible audience and to provide an opportunity to launch them into the world of paid work. This is particularly germane for those that inhabit a world where paid employment offered by another external organisation is scarce. As James, (a DJ) in an early interview in 2008 told me:

> Well, I just need to, it's like a erm, it's like, you have to make yourself like a brand. It's not just like being a DJ it's like you have to work it kind of thing. It's like a game. You have to put yourself about, put CDs out, marketing basically. And if you don't…if you get that right then you can be big, people will look for you. Like some people they're not necessarily

good DJs, they've just worked up their name in a way where it's a brand and you can see that they're not actually the best, there are loads of other people there that (…) that's what I want to do, push myself more on the marketing side of it cos it's all good being good at all that but if no one gets to hear you, it don't matter. Need to do them extra things. (Lines 122-131)

Since that interview, James has established and sustained an online radio station that has DJs broadcasting from around the world, including San Francisco, Toronto and Rome. The business model for his radio station emulates the pirate radio set up where James learned his craft, in that budding DJs pay for the opportunity to broadcast. Therefore this business also acts as a training ground and provides a possibility for entry into wider work opportunities. Another one of my informants was Edward, who wanted to build his Grime crew into a [business] organisation where everyone got paid 'no dodginess' (Lines 135- 137). At the time of writing he has done just that, setting up a limited company and trademarking his clothing brand. Another informant, Fiona 'saw the world in pictures' and used her passion for music to create her own employment in a male dominated environment. Since she left school at the age of 16 with few qualifications, Fiona has been making a living as a music video director. Furthermore, Brian a forty year old van driver, wanted to 'Get my own label, make my own music, get into production […]' and this was based on what he'd seen others do as well as viewing it as a natural progression from being a DJ.

Most people start out in business doing what they love and subsequently find a way to get paid for it (Williams 2006; Albert & Couture 2013). In *The Hidden Enterprise Culture* Williams reveals that the majority of those working off the books are not in a stereotypical 'sweatshop' environment but participating in enterprise on a self employed basis. While the definition of entrepreneurship remains elusive, Williams is able to identify the individual traits attributed to entrepreneurs. These attributes include the need for independence, the need for achievement and the ability to take risks and live with uncertainty as well as being innovative and self-motivated (Williams 2006, p.18) and these characteristics are clearly demonstrated by my informants.

In the *English Localities Survey* (cited in Williams 2006), three types of 'autonomous underground worker' are identified, the underground micro entrepreneur – who starts up a fledgling business as a short term risk taking strategy to test out or establish themselves, these are either in employment or 'economically inactive' or NEET (not in employment,

education or training); the second type is the established 'off-the-books' self employed worker who is in formal employment while conducting self employed work 'off-the-books' – such as my informant George who ran his music production company alongside his paid employment for Transport for London and finally the 'off-the-books' social entrepreneur, who carries out one off tasks or takes cash for favours (Williams 2006, p.68). Participating in this way appears to be is a short-term strategy, whether this is through choice or necessity is a moot point. Many of my informants started their self- employment or business activity because that was the only way that they could undertake the work that they desired. In the wider creative economy, jobs as radio presenters and music video directors are at a premium. Those with social and economic capital can participate in internships as a means for entry into the sector, however, this is difficult for those from marginalised communities, particularly if they have limited academic qualifications. Therefore while it can be argued that people choose this option as it provides autonomy, flexibility and freedom and independence it is also possible that this choice is made within the context of certain 'push' factors – such as unemployment, entrenched joblessness and economic adversity (Gerxhani 2004; Albert & Couture 2013; Venkatesh 2006). Furthermore, the formal sector now operates with increasingly informal and unstable work patterns such as fixed and zero hours contracts and workers who do participate in this are often no better off financially (Macdonald et al. 2013).

Business studies: learning to be enterprising

If, as Malcolm Tight asserts, that learning is like breathing and it is something we do all the time, it is worth exploring the process by which the participants in this sector learn to do business. As with entrepreneurship there is no unifying theory of learning (Dennick 2008). The debate about what education is for continues unabated. Indeed, these artist/entrepreneurs have grown up and been schooled in a time of what Tomlinson calls an 'epidemic of policy making' which saw one or more Education Acts passed every year in the period from 1988 – 1994. Perhaps then, it is no wonder that Rogers is convinced that learning has been transformed into a 'dull, mind numbing experience' (1983 cited in Dennick 2008, p.68) and that the formal learning experience for many of my informants was at best a hindrance or of no relevance.

Ian is a DJ, when I interviewed him in 2009 he was working on a cash basis in clubs and using his stints on pirate radio to raise awareness of his work. Since that time he has secured a regular weekly radio show with a licesned broadcaster. Ian said:

> Yeah, they didn't really teach me anything too tough, about like mixing or anything so I sorted out it all myself, but yeah, they could have taught us a bit more about music cos, really and truly it was just about the old school guys and stuff
> JW: In what way?
> Like Pavarotti and stuff, them sort of people, they don't really relate to me. (Ian – DJ – 22)

Charlotte was a few months in to her career as a model, working for a north London model agency. This agency had started out providing models for urban music videos, but now focused on providing models for the fashion industry.

> It's not that I wanted to be a Legal Secretary, but when I left school I didn't know what I wanted to do, so my Mum said that it was a good career, like the money's good so you can get, like, a qualification for it. You can just fall back on to it. But I've always wanted to be a model; I've never really been into studying and things like that.
> JW: So what did you learn at school which is useful to you now?
> Nothing
> JW: Nothing?
> No, honestly I don't think [so], I think that school's good because you learn lots of social skills, you know, and how to interact with people, but actual things you learn in lessons, like, no I don't really use them, it's just like, I don't think that me going to school proves anything. (Charlotte – Model -18)

However, for some although school was deemed to be of little or no importance, specific college courses targeted at practical aspects of the music industry were felt to be useful:

> So because of that, because I done music business in college, that really helped, and I'd advise any girl or guy who wants to do their own, kinda, underground music and work their way up to get commercial, to make sure they know the foundations of it, or otherwise people walk all over you. (Helen – Singer/Songwriter – 18)

As in other occupational and industrial sectors, starting a business in the urban music economy is often a by-product of a hobby or interest. For example, Jamal Edwards started his company, SBTV, as an outlet for his interest in making videos for the Grime music that he loved. By first establishing a YouTube partnership advertising deal[27] and then achieving

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[27] The YouTube partnership programme is designed for regular video makers and offers a shared advertising revenue solution (S. Cunningham 2012).

contracts with other companies such as Virgin Unite, Edwards has turned SBTV into a global brand (Edwards 2013, p.151; Smale 2013). This is one well-documented example of learning how to create an enterprise in a setting that traditionally, has little value except as a source of new talent for the recording industry (Collins 2004). Participation in the urban music economy is an activity for sizable numbers of young people who have been ill served by formal education, they are NEET and the numbers of young people who are NEET is near the one million mark (A. Cunningham 2012; Rogers 2012a; LSN 2009). The process of becoming an artist/entrepreneur in the urban music economy is experiential, the rules of the game are learned by observing, carrying out the activity and getting feedback. This activity is collaborative and interconnected and therefore disrupts the existing view that young people from impoverished areas exist in postcode silos.

Becoming an artist/entrepreneur in the urban music economy

Far from operating in a vacuum, entrepreneurship is a social phenomenon anchored within a socio-cultural context (Thornton et al. 2011; Drakopoulou Dodd & Anderson 2007). Social capital, in terms of concrete resources such as editing skills, production skills and tangible resources such as feedback, positive regard and appreciation are gained from working in this sector (Thornton et al. 2011). Artist/entrepreneurs in the urban music economy challenge the accepted notion of the entrepreneur by undertaking activity which is clearly rooted in their social and cultural circumstance but extending that into the wider world. These artist/entrepreneurs are firmly located in their inner city environs and therefore economic capital is scarce. In Figure 25, I have illustrated the inputs and influences that impact on becoming an artist/entrepreneur. Once an individual has scanned the horizon and has an awareness of the limited opportunities that are available, they then draw on their creative and/or technical skills in order to carve out a niche for themselves. These skills can be honed through practice, observation of other 'old hands' and mentoring. These individuals also have access to technology, social media, online broadcasting and specialised digital TV channels where they can disseminate their creative output directly to their audience and receive feedback. The urban music economy therefore creates an environment in which artist/entrepreneurs are able to learn from each other. This is enhanced by accessible communication and social media which enables a cross fertilisation of not just creative ideas, but business ideas also.

