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Title

Voices of the banned: Emergent causality and the unforeseen consequences of patron banning policies

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Abstract

In Western cities, public authorities are increasingly resorting to the use of patron banning orders as means of reducing alcohol and other drug-related harms in nightlife. While the use of banning orders is often hailed by authorities, due to their presumed deterrent and crime reduction effects, little research exists on how patrons react to being banned. This is a problem, as assessments of whether the policy goals of banning orders are being met, and of the wider consequences of banning, necessitate understanding the practice from the perspective of its targets. This article combines statistical data from police registers, and in-depth interviews with 10 young patrons who have been subjected to a two year banning order in Aalborg, Denmark, to explore how patrons experience and negotiate the banning orders imposed upon them. While police use of patron banning orders is often based on a conception of patrons as rational actors, as well as on linear notions of cause and effect, this article challenges such conceptions. Instead, the article draws on actor network theory, and an understanding of banned youth as situated in networks of relations, in order to provide insights into how the effects of banning policies emerge in often unpredictable ways and with unforeseeable consequences dependent on the specific socio-material contexts through which they are co-produced. In this way the article aims to provide a more detailed understanding of the causal mechanisms giving shape to banning policy effects.

Keywords

Nightlife, Banning orders, Patron perspectives, Actor network theory, Emergent causality, Unintended consequences

Introduction

In recent decades Western cities have seen a massive expansion of the night-time economy, along with growing concerns about young people's binge drinking and unruly behavior in nightlife. In response new control and safety measures have emerged. One key example of this is the growing use of "patron banning orders"¹ (Hadfield et al., 2009; Palmer & Warren, 2014). Although the banning of troublesome individuals from frequenting specific drinking outlets is not a new form of control, Room (2012) has argued that the increased use of such strategies represents a shift from structural legislative approaches, concerned with regulating venues' opening hours and alcohol prices, toward more individualized modes of control, concerned with managing the "irresponsible drinker". One reason for public authorities' growing use of patron banning orders is their purported deterrent and crime prevention effects, addressing a focal concern of patrons by threatening their ability to frequent preferred venues or entire nightlife districts (Hadfield et al., 2009). In this article, however, I draw on interviews with banned patrons in Aalborg, Denmark, to challenge the linear models of causality and deterrence underpinning current banning policies. Inspired by critical alcohol and other drug (AOD) research, the article instead argues that one way to advance our understanding of patron banning policies is to develop a conceptual framework that enables us to analyze the effects of banning policies as emergent, and as co-produced through patrons' mediation and the assembling of immediate socio-material contexts. Thus, rather than focusing on a predefined cause-and-effect variable, such as the relation between banning orders and the reduction of alcohol-related crime, the aim of this article is to provide an account of the co-constitution of various ban effects, which include but are not reducible to the general question of deterrence and nightlife crime reduction.

¹ These orders are sometimes also referred to as "drinking banning orders" (Hadfield et al., 2009).

Like many other policies and harm reduction initiatives (Race, 2014), police use of patron banning orders tends to rest on normative thinking, and a linear and delimited model of causality. Dominant discourses on police use of patron banning orders often hold that young people's drug use and unruly behavior in nightlife is unacceptable, and that the purpose of policy must be to deter such practices. Within such discourses, deterrence is typically highlighted as a direct and unidirectional effect of patron bans, reflecting a linear notion of causation. Furthermore, notions of linear causation also inform authorities' claims that the use of banning orders enhances nightlife safety by removing troublesome individuals from hotspot areas. As such, governance through patron banning orders can be seen as a particular form of "contractual governance" (Crawford, 2003), which treats patrons as self-maximizing, rational-choice actors, and aims to enhance nightlife order by encouraging patrons to engage in "regulated self-regulation"; by threatening to exclude disorderly individuals (ban them), and through the threat of fines for ban violation. Furthermore, dominant discourses on the effects of patron banning orders also provide evidence of a delimited notion of causality, in that deterrence and crime reduction are often the only effects deemed worthy of consideration by authorities, while other possible effects are overlooked or defined as irrelevant. This line of thinking is today also reflected in attempts to measure the precise crime- and harm-reduction effects of patron banning orders (Conigrave et al., 2007, cited in Room, 2012), though this has proved difficult (Miller et al., 2016). Today it is not just discourses on patron banning that are characterized by linear and delimited models of causality. Rather, as Race (2014) points out, such models span and dominate a range of harm reduction approaches, and are particularly evident in experimental hotspot studies attempting to measure the linear relation between specific police interventions and their crime reduction effects.

In recent years however, researchers in the AOD field have become increasingly skeptical of such reasoning, arguing that linear models of cause and effect are too simplistic to be able to comprehend the complex and sometimes unexpected processes of causality and effects emerging from police

interventions into AOD scenes (Maher & Dixon, 1999; Aitken et al., 2002; Small et al., 2006). Drawing on ethnographic research, these studies instead provide evidence of the multiple and collateral effects of police interventions, highlighting how law enforcement can engender transformations in users' drug- and risk-taking practices, delimit their access to health facilities, and result in drug market displacements which, in turn, might have feedback effects on police practices. Against this background, Race (2014) has highlighted the need for more open-ended explorations of processes of causation and the wider effects of policy and police interventions. Rather than operating with predefined notions and measures of effects and causation, Race proposes that the analytical concept of "emergent causality", derived from the work of Connolly (2004), is useful to enhance attentiveness to the wider circumstances, practices, relations and forces through which various effects are constituted, changed and come to function as causes for other actions. To propose such a relational approach is to understand causality as emergent and dependent on the manner in which objects, actors and relations come together at a given time (Race, 2014). From this perspective police interventions are conceived as only one "actor" among many in the materialization of a range of effects which include, but are not reducible to, the general question of deterrence (Race, 2011).

