



Spring 2015

# Rave Culture: Hugs, Drugs, or Both?

A study of modern rave subculture



Ari Abramson  
TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

## Abstract

In this research paper, the subculture of raves was explored and investigated throughout a variety of research including books, documentaries, and surveys. The paper aimed to glue together the voices of ravers across the globe and to find common ground among raver ideologies with specific regards to drug usage. It also explores the changes the subculture has undergone since the founding of the subculture in the late 1980's through its immersion into societal mainstream this past decade.

Key terms: subculture, deviance, local/translocal scene, gender, self-expression, community, commodification, social class, identity, social construct, race, fragmentation, subcultural capital, hierarchy, authenticity, ideology

## Introduction

I have always been fascinated by a raver's style, traditions, and the complexity of music they listen to. I have been to a few raves in my lifetime, and each and every time proved to be a unique experience that I craved more of. Even though I had never truly immersed myself in the culture, I felt as if I belonged in the community. At each of the raves I went to, I noticed there were a lot of drugs, specifically a lot of a particular drug called "Molly," more commonly referred to as ecstasy. I was left wondering how the drug culture within the raver community influences raves themselves, and what role drugs play in the big picture of raves. I was also interested in the exotic culture the rave community has adopted, which include wearing the craziest and most colorful outfit possible, derived from the value of self-expression.

My curiosity lead me to conduct research on the subculture of raves. In his book *Goths, Gamers, and Grrrls: Deviance in Youth Subcultures*, Haenfler defines a subculture as "A relatively diffuse social network having a shared identity, distinctive meanings around certain ideas, practices, and objects, and a sense of marginalization from or resistance to a perceived "conventional" society" (Page 5). I saw rave subculture as a good subject for research because it shares similar ideologies to other subcultures that I've read about, but at the same time it's very different. Raves are all about acceptance, which is most commonly referred to within the subculture as "PLUR": Peace, Love, Unity, and Respect: the raver's motto. Most other subcultures are exclusive, and only cater to a specific demographic, exclusive most commonly by social class and race. However, ravers are completely inclusive and welcome anybody into their community who is willing to take on the identity of "PLUR." Additionally, raves are a subculture that can be found across the globe. Unlike most other subcultures who have primarily local roots, any major city across the world will have a similar rave subculture. There is a large

translocal scene, a raver from one country will be able to easily identify and enjoy a rave in another country.

I did research primarily to find answers to two overarching questions: the first question being “Do youth cultures change mainstream culture, or do they get absorbed into mainstream culture and disappear overtime?”, and the second being “How have music festivals such as Electric Zoo and the inclusion of EDM music in commercials affected the rave subculture, and are drugs such as ecstasy the driving force for people to attend raves in the 21st century?” This study is important because no previous research studied how the commodification of raves has affected the subculture. Drug usage is touched upon in most research done on raves and rave subculture, but no other study clearly defines the driving force for people to attend raves. In a society where large corporations are attempting to normalize deviant groups by turning “tomorrow’s cool styles” into revenue, it’s important to conduct studies like this to track the long-term effects of money-driven authorities on the next generation’s youth and their communities.

## History & Origins

The basis behind modern day DJing and electric dance music (EDM) comes from the first generations of raves, stemming back to a basement in Chicago in the mid-to-late 1980's. The rave subculture has gone through a generation of influence and changes, along the way spreading out to become an international scene. Despite all of the changes the rave subculture has undergone this past generation, the values and reasons for raving remain the same.

Rave subculture began as an underground movement. A group of like-minded people would get together in a basement and dance to all types of electric music. The DJs used a Roland TB-303 bass line, a bass synthesizer with a built-in sequencer to sculpt their tunes. This contributed to what made up the acid house scene, where "acid tracks" were produced on the TB-303, and everybody took acid and danced the night away. DJ Pierre, one of the founding DJs of the acid house scene, says "The machine already had that crazy acid sound in it that you were supposed to erase and put your own in... but we liked it..." (as cited in Reynolds, 2012). These underground acid house parties allowed people to break away from their mainstream lives completely for a night, where they were able to focus on only positive vibrations.

In her online article *History of the Rave Scene: How DJs Built Modern Dance Music*, Simms writes that by 1988, the Chicago house music scene was on a decline due to authorities cracking down. The police banned after-hours parties and withheld late-night licenses from clubs. The sale of house records slowed, and dwindled down to 1500 copies in a fiscal year, a tenth of the sales at Chicago's peak. Many of the DJs behind the underground acid parties decided to move to Europe where there was more financial opportunity in the industry. This led to a massive cultural impact in Europe, specifically within London and Ibiza. Clubs in Britain

started to play acid house music, and stayed open late into the night. Partygoers would spill out into the streets once the nights ended at around 3 AM, which attracted police attention. This activity encouraged UK's strong anti-club laws, which made it difficult for promoters to put on events in clubs. These laws encouraged promoters to hold bigger events in venues ranging from outdoor spaces to abandoned warehouses. As THUMP describe in their documentary *Blackout: Sex, Hugs, & EDM!!!*, "For this music to survive, or to continue growing, it has to go beyond night clubs and being played from midnight until 6 AM. That's the core, but it has to be more than that" (Oskowitz, 2013).

With the spread of rave culture came the spread of a drug known as "ecstasy". *The Oxford Dictionary* defines ecstasy as 'an overwhelming feeling of joy or rapture,' and 'an emotional or religious frenzy or trance-like state'. Ecstasy took on the form of a psychedelic amphetamine called "MDMA," whose effects range from the definitions above, to unique feelings of empathy and insight. Reynolds (2012) claims Ecstasy had been available in London since the early 80's, but it was hard to get your hands on. He says you had to know somebody who brought it back from America, where it was legal until 1985. In his book *Energy Flash: A Journey Through Rave Music and Dance Culture*, Simon Reynolds writes, "Thanks to Ecstasy, all the class and race and sex preference barriers were getting fluxed up; all sorts of people who might never have exchanged words or glances were being swirled together in a promiscuous chaos" (p. 44).

Around 1990, big name DJs started moving to New Jersey and Manhattan, sparking the creation of a rave scene in New York, says Simms (2013). In addition to big name DJs, smaller promotional groups sprung up in New York and around the United States, creating a surge in popularity in rave culture. One of the most prominent rave promotion crews at the time was the

“Global Underworld Network,” who organized the NARNIA festival, which attracted over 60,000 attendees. According to Simms, “Narnia became known as the “Woodstock of Generation X”” (*History of the Rave Scene: How DJs Built Modern Dance Music*, 2013). The Rave culture quickly spread to the San Francisco Bay Area and surrounding areas in California. Between 1991 and 1995, rave culture spread out across major cities across the globe.

According to *Rolling Stone Raver* blogger “Emilie” (2011), at an underground rave in New York in 1991, techno and house music DJ Frankie Bones coined the term ‘P.L.U – Peace, Love, and Unity’ in response to a fight that was happening while he was mixing. Frankie Bones stopped the show and said “if you don’t start showing some peace, love, and unity, I’ll break your f&\*^%#@#g faces.” When his heroic moment was discussed later on by a newsgroup called alt.rave, it was decided by the community to add “Respect” to Peace, Love, and Unity: creating the now ubiquitous acronym P.L.U.R. Frankie Bones is considered by many ravers to be highly influential, and the founding father of modern-day raves. Today, and since its founding in the 80’s, the rave subculture encourages inclusiveness, and accepts anybody who is willing to embrace its values: peace, love, unity, and respect.