The products that are developed include mixtapes – now essentially a collection of tracks for download - rather than a physical product - as well as single tracks and associated merchandise such as clothing.

When few resources are available, being able to pool skills and knowledge means that your track, and the accompanying video will come to fruition. For example, an MC requires a producer to mix the track, and needs a beat to rhyme over, so there are multiple actors and stakeholders in the creation and distribution of a piece of work (Drakopoulou Dodd & Anderson 2007; Anderson & Warren 2011, p.343). These artist/entrepreneurs take from and give back to the social realm in terms of material for their creative output and as source of relevant and readily available skills (Drakopoulou Dodd & Anderson 2007). My informants are an integral part of their social and economic situation and, for the most part, these circumstances have less to offer in terms of employment and opportunity (LSN 2009; A. Cunningham 2012; Rogers 2012a). The participants in this economy learned by doing, others became conversant by watching others and taking their inspiration from them. This was possible in part because of the creative Grime clusters that developed on council estates – like Meridian in Tottenham (in north London) and on street corners such as Greengate in Plaistow (in east London), but also due to advances in technology such as the Internet and social media which allowed this creative practice to become highly visible.
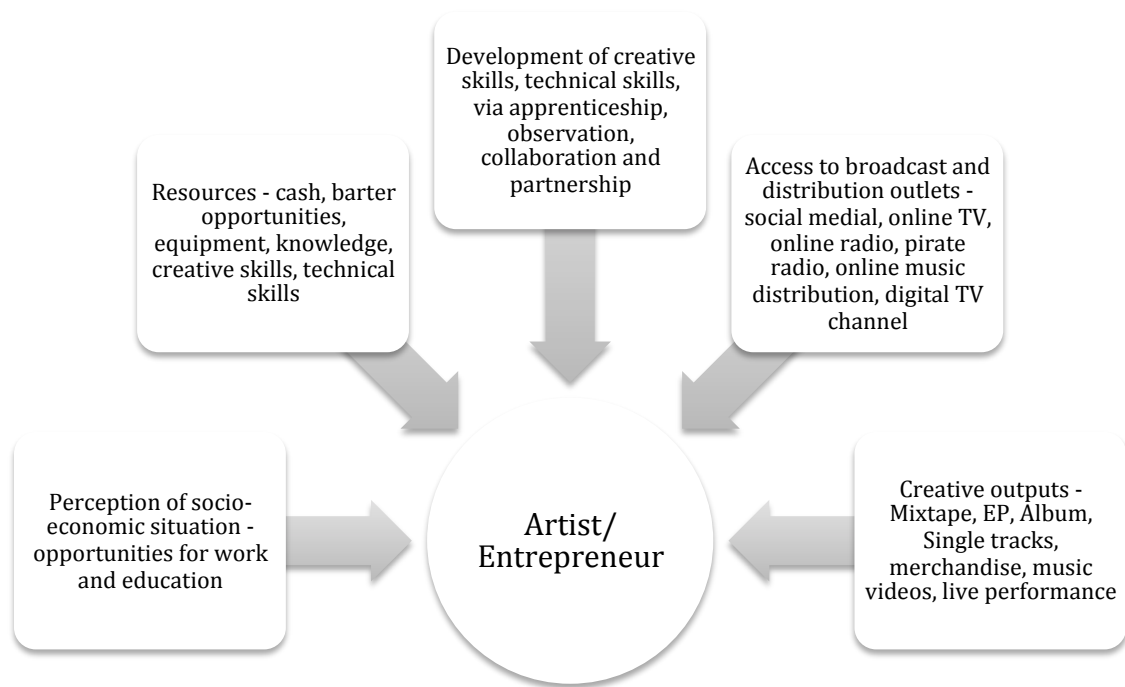
FIGURE 25: How participants in the urban music economy become artist/entrepreneurs

The text boxes in the figure read:

- Development of creative skills, technical skills, via apprenticeship, observation, collaboration and partnership
- Resources - cash, barter opportunities, equipment, knowledge, creative skills, technical skills
- Access to broadcast and distribution outlets - social medial, online TV, online radio, pirate radio, online music distribution, digital TV channel
- Perception of socio-economic situation - opportunities for work and education
- Artist/ Entrepreneur
- Creative outputs - Mixtape, EP, Album, Single tracks, merchandise, music videos, live performance

In *Trench Town Rock: The Creation of Jamaica's Music Industry,* McMillan highlights the global success of the Jamaican recorded music industry and parallels can be drawn with the urban music economy, particularly as it relates to the Grime music genre. McMillan regards the 'creative city' of Kingston and its 'creative clusters' as spaces that allowed for innovation due to the close proximity of a large number of artists and producers leading to increased competition between artists and producers to come up with something new and therefore stay ahead of the game (McMillan 2005). In the UK, Grime and subsequent urban music genres came of age in the YouTube era, that is from 2005 onwards. Therefore, what in previous times would have been a highly localised practice, was now immediately visible to other artists as well as fans, and could elicit an instantaneous response. Here, in this urban music economy, we have the dynamics of young white working class communities juxtaposed in close physical proximity with those of Caribbean and African descent. This in turn creates a genre that exposes the positive externalities of affordable technology and widened access to publication and broadcast. In an era where the fear of the impact of the free music download is palpable, it is evident that through the activities of these artist/entrepreneurs, increased opportunities for live and recorded performance become available.

Much of the literature of entrepreneurship is focussed on the usually heroic individual and their personal traits and individual activities (Carland et al. 2002; Anderson et al. 2009; Cunningham & Lischeron 1991). However, some authors suggest that not enough attention is has been given to the social and cultural context from which entrepreneurs emerge (Drakopoulou Dodd & Anderson 2007). As I have found in my research project, the individuals who participate in the urban music economy were from, on the whole, poor socio-economic backgrounds. This situation may limit their hopes and aspirations in terms of paid employment, but the existence of this economy affords the creation of new identities and opportunities (Bourdieu 1993, p.28). The artist/entrepreneur that I have identified within the context of the urban music economy has some similarities with the concept of *barefoot economics* developed by Manfred Max-Neef, where it can be argued that the *barefoot entrepreneur* or a person with few resources, who enriches themselves through the creation of work operates at the periphery of the economy (Imas et al. 2012). Where the artist/entrepreneur differs is that they operate, largely unseen, not at the margins but at the heart of the economy within a complex network of collaboration and partnership.

Key businesses in the urban music economy

The four businesses outlined here stand-alone but are interconnected in that all of these artist/entrepreneurs work across boundaries and have a significant impact in the urban music sector. For example, Carly Cussen, a music video director has created videos that have been broadcast on SBTV, the online TV station. Previous tensions among performers have been resolved in order to move business and creativity forward and to ensure the widest possible audience for their music. Artists from N.A.S.T.Y and BBK have worked together- see Griminal – 'HAM' ft. JME as an example of this (griminal247365 2012).

Of the artist/entrepreneurs that I interviewed, none had studied business or had formal qualifications or training in enterprise. Nevertheless, they had created networked identities as entrepreneurs and business owners, my informants have adopted and domesticated technology early on as part of the process to learn the rules of the game in this sector (Berker et al. 2006). According to data collected by the Federation for Small Business, the factors that underpin and influence the creation of new firms and business start up include ability, need, opportunity, education and experience as well as technology and innovation (Pickernell et al. 2013). Parallels can be drawn between the impact of participating in the Jamaican sound systems which created income earning opportunities (Witter 2004) and experience of operating in urban music economy.

According to accepted business theory, venture capital, seed investment, mentors and bank loans are a requirement for successful start up and growth (Gage 2012). Yet, it can be demonstrated that for many in this sector, this is not the case. A small piece of equipment, such as a camera or having the opportunity to be coached or mentored by those already operating in the industry, can sometimes be enough of a catalyst to go beyond 'getting by' and start 'getting on' (Reynolds 2013). Key examples of businesses that are getting on include SBTV- an online broadcaster which was established initially as Smokey Barz TV in 2006 by sixteen-year-old Jamal Edwards. This channel now positions itself as an online youth broadcaster and has recently received capital investment (Smale 2013). At the time of writing it has achieved over 100 million views worldwide on YouTube. To mark the 100 millionth view, SBTV celebrated with a BBK (Boy Better Know) cipher[28] (smokeybarz

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[28] In this context a cipher is two or more rappers or MCs freestyling – it does not have to be a battle – they could be lyrically sparring or working off each other.