While existing research on patron banning has examined authorities' governance through banning strategies, and attempted to outline the legal properties and benefits of banning orders in reducing alcohol-related harm in nightlife (Hadfield et al., 2009; Room, 2012; Palmer & Warren, 2014; Miller et al., 2016; Søgaaard et al., 2017), there is currently very little research on those who are the targets of banning policies.² This is a problem because much research has demonstrated that the outcome of policies are as much a result of local settings and the actors involved as they are of top-down decisions (Maher & Dixon, 1999; Aitken et al., 2002). Against this background I argue that a focus on the

² One exception is an article written in Dutch by Schuilenburg & van Steden (2014). Due to language barriers, this work has not been included in the present article.

banned, and how the banning policies imposed upon them are mediated by police practices, the specific and gendered practices of banned youth, and the situational enactment of emotions, spaces, and peer relations, can generate new insights into how banning orders come to have multiple ontological effects and consequences as part of grounded networks of association.

In order to analyze how patron banning policies come to have varied ontological effects, I argue that the notion of “emergent causality”, combined with the actor network theory (ANT) concepts of “mediation” and “event” (Latour, 2005), provides a useful conceptual framework. One key advantage of this analytical approach is that it allows us to explore how bans give rise to a range of ontological effects, without reducing these effects to the properties of particular legal provisions or to the actions of isolated rational actors, such as the police or individual patrons. Rather, in this analysis I demonstrate how “ban effects” are best understood as co-produced “events” (Gomart & Hennion, 1999) that emerge from the coming together of particular policy agendas, legal provisions, relations, actors, emotions, technologies, gendered practices, and spaces in shifting configurations. While some configurations might result in reduced crime, I show how banning orders in other configurations come to have unintended effects, which are sometimes even contrary to those intended by the authorities, thereby complicating causal explanations of the role of banning policies in nightlife governance.

Background

There are several reasons why the use of patron banning has gained prominence in recent years. One is that, while free market ideologies often discourage politicians and public authorities from imposing strict limitations on alcohol suppliers, authorities often support banning policies because doing so enables them to appear responsive to growing public concerns about alcohol-related problems (Room, 2012). In Denmark, the Union of Police Chiefs (2002) has thus encouraged the use of patron banning

orders as a means of reducing violence, disorder, and illegal drug use in nightlife. The alcohol industry has also played a key role in building support for the use of banning orders. For example, Horesta, the Danish Association of Restaurants, Bars and Hotels, has been very active in the media, arguing for legislative changes that will expand police abilities to use not only single-venue banning orders, but also *zonal* banning orders that restrict targeted patrons from frequenting all venues within a specified nightlife district (Ministry of Justice, 2005). In Denmark, as elsewhere, the alcohol industry's agitation for more effective controls of "irresponsible drinkers" has served the purpose of diverting authorities' attention away from legislative measures that aim to enhance nightlife safety by targeting alcohol suppliers and by restricting the availability of alcohol (see also Room, 2012).

In Denmark, police-issued patron banning orders are based on administrative rather than criminal law, and police can issue them on the basis of an individual's criminal behavior either inside or in connection with a visit to a venue. The order can be imposed by a judge or by an officer at the time of arrest (Ministry of Justice, 2009). Since the early 2000s, the police in Aalborg have been at the forefront of the use of zonal patron banning orders. In Aalborg, the main nightlife district is composed of approximately 30 venues located along a 150m-long pedestrianized street, locally known as "the Street". To be under a zonal ban in Aalborg means to be banned for two years from 44 venues, including all of the venues in the Street as well as 17 located in the neighboring streets. The two year zonal ban is imposed for legal offences such as being caught in possession of illegal drugs, violence, drug dealing, rape and possession of weapons. If a person is caught by the police violating a ban, in Aalborg s/he will be fined 1500 DKK (approximately USD240) for a first-time violation, and 2000 DKK (approximately USD320) for a second time violation. The ultimate penalty for repeated violation of a ban is imprisonment for up to four months (Andersen, 2011a). Police have claimed the use of zonal bans to be a success, because they are believed to have reduced drug dealing, drug use and violence in nightlife (Andersen, 2009), though no systematic analysis exists to support such

claims. The use of zonal patron banning orders is typically justified by two further main goals. One is to enhance the safety of other patrons by removing offending individuals from a particular nightlife district, and the second is that the “painful” experience of being banned will encourage individuals to desist from future troublesome behavior in nightlife and more generally.

In Denmark, the voices and perspectives of patrons and banned individuals are rarely included in public discussions about patron banning policies. While the voices of individuals categorized as “addicts” are often neglected in drug policy debates, due to stigmatizing assumptions that they are incapable of providing useful information about their own lives (Tutenges et al., 2015), banned individuals are silenced because they are seen as deviant, undeserving and bad. Banned patrons have been discursively “othered” by police, the alcohol industry and the media, who often depict them as “violent assailants”, “criminals”, “anti-social” and “drug dealers” (see Poulsen, 2004; Andersen, 2009), rather than as youth who have committed an act of violence or been caught in possession of illegal drugs for personal use.

