

Implementing the Three Ps Drug Policy: Harm Reduction or Risk Production?

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Background Music festivals are associated with high levels of illegal drug use. Strategies to reduce drug-related crime at festivals through private policing have been criticised for producing unanticipated effects that contribute to drug-related crime and drug-related harm.

Methods This presentation presents findings from an ethnographic study that collected data using observations and interviews. This study aimed to investigate the role of festival security in harm reduction at English music festivals, with the overarching aim of contributing to existing knowledge regarding contemporary drug and crime issues. Adopting an active-membership-role as an unpaid member of festival security, the observational stage of this study explored and analysed policy in practice.

Results Critically engaging with the Three Ps drug policy, this paper evaluates strategies to Prevent, Pursue and Protect. With a predominant focus on entrance searching and the policing of drug possession, this presentation offers qualitative insights into the harms caused by the policing of drugs and festival drug markets.

Conclusion: This presentation concludes by advocating for the implementation of additional harm reduction measures at English music festivals, beyond public and private policing.

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