2012). Boy Better Know started out as a catchphrase for a Grime crew from the Meridian Walk area of North London and it is now a registered trademark. It was established in 2005 by two brothers - Jamie and Junior Adenuga (who perform as JME and Skepta respectively) and their business output includes; recording artists, a record label, a clothing line and a SIM card for a mobile phone network (Boy Better Know 2011).   Another significant entrepreneur in the urban music economy is Carly Cussen, a music video director who started out at the age of sixteen. After working as an independently as first as a sole trader and then within a partnership, she forms part of a creative partnership. Initially she shot urban music videos for young people who wanted to perform but had very limited means. Carly has worked with almost every major Grime artist, often on a shoestring budget. She has shot over one hundred videos (Shodement 2012) and has now graduated to creating videos for mainstream Pop music acts such as Little Mix – *Hi How ya Doin'* (littlemixVEVO 2013) and Olly Murs *'Dear Darlin'* (OllyMursVEVO 2013), however, she continues to work with signed and independent Grime artists. Finally, N.A.S.T.Y started life as an East London Grime crew in 2002 and it has had a few previous incarnations; including N.A.S.T.Y UK and N.A.S.T.Y brothers. N.A.S.T.Y consists of four brothers, two of whom are recording artists (Lil Narst and Griminal) and two who perform as DJs (Marcus Nasty and Mak Ten). As well as individual performance, their output includes a clothing line - Nasty by Nature™, phone covers, a record label and an internet radio station (Nasty by Nature 2013; Nasty FM 2011; NastyCrew 2005).

These participants and my informants had had limited exposure to the social and cultural context of business. So, how they learn to have a feel for this particular game is through being mentored by an 'old hand' (still common in Grime crews) or perhaps observing someone who is making their mark in the sector. This particular social field, the urban music economy, allows my informants to fit into a business world. The business world that they operate in and are part of is, however, largely invisible perhaps because what is within view is a narrative of guns, gangs and postcode wars (Curtis 2008; Rose 2008; Sherwin 2007; Panorama 2009; journeymanpictures 2008). Perhaps this is because the wider business world has reproduced the concept of the entrepreneur in its own image. That is, the attributes and behaviour of the entrepreneur – risk taking, innovation and so on, is not able to recognise entrepreneurs in the urban music economy. If they do, it is seen as an exception – such as Jamal Edwards – rather than the norm.

Creative enterprise, individual pursuits and collaborative practice

The informal economy involves undertaking the production of legal goods and services by individuals who are not registered for tax and other legislative requirements, including employment relationships that a *cash-in-hand* or *off-the-books* (Llanes & Barbour 2007, p.12; Gerxhani 2004; Chen 2007, p.1). However, it should be noted that the informal/formal distinction is used here as an heuristic device, as a shorthand to explore how the urban music economy manifests itself, the activities do not fall neatly into one category or the other. During the primary research phase it became apparent that the urban music economy has a compelling role here because it offers a variety of products and services. For some authors, the informal economy is considered to be an intrinsic part of the socio-economic landscape in the developed world including the UK (Grabiner 2000; Llanes & Barbour 2007; Losby et al. 2002; Williams 2006; Venkatesh 2002). Other researchers suggest that within the informal sector there are those that *could* work officially, but *choose not to* for a number of reasons, including formally paid employees who work 'on the side' (Williams 2006; Tanzi 1999; Grabiner 2000; Schneider 2004) and this was indeed true of some of my informants.

The prevailing notion is that the formal and informal sector are separate markets, the former highly regulated and driven by enterprising individuals and the latter, occupied by the marginal activities of the less educated western poor (Grabiner 2000; Tanzi 1999; Williams 2006, p.31). Nevertheless it can also be argued that rather than becoming less significant in developed societies the informal economy is here to stay and presents itself in innovative ways and novel places such as the urban music economy (Chen 2007, p.7). In chapter 5, I have drawn on evidence from my ethnographic fieldwork to argue that this economy is just as formalised and that both sectors are not separate and distinct but co-exist with each sector dependent on the other. Even without a concrete definition of what or who is an entrepreneur, it is clear that their actions and decisions can kick-start the economy and generate wealth (Schoof 2006; Pickernell et al. 2013; Chell 2007). Although, perhaps with the recent exception of Jamal Edwards and SBTV, little attention has been paid to the artist/entrepreneur in the urban music economy (Smale 2013; Edwards 2013). The impact of their activities on the social and economic landscape is an under researched area thus far. Yet it is evident from my research project that these business activities and networks while founded in the UK, have a global reach. This means that for example, connections can be

made with artists – such as Skepta[29] from an unfashionable and little loved area of North London to internationally recognised artists such as P Diddy. These business activities are not the efforts of mythical 'noble knights' but of people whose enterprise presents a different story to the usual (Imas et al. 2012, p.565) who have created a national and international reach for their creative practice.

The economic behaviour of those that participate in the urban music economy should be viewed in its specific context and localities (Sköld & Rehn 2007, p.53). The participants in the urban music economy draw on the business practices and entrepreneurial spirit that are intrinsic components of both the Jamaican and UK Sound Systems (Witter 2004). For artist/entrepreneurs in this sector the context is, on the whole, one of low qualifications and poor employment prospects. Therefore enterprise, whether it takes the form of live performance, staging of events, sale of CDs, music downloads and other merchandise, DVDs, studio time, publicity or marketing materials, can afford opportunities particularly where paid employment is scarce. Sometimes, this may be the only way that young people from marginalised communities can have the kind of jobs that they desire in the creative economy.

Transformation in terms of entry into new identities, as I have shown in chapter 6, is a real prospect for those that do participate and this includes the former DJs who have now reinvented themselves as teachers and sell a neoliberal concept of doing for self that is rooted in an imagined African American construction of Africanness. It should also be noted that while the push for participation in this sector often comes from economic adversity, the informants in this study also had a desire to be financially autonomous creative individuals and this can be achieved through self-employment and micro-entrepreneurship.

A close examination of the creative practice of the production and dissemination of Grime music provides evidence that this highly individualised approach to unemployment and economic disadvantage echoes the neo liberal themes of 'uplift, self-responsibility and self-improvement' outlined by Paul Gilroy (2013, p.23). The informants in this study believe that hard work brings rewards and that it is possible to create work and generate wealth

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[29] In 2010, US Hip Hop Artist invited Skepta to create a Grime remix of his track 'Hello – Good Morning' (polydor 2010).

through individual pursuits. SBTV, the online broadcaster began as SmokeyBarz and it now has the strapline of 'self-belief, the vision' to reflect the optimism and can do attitude it seeks to promote.

However, although it is evident that these entrepreneurs are 'buying in to neoliberal capitalism' (Gilroy 2013, p.34) in an individual attempt to overcome advanced marginality, this effort occurs at the same time as collective endeavour, and the 'bring in' or collaborative activity is a key aspect of the urban music economy, nationally and internationally. There is also evidence of community activity as exemplified by Grime artists JME and Skepta from BBK crew who recently built a water pump in their fathers's village in Nigeria (JmeVerified account 2014).

I therefore contend that within the context of the urban music economy, economic enrichment is a collective enterprise as well as an individual one and it is a valid route to employment, albeit with the caveat that the endless demand from consumers for new product, means that in many respects creative enterprise becomes something akin to a production line.

Conclusion

When I embarked on this project it was with the intention to map the creative practice in an 'underground' economy. However, at the initial phase, I soon discovered that there was a wide range of business types and models in place and that the participants carried out these activities, not underground, but on the ground and operated in the same way that business was conducted in the formal sector. Micro business, small business and self-employment in areas such as film directing, making music videos and the sale and distribution of clothing brands had been established in this sector. What was also evident was that, except in a few cases, these business owners applied their knowledge of their customer base in a pragmatic way, offering goods and services at little cost. Few mentioned that classroom or formal taught knowledge had any significance for the impetus for business start up. These businesses emerged out of the individual passions of the artist/entrepreneur as well as the desire to make money and become an independent adult. Some of these ventures have grown to have a global presence, some have national and international reach, while others are almost entirely local, nevertheless – business start up, seen to be the lifeblood of the

economy (Henderson & Weiler 2010; Drucker 2006), is being generated by young people on a shoestring budget with access to very few resources.

At the start of my research project, I had not anticipated the global reach of Grime – a type of music that is created in specific and particular urban areas in the UK. Over time though, the genre mattered less than the opportunity it afforded to create an alternate persona, that of an entrepreneur and business owner. Indeed, seven of my informants played a pivotal role in setting up businesses that have a significant impact in the informal urban music economy, namely SBTV, Nasty By Nature (NBN) and Boy Better Know (BBK).

