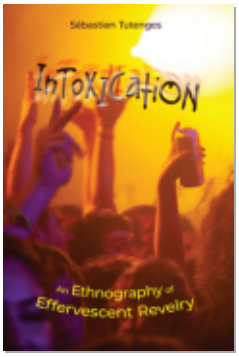
Notes



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NOTES

CHAPTER 1 — INTRODUCTION

1. The term *narrative* is central in this book. I use it interchangeably with that of *story* to describe a form of communication that organizes events or experiences into a sequenced, meaning-making whole. In the words of cultural sociologist Philip Smith, "We can understand narratives as the stories we construct and exchange in the effort to make sense of the world . . . They display actions arrayed in chronological time and allow us to answer the journalist's questions: Who? What? When? Where? And How?" (2005, 18). Sociologist Lois Presser adds that narratives produce emotions and drive action in a more forceful manner than other discursive forms, such as chronicles, expositions, and reports: "They do more than guide and condone action. Stories beguile and engross us" (2018, 134).

2. Aspects of Durkheim's work are outdated. For example, he almost exclusively writes about men, and what little he writes about women tends to be both reifying and disparaging (Lehman 1994). Also, his idea that societies move through stages from the "primitive" and "simple" (e.g., Aborigine society) to the civilized and advanced (e.g., Western societies) is highly problematic (Jackson 2016, 9).

3. For a discussion of "sexually violent effervescence," see Tutenges, Sandberg, and Pedersen (2020).

4. It was sociologist Lea Trier Krøll who first made me aware of the existence and importance of melodramatic effervescence in nightlife settings.

5. The concepts of "emotional energy" and "collective effervescence" are sometimes confused, but they are not the same in the work of Collins. He explains, "I distinguish the collective effervescence of the situation itself from the EE that individuals feel in the aftermath of the situation. The former is a collective emotion, the excitement and energetic coordination of participants in their interaction; the latter is an individual emotion, felt by the individual as they are physically away from the social situation. The two emotions are related; as Durkheim said, the individual acquires a portion of the energy of the group, which can be carried for a time away from the group" (Baehr and Collins 2005, 9).

6. Durkheim's work is often associated with positivism, functionalism, and structuralism. However, *The Elementary Forms* also has affinities with phenomenology, particularly in its meticulous examination of religious experience and its insistence on setting aside "all preconceived ideas" and "commonsense notions" in order to understand "things as they are" (1995, 21, 22). It would be going too far to call the late Durkheim a phenomenologist, but *The Elementary Forms* contains powerful methods and concepts that can be used for studying the phenomenology of intoxication—that is, the actual here and now of intoxicating

experiences as these register in people's bodies and minds. For further phenomenological readings of Durkheim, see, for example, Tiryakian (1978) and Throop and Laughlin (2002).

7. For a more detailed study of the operations of nightlife venues, see Tutenges and Bøhling (2019).

8. As mentioned in the acknowledgments, my research has benefitted from the help of assistants, notably during fieldwork in Sunny Beach, Copenhagen, Aalborg, Nykøbing Falster, and Sønderborg. All assistants had either a BA or MA in social science studies, and prior to fieldwork, they received training in relevant methods, ethical guidelines, and safety procedures. Their job mainly consisted of collecting questionnaires, but some were also involved in other tasks, such as making observations, coding data, and coauthoring articles. The assistants thus did much more than generate data; they offered new perspectives and insights I would never have been able to come up with on my own. For example, observations made by Sanna Schliewe and Hallie Barrows illuminated some of the challenges that women confront in nightlife environments. Their input—combined with commentaries by peers (e.g., Radcliffe and Measham 2014; Bogren 2014; Fleetwood 2014b)—has pushed me to explore the themes of sexual objectification, sex work, and sexual violence in this book and elsewhere (Hesse and Tutenges 2011; Tutenges 2012; Tutenges, Sandberg, and Pedersen 2020).

9. For more information on the Ringsted Project, see Balvig, Holmberg, and Sørensen (2005).

10. Throughout the book, I refer to research participants with pseudonyms instead of their real names, and I have masked revealing personal details. I have done so in order to protect the participants' anonymity, which is important given the sensitive nature of what I am studying. Almost all the interviews were conducted in Danish. Everyone who took part in them was given detailed information about the research, and each gave their consent to be involved. It was not feasible to obtain informed consent from all the people who were observed. Some of the observed events had thousands of participants, and it would have been both impractical and intrusive to interrupt them in their revelry in order to inform them about my research. In such situations, we should not "mess with the vibe" of the ongoing party (García 2013, 9) but rather openly talk about the research with those who care to listen and make sure that everyone remains anonymous in all published material. For a more detailed discussion of my research methods, see Tutenges (2022).