One consequence of the discursive othering of banned patrons is that, in policy debates, they are often spoken about but rarely allowed to speak for themselves. One exception to this was a series of newspaper articles with a young male reveler banned from Aalborg in 2011. In contrast to media accounts claiming that Aalborg nightlife was “hermetically sealed off” for individuals holding a zonal ban (Andersen, 2011a), the young man reported how he loved partying with his friends, and that staying away from the Street was for him as difficult as quitting cigarettes. He had therefore systematically violated the ban, and he estimated that he had been caught by police more than 30 times, bringing his fines for violating the ban to a total of 50,000 DDK (approximately USD8000) (Andersen, 2011b). While the viability of banning policy goals and arguments often rests on the assumption that banned youth comply with their exclusion, Beckett and Herbert (2010) have

rightfully argued that if the banned routinely return to the spaces from which they are banned, it is unlikely that the intended effects of banning orders are realized. This in turn points to the need for including the perspective of the banned, and how they are involved in the mediation of nightlife banning policies, as this can provide a more nuanced understanding of such policies and their effects and consequences.

Analytical approach

In many western countries, AOD policies and harm reduction are often informed by an understanding of “problematic” subjects as autonomous and rational actors. Reflecting broader changes from classic to neoliberal governmentality, preventive interventions therefore often aim to reduce AOD-related harm by encouraging individualized self-regulation, self-care and self-disciplined consumption (Moore, 2004). In recent years, this individualised approach has, however, been challenged by “risk environment” studies, often identified with the work of Rhodes (2002; 2009). Rather than focusing on the individual as a primary determinant of harm, risk environment studies argue that macro as well as micro structural factors - such as economic deprivation, lack of access to employment and health care services, social in/exclusion, peer pressure and societal norms - are also implicated in production of AOD-related harm. As a consequence, risk environment studies have argued that in order to reduce AOD-related harm, structural and contextual barriers to harm reduction need to be identified and removed (Rhodes, 2009).

While a focus on risk environments helps to overcome the limits of individualism characterizing much AOD harm reduction, this approach has recently been criticized for reproducing a simplified model of linear causality, and for failing to account for complexity. Duff (2016), for instance, has argued that a longstanding problem in risk environment research is its tendency to see AOD use as a

function of accumulated and reified risk and policy factors, and that it therefore fails to account adequately for observable variations and articulations. Too often causal relations are asserted rather than demonstrated. Furthermore, Race (2014) has argued that notions of linear causation, inherent to many crime and harm reduction initiatives, are flawed in that they overlook the many connections, processes and associations that give rise to expected but also unexpected effects. In an attempt to pave the way for more detailed understanding of the causal mechanisms of AOD use and harm reduction, researchers have therefore turned to alternative models of cause and effect.

One such model can be found in the ANT pioneered by Latour (2005), which critiques mainstream sociology's tendency to attribute a stable, stand-alone agency to certain entities, while often adding a "social" dimension as context. Conventional public discourses on patron banning orders are an example of such attribution. Here, bans are depicted as acting in a relatively stable and predictable way, while "social factors" might play a role in debilitating or amplifying their effectiveness as deterrent and crime reduction measures. Taking ideas from semiotics and applying them to sociological analysis, Latour instead argues that agency and effects are better understood as relationally constituted. There are no stable subjects interacting in predictable ways with passive objects, and no social structure supporting the organization of society. Instead, Latour aims to expose the empiricity of actor-networks – that is, the specific ways in which causal relationships and states of affairs are assembled and enacted. Within this framework, both causes and effects are seen as the outcome of particular configurations of contingent network relations. In order to explore the generation of actions, Latour (2005) argues that researchers should follow their agent of concern, account for its intersection with an abundance of immediate forces, and be attentive to how each of the intersections can act to translate, modify or transform effects. In recent years a growing body of AOD studies have deployed Latour's model to argue that rather than assuming that AOD have stable effects, relative either to some inherent properties or to "social factors", these effects are better

understood as being “co-produced by a network of forces immanent to the events of consumption” (Hart, 2015, p. 151, see also Demant, 2009; Hart & Moore, 2014; Dilkes-Frayne, 2014).

Inspired by this approach, I argue that one way to investigate the effects of patron banning policies in relation to a much wider range of possible outcomes than those that usually come into view is to follow banning orders as they intersect with a plethora of immediate forces, and examine how the “taking shape” of ban effects is co-produced through specific encounters and heterogeneous networks of actors and relations. From this perspective, causality is emergent (Race, 2014) rather than determined, and belongs to the network rather than to its components (Hart & Moore, 2014). Importantly, the agency of the network should not be seen as attributable to the sum of its parts; that is, an actor – for instance, an officially banned subject – should not be understood as merely an “intermediary” that merely “transports” or carries the intentions and/or sanctions of policies “without transformation” (Latour, 2005, p. 39). From an ANT perspective, by contrast, the role of each “actant” (whether human and non-human) is understood as one of “mediation”, meaning that they translate, distort and modify the meanings or elements they are supposed to carry. Just as we cannot deduce the effects of AOD use from abstracted social (e.g. risk) factors, we cannot deduce the outcome of policies from their intentions or from police enforcement practices. Rather, we need to pay careful attention to how various actants – such as a banned youth, a “tough on crime” discourse, a police officer, an enforcement practice, an emotion, a specific legal provision, a space or a friend of a banned individual – mediate policies, and how such mediation generates emerging effects, which again come to influence the mediating actions of others.

While the concept of “mediation” can be used to analyze specific and grounded translations of banning policies, the concepts of “event” or “event-network” (Gomart and Hennion, 1999, p. 225) are useful for tracing the chains of mediation and transformations producing specific effects. In this

article, I use the concept of “event” to characterize a process of successive actions and mediations, generating a series of transformations and effects (Dilkes-Frayne, 2014), including young patrons’ compliance with or violation of bans. While some scholars have used an ANT framework primarily as means of focusing on non-human elements of networks, this article follows Dilkes-Frayne’s argument that a primary focus on humans, in this case the voices and practices of the banned, is compatible with the aims of ANT, provided that these persons are not treated as sole and independent agents detached from their relations with other human and non-human actants.