## Methodology/Findings

A majority of my fieldwork was done through surveying. The survey I asked participants to fill out looked as follows:

**Age\***

**How do you identify yourself\*?** (i.e. Male, Female)

**Approximately what year did you start going to raves?\***

**Why did you go to your first rave, and what kept you coming back for more?**

**If you stopped going to raves, or started going to less than you previously did, why is that?**

**Do you chose to take a drug/drug at raves?** (Options: Yes, No, Sometimes, I used to but not anymore)

**If any, which drug/s?**

**Why do you take that drug during raves/why don't you take drugs at raves/how come you no longer take drugs at raves?**

**Do you feel that drugs play an important part in the Rave culture, and why?**

**What is your opinion on large festivals, such as Electric Zoo and Ultra, compared to smaller/underground venues?**

**Is there anything else you would like to share about your rave experiences?**

\* Indicates required question

I posted this survey on Reddit to a community called /r/aves, which has hundreds of daily users.

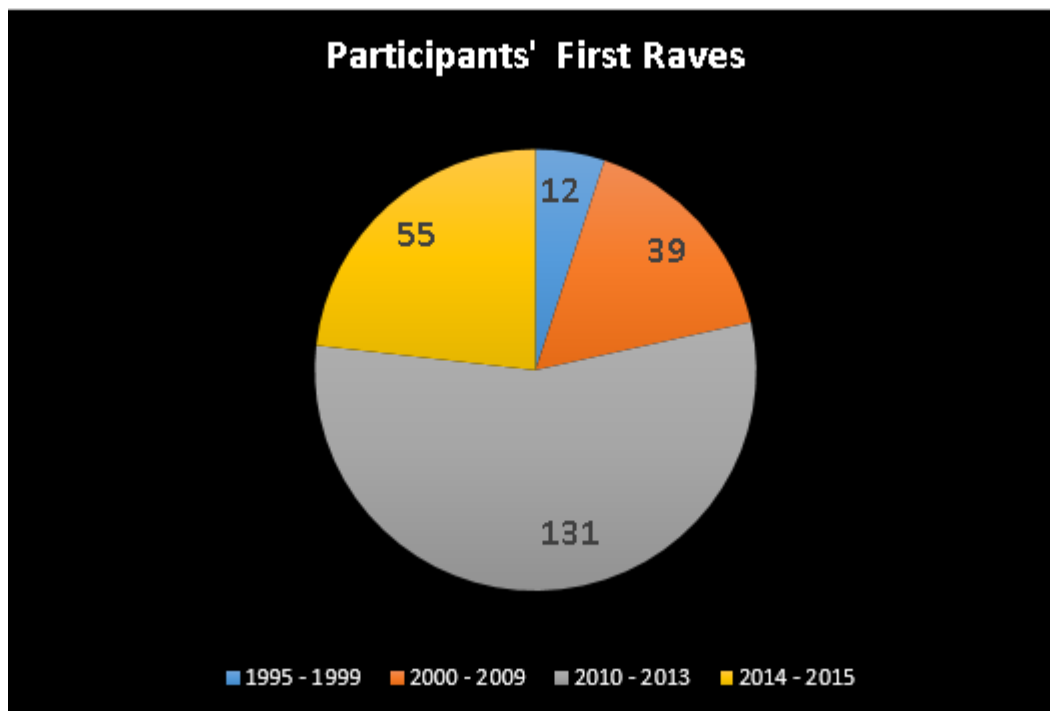
Because I chose to conduct my research through Reddit, I predicted that I would have more responses from users who identify themselves as Male than those who identify as Female, simply because published Reddit demographics have stated that there are over two times the amount of men than there are women who regularly use Reddit. I was also skeptical of how many 'troll' responses I would get.



Because Reddit is an anonymous social media platform, and users would otherwise be hesitant to talk about their personal drug usage, I did not ask users to identify themselves. I made it clear in both the Reddit thread and on the survey that participants' responses are completely anonymous and secure.

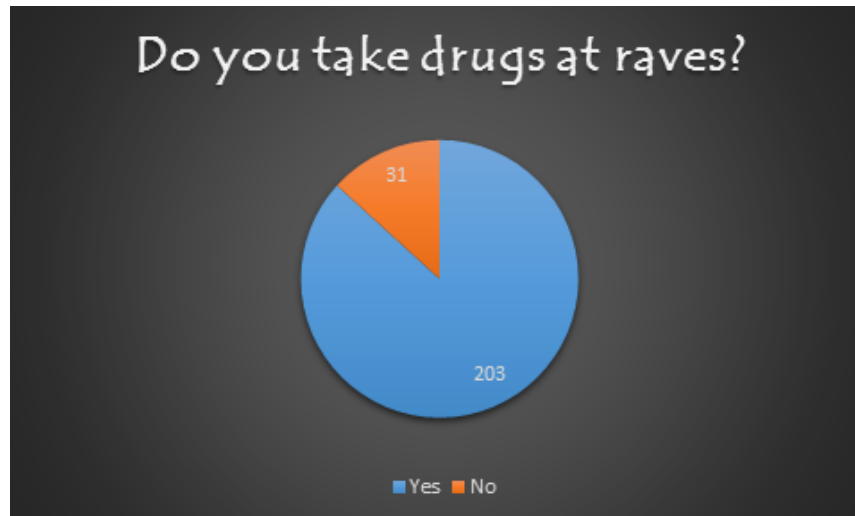
I received an incredible amount of love, support, and feedback from the community. Within three days of posting my survey to /r/aves, I received 237 total responses (after sifting through duplicates and mistakes), which is more than I could have possibly imagined. The best part is none of my responses were troll answers, they were all of high quality from people who were legitimately interested in helping me conduct research. The community loved the work I was doing and even requested that I share my findings with them when I finished my project.

Of the 237 responses I received, similar to what I predicted, 61 of the participants are female, and 176 of whom are male. The youngest person to respond to the survey is 15, and the oldest is 40. The median age is 22, the age mode (repeated most often) is 20, and the average age is 22.7. The majority of participants' ages range from 18 to 25. The earliest a participant first attended a rave was 1995, and the most recently a participant first attended a rave was in 2015. The following graph shows the year range in which the survey participants attended in their first rave.