While an agreed definition for an entrepreneur or indeed enterprise culture is not in place (Williams 2006, p.16). Schumpeter's definition for example, focused on the entrepreneur's drive for innovation, which allows for creative destruction or new ways of doing business (Schumpeter 1994). For Drucker, it is someone who seeks change and exploits the opportunity that that difference brings (Drucker 2006). Baumol defines entrepreneurs as '…persons who are ingenious and creative in finding ways to add to their own power and prestige' (Baumol 1996, p.897). My research has shown that in the informal urban music economy, there is clear evidence of new ways of doing business through the innovative use of YouTube by SBTV or the SIM card created by Jamie Adenuga of BBK for example.

In chapter 6, I analysed and examined how participating in the urban music economy can create a route to employment through enterprise, thus allowing for movement and reinvention. It is possible that the music industry is the new 'road' in that it has replaced existing street tropes as a desired way of being for young people from impoverished areas but on the whole, my informants were not 'on road' and only two people made reference to this (Ilan 2012). The activities of artists and entrepreneurs who established and sustained SBTV, BBK and NBN call for wider recognition as musicians and legitimate entrepreneurs. This entrepreneurial spirit and pride in achievements have emerged as new tropes for urban music artists.

Grime artists and other urban music practitioners are able to realise the means to consume as well as negotiating a dual repertoire of 'making it' and 'keeping it real' in other words creating a successful business while still maintaining credibility with the ends (Sköld & Rehn 2007). But there is also a tension here between selling out and staying true to the

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game and black vernacular cultures continue to have an ambivalent relationship with the corporate world (Gilroy 2004, p.252). Wiley, the self-styled 'Godfather of Grime' and a founder of the Grime scene, is an exemplar of this. He is currently signed to a major label – Warner - that brings him into contact with a wider audience[30]. Nonetheless, he still releases Grime mixtapes – such as *Steps 1 -20* for free download (PulseMusicPromotions 2013), thereby operating simultaneously in both camps.

These artist/entrepreneurs have a tacit and detailed knowledge of their audience and innovative use of technology has enabled them to turn their output into a commodity, without the need for an intermediary such as a record company. At the same time, audio and video production technology became less expensive and therefore more accessible. This created a juncture where micro business could be created in the urban music industry, embodying what Ilan calls the 'respectable trope of the educated entrepreneur' meaning those who have stepped outside the boundaries of marginalisation (Ilan 2012). The urban music economy is a space where creative practice and commerce come together and enable the sale of black creative expression in a national and global market place (Collins 2006). This creative expression/enterprise can take the form of live performance, staging of events, sale of CDs, music downloads and other merchandise, DVDs, studio time, publicity and marketing materials. At its heart are MCs, DJs, producers, beat makers and promoters almost all of them male. All of these products and services are exchanged for cash, recognition and knowledge.

The pirate radio network, Channel AKA and YouTube form an influential and integral part of marketing and promoting urban music of all kinds, including Grime. These avenues of promotion and distribution have been made possible by advances in technology. Participation in this arena therefore requires technological skill, collaborative activity and the exchange or barter of goods and services (Banks & Humphreys 2008, p.405).

Over a five-year period, I interviewed 40 people who were participants in the urban music economy, 34 of whom were creative practitioners. Most of the business activity that is conducted is represented here. These young people have responded to the challenges of the constant policy changes during their formal schooling years and shrinking economic

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[30] Wiley has been signed to major labels before, but is loathe to give up his artistic integrity to the mainstream (Hancox 2010c).

opportunity to create business and enterprise. The learning and life strategies that are utilised include high levels of collaboration which contests the predominant view that the lives of inner city young people are defined by postcode silos (metrowebukmetro 2009; Barnett 2006). They also learn by doing, using and sharing available resources in order to produce and disseminate their creative output. While not wanting to downplay the pressing challenges of urban life, such as that demonstrated by the riots in August 2011 (Tester 2012), I would argue that some convivial dimensions of diversity are in evidence here. Grime emerged from East London and it allows for an exploration of the creative disruption which occurs at the nexus where race, movement and poverty intersect (Noble 2013, p.168).

PART FOUR: CLOSING REMARKS

CHAPTER 8: THE WRAP UP: ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE URBAN MUSIC ECONOMY

How do I look so young when I've been in the game for ten years […].
I'm an R-E-B-E-L, kicked out of school, ended up in Feltham
But I should've went UTL, now I'm putting my life on iTunes
For all to hear, ain't nothing on the DL, I am in another league, I'm real […]
Ghetts – Intro from Album Rebel with a Cause (Ghetts 2014)

The NEET category is the latest in a long line of classifications that is used to position young people from ethnically stigmatised communities at the margins of society. It is a designator of deficit in that it classifies people by what they *are not* doing or taking part in; education, employment or training. Therefore what they *are* doing is rarely recorded. Yet within proximate view, these maligned urban environments are a locus for an abundance of entrepreneurial activity and spirit (Sköld & Rehn 2007). The very narrow debate regarding gang related and knife crime among inner city youth ignores the complex layers of activity carried out by young people in these geographical locations (Sergeant 2009a; Bennett & Holloway 2004; De Castella 2007). From the outset of the research project, it soon became clear that the urban music industry in these locations was on the ground and highly visible. From my detailed ethnographic study, carried out in east London and Cyprus over a five-year period from 2007 until 2012, it is evident that entrepreneurship and self-employment provides new jobs, business start-up and economic movement for young people operating in the urban music economy. This micro-entrepreneurship can offer a bottom-up method for generating an income, self-reliance and a new, innovative path to earning a living (Schoof 2006). It can also lead to business development on a national and global scale and this is clearly illustrated in chapter 7, where I have shown that there are a wide range of business types and models in place and that the participants undertook these activities and operated in the same way that business was conducted in the formal sector. Micro business, small business and self-employment in areas such as film directing, making music videos and the sale and distribution of clothing brands have been established in this sector by young people who have been categorised as NEET.

Entrepreneurs in the urban music economy

While it can be argued that people choose this option of self-employment or micro business as it provides autonomy, flexibility and freedom it is also possible that this choice is made

within the context of certain 'push' factors – such as unemployment, entrenched joblessness and economic adversity (Gerxhani 2004; Albert & Couture 2013; Venkatesh 2006). It is possible that these 'push' factors drive participation in the urban music economy as it appears to contain sizable numbers of young people who have been ill served by formal education. In this study of entrepreneurship in the urban music sector, I have shown in chapter 4 and in chapter 5 that sustainable businesses and self-employment has been created by those who, on the whole, had underachieved in formal education, often on shoestring budgets and with no formal training or qualifications in business. These enterprises create wealth and operate on a national and international scale.

The entrepreneurs participating in the urban music economy in east London are invisible because, to borrow a concept from Loic Wacquant, they are inhabitants of a stigmatised community, in this case they are young, black and poor (Wacquant 2007). Therefore the concept of advanced marginality has been a useful way to explore the activities of the participants in the informal music economy in east London. One feature of advanced marginality is wage labour as a source of social fragmentation, particularly for those at the borders, for example those on temporary or zero hours contracts and the rise in apprenticeships that pay below the minimum wage. There is also a disconnect from global economic trends in that whatever happens in the world, the conditions for the poor stay the same. In reality, social mobility and material conditions change very little and those that are NEET often remain so. Reducing the numbers of those who are classified as NEET therefore has been a key youth policy for successive governments during the last fifteen years (Shildrick et al. 2010; LSN 2009; Lee & Wright 2011; A. Cunningham 2012). Since poor young people are often defined as NEET (Chandler & Barrett 2013), it was important to examine the genesis and political context of this category particularly as it relates to young people from poor areas such as inner east London.

In the post-Fordist economic era the east London Boroughs of Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham have lost local jobs and become disconnected from traditional mechanisms of mobility such as educational achievement (Rogers 2012b; Blanden & Machin 2007). As workers, this community has been made expendable by advances in technology and some of the highest numbers of workless households in London reside in these boroughs (London Councils 2010, p.42). This disconnection from mobility and high levels of joblessness as the norm are also features of advanced marginality (Wacquant 2007, pp.243–245).