Method

The data used in this article form part of a larger study of nightlife policing and the use of banning measures in Aalborg, a Danish city of 210,000 inhabitants. The main aim of this research is to study how (in)formal public-private collaboration between police, venue owners and bouncers shapes the production of nightlife order and the enforcement of zonal bans. In order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the workings of patron banning orders, the researchers also collected data on how banned patrons relate to being banned from Aalborg nightlife. The study was approved by the Danish Data Protection Agency (reference number: AU62908), the ethical review board for Danish social science research.

Different strategies were used to recruit participants. One was to send a flyer – a call for participants – to most of the educational institutions in Aalborg, which carried information about the project, its purpose, a guarantee of full anonymity, and contact details. Three participants were recruited in this way. In conversations with bouncers and venue owners, who participated in the main “control-side research project”, the author also started spreading the word that he was keen to interview patrons who were or had been banned. Five participants were recruited through the use of

this snowball strategy. Lastly, a notice was posted on Facebook containing information similar to that listed on the flyer. The author asked friends, colleagues and acquaintances to “like” or “share” this notice. Two participants were recruited in this way. Although recruited via Facebook, the author and these participants were unknown to each other prior to the interview. The criterion for inclusion was that participants should have personal experience of being subjected to a police-issued zonal patron banning order in Aalborg. With the exception of one participant who was 32, participants were aged between 20 and 26 years. The group of participants included one female and nine males. The gender imbalance reflects the fact that the vast majority of individuals subjected to zonal banning orders in Aalborg are men, which is why the author, despite much effort, was unable recruit more female participants. In terms of occupational background, one participant was unemployed, six worked as mechanics or in low-skilled service professions, and three were students at a higher educational institution. In exchange for participating in interviews, participants were given cinema tickets worth 150 DKK (approximately USD24).

All interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide and lasted between one and two hours. Before the interviews, participants were thoroughly informed about the purpose of the study and the voluntary and anonymous nature of their participation. It was made clear that they could withdraw at any time without any repercussions. None did so. The interviews were designed to give participants the opportunity to elaborate on: their nightlife experiences, the episode(s) that resulted in their ban(s), and how being banned had impacted on their life and relationships. If they had violated their ban, they were asked to describe the circumstances and episodes leading to the violations, and the ways in which they tried to avoid police detection. Interviews were coded using NVivo and a grounded theory approach. Drawing on Latour’s notion of “tracing” mediating relations, the coding specifically focused on points of change and transformation in the way participants related to the ban on weekend nights, in their interactions with friends, and in their use of substances and of space.

Several participants, for instance, described how being banned had led to conflicts with friends and intense feelings of isolation, while others described how being banned had led them to seek out alternative party scenes where drug use and crime were the norm. To retain participant anonymity, pseudonyms are used throughout the article.

In order to contextualize the qualitative data, relevant documents outlining the government's intentions and the legal framework for police use of patron banning orders were collected, along with local newspaper articles. The latter were used to map local discourses and the historical development of police use of zonal banning orders in Aalborg nightlife. Furthermore, statistical data on police use of banning orders in Aalborg nightlife from 2011 to mid-2015 was collected using POLSAS, the official police database, where all cases and verdicts are registered. The database contains a description of the incident leading to the ban, which was used to establish different categories of offences (drugs, violence, weapons possession, theft, and unspecified). The dataset was cleaned to focus on unique cases, meaning that a particular case, at times involving more than one offender, is only counted once. The dataset also contains cases where individuals were caught by police violating a zonal banning order. Again, the dataset was cleaned to focus on unique cases. The data were analyzed with Stata 13 (StataCorp), and are used in the following analysis to outline key patterns both in police use of zonal banning orders in Aalborg nightlife, and in patrons' violations thereof. Access to the POLSAS database was granted by the Northern Jutland Police Department and based on a written agreement stating that all data on specific persons would be anonymized in publications, that the data could be used for publications related to the research project, and that the police had the right to read any articles or reports based on the data. The police did not, however, have the right to decide on or alter the content of publications.

An overview of bans and violations

Every weekend, “the Street” attracts thousands of young people from the wider Aalborg area, as well as tourists from Norway and Sweden. During the early 2000s, recurring reports about alcohol-related violence and revelers’ use of ecstasy led the police to start experimenting with the use of zonal banning orders. Media accounts indicate that the use of such orders rose gradually during the 2000s. Data from police registers in Aalborg show that between 2011 and mid-2015 the police issued a total of 388 zonal bans. More than two thirds of these (70.6%) were issued based on drug-related offences (Table 1).

TABLE 1

Although media accounts have suggested that banning orders are primarily used to target drug dealers in Aalborg’s nightlife (Andersen, 2009), police registers show that the majority of zonal bans are issued based on individual possession of very limited quantities of illegal drugs. Case descriptions in the police database show that 73% of drug offences involved possession of one gram or less of the drug in question, and an additional 13% involved possession of between one and two grams. In 64 cases the specific amount was not noted; however, most of those cases were prosecuted as drug possession for personal use. This indicates that the group most likely to be targeted by zonal bans is clubbers who are caught in possession of drugs for personal consumption (see also Søgård et al., 2017). In terms of showing the gendered distribution of bans, the POLSAS data is incomplete since the gender of the banned is only reported in 25% of the cases. In these cases, however, 95% of the banned were men and 5% women. The impression that it is primarily men who are banned is supported by media accounts. In 2011, for instance, the police stated that of the 113 individuals, who at that time held a ban, 108 were men and only five were women (Andersen, 2011a).