CHAPTER 2 — WAYS TO EFFERVESCENCE

1. For a Danish-language analysis of the Ringsted Town Festival, see Tutenges (2004).

2. Anthropologist Alfred Gell (1980) writes in a study of the Muria people in central India that the cultivation of vertigo is key to their intoxicating practices. He writes that Muria socialization and childhood games "emphasise violent rocking, swinging, jiggling up and down, and balancing to a marked degree," testifying to a "profound cultural preoccupation with dizziness, which pervades subsequent religious experience" (1980, 239). Indeed, there are many ways to achieve and experience collective effervescence.

3. See Tutenges (2015) for a longer crowd theoretical analysis of pub crawls.

4. I generally write field notes in two stages. First, I scribble down a few words on paper while I am making observations. Then later, I turn the words into complete sentences while working on my laptop. The notes include descriptions of what I have observed, my emotional reactions in the field, tentative interpretations, and much more. All field notes and interview excerpts in this book have been translated from Danish into English.

5. Following Durkheim, collective representations may be understood as shared interpretative frameworks that influence the ways people make sense of and act in the world. Collective representations—including culturally recognized signs, symbols, beliefs, and

narratives—are charged with emotions and move people to behave in a socially appropriate manner (Schliewe and Tutenges 2021). It is typically, but not always, during moments of effervescence that representations become emotionally charged, as will be discussed in chapter 6.

6. The messages are quoted in an article by Josiam and colleagues (1998, 502).

7. Early crowd theorists also argued that the emotional outbursts during celebrations, riots, and other gatherings should not be understood merely as sudden spontaneous manifestations among unstable individuals who happen to be in the same place. As Le Bon points out, it may appear at first sight that mass excitement erupts with "startling suddenness," but this "is only a superficial effect, behind which must be sought a preliminary and preparatory action of long duration" (2001, 47). He mentions the example of the French Revolution, which was fueled by "the writings of the philosophers, the exactions of the nobility, and the progress of scientific thought. The mind of the masses, thus prepared, was then easily roused by such immediate factors as the speeches of orators" (2001, 47). Narrative scholars have since elaborated on this with a special focus on the unique capacity of narratives to arouse emotions, change public opinion, and inspire courses of action—including collective acts of violence (Presser 2018).

8. During the COVID-19 "lockdown," many people turned to livestreamed rituals, such as concerts, for entertainment, comfort, and hope. However, many of these rituals left participants frustrated and longing for physical proximity. For example, Femke Vandenberg and colleagues observe in a study of livestreamed raves that participants found it difficult to immerse themselves fully in the experience due to the absence of "visceral elements of a physical audience" (2020, 1). They conclude that these online raves succeeded in reminding participants of past effervescent experiences on the dance floor but seemed to fail in providing new experiences of effervescence.

CHAPTER 3 — UNITY

1. Many revelers have the impression that alcohol in large doses causes disinhibition, as if by some universal biochemical law. Hence the standard excuse for nightlife transgressions, "I was drunk," suggesting that what happened was exceptional and unrelated to the transgressor's true moral character. However, heavy drinking can lead to all sorts of behavior, depending on the cultural context. As anthropologists Craig MacAndrew and Robert B. Edgerton point out, "The presence of alcohol in the body does not necessarily conduce to disinhibition . . . drunken comportment is an essentially learned affair" (1969, 87–88). In other words, when drunken revelers permit themselves to act with disinhibition, they draw on an available cultural "script" for how to behave when drunk. For a comprehensive discussion of drunken disinhibition, see Fjær (2021).

2. Maffesoli has, with good reason, been criticized for focusing too narrowly on the positive aspects of effervescent assemblies. For example, Shilling and Mellor write that "Maffesoli overlooks the fact that sensual associations may not involve a 'keeping warm together', but may result in 'getting *burnt* together' and an enjoyment of '*burning others* together'" (1998, 203). A similar critique has been leveled against Durkheim (e.g., Graham 2007), although Durkheim repeatedly warns that the condition of collective effervescence is volatile and that it might harm oneself or others (see, e.g., Durkheim 1995, 213).