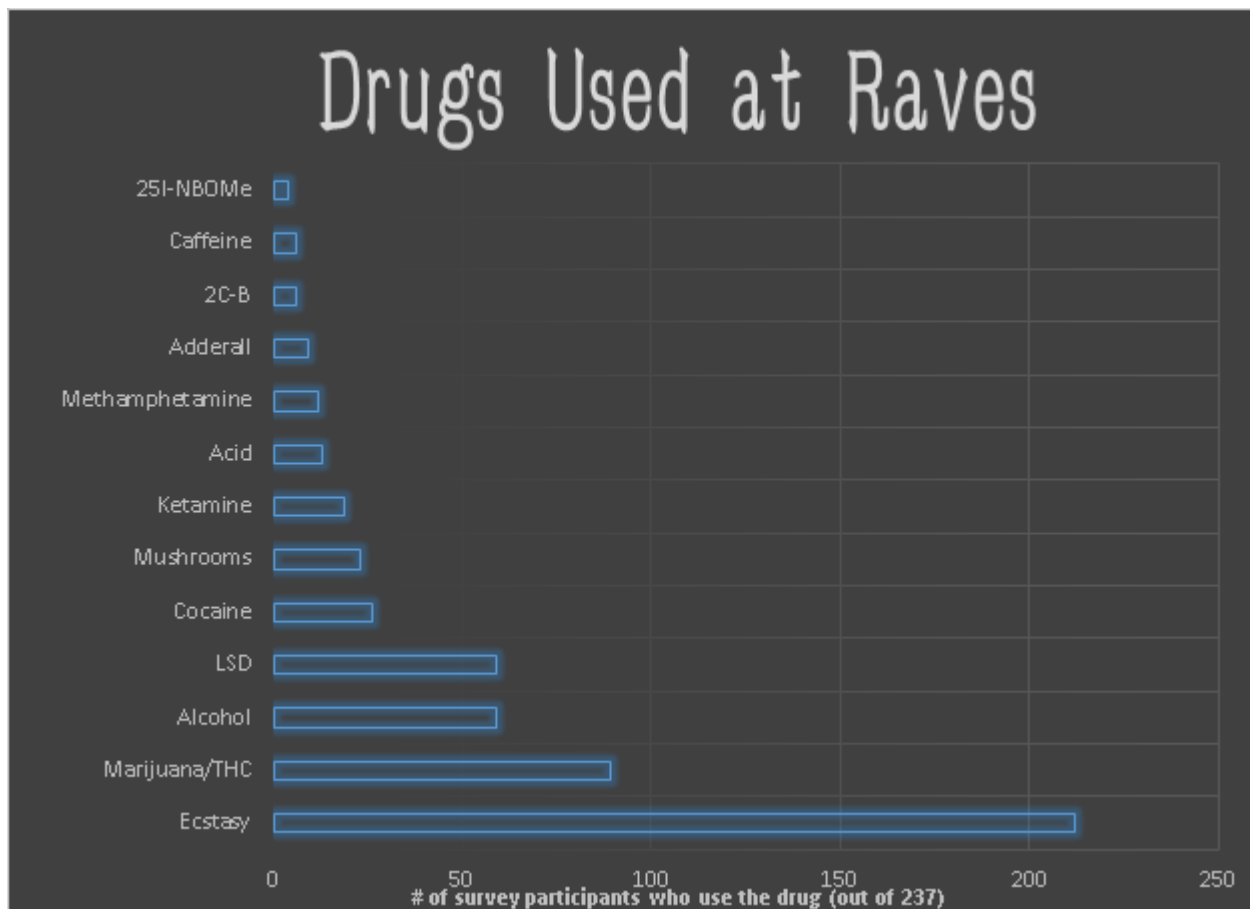


*Graph indicates the timeframe in which participants first attended a rave*

When asked about their drug intake at raves, the participants were given four options: Yes, No, Sometimes, or Used to but not anymore. I realized afterwards that, for the sake of data presentation, it would be best to group together “I used to but not anymore” and “no” together into just “no” and “sometimes” and “yes” into a “yes” category. I was more interested in knowing their reasoning for taking drugs or not taking drugs, and whether or not they always take drugs or have stopped taking drugs at raves was a lead-in question to that answer.



When asked about drug use concerts (if any) in the survey, I left the answer open ended because I wanted participants to be as open about their drug usage as possible, not limiting their answer in any way. I also don't know enough about drugs myself to provide an accurate list of drugs. This made it a little harder on my end to sort and analyze the data because I had to go through everybody's answers one-by-one and decipher which drug they were talking about (there are about ten different names for each drug) and create an organized list. I ended up categorizing all drugs into the general category under which they fall under, i.e. MDMA, MDA, X, and Molly all fall under 'Ecstasy'. Not all users listed the specific drugs they use, some people said they do "all" drugs, and others simply listed the type of drug they do, such as psychedelics, stimulants, and hallucinogens. Only a single participant's response included Nicotine in their list of drugs, which isn't a surprise because many ravers smoke cigarettes, and Nicotine itself doesn't enhance the rave in any way. It was hard to decide how to display the data collected on a graph, because each participant's answers were extremely diverse. Some people take ten drugs at a time, others take certain in specific settings, and some put very specific details as to when and why they take each drug. I decided that I was going to graph the amount of times each drug (or grouping of drugs) was mentioned. The cutoff amount of times a drug has to be mentioned was four times.



Other drugs used by participants that were mentioned <4 times are: Moon Rocks, Xanax, Hydrocodone, Laughing Gas, Poppers, Kratom, Research Chemicals, Benzodiazepine, 4-Fluoroamphetamine, 5-methoxy-diisopropyltryptamine, and Modafinil.

I observed that Marijuana/THC was usually consumed alongside another drug, and over 90% of those who take drugs at raves take some form of Ecstasy.

I have also identified two books to help me with my research. The first book is titled *Fight, Flight, or Chill* (March 2006), written by Brian Wilson. The book emerged from a dissertation project that was funded through a doctoral fellowship from the Social Sciences and

Humanities Research Council of Canada. The information within the book represents the research and writing Wilson completed during his time in graduate school at McMaster University, his postdoctoral work done at Simon Fraser University, and his current position at the University of British Columbia within the Department of Human Kinetics. *Fight, Flight, or Chill* explores the extent to which raver youth's experiences are constrained or determined by individualistic, high-tech, mass-mediated Western culture in which alienated youth are more at-risk for escapist and thrill-seeking behaviors. The second book I used is titled *Energy Flash: A Journey Through Rave Music and Dance Culture* (March 2012), written by music journalist Simon Reynolds. Reynolds started watching and partaking in the rave scene early on, specifically observing the rave scene in London, eventually branching out to the global rave scene including New York. The book talks about drugs in the world of raving, specifically ecstasy, and how a mixture of drugs and bass came together to form today's rave scene.

Lastly, I watched a documentary titled *Blackout: Sex, Hugs, and EDM!!!* (December 2013), a visual YouTube documentary made by THUMP, the electronic music and culture channel from VICE magazine. The documentary follows the dramatic highs and lows of ravers all over the world. It differs from a traditional documentary because it speaks through image and live scenes rather than formal interviews with a narrator.

## Analysis/Claims

In this section I will be including direct quotes from the Reddit survey to help quantify my claims. Because the data was recorded anonymously, each quote will have a tag on the end that represents age, gender, and year in which the participant started raving. So, a 19 year old Female who attended her first rave in 2013's tag would look like (19 F, 2013). Some tags will include more information based on their response to a different question on the survey to add context. A larger list of participant responses to specific survey question can be found in the Appendix.

**Claim #1:** Ravers are inclusive, breaking down socially constructed barriers such as race, social class, and gender. The openness of the community creates a positive atmosphere that keeps ravers, both new and old, coming back for more.

Raves serve as a break from every-day life in which there are barriers that prevent humans from interacting with one another. Nancy Borrego (2014) describes the experience as: “Imagine yourself being a part of a world with no boundaries, no racism, no prejudice, no sexism, no rules, no guns, and no hatred- simply a world filled with peace, love, unity, and respect. A world where you can express yourself in any way you feel comfortable; a place where you feel no fear, just a place where you only feel love and joy from everyone around you. This is how I can best describe the culture of a rave and its people” (para. 1). Simon Reynolds links this inclusiveness to drug usage, in his book *Energy Flash: A Journey Through Rave Music and Dance Culture* he writes, “Thanks to Ecstasy, all the class and race and sex-preference barriers were getting fluxed up; all sorts of people who might never have exchanged words or glances were being swirled together in a promiscuous chaos. One of the most striking changes was the way that the territorial rivalry between areas of London – largely expressed through supporting different football teams – was dissipated. Almost overnight, the Stanley-knife wielding trouble-maker had metamorphosized into the ‘love thug’, or as Brit-rapper Gary Clail later put it, ‘the emotional hooligan’” (page 44). DJs, the ones at the top of a raver’s hierarchy, are the ones who

fuel this inclusiveness, and acknowledge the success the subculture has had in bringing people together over the years. In his book *Fight, Flight, or Chill*, Brian Wilson quotes DJ Billy Nasty in M. Harrison's edited *High Society: The Real Voices of Club Cultures*, "The whole scene – now over a decade old – has helped bring together so many different kinds of people who would otherwise have nothing in common. The creativity and constant growth of the scene amongst people worldwide who are now as passionate about clubs and music as I was aged sixteen, surely make this the first youth culture to go truly global" (Page 37). Wilson, similarly to Reynolds, links the inclusiveness with drug usage. He writes about an interview with a raver (male, university student) who says, "Besides the ecstatic feeling that you get from it... it breaks down barriers. It breaks down preconceptions, it makes it easier to meet people, it creates an ecstatic feeling more intense than anything most people have ever experienced, and you couldn't experience it without the help from the drug..." (Page 103).