The interview sample includes interviews with 10 participants who reported having received a total of 14 different zonal bans issued by police. Somewhat in line with the above statistics, the participants reported being banned due to violent offences (seven cases), possession of drugs for personal consumption (six cases), and possession of weapons (one case). Eight of the participants reported having received a zonal ban once in their life, one reported being banned twice, and one reported having received a ban four times. Since a person can only hold one ban at a time, this means that two of the participants have experienced extensive periods of exclusion. Police registers also show that zonal banning orders in Aalborg are regularly violated. Table 2 shows the number of zonal bans issued by police per year, and Table 3 shows the number of times police caught a person violating a zonal ban from 2011 to mid-2015. Again, these tables show cases and not persons, meaning that the same individual might be responsible for several violations registered by police.

TABLE 2

TABLE 3

Six of the interviewees reported having been caught by police violating their ban. One reported only being caught once, two reported being caught twice, one five times and one six to seven times. Lastly, one participant estimated that he had been caught by police more than twenty times. Though only six of the ten participants had experienced being caught by police violating their ban, all reported that they occasionally violated the ban without being caught, some even very systematically. Several also reported that their friends and acquaintances holding bans often violated them. This suggests that the violation of zonal bans by young patrons' in Aalborg is relatively normalized and routinized, and that such violations often go unnoticed by the authorities. Against this background the following section draws on qualitative data to provide insights into the different social processes leading patrons to violate a ban.

The difficulties of compliance: Drinking settings, affects and peer relations as forces in the ban event

Like other deterrence strategies (Race, 2011), governance through patron banning presumes a rational-choice actor, who in view of threats of exclusion and fines will be deterred from deviant practices, including violation of bans. While such reasoning might hold some validity, it can be criticized for operating with a narrow conception of young patrons, ignoring the fact that they are often motivated by multiple concerns, and that their practices emerge within larger relational networks. While the fear of being fined did lead some participants periodically to comply with their ban, the following material outlines how drinking settings, contextually generated affects and peer relations become co-constitutive of banned youths' non-compliance with bans. The following thus provides evidence of how the singular rational individual is not the only source of agency. Rather, ban events emerge from an assemblage of heterogeneous elements and relations.

With one exception, all of the participants emphasized that going out was of great importance to them, and that their party destination of choice was the Street. In the following quotation, Anders (male, 23 y.o.) reflects on what going out meant to him before being banned:

I was going out a lot. Back then, that was basically what happened in your life, going out Fridays, Saturdays and sometimes Thursdays. The rest of the week you were actually just recharging [your batteries] to get ready for the next party.

Many participants also made strong associative links between going out and being young, and emphasized that the Street held a strong attraction for them, being imagined as the place “where the action is” (Goffman, 1967):

[Going out] meant friendships, a whole lot of friendships, and it meant that you had something to look forward to, that you were part of a group, and it was fun. Going out was like *the* thing for all of us, all of my friends..... And the Street was *the* place. We didn't go out anywhere else. (Interview, Pia, female, 23 y.o.).

The above is indicative of how many of the participants' ascribed particular symbolic and social meanings to the Street, viewing it as an epicenter for their enactment of friendship relations.

However, interviews also highlighted how the atmosphere – the music, lights, fun, meeting with friends and intensities of AOD use or dancefloor experiences (see also Bøhling, 2014; Poulsen, 2015) – led participants to develop affective ties to this particular drinking setting. Affect is interesting because rather than being a simple concentration of feelings, it also constitutes an embodied force and a source of orientation and action (Duff, 2016). In line with this, interviews revealed that affects sometimes came to function as a constitutive force in the production of ban violation. This was evident in participants' accounts of how they feared that compliance with bans would lead them to lose friends, but also in accounts of how the atmosphere of the Street had an alluring, and hard to resist, appeal to them:

[When I received the ban] I was supposed to stop going there [the Street], but I couldn't. I was addicted to it. It was just so special there, the atmosphere – everybody knew each other. I got caught many times, and fined, but I didn't care. (Interview, Troels, male, 26 y.o.).

The above extract is an example of how affect, sometimes articulated almost as a craving for experiencing the intensity of a particular drinking setting, can function as an alluring or seductive force, which not only operates beyond the full control of the actor, but is also a key driver in patrons' violation of bans.

Peers and friends also play a constituting part in young patrons' violation of bans. While authorities tend to view banned youth as singular rational actors, the following material suggests that they are better understood as actors situated within networks of social relations, and whose response to being banned is influenced by the mediating practices of their peers. Interviews suggested that banned youth are encouraged by friends to violate their ban, and come along and party:

I tried to stay away [from the Street], but my friends, they really wanted to party in the Street and they were pushing me, a lot. When I'm drunk and others are tempting me like, my friends are saying "come on, you're not going to get caught". My willpower isn't that strong when it comes to that, right. I'm trying, but if they continue, sometimes I eventually just give up: "All right then". They promise stuff like "if you get caught we'll pay half your fine". Of course they never do, but still. (Interview, Poul, male, 25 y.o.).

For male ban holders, the encouragement of friends can sometimes take the form of challenges to and disparagement of their masculinity:

Many don't comply with the ban. Except Hans, he's a little pussy. He doesn't dare to party in the Street anymore. Since he received the ban he hasn't been there at all. (Interview, Niels, male, 21 y.o.).

As this extract indicates, gender functions as an actant shaping the co-production of ban effects. This was also clear in interviews showing that some male participants' experience of being caught violating a ban, was mediated by the gendered interpretations of their male peers.

Back then, just about everything I did was turned into a good story. If you had a conflict with police, you were seen as a "bad ass". I was a real bad as. I think I scored some girls on that account.

I was always the one with the good stories, and many of my friends just thought it was cool when I was apprehended by police [for violating the ban]. (Interview, Dennis, male, 22 y.o.).