The informants for this project were people aged between 18 and 40 who participate in the informal music business. The geographical starting point was urban east London and as this area contains some of the most socially and economically deprived areas in the country, as well as some of the most ethnically diverse, it therefore foregrounds the activities of those who are from ethnically stigmatised communities (MacRury & Poynter 2009; Freeman et al. 2009; Mayor of London 2010; Bux Ryan et al. 2010). Over the last decade these inner east London areas have undergone a shift from being a post-industrial wasteland scoring low on most economic and social indicators into becoming four of the five host boroughs for the London 2012 Olympics (BBC London 2008). Nevertheless, the three most deprived boroughs in London continue to be Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham, in that order, and Newham remains 6th (out of 354) on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (HM Government 2007).

The post-war slum clearance in these areas and the subsequent creation of local authority owned housing estates led to an increased segmentation of architectural space occurred as poorly regulated private housing provision gave way to the careful bureaucracy of the municipal housing department (Foucault 1991). The high unemployment of the post Thatcher years had an enduring negative impact on working class communities such as those in inner city east London. There were deepening divisions between those that became part of the property owning democracy by buying their council property, moving up the social ladder and then moving out of these areas of urban decline. A residual working class remains in situ with little access to employment and intense competition for resources such as housing (MacRury & Poynter 2009). The shared outside spaces of these housing estates provided an opportunity for the young white working class and the offspring of Commonwealth migrants to socialise and congregate thus allowing for a flow and mix of creative expression – including the creation of Grime music.

Paul Gilroy's concept of the Black Atlantic, particularly as it relates to the transnational and borderless flow of black creative expression (Gilroy 1996) allows for an analysis of the hybrid forms of creative expression produced predominantly by those from the black diaspora. These hybrid cultural forms draw on the influences of the Caribbean, America and Africa and have been reworked and filtered through a UK lens. New black vernacular creative expression, such as Grime music, has been created from this hybridity and intermixture. Therefore the black Atlantic trope is a useful construct to explore the origins,

location and flow of Grime music. Within this context, Grime music does not flow in line within national borders, instead it moves back and forth crossing boundaries but retaining the same distinctive sound. Grime, when used as a lens to examine and analyse the NEET category exposes the web of relationships and business activities that exist in informal urban music economy. Its origins, practice and dissemination lie within the black Atlantic construct. Artist/entrepreneurs in this urban music economy work across the boundaries that ostensibly delineate the formal and informal sectors and the economic behaviour of these participants needs to be understood in its specific contexts and localities. For example, figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) suggest that black males aged 16-24 have an unemployment rate in excess of 50% - a rate which has almost doubled since the 2008 global financial crisis (Ball et al. 2012). The majority of my research informants were young black men of African and Caribbean descent from poor areas and it therefore appears that it is not possible to fully escape the reality of race and socio-economic background. (Sköld & Rehn 2007).

Furthermore, low attainment and school exclusion also has an ethnic and racial dimension. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation research into low educational achievement looked at those who left school at 16 and concluded that low achievement was more commonly found in poor urban areas. Overall their view was that 'it is apparent that something has been arresting the progress of Caribbean students – boys in particular – [because] even if they start out well, they may come to grief later' (Cassen & Kingdon 2007, p.9). The Rowntree Report had the following key findings: that black boys have lower levels of attainment at GCSE than any other ethnic group, more black and mixed African Caribbean boys are likely to be excluded from school, black men are less likely to attend university at age 19 and are overrepresented in prisons and Young Offender Institutions (Cassen & Kingdon 2007, p.4). Other reports argue that black pupils do worse than white ones, and suggest that even when class is accounted for – '25% of black boys got five good GCSEs compared to 43.5% of white boys' (BBC Online 2010; Sergeant 2009b). Five good GCSEs in this setting constitutes a golden ticket, as it provides access to further education, higher level apprenticeships and a more successful transition into the world of work.

It has been argued that educating and training young people to the highest levels will enable them to face an uncertain globalised future particularly as workers with low qualifications have a reduced chance of permanent, stable employment (du Bois-Reymond 2004, p.7;

Communities and Local Government 2007; Sergeant 2009b; Leitch 2006). As educational achievement, particularly the acquisition of qualifications, is deemed to be so important for personal and national success, underachievement is a problem that cannot be left unfixed. A Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) Report in 1999 highlighted a clear link between low attainment, truancy, school exclusion and crime (Sparkes 1999) and more recent research shows that this connection still exists (Children's Commissioner 2013).

Entrepreneurship is seen as a significant factor for economic growth and all the more important as the developed world endeavours to pull itself out of an acute global recession. It is almost a given that individuals with entrepreneurial behaviours are vital for economic success. To this end, much research in this area has focused on the attributes, traits and behaviours that individuals are deemed to have, such as being able to find innovative ways to do business (Schumpeter 1994) someone who can exploit the value of new ideas and take risks (Carland et al. 2002; P. Kilby 1971; Brockhaus & Horwitz 2002). This focus on enterprise as a key tenet for economic recovery is manifest through, for example, the UK policy to develop entrepreneurship skills and attributes among young people through the implementation of enterprise education in primary and secondary schools and the mandatory work experience for those aged 15 and 16 (Schoof 2006; Ofsted 2011).

The findings from the field research detailed in chapter 4 and chapter 5, clearly shows that far from being contained in tightly defined, local areas the activities of my respondents had a national and global reach. In Ayia Napa, for example, the black Atlantic trope of movement takes us beyond existing geographical and physical boundaries and allows for the performance of different identities as artists, entrepreneurs and business owners. Transitions between genres, roles and identities form a significant aspect of the urban music economy. This movement requires a deeper analysis particularly as it relates to the global economy for UK urban music and its impact on local producers of music. From the participant observation in London and in Cyprus, the performance and sale of a persona was evident and enterprise, as a means of getting paid, was a key motivation. In the urban music economy, there is no easy distinction between enterprising activities and entrepreneurship in the formal and informal sector. However, I have shown that there is a wide range work undertaken in the informal economy which may be undeclared for tax purposes but this is also the case with those in the formal sector, who also participate in undeclared work activity (Williams & Nadin 2012). The dualisation of the formal/informal split needs to be

explored in more detail. It is evident that there is a fluidity of practice across the sectors and the boundaries where they exist are not clear either for the practitioners or for the consumers. A more in depth study into how this work is carried out in practice may provide a more effective dissemination of the processes this entrepreneurial activity. This in turn may offer a more relevant framework for enterprise education for those who are deemed to be NEET.

A pragmatic approach to NEET reduction

What was also evident was that, except in a few cases, these business owners applied their knowledge of their customer base in a pragmatic way, offering goods and services at little cost. Few mentioned that classroom or formal taught knowledge had any significance for the impetus for business start-up. These businesses emerged out of the individual passions of the artist/entrepreneur as well as the desire to make money and become an independent adult. Some of these ventures, such as SBTV (Edwards 2013), have grown to have a global presence, some have national and international reach (see for example (Dench 2013; Boy Better Know 2011; Nasty FM 2011), while others, such as my informant – Adam, an 18 year old MC – operate almost entirely in their local area. Nevertheless – business start up, seen by some to be the lifeblood of the economy (Henderson & Weiler 2010; Drucker 2006), is being generated by young people on a shoestring budget with access to very few resources.

The informants in this research project have used urban music to articulate their living conditions, to speak of the lack of opportunity and at the same time create a route to employment through enterprise. Through apprenticeships with sound systems and Grime crews, honing their craft by watching and working with others, these practitioners have used their creativity to establish ways to learn and earn. Bourdieu suggests that people attempt what is possible and what is possible is based on what is seen around you. By participating in the urban music economy as a producer or as a consumer these young people see and experience the world in a more substantial way, therefore, the possiblities for improvement and exit increase (Jenkins 2002). What Thrift calls 'the crushing weight of economic circumstance' in the 'cramped worlds in which many people are forced to live their lives' (Thrift 2007, p.20) has been disrupted by this participation in the informal music economy. In *Urban Outcasts* Wacquant warned against the hurried glance of the casual

observer (Wacquant 2007). This project has done that, in that it has looked at the complex layers, networks and connections of what initially appeared to be an underground or hidden creative economy. Uncovering the workings and activities of the practitioners in the informal urban music economy in east London, therefore questions the NEET category as one of deficit and inactivity.