Ravers who completed the survey on Reddit agreed, and spoke first-handedly about a raver's inclusiveness. One participant says, "I grew up with my brother exposing me to Techno / Acid House in the 90s, but never knew what it was or what it was about. When I grew older, I discovered the dance music scene, and realized what a rave was all about. I attended my first event in 2007. The emotions and feelings you get at raves are hard to find in the real world, and I keep coming back." (25 M, 2007), reinforcing the idea of a new boundary-free world that is created at a rave. Another participant says "Went [to my first rave] because some friends got tickets and I decided to give it a shot. I absolutely loved the energy and how fun it was being in a crowd of people just all have so much fun. You could turn to anyone at any time and just dance like an idiot and they'd laugh and dance back." (18 M, 2014). He is able to form a connection with a complete stranger, and feel at-ease expressing himself with somebody he

doesn't know. Almost nowhere in the world are people that comfortable with one another on the streets. Another participant said: "A group of friends invited me, and I already had a lot of interest in EDM in general. The sense that everyone was there to just love and enjoy the music keeps me coming back for more! To me, the whole idea of PLUR makes ravers the best people to share a love of music with." (21 F, 2014). Unlike Simon's claim, this participant relates the inclusiveness back to the shared value of PLUR rather than to ecstasy.

From my own observation at raves, the crowd is extremely diverse and there are no boundaries. Everybody expresses themselves as freely as possible, and nobody is ever shamed for doing so. It's easy to see how diverse the crowds at raves are, especially at the larger festivals, because ravers tend to bring a flag from their native country and wave it with pride throughout the night. It's possible to see over 20 different flags just from looking around at a rave. The authentic costumes that ravers come in, ranging from decked-out neon to the absolute bare minimum of clothing legally possible, wearing nothing but beads, goes to show there are really no boundaries at a rave. No matter who you are, or how you chose to express yourself, you will find your place and have a good time.

**Claim #2:** An overwhelming majority of ravers take drugs at raves because it enhances the experience, and the few who chose not to take drugs are able to have a great time without them. Most ravers believe that drugs usage is a large part of a raver's identity, but not the entirety of the identity.

Molly, or ecstasy, is considered to be the subcultural capital due to the large market for it at raves. In his book *Fight, Flight, or Chill*, Brian Wilson writes, "There was a clear relationship between drug use and music consumption. Smoking marijuana to "chill out" or relax was preferred by many ravers when listening to slower, ambient music. Ecstasy, and to a lesser extent



crystal meth, were the amphetamines of choice when it came to fast dancing. Interviewees described how certain techno music tracks were structured around the effects of a drug. For example, some tracks include a “buildup” stage, where the beat gets fast and faster, followed by a “plateau” stage, where the beat remains consistently fast. This structure is apparently conducive to an optimal euphoric feeling or “rush” for those on ecstasy” (Page 100). Wilson makes an important point by tying together drugs usage and music consumption. It’s important to acknowledge that almost all music-related subcultures have been influenced by drugs in one way or another, as a survey participant notes, “I believe that drugs have played a role in all musical sub-cultures. You can go to any genre of music and find artists that sing about being drunk/high on all sorts of things. It is not just a rave culture. I think we as a scene embrace it more and are open to people who want to experiment as the scene is a judge free place. I wish that it was not a part of the scene, but I cannot change that. I can only do what I can to keep people informed and make the best decisions.” (25 M, 2007 – Does not take drugs at raves).

Survey participants who note that they do take drugs at rave talk highly of the experience. One participant says “...it [ecstasy] makes me come out of my shell. I empathize with people on a personal level and can't stop dancing for hours. Truly a wonder drug.” (22 M, 2012). Again, classifying ecstasy as a key component of the creation of a positive, boundary-free atmosphere. Another participant says, “It [ecstasy] is therapeutic. I'm educated on the risks and the benefits heavily outweighed those risks. It seems to go hand in hand with electronic music as the often lyricless music coaxes out memories in your past, you re-remember them and repackage those memories in the same way as taking the oil off of an oil-spill infected duck. You are literally curing yourself of the afflicted mind and ptsd-type memories by re installing memories with a

compassionate and forgiving wrapping.” (23 M, 2010). Ravers educate themselves on the risks of taking drugs so they are able to let loose and enjoy themselves at concerts

Participants who chose not to consume drugs at raves feel as if they fit in to the community without the influence of drugs. One participant says: “I feel that I don't need drugs to be able to experience the mood of raves. I already feel deeply when I'm there, so to me there isn't a need to use drugs to feel even more.” (24 M, 2015). I noticed that a large chunk of participants don't take drugs because the drugs because they simply do not enjoy doing drugs. Another participant notes: “I'm not a fan of drugs. The closest I come to drugs is weed, but that's not really appropriate for the dancing scene. Stuff like ecstasy, etc. just doesn't appeal to me. I'm already an insanely happy, peppy person without extra serotonin in my brain.” (21 F, 2014)

When asked the question “Do you feel that drugs play an important part in rave culture, and why?” most participants tended to agree that drugs play an important part in rave culture. Most participants stress the importance of drug usage in rave culture, but note that other aspects of raving are just as important. One participant says: “I think it's totally possible to participate in and enjoy rave culture without using drugs, but they're definitely an inextricable part of rave culture. Like it or not, part of the reason raves are so popular is because MDMA is popular (because it's fun) and raves and MDMA go hand in hand. Denying that MDMA plays an important part in rave culture is like denying that psychedelics were/are a big part of hippie culture or that cocaine was a big part of disco culture” (23 M, 2010 – Takes drugs at raves). Another participant says: “I believe so, rave culture is an escape from reality, social norms don't necessarily apply at events. Drugs play a part in creating this false sense of reality. People behave differently than they would while under the influence and I believe for the better (mostly talking about MDMA/LSD). You see human interactions in their purest form, without social

constraints. Drugs also bring that sense of connection between the crowd and the music. Sure, you could feel connected sober, but I believe it's an enhancer to those feelings.” (20 M, 2014 – Takes drugs at raves).

However, drugs are not the key component of raving. A survey participant says: “It is a very typical aspect of Rave culture, just like nightclubs and alcohol or frat parties and alcohol. Not really important in it of itself, but it is an aspect that is deeply tied with rave culture. Drugs don't really define rave culture. It's the music and the people that really do.” (24 M, 2015 – Does not take drugs at raves). Another participant stated: “Drugs play a part in Rave culture, but it is not important. I've learned so far in almost my year of Raving that it is important to know that music and the friendly community that comes with raving is more important” (20 M, 2014).

These two response show that despite drugs usage being woven into rave subculture, the music and the people are what are gluing the subculture together,

**Claim #3:** Rave subculture has gone through several phases of commodification over the past decade, fragmenting the ravers into two distinct groups: those who dislike the idea of large festivals and prefer the smaller, underground scene, and those who are able to enjoy themselves at all venues.

Survey participants were split in half when asked about their opinion on large festivals, proving that fragmentation has occurred within the subculture, and that the raver community stands divided. A participant who has been in the subculture for eight years says, “Honestly, large ticket festivals are a blight on the scene and stand against a lot of what the culture originally stood for. The overall commodification of a culture and advertising it as a place to come and get wasted for a weekend is what gives a lot of the culture a bad reputation. There is no ethos or core ideology behind something like Ultra or EDC. On the other hand there are

smaller festivals with a focus on art and community such as Freeform, Transformus, Apogee, etc. These stand as a testament of what this particular scene came from. A community of people who felt displaced and found a home within each other. Likewise venues such as Webster Hall NYC can get (and on certain nights definitely has) a bad reputation along the line of major festivals. At the same time there are people out there who organize smaller events (Such as BASSment Saturdays at Webster) that are focused on amazing music and cultivating the community.” (26 M, 2007). While this response was a more passionate one, there were many which were blunt and to the point, such as “[Large festivals are] Soulless and commercial. They're about money, not love, and it shows.” (35 M, 1995). Ravers felt that they weren't able to find the same values of PLUR in the commoditized festivals that they found with ease at smaller venues. These ravers tended to be the ones who started raving in earlier years, but that isn't a defining factor.

