



Surveillance and Social Exclusion in Nighttime Economies

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From the early 1990s onwards the nighttime economy and, more broadly, the 24-hour city (Heath and Stickland 1997; Lovatt and O'Connor 1995) has started to develop, with many cities now including the nightlife sector in their regeneration plans (Bianchini 1995; Lovatt and O'Connor 1995). This revitalization of nightlife districts is expected to boost the local economy, but also to help make cities competitive and attract certain types of tourists/visitors. The fact that alcohol related establishments are the driving force of this economy (Hollands and Chatterton 2003) makes the nighttime economy different from the daytime economy. Concerns about personal safety and fear of crime have increasingly started to dominate ideas around how to manage these leisure-based inner-city areas (Judd 2003; Bannister et al. 2006).

Based on empirical research in Utrecht and Rotterdam (the Netherlands) this paper looks into the broad variety of safety measures that are taken in two particular nightlife districts and explores how practices of surveillance impact on various dimensions of social exclusion. It is shown that new forms of governance in nightlife districts reveal different ways of controlling public space than traditional ways of policing and brings target groups who are deemed 'incompatible' with the neoliberal urban vision disproportionately under surveillance. Moreover, by reclaiming civility a certain 'morality' around public space is created that reinforces the broader vision for order in the entrepreneurial city and makes urban public space less inclusive.