In the UK, the numbers of young people who are NEET is at an all time high (A. Cunningham 2012; Rogers 2012a; LSN 2009). Indeed, the number of those that are NEET has increased steadily between 1997 and 2007 – 23.9% and 30.8% respectively - (Bainbridge & Browne 2010) and recent reports suggest that in the UK, 16 – 24 year old NEETS number around the one million mark (Groom 2011; Kingsley 2011a; Office for National Statistics 2013b). Despite the expansion of the Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) sectors as a means to absorb those young people who would otherwise have gone into work and as a response to youth unemployment, the numbers of those categorised as NEET remains around the one million mark (Kingsley 2011a). Other policy responses and initiatives included financial incentives such as the Education Maintenance Allowance - a means tested payment for 16 -19 year olds who proceeded to further education (GOV.UK 2011). The payment was linked to regular attendance at Sixth Form or an FE College, however, if young people are earning money from their activities in the urban music economy the impact of financial incentives is lessened and may therefore have little impact in reducing the number of those who are NEET. In 2008 the Nuffield Review (Hayward et al. 2008, p.2) questioned why so many young people did not participate in education, employment or training beyond the mandatory age. They argued that a lack of appropriate role models hindered the life and work ambitions of those who became NEET. With a specific focus on raising aspirations and achievement amongst black boys, the Reach Project and the subsequent follow up report also cited the lack of role models and mentors as an issue (Communities and Local Government 2007; Communities and Local Government 2011). Instead the Reach project argues that we need to move away from profiling achievements from music and sport and consider success in a wider context, in other words:

> 'Success by 2020 would mean a society in which Black men are represented in a significant number of powerful positions, from the Cabinet, to high-ranking judicial positions, to the executive boards of companies in the FTSE 250. At the other end of the spectrum the number of Black boys excluded from school, or passing through the criminal justice system should no longer be

disproportionately high. The prevalent media stereotypes of Black men as either sporting or music stars, or gang members, should fade as Black men become more visible right across public and private life' (Communities and Local Government 2011, p.4)

While this is a laudable aim, it potentially ignores and negates the significant achievements of those in the urban music economy that I have already explored in some detail. Enterprise education is another policy which aims to increase employability and encourage young people to become entrepreneurs suggests that those who receive enterprise education acquire a more entrepreneurial outlook and are more likely to think about running their own business (Department for Children, Schools and Families 2010; Wicks 2013). The Start Up loan scheme (Start Up Loans 2013) created in 2012 by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to support young people who have a feasible business idea and the Prince's Trust who offer low interest loans and mentoring (Prince's Trust Enterprise Programme 2014) are examples of initiatives to support business start-up by young people.

The Future Jobs Fund (FJF), another policy response to rising levels of youth unemployment and increased numbers of NEETs formed part of the Young Persons Guarantee, a Labour government action which started in 2009 and which was shelved by the Coalition government in 2010 (Directgov 2011). FJF mandated those who had been in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance for six months or more to take a job on at least the national minimum wage – with sanctions such as the removal of benefit if they refused. The wages for those on the Future Jobs Fund Programme were paid by the state. The Coalition government replaced the FJF scheme with the Youth Contract as a new response to rising youth unemployment. These measures included: '160,000 Government-subsidised jobs; an extra 250,000 work experience places; extra financial incentives for employers to take on apprentices; additional support for young unemployed people through Jobcentre Plus; and a new payment-by-results initiative focused on 16–17 year olds with no qualifications' (UK Parliament 2012). Again, these measures assume that those who are NEET have little work experience and require vocational qualifications in order to secure jobs. However, I have shown through my research that measures to tackle the NEET issue will not have the desired outcomes if there is a continued misrecognition and misunderstanding regarding the activities young people, categorised as NEET, are actually engaged in.

The lyrics that open this chapter are from Ghetts, a Grime MC from Plaistow in the London Borough of Newham. In the album intro, the game he refers to is the Grime music scene and he charts his journey from 'being kicked out of school' and becoming NEET, to ending up in Feltham - a Young Offenders Institution. That might have been the end of his story – remaining out of sight or unable to locate (UTL) – instead he has a highly visible presence as an independent recording artist, creating music and selling it through online distribution channels such as iTunes. My research findings show that operating in this sphere enables young people, like Ghetts, to make movement, create an exit from harsh environments and establish identities as artists and entrepreneurs. Grime music, as a black Atlantic creative expression, therefore not only has a symbolic value, it also allows for mobility as well as the creation of new identities.

By using Grime music as a way to articulate and bring to the fore the education, employment and training that people in the NEET category are engaged in, this ethnographic critique of the category of the NEET using Grime music and its related enterprise culture is a novel and innovative contribution to knowledge. It has been clearly demonstrated that young people like Ghetts, often classified as NEET, mature and evolve through their participation in the urban music sector. There needs to be a recognition that this process offers a significant transition into adulthood and independence. It can remove or lessen the life scarring impact of youth unemployment that holds such dread because the consequence of this lack of integration into formal work and adult life has a social cost, with increased criminal and anti-social activity being a much debated aspect of this. There is also, of course, a financial and economic cost, which is estimated in some quarters to be between £12 and £32 billion, which includes the cost of paying for welfare benefits and increased instances of interactions with the criminal justice system (Coles et al. 2010). Reducing the numbers of those who are classified as NEET therefore has been a key youth policy for successive governments during the last fifteen years (Shildrick et al. 2010; LSN 2009; Lee & Wright 2011; A. Cunningham 2012). Yet, in London, the proportion of those who are NEET has not altered significantly over the last decade (Bainbridge & Browne 2010).

During this time, independent artists in the Grime music scene have used advances in technology to establish national and global audiences for their creative output, allowing

them to transcend distance and reach large audiences without the intervention of intermediaries such as record companies.

The informal economy may be viewed as something which needs to be eradicated or brought in to line because its existence is seen to be unfair to those who adhere to all of the legal and state requirements (Grabiner 2000), but through my research, I have shown that operating in this sector allows business and enterprise to be created. It may be viewed as scattered and fragmented and on the whole unregulated, leaving those that participate in it at risk of exploitation (Gerxhani 2004), however, in the urban music economy, participants are subjected to the same level of regulation – including licensing and health and safety, whether they operate in the formal or informal sector. It has been argued that in developing areas such as Africa, the informal sector has the potential to end poverty as it fosters growth and creates jobs, yet little attention has been paid to this (Ncube 2013). This maybe because this sector is often associated with irregular opportunities for income and few, if any, employment benefits. However, the changing nature of work in the formal sector with, for example, zero hours contracts and other employment structures that offer few benefits mean that it can be just as insecure as the informal sector (Williams & Nadin 2012).

In the developing world those that participate are mainly women and youth and the barriers to participating in formal economy include; limited access to capital, lack of skills, training and education and lack of technological skill (Ncube 2013). It is possible that all of these barriers – except the need to develop technological skill could be applied to participants operating in informal creative economy in the UK. Barriers to formalisation have been researched in the developing world but less so in the developed world (Ncube 2013). The simultaneous occupation of the formal and informal spheres allows for the creation of self-employment in areas of advanced marginality where there is high and persistent unemployment. Economic advance and strategies to reduce youth unemployment therefore needs to include discussion on the informal sector. A pick and mix approach to employment – for young people – would enable a move back and forth and in between both sectors particularly in terms of establishing enterprise.

As societies and economies become more developed and advanced, work becomes increasingly structured and formalised. Unregistered activities therefore become associated with a throwback to less modern times and/ or the developing world. The formal and

informal sector have been viewed as separate markets, the former highly regulated and driven by enterprising individuals and the latter, occupied by the marginal activities of the less educated western poor (Grabiner 2000; Tanzi 1999; Williams 2006, p.31). This dichotomy views the informal/formal economy as distinct sectors in separate worlds. However, research has indicated that this is not the case and it has been demonstrated that populations and companies operate simultaneously in both spheres (Round et al. 2008; Woolfson 2007).

Furthermore, in *Rethinking the Informal Economy* Chen argues that rather than withering away in developed societies, as predicted, the informal economy is here to stay and presents itself 'in new guises and unexpected places' (Chen 2007, p.7). However, the informal economy has not shrivelled as anticipated, it is a persistent and enduring feature of the economic landscape in the developed world (Williams & Nadin 2012). The informal economy is in fact an enduring sector in developed countries, but little research has been carried out to show how the underground and informal spheres are linked together (Williams 2006, p.35). I have shown that in certain respects, the urban music economy is just as formalised and that both sectors are not separate and distinct but co-exist on a continuum with each sector dependent on the other.