In line with studies showing that displays of opposition to authorities can form part of some men's construction of masculine identities (Messerschmidt, 2000), the above provides evidence of how ban violation can form part of a situated assembling of masculine status and identities. The above material furthermore shows that rather than the rational actor being the sole source of action, ban events emerge through the collective coming together of the nightlife setting, symbolic meanings, affects, gendered practices, banned subjects and peer relations in a particular configuration. While the actor-network enables some actions, as will be outlined in detail later, it sometimes also reduces the individuals' capacity to comply with bans. For instance, when confronted by peers urging them to violate their ban – either by encouraging them to come along or by mocking them for being unmanly and scared of the police – compliance becomes a considerable accomplishment for those holding a ban. If we are to develop a comprehensive understanding of the effects of banning orders we need, however, not only to replace abstract conceptions of banned subjects as rational actors with grounded analysis of the networks of forces and relations co-constituting ban events. We also need to focus on the wider and sometimes unexpected effects of banning orders.

The unintended and harmful effects of banning orders

In recent decades much research has documented how law enforcement and drug market interventions have the potential, inadvertently, to produce harmful outcomes for drug users and to exacerbate drug users' risk behavior (Maher & Dixon, 1999; Small et al., 2006). Inspired by this work, in this section I analyze how banning orders sometimes participate in contradictory, unforeseen and harmful eventualities when they come into contact with actual social relations.

In the media, as noted earlier, one of the ways in which police in Aalborg have justified the use of zonal banning orders is by arguing that the “painful” experience of being banned is likely to lead individuals to desist from future troublesome nightlife behavior. This was, for instance, clear in the following statement made by a leading police officer in 2011:

It is my clear impression that most young people very much regret being banned from the Street. They have much respect for it [the ban], and it shocks them. It’s not fun, not being able to come along when one’s friends are heading for the Street to party all weekend. In that way a banned young man or woman is excluded from the friendship group and that definitely gives them cause for thought. (Vice Police Commissioner cited in Andersen, 2011a, p. 10).

In line with the above, some of the participants in this study reported that the experience of being banned had led to feelings of regret and had also had a disciplinary effect. One example of this was provided by Kent, who was banned after being caught in possession of 0.2 grams of MDMA at a local nightclub:

I regret it of course, you know. I’ll never again bring drugs with me to a nightclub. I’ve learned from being punished. I think one year or half a year would be sufficient though, by then I already had many regrets. (Interview, Kent, male, 27 y.o.).

While the police have argued that bans, by reducing banned youths’ options for socializing with friends, are likely to have crime-reduction effects on post-ban behavior, interviews suggested that the use of banning orders can also have a negative impact on young people’s health and wellbeing, and may end up exacerbating their risk behavior. The most extreme example of this was provided by Pia, who described being banned after punching another young woman in the face. Pia explained that the incident was her first and only encounter with the criminal justice system. Unlike some male participants, who reported bragging about their ban to friends, Pia explained how she felt deeply

ashamed when banned (in this sense, being banned might be more compatible with established masculine rather than feminine gender roles). Since Pia generally saw herself as a law-abiding citizen, she initially decided to comply with the ban. Pia also explained how she had tried to persuade her friends to party with her at venues in other parts of Aalborg where she was not banned, but without much success. Eventually, some of Pia's friends stopped inviting her to pre-parties, which led her to feel increasingly socially isolated:

I couldn't stand being so cut off from everything, and I felt I was losing many friends. I wasn't part of it anymore, I wasn't invited to pre-parties anymore, because [imitating a friend] "Pia can't go out anymore". I lost so many friends having that ban. I had lots of quarrels with my friends because I wasn't invited. They had all kinds of lame excuses. (Interview, Pia).

At other times Pia was invited to the pre-party, but then left there while her friends headed into town. For Pia, being banned was therefore coupled with intense feelings of frustration, abandonment and desperation, culminating in a suicide attempt:

[At pre-parties] it wasn't like I was going easy [with the alcohol] just because I wasn't going with them to town. Getting drunk like them, and then when they left [to go to a nightclub] I was all alone. Completely wasted and all alone with all my thoughts... that was really tough. Because it was every weekend people were going to town partying, and then you're just left back [at the pre-party] alone. I think I was feeling lonely, and it's just that age when partying is what it's all about [...]. Then one weekend when we had yet again been drinking heavily [at a pre-party], and they left, I was sitting at the table, and the music stopped, and I heard the door slamming. They had gone, and I was sitting there alone. I was like, I can't do this anymore. So I cut myself [Pia points at her wrist]. There was blood all over, and I panicked because I was so drunk. So I phoned a friend

and she came and called an ambulance. That's when I started going with them to town again [violating the ban]. I just couldn't cope with not being able to come along.

Pia's story shows how being banned can result in young individuals becoming socially isolated and very frustrated. Consistent with research describing how women are often socialized into internalizing their AOD problems (Raine, 2001), Pia's self-harm can be interpreted as a particularly gendered articulation of the banning experience. Her case is also a good example of how causality is emergent and how ban effects should not be seen as final, but rather as a process of successive mediations. In this case such mediations comprised Pia's initial decision to comply with the ban, her attempt to persuade friends to change drinking settings, their choice to continue frequenting venues in the Street, Pia's frustration, her continued heavy alcohol consumption, and her self-harm, which became a turning point and a motivating factor for her to start violating the ban, in turn altering the ban's effect.