Other participants say that they enjoy both the underground scene and festival scene. One participant says: “It [large festivals] is a different feel. I personally go to underground type places when I want to see a DJ that I really enjoy listening to. Bigger festivals are nice to experience new music and maybe find a DJ or producer that you never heard of before. Also the vibe of a big festival is amazing. So many people in one place for the same reason.” (23 M, 2009).

Another participant confirmed that fragmentation has occurred within the rave community in his response: “I like them both equally. You can't go to both expecting the same thing though. It's a different vibe, crowd, and just overall experience. When festival season comes around, me and my friends look forward to a few days of just dancing and having fun out in the sun with a ton of people. On the other hand, small venues are fun to go to in their own right for like a night of dancing and chilling.” (19 M, 2012)

## Conclusion

In his book *Subcultures: the Meaning of Style* (1979), sociologist Dick Hebdige attempts to define the evolution of subcultures as he writes, "...subcultures form out of their replacement of one or several previous subcultures which disappear through a process which includes commodification by the establishment and media and eventual assimilation into the larger mainstream culture" (1979). The commercialization of rave subculture has changed the way some ravers view the subculture, ultimately turning away a lot of ravers who started raving in the late 90's and early 2000's. Although the commercialization process has had some negative influence on the subculture, it has ultimately allowed for the subculture to grow, and attract a new, younger audience. This is a natural cycle of change that every subculture goes through at one point or another. Thankfully, it has contributed positively to the rave subculture unlike other subcultures such as hip-hop that have become completely mainstream, losing touch of its foundational values. Rather than being absorbed by the mainstream, rave culture has the influence to change the mainstream, and break down socially constructed barriers.

Lastly, while ecstasy and other miscellaneous drugs are a large part of the rave subculture, the driving force for people to attend raves is the music, the community and the shared values ("PLUR").

This study was conducted to study how the rave subculture has changed since its creation, specifically focused on the effects of commercialization. The study tried to contribute to the literature of rave subculture by banding together a large number raver's voices in order to find norms and differences within the subculture.

## Reference Page

Resources used:

**Books**

*Energy Flash: A Journey Through Rave Music and Dance Culture* by Simon Reynolds

*Fight, Flight, or Chill* by Brian Wilson

*Goths, Gamers, & Grrrls: Deviance and Youth Subcultures* by Ross Haenfler

*Subcultures: the Meaning of Style* by Dick Hebdige

**Online Publications**

<http://www.djtechttools.com/2013/12/19/history-of-the-rave-scene-how-djs-built-modern-dance-music/>

<https://rollingstoneraver.wordpress.com/2011/02/15/history-of-the-rave/>

<https://jojoelectro.com/2012/02/the-history-of-p-l-u-r-by-frankie-bones/>

<http://drleannawolfe.com/genrave.html>

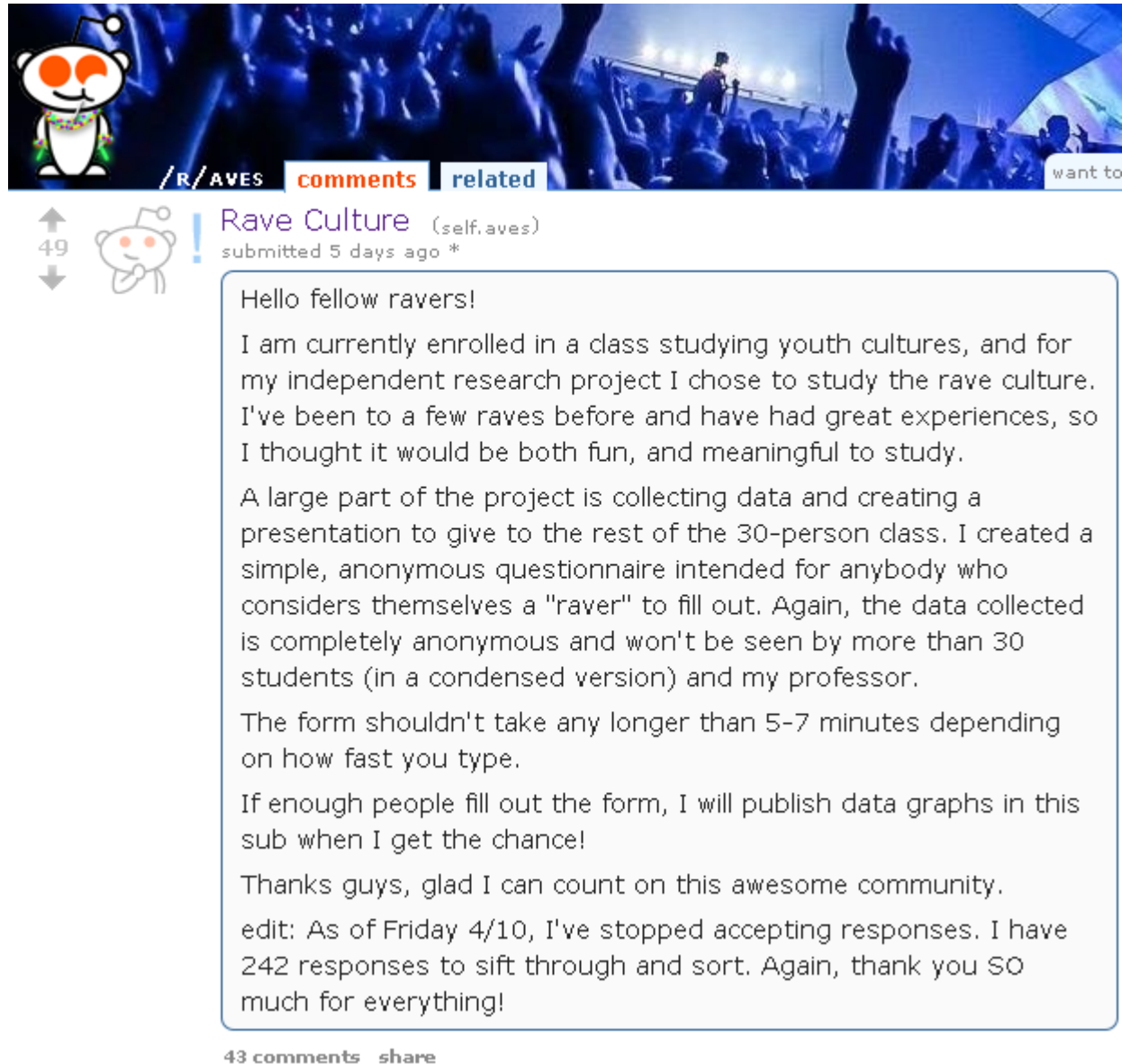
**Documentaries**

*Blackout: Sex, Hugs, & EDM!!!* by THUMP <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBn5iUnxDd0>

**Other**

The Oxford Dictionary - <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us>

## Appendix



*The post I made to /r/aves on April 7<sup>th</sup> advertising my survey (link removed)*

The remainder of the appendix are a list of high-quality survey responses, sorted by question.