It can be argued that the category of the NEET disguises and obscures the enterprising activities of young people from poor areas. Funding and policy strategies, such as Jobseekers Allowance (GOV.UK 2014) and the National Apprenticeship Programme (Mirza-Davies 2014) presume that those who are deemed to be NEET are doing nothing at all. The reduction of youth unemployment levels constitutes a major challenge for governments across the globe and entrepreneurship may be a crucial way to increase employment and stimulate job creation (Schoof 2006). Entrepreneurs have a distinctive presence, what they do in general and who they are as individuals create images of an entrepreneurial identity (Anderson & Warren 2011). By foregrounding the entrepreneurial activities of participants in the urban music economy, I have shown that the existing definitions of who is an entrepreneur and what constitutes enterprise and entrepreneurship are key questions that require further examination. However, the processes by which these practitioners acquire the knowledge required for business planning, marketing and promotion as well as sales and financial skills require further research. Through the creation of business and self-employment, young people can navigate a course to economic

independence at a time when traditional labour markets are shrinking. It also has been suggested that creation of new small firms may increase competition and it is possible that young entrepreneurs may be more responsive to new opportunities and trends (Schoof 2006; Blanchflower & Oswald 1998). The businesses created by entrepreneurs in the urban music economy offer a template that others can follow. My research has shown that in particular economic sectors, young people from disadvantaged backgrounds have already become active, innovative entrepreneurs.

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APPENDICES

Questionnaire

1. Who are you (performing name, age)?
2. What do you do (MC, DJ (radio or other), promoter, producer, events, merchandise, other)?
3. How long have you been doing this (question 2) for? (How did you learn your craft?)
4. Where did you grow up? (How would you describe your area?)
5. What were your experiences of school (which school attended, when did you leave, (year), how old were you when you left, which qualifications did leave school with)?
6. What did you learn at school which is of use to you now?
7. What are your hopes for the future?

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM:
LEARNING CHOICES IN THE INFORMAL CREATIVE ECONOMY

This is a research project about the 'creative underground', which is a growing informal business sector. People in the creative underground make music, magazines, merchandise and events.

Focusing on 16 - 40 year olds in east London, I aim to:

- Find out about the education and qualifications of the people involved.
- Explore learning opportunities for those in the 'creative underground', and what choices they may have about education.
- Identify the skills, talents and energy of these young people, and see if they can get formal qualifications and start legitimate businesses.

If you would like to take part in the research, this will involve a short tape recorded interview and the completion of a short questionnaire.

Your answers will be used in the study without telling anyone your name. Only Ms. White and those present at the interview will know who you are and what you said. The audio recording of the interview will be kept secret.

You can ask any questions you like about the study, and discuss it with the researcher.

You can have anyone you wish in the room with you during the interview.

If you would like someone to leave, feel free to tell them.

You are free to stop participating at any time, and you do not have to give reasons for doing so.

Title of Research: **Learning choices in the informal creative economy**
Investigator's name: **Joy White**

To be completed by the **participant / parent / guardian**
 	
 (delete as necessary):
 	
 1.   Have you read the information sheet about this study?   YES/NO
 	
 2.   Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?   YES/NO
 	
 3.   Have you received satisfactory answers to all your questions?
 	
 4.   Who have you spoken to about this study?   YES/NO
 	
 5.   Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from this study: ………………
  •   at any time?   ….
  •   without giving a reason for withdrawing?
 	
 7.   Do you agree to take part in this study?
 	
 YES/NO
 	
 YES/NO
 	
 YES/NO

Signed   Date
Name in block letters
Signature of investigator   Date

This Project is Supervised by:

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APPENDIX 3 – Research Participants – Summary Data

Research Participants – Summary Data

Total number = 40

1. Age	
16 - 18	6
19 - 21	2
22 - 24	5
25 - 27	4
28 - 30	4
31 - 33	5
34 - 36	1
37 - 40	2
Not specified	11

2. Ethnicity	
West African	5
	Nigeria, Ghana
East African	1
	Uganda
Caribbean	19
English	7
Greek-Cypriot	1
Indian	1
Mixed-Parentage	1
	English/Nigerian
Not specified	5

3. Gender	
Male	30
Female	10*
	*five practitioners in the urban music economy and five holidaymakers in Ayia Napa

4. Geographical location (of the informant)	
London	Plaistow, Walthamstow, Hackney, Forest Gate, Manor Park, Tottenham, Custom House, Beckton, Chiswick, Redhill, New Cross
Outside of London	Manchester – Moss Side, Wolverhampton, Birmingham, Reading, Gloucester

5. Role	
	Radio DJ, Club DJ, Internet Radio DJ MC, Event Promoter, Model, Entrepreneur, Barber, Music Producer, Singer-Songwriter, DVD/Filmmaker (Video), Music Video Director, Make up Artist, Online TV Broadcaster, Holidaymaker

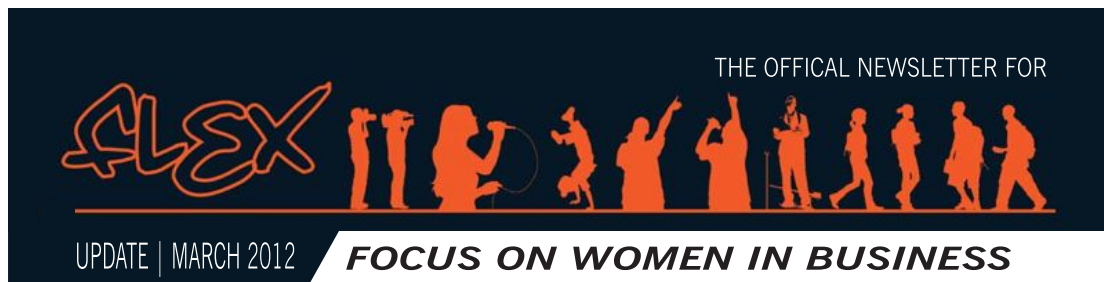| 6. Qualifications	
Masters Degree	1
Degree	4 – including informant with Masters Degree
A Levels	4 – including informants with Degree and Masters Degree
5 GCSE A*-C	5
Less than 5 GCSE A*-C	6
None	6
Not specified	14

7. Age left formal full time education	
Below 16	2
16	10
17	3
18	4
Over 18	4
Not specified	17

APPENDIX 4 – Coding for Interviews

LONDON			
1	ANDREW	MC	18
2	BRIAN	DJ	40
3	CHARLOTTE	MODEL	18
4	DIANE	MODEL AGENCY OWNER/MODEL	29
5	EDWARD*	MC	20
6	FRED	DJ/EVENT PROMOTER	40
7	GEORGE	PRODUCER	24
8	HELEN	SINGER	18
9	IAN	MC	22
10	JAMES	DJ/ONLINE RADIO	25
11	SAM	FILM DVD MAKER	22
12	ADAM	MC	18
13	BERNARD	MC	18
14	VICTOR*	DJ/TALENT SCOUT	33*
15	QUENTIN	VOCALIST	34*
16	COLIN	PRODUCER	23
17	DAVID	RECORDING ARTIST/BUSINESS OWNER	26
18	ERIC	DJ BBC RADIO	
19	FIONA	MUSIC VIDEO DIRECTOR/FILM MAKER	24
20	GILLIAN	MAKE UP ARTIST /STYLIST	27
21	HARVEY	RECORDING ARTIST/BUSINESS OWNER	
22	JOHN	RECORDING ARTIST/MC	
23	STEVEN	MANAGING DIRECTOR ONLINE TV STATION	25
AYIA NAPA			
24	KEVIN	DJ/MC/EVENT PROMOTER	30
25	LIONEL	ENTREPRENEUR	32
26	MICHAEL	DJ	28
	QUENTIN*	MC/VOCALIST	32
27	PETER	DJ	34
28	OLIVER	MC/PRODUCER	30
29	RICHARD	MC	18
30	WILLIAM	PRODUCER	19
	VICTOR	DJ/TALENT SCOUT	31
31	NEVILLE	EVENT PROMOTER	31
32	XAVIER	EVENT PROMOTER	29
33	TYRONE	MC	
34	ARNOLD	MC/VOCALIST	
HOLIDAYMAKERS – AYIA NAPA			
35	NATALIE		
36	GEORGIA		
37	GIRL 1		
38	GIRL 2		
39	GIRL 3		
40	TOM		

FLEX

THE OFFICAL NEWSLETTER FOR

UPDATE | MARCH 2012

FOCUS ON WOMEN IN BUSINESS

Flex UK is an innovative portal for young people. On 8th March, the world celebrates International Women's Day. In this special issue of our newsletter, we feature four young women from ordinary backgrounds who are making great strides in the business world.