Ban events, as Pia's account suggests, can be seen as a process of successive mediations that generate sometimes unintended transformations and actions, including changes in actors' AOD use patterns. In the following interview extract, Paul explains how, after being banned from the Street, he started looking for new places to party. Through a friend he became involved with a group of young people arranging private rave parties where use of illicit drugs was the norm:

Before the ban, it was only nightclubs, and I almost only drank alcohol, right. After I got banned... how can I put it? I started hanging out with the wrong people. Before, when I went to private parties, like pre-parties where you drink from eight in the evening to twelve o'clock [at night], and then you head into town. There you get really drunk, and at five or six in the morning you go home to sleep. At these private parties that I attend now, they start at like seven o'clock in the evening and last until eight, nine the next morning. I've got a lot of new friends, and we take these different

kinds of drugs, mushrooms, all kind of drugs that I didn't use before. (Interview, Paul, male, 25 y.o.).

Paul's account offers an example of how youth banned from mainstream nightlife, where alcohol use remains the norm, might start frequenting alternative nightlife scenes where the use of illegal drugs is more prevalent. Banned youths' search for alternative party scenes might also be coupled with risk practices, such as drink driving:

Me and my friends [who were also banned], we just went partying in other towns. We were drink driving. We did that many times. I'd say every time we went out of town partying we were drink driving. (Interview, Ahmed, male, 22 y.o.).

The use of banning orders can sometimes also have very unexpected effects. This was evident in Tommy's account of how his search for alternative places to party led him into the local gang and outlaw-biker community, where crime is routinized:

When I got banned, I started looking for private parties, as did some of my friends [who were also banned]. We asked ourselves: "Who else is there, like us, who are not allowed to party in the Street"? Well, there are the outlaw bikers, because there's a ban on bikers [in the Street], right.³ So we started frequenting their place. We were young, and we just wanted to party, so first it was Bandidos, later on it was Hell Angels. They have their own disco, bars and stuff in their clubhouse. So we started hanging out [...]. When my ban was over I started partying in the Street again. Before I was this happy party-dude; now I hung out with the bikers. I'd made a name for myself. I was the aggressive troublemaker, the biker. (Interview, Tommy, male, 32 y.o.).

³ In recent decades, Danish police have played a key role in enforcing an informal ban on outlaw bikers and gang-related individuals in Danish nightlife, regardless of whether or not they behave in an orderly manner (see Søgaaard et al., 2016).

While other researchers have argued that banning strategies do not solve but merely displace problems (Palmer & Warren, 2014), the above extracts suggest that the use of banning orders can have unexpected and unintended effects. In the following section, I demonstrate how banning orders might also have effects that directly contradict those intended by authorities.

Negotiating nightlife access: Banned youth as active mediators

As noted above, existing research on patron banning powers has largely neglected “the voices of the banned” (see Hadfield et al., 2009; Room, 2012; Palmer & Warren, 2014). One consequence of this absence is that banned individuals often come to appear as passive and compliant objects of governance. The interview narratives, however, suggest that young patrons do not merely passively accept being banned or try to find alternative party scenes. Rather, they often act as mediators in their attempt to produce access to the venues from which they are officially banned. Below I show how banned youths attempt to gain access by changing their relationships with other actors, and by “enrolling” (Callon, 1986; see also Latour, 2005) these into larger collectives that contribute to the co-production of access for them. Enrollment is a term used by Callon (1986) to explore the various processes and techniques used to include in a larger actor-network particular actants that generate effects. This section thus provides insights into how ban effects are mediated by banned youths’ capacities to activate and stabilize network relations and the actions of others.

In Denmark, police are allowed to distribute the names and addresses of banned individuals to venue owners and bouncers, but not their photographs. Furthermore, while research has pointed to the proliferation of identification scanning technology in the sorting of desirable and undesirable or banned patrons at venues (Palmer et al., 2013), the use of such technology remains very limited in Denmark, and in Aalborg no venues made use of such technology. Due to bouncers’ lack of access

to hardcopy pictures and identification technology, most of the interviewees therefore believed that the chance of getting caught by bouncers was low when they tried to enter venues from which they were banned. When violating their ban, most participants were therefore primarily concerned with avoiding contact with police officers patrolling the nightlife.

The extent to which banned participants were concerned about being apprehended by police when trying to gain access to venues within the zone varied. At one end of the continuum, Nikolaj explained that receiving the ban had had virtually no influence on his use of venues in the Street, the reason being that he figured that police officers would most likely not be able to remember that he was subject to a ban. Not only was he not known to police prior to the violent incident leading to his ban, he also asserted that, since he looked like a decent, middle-class person, his visits to nightlife venues in the Street were unlikely to arouse police suspicion:

The week after I got banned, I partied in the Street again. It was no big deal. A month later I actually encountered three officers, including the very same officer who had arrested me. I almost bumped into him. He didn't recognize me. So I just go out as I please. Honestly, I hardly ever think about the ban when I go out. (Interview, Nikolaj, male, 21 y.o.).

While several of the participants agreed with Nikolaj that the likelihood of being detected by police was low – a perception that also seemed to fuel their lack of compliance with bans - most nevertheless engaged in different forms of practices to minimize the chance of being seen and apprehended by police when violating their ban. While the ANT framework is often used as a critique of a rational actor perspective, humans may at times also function as “active mediator[s]”, a term used by Dilkes-Frayne (2014, p. 461) in her study of how MDMA users seek to minimize the chances of contact with sniffer dogs and security personnel when trying to gain access to festival spaces. In Aalborg, two key methods used by banned youth to minimize the chances of being seen and apprehended by police

involved temporality and bodily movement. Pia, for instance, explained that, though she believed it was impossible to figure out police patrol patterns, she preferred going out on Thursdays because she assumed that there would be fewer officers on patrol than on Fridays and Saturdays. Furthermore, participants also reported that they would try to avoid being spotted by officers by turning their face away from officers when encountering them, or they would pretend to be tying their shoelaces when officers were patrolling inside the venues. Banned youths' attempt to avoid being apprehended by police also included behaving decently and leaving venues when conflicts were building or actual fights had erupted, as such incidents were believed to attract police officers.