**Why did you go to your first rave, and what kept you coming back for more?**

- "I came for the music - was just getting into trance and wanted to go to a show. I kept coming back because of the vibe and the people. Coming from the caustic mid-90s indie rock scene, it was a real eye opener to find a place where people were genuine and polite, and it wasn't cool to be a jerk. PLUR was real back then, and people took it seriously. There was a real sense of family and togetherness that I don't see today. Going to underground shows requires effort and

drive - it isn't handed to you on a platter to consume, you have to create your own experience, and that brought people together.” (35 M, 1995)

- “I was 15 and I just started experimenting with drugs. My friends were going and I wanted to join. So we went, took some acid and it was awesome. We eventually graduated to much more...E, coke, some meth, drinking, smoking weed too. It was fun...taking drugs as a teen, hitting on girls and hooking up with some decent music. Plus it was 'underground', so it was cool. We eventually started selling drugs too and it was a lifestyle. Collecting tapes and flyers from parties. I have partied in Boulder and Denver, CO and also in California.” (34 M, 1997)
- “The music, the atmosphere, the people, the late hours.” (34 M, 1999)
- “I grew up with my brother exposing me to Techno / Acid House in the 90s, but never knew what it was or what it was about. When I grew older, I discovered the dance music scene, and realized what a rave was all about. I attended my first event in 2007. The emotions and feelings you get at raves are hard to find in the real world, and I keep coming back.” (25 M, 2007)
- “I was curious about the underground electronic music and I knew of parties they were having at this old music theater venue in Denver. I went the first night with my two friends, was 16 years old, stayed sober and felt so cool being there watching people dance and the lights and heavy music.” (25 F, 2005)
- “Went because some friends got tickets and I decided to give it a shot. I absolutely loved the energy and how fun it was being in a crowd of people just all have so much fun. You could turn to anyone at any time and just dance like an idiot and they'd laugh and dance back.” (18 M, 2014)
- “A group of friends invited me, and I already had a lot of interest in EDM in general. The sense that everyone was there to just love and enjoy the music keeps me coming back for more! To me, the whole idea of PLUR makes ravers the best people to share a love of music with.” (21 F, 2014)

**If you stopped going to raves, or started going less than you previously did, why is that?**

- “The scene has gone through a huge evolution, and many of the values I used to love are harder to come by with the commercialization of "EDM" as it's now called. I still go out, but not as much. I should note I've also been a regionally successful DJ for about 15 years.” (37 M, 1997)
- “I've grown older, started a family, and a career. I'm no longer a college student with lots of free time, and I just have many more responsibilities. I try to make it to a festival once a year, but my wife and I go out about once a month.” (35 M, 1997)
- “My music tastes have shifted slightly, I listen to more esoteric music now that is more available in clubs than large scale events. I do still occasionally attend large productions if the artists are good though. Also, either I've gotten older and more crotchety or people at raves have gotten ruder and more belligerent. I do try and stick with just trance shows for large production events since the crowd is much nicer at those and people are less fucked up out of their skull. I also started going to Burning Man and found a scene that I prefer now.” (28 F, 2009)
- “Mainly money is the thing that stops me from going to every rave I have even slight interest in. Also, a lot of my core friend group doesn't rave so I used to not have a lot of people to go with.” (21 F, 2014)
- “Haven't stopped, but probably will when I get into graduate school and have less free time.” (21 F, 2013)
- “One summer I had to stop going to so many because ticket prices went up and I didn't have a job. That's how I discovered underground raves.” (17 F, 2011)



**Do you chose to take a drug/drugs at raves? Why do you take that drug during raves/why don't you take drugs at raves/how come you no longer take drugs at raves?**

*The following participants answered "Yes" when asked if they take a drug/drugs at raves:*

- "I always have used alcohol and marijuana so I'll talk about molly first. At my first event I popped my first molly (probably not MDMA but whatever sketchy stuff the dealer put into the pill), it was definitely a fun experience. At my second event I popped two and drank a little, and it was also great. At my third and most recent event I just got a little tipsy and stoned and probably had the most fun I've had at the event. I feel like the music and crowd vibe has the greatest effect on my enjoyment not the drugs (even though they are fun). I'll probably keep doing drugs at raves but I can definitely see myself going to an event sober too (plus I get to drive home which would be nice)" (20 M, 2015)
- "I took MDMA for my first time at my first rave. At first I thought drugs were necessary and a part of rave culture. I didn't think I would be comfortable going to the rave, and dancing sober, and I thought it was the norm to take drugs at raves. After going to more raves, both sober and intoxicated, I realized this isn't the case. Raving sober is just as fun and has many perks to it. I can still enjoy the artists, and music just as much. I also feel more comfortable going to raves and dancing and no longer feel the need to take drugs to break free from my comfort zone. Depending on the drug I use, (mdma specifically) I often forget large chunks of the show, and for me this is a huge drawback. I go for the music, and if I cant remember the experience, what is the point? On the flip side, I feel drug use at raves can also enhance the experience if done in moderation and safely. For me it opens my mind to new experiences, and gives me a new perspective on life. It often gives me a greater connection to life, the music, and the people I am with." (19 M, 2014)
- "These drugs usually enhance the experience for me especially ecstasy. They make me feel good and the music even better. I know my limits and make sure I rave safe with these drugs." (18 M, 2014)
- "As stated above, it makes me come out of my shell. I empathize with people on a personal level and can't stop dancing for hours. Truly a wonder drug." (22 M, 2012)
- "I do it to enhance all the wonderful feelings I get from being there, to be able to dance for several more hours and to be more comfortable and less self-conscious about my body so I can really dance my ass off. However I do enjoy going to raves sober as well, I just don't dance as much." (22 F, 2012)
- "It's therapeutic. I'm educated on the risks and the benefits heavily outweighed those risks. It seems to go hand in hand with electronic music as the often lyricless music coaxes out memories in your past, you re-remember them and repackage those memories in the same way as taking the oil off of an oil-spill infected duck. You are literally curing yourself of the afflicted mind and ptsd-type memories by re installing memories with a compassionate and forgiving wrapping." (23 M, 2010)
- "Started off just looking for a good time, as well as lowering my inhibitions to help me come out of my shell. As I got older I started doing less MDMA/X and found myself using hallucinogens as a tool to help me connect with others." (26 M, 2007)
- "I believe that safe, responsible drug usage can enhance the rave experience. I enjoy staying up longer, the way lights and lasers look under the influence, increased empathy and feelings of euphoria." (26 F, 2011)

*The following participants answered "Sometimes" when asked if they take a drug/drugs at raves:*

- “I take them occasionally because it enhances the experience. They give you a sense of peace and acceptance. They are not the reason I go. I have gone totally sober or just drank alcohol. It simply changes how you experience the music and atmosphere.” (25 F, 2014)
- “I take the drug as an enhancement. I can enjoy raves sober, I have done it in multiple occasions. But there is that one event where you want to just completely forget the problems and only focus on the moment. That’s why I take drugs.” (18 M, 2014)
- “Most of the time it’s because I have to drive or I just can’t get a hold of it.” (20 M, 2014)
- “On a 2 day rave I’ll do one day sober one day MDMA, or a 3 day rave 1 day sober, 1 day LSD (if it feels right), and 1 day MDMA. Sure, I’m there for the music, and it’s important to self-recognize that I can truly enjoy myself without drugs. However, drugs are an enhancement. I know I can have a great time without them, but I can have an awesome time with them. Raves/music festivals are a release for many people including me. I don’t take drugs any other time so it’s my moment to let loose and fully enjoy myself.” (23 M, 2011)
- “I started taking drugs at raves, just because that was the Thing To Do. Had a friend who recommended them, and loved it. I really enjoyed how good MDMA would grease the wheels of every interaction I had. It made everyone and everything perfectly beautiful. I pretty much stopped taking drugs after a full year of hard partying because I just burned out on being fucked up all the time. It got old.” (24 M, 2011)

*The following participants answered “I used to, but not anymore” when asked if they take a drug/drugs at raves:*