3. It is well known that heavy drinking may cause sexual impotence, including among young people. This constitutes an important "drinking dilemma" (Thurnell-Read 2016). On the one hand, alcohol may serve as a *social lubricant* that helps people become more bold, self-confident, outgoing, and sexually adventurous (Vander Ven 2011, 51–52). On the other hand, alcohol in large doses may function as a *social saboteur* that disrupts, thwarts, or otherwise impedes all attempts at interaction. Some male revelers try to solve this dilemma

by self-medicating with Viagra, which is a drug reputed to increase the blood flow to the male sexual organ. However, Viagra does not help much against the crushing fatigue that often strikes the overly drunken person who shifts from the effervescent atmosphere of a drinking venue to the tranquil atmosphere of a bedroom.

4. Stephen Lyng confirms that voluntary risk taking, or what he calls "edgework," is "more common among young people than older people and among males than among females" (1990, 872). He explains this gender difference in the following terms: "Males are more likely than females to have an illusory sense of control over fateful endeavors because of the socialization pressures on males to develop a skill orientation toward their environment. Insofar as males are encouraged to use their skills to affect the outcome of all situations, even those that are almost entirely chance determined, they are likely to develop a distorted sense of their ability to control fateful circumstances" (1990, 872–873). For a discussion of the cultural construction of gender identities, see Connell (2020) and Fleetwood (2014a).

5. Research that I and others have conducted in Norway suggests that the majority of sexual assaults that occur among youth in the context of nightlife constitute a dark form of effervescence, or what may be termed *sexually violent effervescence*, because they emerge out of emotionally turbulent interactions—which, on the victim's side, involve a sense of being caught up in a destructive flow of events that robs them of agency and leaves them harmed and confused (Tutenges, Sandberg, and Pedersen 2020; Stefansen, Frøyland, and Overlien 2020). After the assault, many victims find it difficult to recall it fully and describe what they have been through. Moreover, many are unsure whether the assault constituted a crime, whether they were responsible for it, and whether it is a problem worth mentioning. This confusion partly explains why so many victims of sexual violence refrain from reporting the crime to the police.

CHAPTER 4 — INTENSITY

1. O'Grady cautions that the nightlife ethnographer is faced with the problem of "researching a phenomenon where intrusion is not only inconvenient and impractical but effectively collapses and destroys the very object of attention" (2013, 18). She recommends that nightlife ethnographers accept the inherent messiness of revelry and that they embrace "the sense of embodied immersion" that is required of revelers (2013, 26). In so doing, the ethnographer may gain an embodied understanding of the revelry without destroying it (see also Kershaw and Nicholson 2011). This is certainly good advice, but it is hard to follow.

2. See the work of sociologist Ashley Mears (2020) for an exploration of conspicuous consumption and extreme gender inequality on the global VIP party circuit, which is frequented by superrich revelers and those who aspire to such "heights."

CHAPTER 5 — TRANSGRESSION

1. A key figure in cultural criminology, Keith Hayward, explains that "cultural criminology is a particular form of criminological theory that sets out to reinterpret criminal behaviour as a technique for resolving certain psychic conflicts—conflicts that in many instances are indelibly linked to various features of contemporary life. One might say that it represents a phenomenology of transgression fused with a sociological analysis of late modern culture. That said, cultural criminology should not be thought of as in any way oppositional to the more mainstream criminological enterprise. Rather it should be seen as a means of reinvigorating the study of crime" (2002, 91). This version of cultural criminology, with its emphasis on examining transgressions in cultural context, meshes well with the neo-Durkheimian

framework I am advancing in this book. However, up until now, the concept of collective effervescence has been strangely absent in the cultural criminological literature. For notable exceptions, see Dimou and Ilan (2018) as well as Binik (2020).

2. Different types of venues specialize in different types of effervescence. For example, many Goa trance festivals are packed with art featuring bright colors, swirling patterns, and mystic religious symbols. This art is part of the Goa trance machinery, which is meant to evoke and enhance psychedelic effervescence with its powerful transgressive sensations, visions, and ideas. The emphases are different in mainstream nightlife venues, where the focus tends to be on the promotion of drunken effervescence and the more conventional transgressions that accompany it, such as boisterousness, wastefulness, vulgarity, and extraversion.

3. Atrocious crimes sometimes also appear to be inspired and facilitated by role-playing. For example, there are numerous cases of school shootings where the perpetrators wore culturally recognizable costumes (e.g., a Darth Vader mask) during their crimes. I suspect that some of these perpetrators took on not just a costume but a different persona in order to make it easier for themselves to kill. As Collins demonstrates, "Violence is difficult, not easy" (2008, 449); but perhaps it can be made less difficult when done from behind a mask, a cloak, or from within a role. However, the link between crime and role-playing deserves more attention than what I am able to offer in this book.