Ande Dilema Owner - Dilema Agency

In 2007, we interviewed Ande for engage magazine, back then this is what she said…

"...**Dilema models** have worked on commercials, video shoots, promotional material and corporate events.

As well as managing the **20 or so models on her books,** Ande also organises events and carries out promotion for urban UK artists.

"I always knew I didn't want to work for anyone else, I tried various jobs, but I was sure that being an employee wasn't for me. It wasn't easy starting out at 23 years old but I knew what I wanted to do and I just had to go for it."

Before starting out, Ande made sure that she acquired as much **knowledge and information** about this particular business arena. Initially helped and supported by Dice Recordings, Ande gained the necessary expertise and established and developed beneficial networks and relationships.

To those starting out now, Ande advises: *"Start small, be prepared to do everything yourself and build a loyal team around you. Go on training courses, especially in the areas that you know you are weak in. Get everything in writing."*

Her plans for the next five years, include taking on additional staff, **raising awareness of the dilema brand in the UK and Europe and to make the most of the opportunities that 2012 will bring.**

The modelling world seems glamorous, but behind the scenes, an inordinate amount of hard graft is required to make it happen. Ande is a down to earth, hardworking and committed young woman, who has built a sustainable business from her own efforts. All things being equal there should be a huge dilema in 2012.

Well here we are in 2012, and it's true Dilema has indeed gone from strength to strength, operating on a UK wide and international scale. Back in 2007, the artists that Ande promoted included Kano and Tinchy Stryder, but she since realigned her business strategy and focused her agency on fashion.

Committed as always to responsible business practices, Ande is not only spearheading a campaign for more curves on the catwalk, she has also used her model agency to raise thousands of pounds for the Children in Need. **In addition,** Ande has now extended her love of music to develop a career as a DJ, playing in Mayfair's finest clubs such as Embassy, Funky Buddha and 20 Kensington. Her meteoric rise has led to being featured as a **'DJ to Watch"** in *Flawless Magazine www.flawlessmag.co.uk*

"On a personal level I have gained more international bookings such as in Amsterdam, Spain, Ibiza and Cyprus. One of the high points of my DJ career was hosting my own beach party on Bora Bora Beach in Ibiza. For the future, I will compile the monthly House chart for Flawless Mag starting with their March issue and I am also going on tour with Flawless Mag alongside Tara McDonald, Christina Novelli, Shapeshifters plus many more. One of my goals is to be featured as one of DJ Mag's top 100, as no female DJs are ever listed!"

CONTACT
www.dilema-agency.com
models@dilema-agency.com
twitter @dilemaagency

photo: Gavin Thorn & designer: Obscure Couture

▶ **www.flexuk.org**

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR

flex

UPDATE | APRIL 2012

RISING STARS

THESE ARE CHALLENGING TIMES FOR **YOUNG PEOPLE**. THE UK IS EXPERIENCING THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE NEET (NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING). INDEED, AT THE TIME OF WRITING THE NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE UNEMPLOYED RECENTLY **EXCEEDED ONE MILLION**. THROUGHOUT EUROPE, THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN MEANS THAT THIS SITUATION IS REPEATED IN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING SPAIN, GREECE AND ITALY.

A key tenet of our project at *Flex UK – an innovative portal for 14 – 25 year olds –* is to showcase and highlight the positive achievements of young people in the UK. We aim to inspire, educate and inform.

LIL NARST

SLICK DON

CRIMINAL

DURRTY GOODZ

This month, Joy White spoke to four young men who have made their mark in the music industry; LIL NARST, GRIMINAL, SLICK DON AND DURRTY GOODZ to discover more about them in their own words and elicit the advice that they would give to our Flex members.

Comment: *"Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."* Thomas A. Edison
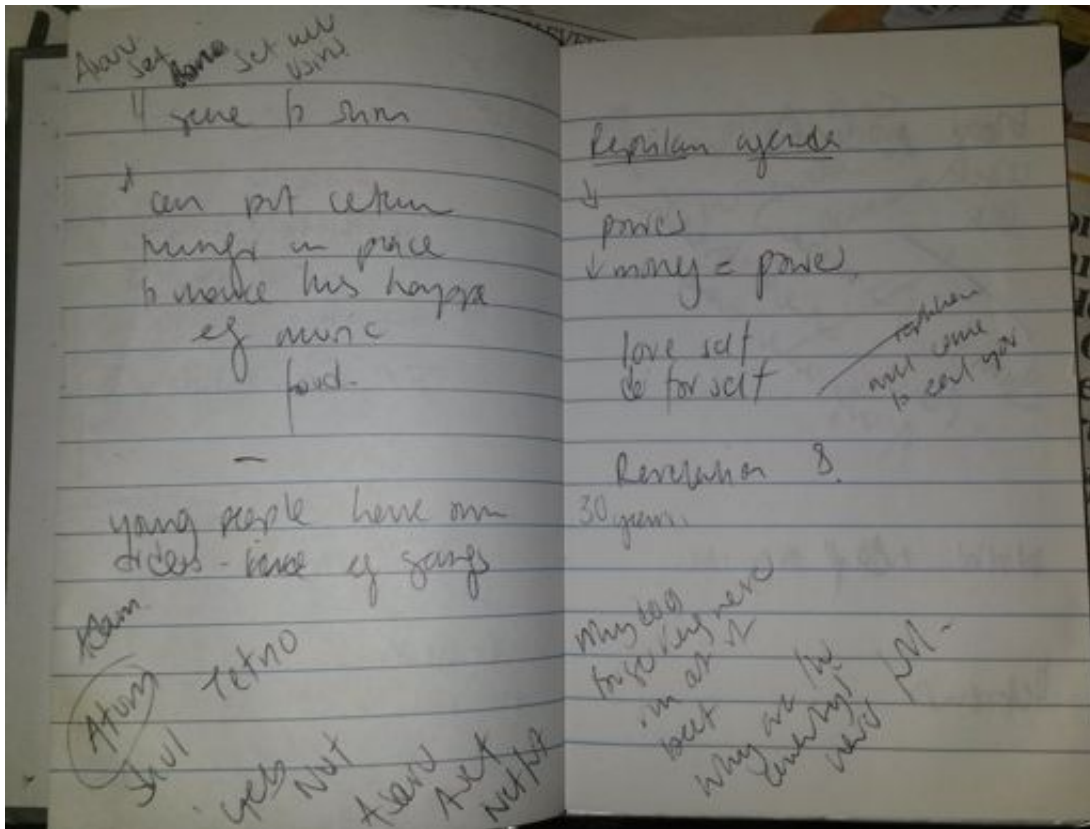
At Flex UK, we encourage our members to make the most of every opportunity. Our influence is growing steadily and we continue to use our resources to promote the positive activities of young people throughout the UK

Share your achievements, aspirations and successes with us. We would love to hear from you.

▶ **www.flexuk.org**

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APPENDIX 8 – Business connections in the urban music economy

During the five years that it took to carry out the primary research for this project, I interviewed thirty-four participants in the urban music economy. All of them have a links with businesses in both the formal and informal economy. This connection is as business owners, customers, or performers. In order to preserve the anonymity of my informants, I have not specified who has come into contact with which business.

On line TV Channels (will also film and broadcast videos)	
Link Up TV *linkuptv*.co.uk	Mini Kings *minikingz*.co.uk
SBTV *sbtv*.co.uk	
Indevisuals www.*indevisuals*media.co.uk	Westwood TV www.tim*westwood*.com
UK Record Shop www.ukrecordshop.com	The Grime Report *thegrimereport*
GRM Daily (formerly Grime Daily) grm*daily*.com	
TV Channels	
Channel AKA Channel 385 Sky Digital	Channel 4 www.*channel4*.com
Flava Channel 374 Sky Digital	
Radio	
1XTRA www.bbc.co.uk/*1xtra*	Kiss FM www.*kissfm*uk.com
Choice FM www.capitalxtra.com	Rinse FM *rinse*.fm
Magazines	
RWD Mag *rwdmag*.com	Live Mag www.live-magazine.co.uk
Fact Magazine www.factmag.com	
Music Management	
No Hats No Hoods *nohatsnohoods*.com	M Kaddy Music Spread *m-kaddymusic*.blogspot.com
Video Production	

Deadcloud *www.**deadcloud**.com*	Lord of the Mics (LOTM) ***lordofthemics***.co.uk*
Clothing and Merchandise	
No Hats No Hoods ***nohatsnohoods***.com/***shop**/*	Nasty By Nature (NBN) *www.**nastybynature**.co.uk*
Dench *www.stay**dench**.com*	