- “I take them when I want to enjoy something visual. I don’t really take them at raves because I go to raves to dance, and hallucinogens interrupt my body-brain dialogue for movement.” (30 F, 2012)
- “Short answer, it was making me miserable and I realized I was associating with some very dodgy and psycho types that I didn’t want to be around for my own safety. Plus I felt it was becoming immature and stupid: why would I keep taking these chemicals if they just consistently made me feel worse? Around the same time I stopped drinking: I have been sober since October 2013.” (21 F, 2008)
- “The hallucinogens and ecstasy heightened all the senses and just made for a very unique experience. As I stopped going to raves, so did the drug use.” (31 M, 1998)
- “Grew up, started noticing the substances was affecting my school and work. Decided its not necessary to have these to have a good time.” (26 M, 2003)

*The following participants answered “No” when asked if they take a drug/drugs at raves:*

- “I have always believed that the magic and spirit of the rave scene comes from the music and within. I don’t need synthetic happiness. I grew up not wanting to try drugs way before I discovered the scene, so it was natural for me to not take anything.” (25 M, 2007)
- “I have never partaken in drug use. I believe that the rave culture is oversaturated with drug use and is desaturating the PLUR and music loving qualities in which attracted me to raves in the first place.” (18 M, 2010)
- “I feel that I don’t need drugs to be able to experience the mood of raves. I already feel deeply when I’m there, so to me there isn’t a need to use drugs to feel even more.” (24 M, 2015)
- “I’m not a fan of drugs. The closest I come to drugs is weed, but that’s not really appropriate for dancing scene. Stuff like ecstasy, etc. just doesn’t appeal to me. I’m already an insanely happy, peppy person without extra serotonin in my brain.” (21 F, 2014)
- “I personally don’t take drugs at all. I feel that when I go to a show or a rave, I’m there for the music and the crowd vibe and I don’t necessarily need to amplify any of that with drugs. That

being said, I'm totally cool with people rolling or whatever. It's the people that prey on the community by selling spiked stuff to inexperienced ravers as well as people not doing their research and just loading up on pills or whatever and dying that pisses me off. It tarnishes the reputation of the community as a whole where friendship, kindness, and fun are the top goals. But stuff "Concertgoer makes a ton of new friends at X show" doesn't sell as well as "Teenager ODs and dies at X show". (19 M, 2012)

### **Do you feel that drugs play an important part in the Rave culture, and why?**

*There is an array of different answers depending on if the participant takes drugs during raves or not, which is indicated in the ending tag.*

- "Yes, and it's unfortunate. A lot of people perceive the EDM community (or "rave culture") as a bunch of burnouts who need a place to take drugs. A lot of people go to shows just to get fucked up and don't really care about the music. This isn't specific to just the rave culture, as there will be fucked up people at any concert you go to. We are in the same age the rock'n'roll was during the 70's/80's" (20 M, 2012 – Sometimes takes drugs at raves)
- "It is a very typical aspect of Rave culture, just like nightclubs and alcohol or frat parties and alcohol. Not really important in it of itself, but it is an aspect that is deeply tied with rave culture. Drugs don't really define rave culture. It's the music and the people that really do." (24 M, 2015 – Does not take drugs at raves)
- "Sadly, I think they do. At least more so now. I personally don't believe in the philosophy of seeing drugs as a crime issue rather than a health and psychology issue. The former view has negatively influenced the characters of recreational drug users seen through this light. It has made them less sympathetic to society and those around them, and has helped persuade them into criminal activity, even if that initially just means drinking alcohol under the age of 21 or smoking marijuana. The result is a crowd following a bastardized and perverted idea of PLUR, and an increase in recreational drug use." (19 M, 2012 – Sometimes takes drugs at raves)
- "I don't think they are important as much as they are prevalent, the culture would still exist without them, raves present the best opportunity to take most of these drugs as with just the drug itself and no massive stimuli from the event the drugs are somewhat underwhelming and would definitely not be as commonly used." (18 M, 2014 – Sometimes takes drugs at raves)
- "Absolutely not. I think that drugs are constantly associated with the electronic music culture and it really is discouraging. If you look at /any other genre/, the same drug usage is sporadic -- sexual assault has become common at some country shows modernly. If we wanted to quickly dismiss an /ENTIRE/ culture or genre just because of the actions of a select group of attendees, you might as well dismiss music in its entirety for actually just being noise (that happens to sound pretty)." (15 M, 2013 – Does not take drugs at raves)
- "In a way. They've always been around in some sort of fashion, but it's more mainstream now. It didn't define raves, it was the music & people. But just take Madonna yelling "How many people in this crowd have seen molly" at the very mainstream Ultra music fest a couple years back." (31 M, 1998 – Used to but no longer takes drugs at raves)
- "I do, but I don't like that they do. There have always been people in the scene using the excuse of a "rave" to do drugs. There are others who may partake, but don't make the "rave" all about drug usage. Between a mixture of those two groups I feel like drugs become a large part of the scene." (35 M, 1997 – Takes drugs at raves)
- "I think it's totally possible to participate in and enjoy rave culture without using drugs, but they're definitely an inextricable part of rave culture. Like it or not, part of the reason raves are so popular is because MDMA is popular (because it's fun) and raves and MDMA go hand in hand. Denying that MDMA plays an important part in rave culture is like denying that

psychedelics were/are a big part of hippie culture or that cocaine was a big part of disco culture” (23 M, 2010 – Takes drugs at raves)

- “Generally, it makes people a lot more pleasant, and it changes the whole vibe. I'd much rather be around a bunch of people on rave drugs than drunkards. This effects the rave experience even for those that don't do drugs. It's important.” (26 M, 2012 –Used to but no longer takes drugs at raves)
- “Yes they do. Drugs more or less ARE the rave culture. It is the biggest reason people enjoy going to events to have a great experience and feel a feeling that is really hard to achieve sober. It is one of the reasons I feel less connected to the scene. I love the music and the vibes, but some people are much too focused on rolling. However, that is not to say that everyone needs drugs, but it is definitely the main catalyst for the rave scene being so huge now in America.” (22 M, 2010 – Takes drugs at raves)
- “I believe that drugs have played a role in all musical sub-cultures. You can go to any genre of music and find artists that sing about being drunk/high on all sorts of things. It is not just a rave culture. I think we as a scene embrace it more and are open to people who want to experiment as the scene is a judge free place. I wish that it was not a part of the scene, but I cannot change that. I can only do what I can to keep people informed and make the best decisions.” (25 M, 2007 – Does not take drugs at raves)
- “I think they do, but I think they don't need to. It plays the same role in Rave culture as it did in Rock n Roll: it was about rebellion, and it still is.” (19 F, 2010 – Used to but no longer takes drugs at raves)
- “Yes, but many people will disagree - it is important to the culture because for many people it is easier to understand and identify with the culture through drugs, even if it is a one-time experience and they choose to never do drugs again” (24 M, 2011 – Takes drugs at raves)
- “Yup, rave culture is (or at least should be) all about truly loving each other and celebrating life through music and dance; not everybody is ready for that way of thinking though, so ecstasy is sort of a social or conceptual lubricant in that regard.” (33 M, 1998 – Used to but no longer takes drugs at raves)
- “I believe so, rave culture is an escape from reality, social norms don't necessarily apply at events. Drugs play a part in creating this false sense of reality. People behave differently than they would while under the influence and I believe for the better (mostly talking about MDMA/LSD). You see human interactions in their purest form, without social constraints. Drugs also bring that sense of connection between the crowd and the music. Sure, you could feel connected sober, but I believe it's an enhancer to those feelings.” (20 M, 2014 – Takes drugs at raves)
- “I'd say absolutely, as far as the development of the culture goes. The ability to use without fear of judgment definitely contributes to the "live in the moment and have a good time" vibes that are crucial to the scene.” (20 F, 2013 – Does not take drugs at raves)
- “I think so, the basis of rave culture [peace, love, unity, respect] possibly stems from the mindset of someone on MDMA, because those are the values and qualities that a successful rolling experience embodies. Of course, it's not the only part of rave culture; it's not like this one drug is the foundation of an entire subculture. The people, whether or not they chose to partake, are what keep the culture and the movement going. If you consider yourself part of the culture, you're surrounded by a group of loving, caring, generous people who will go out of their way to make someone's day, and you in turn become one of those people. It's people like that who make this culture so welcoming and alive.” (20 F, 2013 – Takes drugs at raves)
- “Absolutely. Many aspects of rave culture can appear confusing at first (styles of dancing like gabber/hakken/shuffling, gloving and light shows, kandi, fluffies) but all become a lot clearer

when you view it through the perspective of drug use. Also a lot of the music is geared towards drug use, putting you in a trance etc.” (26 M, 2009 – Takes drugs at raves)