4. Lyng's writings on edgework are key inspirations in cultural criminology. However, whereas Lyng mainly focuses on extreme sports, cultural criminologists tend to focus on criminal transgressions. Cultural criminologists have argued that many types of crime including vandalism, fighting, joyriding, graffiti writing, and drug use may be understood as edgework activities aimed not so much at moneymaking but more at merrymaking, expressivity, and exerting control over the uncontrollable. Accordingly, Mark Fenwick and Keith Hayward write that many crimes, although dangerous, "offer a mode of being in which individuals take control through a calculated act of decontrol. The seductiveness of crime is not only linked to the inherent excitement of the acts involved, but also to the more general feelings of self-realization and self-expression to which they give rise. It might be an unpalatable thought, but it is through such activities that individuals come alive" (2000, 49).

5. Roger Caillois observes that role-playing can be gratifying but warns that it may become corrupted if the role-players start believing that the roles they are playing are real or if their role-playing involves the use of alcohol or other drugs (2001, 49, 51). I partly agree with this. Substances that sometimes enable and ameliorate role-play experiences may also lead to harmful transgressions. Too many substances—and especially the continuous use of them—may, in the words of Caillois, lead to mere "stupidity," "organic disorder," and the deprivation "of the freedom to desire anything but [. . .] poison" (2001, 53). See also Milthorpe and Murphy (2019).

6. Details of the tattoo have been altered for anonymity.

CHAPTER 6 — SYMBOLIZATION

1. Christian von Scheve (2012) points out that modern psychological and neuroscientific research confirms Durkheim's proposition that symbols that are emotionally charged during effervescent events may keep their functions for a group after the event has ended. He explains that contact with emotionally "hot" symbols can activate emotional memories and specific, emotionally laden meaning, which relates to past experiences of effervescence. Something similar may happen to narratives. If an effervescent group focuses on the same narrative and imbues it with emotions (e.g., during a speech), the narrative becomes more compelling and committing for a period of time beyond the actual effervescent event.

2. Criminologists Heith Copes and Andy Hochstetler observe that it is common for criminal offenders to encourage each other verbally before perpetrating a crime. They describe

this as a process of "bucking up heads," which may involve sharing stories and statements about personal bravery, past criminal successes, and the ease of avoiding detection or arrest. Copes and Hochstetler explain that this kind of talk before the act creates "such an optimistic tone that hesitation by those who have claimed to be criminally capable is laughable" (2003, 291). Engrossing talk can thus fill a group with the motivation and emotional energy needed to carry out risky operations.

3. Presser and Sandberg define narrative criminology as "any inquiry based on the view of stories as instigating, sustaining, or effecting desistance from harmful action. We study how narratives inspire and motivate harmful action, and how they are used to make sense of harm" (2015, 1). This emerging tradition has clear affinities with cultural sociology in that both are concerned with processes of meaning making and the way narratives "allocate causal responsibility for action, define actors and give them motivation, indicate the trajectory of past episodes and predict consequences of future choices, suggest courses of action, confer and withdraw legitimacy, and provide social approval by aligning events with normative cultural codes" (Smith 2005, 18; see also Presser 2016). Narrative criminology also overlaps with cultural criminology, although the former has a "methodological commitment to studying discourse" (Presser and Sandberg 2015, 13), while the latter is committed to exploring "the visceral immediacy and experiential thrill of crime and transgression" (Aspden and Hayward 2015, 239).

4. There is mixed evidence for the effectiveness of information, education, and warning campaigns. Providing information and education about alcohol, for example, does not lead to sustained behavioral changes (Burton et al. 2017). However, when it comes to cigarettes, pictorial health warnings on cigarette packaging seem to reduce smoking (Thrasher et al. 2011).

5. Stories read in solitude can generate very strong reactions in readers. These reactions may resemble the condition of effervescence, but full-blown effervescence requires the energy rush of being copresent with other people and partaking in mutually attuned synchronized interactions, such as those of an engrossing storytelling session.

CHAPTER 7 — REVITALIZATION

1. Cultural psychologists Brady Wagoner and Ignacio Brescó observe that funerals and other "grief rituals" are experienced "not only as an individual's emotional reaction to loss but also publicly, in the first-person plural—that is, *we* grieve for the loss of *our* group's members. This is particularly apparent in today's world after terrorist attacks, school shootings and the death of national figures. After such events, national days of mourning are often declared and people feel the need to meet in public spaces and express themselves with other members of the community" (2021). Grief rituals can serve to strengthen in-group solidarity, trigger collective memories, and resurrect shared symbols.