**What is your opinion on large festivals, such as Electric Zoo and Ultra, compared to smaller/underground venues?**

- “Honestly, large ticket festivals are a blight on the scene and stand against a lot of what the culture originally stood for. The overall commodification of a culture and advertising it as a place to come and get wasted for a weekend is what gives a lot of the culture a bad reputation. There is no ethos or core ideology behind something like Ultra or EDC. On the other hand there are smaller festivals with a focus on art and community such as Freeform, Transformus, Apogee, etc. These stand as a testament of what this particular scene came from. A community of people who felt displaced and found a home within each other. Likewise venues such as Webster Hall NYC can get (and on certain nights definitely has) a bad reputation along the line of major festivals. At the same time there are people out there who organize smaller events (Such as BASSment Saturdays at Webster) that are focused on amazing music and cultivating the community.” (26 M, 2007)
- “I prefer close-knit groups. When I started raving the scene in my town was 1000 people tops. It was really easy to make friends and see a bunch of them every weekend at the rave. When the scene blew up a couple years later it didn't happen anymore. I would find 10 friends maybe, where-as before it would be 100 friends.” (25 F, 2009)
- “They may be a bit too commercialized, and it was more fun when even the massive events were "unknown" but they are still fun. The only issue I have with them is that sometimes they try to be bigger than they need to be.” (24 M, 2009)
- “I do not enjoy large festivals as much. Like anything, when enough money gets involved, you can absolutely ruin anything. Part of the initial appeal was that parties were kind of clandestine. And the whole experience is much more intimate with fewer people. I feel that a lot of the larger festivals now are pretty much cash grabs. They can be fun but the "soul" of what I experienced going to undergrounds is largely missing. P.L.U.R. or peace, love, unity, respect is an idea I cling to regarding the culture. And it's what sets it apart from simply being a big "Project X" style party. It's neat to see a thing that you love grow but larger festivals feel like the proverbial "sell out.”” (32 M, 2001)
- “I like them both equally. You can't go to both expecting the same thing though. It's a different vibe, crowd, and just overall experience. When festival season comes around, me and my friends look forward to a few days of just dancing and having fun out in the sun with a ton of people. On the other hand, small venues are fun to go to in their own right for like a night of dancing and chilling. I know that's kind of vague but I hope you understand what I'm trying to convey.” (19 M, 2012)
- “Soulless and commercial. They're about money, not love, and it shows.” (35 M, 1995)
- “It's a different feel. I personally go to underground type places when I want to see a DJ that I really enjoy listening to. Bigger festivals are nice to experience new music and maybe find a DJ or producer that you never heard of before. Also the vibe of a big festival is amazing. So many people in one place for the same reason.” (23 M, 2009)
- “Festivals are festivals. They are not raves in any sense in my eyes. I go to underground raves and I go to multi-million dollar festivals. I enjoy both and for very different reasons. The sense of community and "family" is much greater at undergrounds since you tend to see the same people from your city/town week after week at these things. Whereas at festivals it's a huge assortment of people from all over the world. I go to festivals to let go of reality and have a blast

for 3 days. I go to underground raves to go to a place "where everybody knows your name" so to speak." (22 M, 2012)

- "I have no issue with smaller venues, but underground isn't really my scene. I go for the music, mainly, so when I don't know who's playing, I don't feel as strong of a connection to the music and therefore to the people I'm raving with (if they're strangers/acquaintances). I haven't been to any big electronic music only festivals, but they sound amazing!" (21 F, 2014)

### **Is there anything else you would like to share about your rave experiences?**

- "I began attending raves at the end of the really good age of raves and really missed the community feel and underground vibe of raves. When tickets to events began being sold at Ticketmaster, it was basically the end of the underground and meant more eyes on the rave scene. I would be considered a rave purist with that "back in my rave days.." type of attitude. Let's face it, when will you ever get to go to EDC for \$25.. never. Rave scene is dead and it's mainly a cash cow for only a handful of promoters who cater to high school seniors and up." (31 M, 1998)
- "Like many other generations, my worry is the capitalistic consumerism is taking advantage of the scene and will inevitably bring it to its end. Similar to how we portray "hippies" today as the 70s counterculture and Halloween costumes, I predict this era will be remembered the same way. We will see kids 30 years from now wearing kandi and plur t-shirts going trick or treating." (26 M, 2003)
- "Because rave culture is becoming more mainstream, especially with the rising popularity of big festivals like Ultra and EDC, I feel like people focus more on doing drugs, dressing up, getting drunk, etc. rather than the most important thing, which, in my opinion, is the music." (20 F, 2013)
- "They can be really great experiences with a group of friends and I will always cherish the times that I have/had. However, there is always a danger if drugs are involved and I think we have typically, as Americans, done everything we can to destroy the culture by making it a more and more corporate thing. It's important to remember, dance clubs and undergrounds were absolutely demonized in the media in the late 90's and early 2000's. Now that these big festivals bring in big money you hardly hear a thing about it. Interesting." (32 M, 2013)
- "It has been overwhelmingly positive and ravers have been some of the nicest people I've ever met. I feel that the "EDM" trend and club culture in general have brought down the quality of these events in the last 10 years and I hope that people start to return to PLUR, the spirit that made raves so great in the first place. some club kids come to events to show off, drink too much and spend all their time on their phones... these days it seems to be getting harder to find the PLUR ones who are always friendly and helpful.  
I hope people come to realize that raves and electronic events shouldn't be about following trends or getting fucked up, they should be about enjoying the music and about people coming together to share something that they love. I love the feeling of community and I look forward to experiencing that again, especially now that I'm getting older and it seems like most of my peers are settling down into lives that don't complement mine." (28 F, 2004)
- "Raves are fun while we are young. We are in the golden age of this movement so ride it until it dies." (18 M, 2014)
- "Raving is about belonging to something. A new wave of truly gripping sounds, the sounds of the future. I am blessed to have had, and will continue to have, the experiences, people and even two girlfriends! Keep going to raves bro. It's awesome. I know I talked about drugs a lot, but I listen to EDM all day every day, over 15 genres, and I'm sitting in an office. No room for drugs

there! Yes they do follow the scene quite heavily, but a true lover of EDM doesn't need drugs to enjoy the music. And that, is a raver." (22 M, 2010)

- "Trying not to sound elitist, but I feel that as electronic music becomes more popular, the good vibes are getting diluted with people that are just there to party (not that that's a bad thing for them! It's just not as fun for me to be at big popular events than smaller ones)" (24 M, 2010)
- "Be yourself." (20 M, 2013)
- "No matter how far I've traveled to go to a rave, whether it was across the country or across the city, I've found that they are all consistent with the way the people are and the way it made me feel. I can't say if it's the music or the drugs or the friends I've made but it's really just so amazing and it feels like another world that I never want to leave. I think everyone should experience a rave sometime in their life, I've never taken a friend to an event and had them not enjoy themselves and want to come back." (20 M, 2014)