Banned youth also attempted to “enroll” (Latour, 2005) other actors into an actor-network that could facilitate their access. While some participants reported that bouncers did sometimes alert police to their presence in nightlife venues (see also Søggaard et al., 2017), Janus, for instance, explained how, before heading into town, he would phone a bouncer he trusted to inquire about the numbers of officers currently patrolling the Street. If the bouncer reported that there were few officers present, Janus would take his chance and head for the Street. Participants also explained how they were sometimes able to persuade friends and occasionally venue staff to keep watch for them. As an example of this, Troels, who had a long history of police encounters, explained that he had been able to get the bouncers and bartenders at his preferred nightclub to warn him if officers were approaching:

I always partied at the ‘Out of Space Nightclub’. Everybody knew me. So if officers were coming, the bouncers waved, you know, warned me. Then I’d run out of the back door into the alley, smoke a cigarette, and [when the officers had left] I was allowed back inside again. (Interview, Troels).

In many situations, however, the success of such enrollment remained outside of the banned actor's control. Troels, for instance, explained that although his male friends promised to help him keep

watch for officers, they were easily distracted and forgot all about their promise when they got caught up in an interesting chat, flirting with a young woman or quarreling with a bartender. In nightlife there are many interfering factors. Participants, however, also sometimes try to stabilize and control the practices of others as a means of gaining access. The most extreme example of this was Tommy, who, as mentioned earlier, ended up becoming part of the local gang and outlaw-biker community after being banned:

The first time I got banned, I was in shock. I didn't think it was possible [for police to ban someone for two years]. [...] You learn from your mistakes. My friends and I got more aggressive after that first ban. If I was in a fight, I knew the first thing the police would do, would be to get hold of the CCTV recordings [from inside venues]. So the first thing I did was to get hold of the owner or the manager and make them erase the tape. Witnesses – staff are reliable witnesses. Bouncers are very reliable witnesses. So if they say I didn't do it, the police don't have a case. Back then the bouncer didn't dare [to say anything]... He also had to walk home, right, and he knew...

Interview: Would you beat him up?

Tommy: Oh yes, we would. Now that I knew what being banned for two years meant, I did everything I could to make it as difficult as possible for the police to catch me.

While the use of zonal banning orders is justified by authorities on the basis that bans deter patrons' violent behavior, the case with Tommy highlights a paradoxical causation and outcome where patrons' fear of being banned can become a driver of violence and intimidation, now directed at staff and potential witnesses. Such cases were mainly limited to banned male youth, who identified with "oppositional masculinity" (Messerschmidt, 2000) and were willing to engage in retaliatory violence, and they reinforce the role of gender as a key force in the production of ban effects.

Conclusion

In this article I have argued that the current move toward nightlife control measures targeting “irresponsible drinkers” has created an urgent need for better accounts of how young patrons experience and respond to being banned. Though such a focus might not produce data that can be used to directly test the extent to which banning orders reduce crime and disorder in nightlife, it can shed light on whether the policy goals used to justify banning orders are achieved (see also Beckett & Herbert, 2010). For instance, the findings in this study suggest that while authorities often justify the use of patron banning orders by arguing that they enhance nightlife safety (by removing offending individuals), this governmental goal is rarely or only partially achieved. The fact that all participants in this study reported occasionally violating their ban, some very systematically, points to several problems at the core of patron banning. Not only does it indicate a discrepancy between official claims about the effectiveness of banning measures and the practical reality of these. It also suggests that the justifications used to promote patron banning orders are often based on a narrow conception of revelers. Whereas governing authorities tend to see young patrons as rational actors, who will be deterred from deviant practices by threats of exclusion and fines, this article has highlighted how banned young people are better understood as actors situated in networks of relations and motivated by concerns that sometimes mitigate compliance with bans. One example of this is the finding that “ban events” are co-constituted by networks comprising the nightlife setting, symbolic meanings, affects, gender practices, banned subjects and peer relations. While the actor-network in some configurations enables particular actions, such as banned youth starting to frequent alternative nightlife scenes where they are not banned, in other configurations it reduces the capacity of banned youth to comply with bans. In these latter situations compliance with bans does not naturally follow

from the threat of fines, as sometimes assumed by authorities. Instead, compliance becomes an accomplishment for those holding a ban.

Equally important, this study also shows how a focus on banned youth, combined with an ANT approach, can be used to redirect the focus of analysis from predefined variables, such as the relation between banning orders, deterrence and crime reduction, to a more open-ended examination of how banning orders come to have multiple effects as part of grounded networks of associations. As such, a key aim has been to establish a need for future research on patron banning orders to focus on the unintended, unforeseen and sometimes even contradictory effects of banning orders. As part of this effort I have suggested that rather than assuming that banning orders work through linear processes of cause and effect, greater attention be paid to the emergent and contingent character of the causes and effects of banning policies, and to analyze how these are co-produced through patrons' mediation and the assembling of immediate socio-material contexts. This implies exploring how ban effects emerge from the coming together of a myriad of forces such as particular policy agendas, legal provisions, peer relations, actors, affects, (lack of) technologies, gendered practices, and spaces in shifting configurations. In this article, for instance, I showed that while banning orders in some configurations did seem to have disciplinary and crime-reduction effects on post-ban behavior, in other configurations banning orders came to have a negative impact on young people's health and wellbeing, and sometimes exacerbated their risk behavior and their use of violence in nightlife. The point here is that causality cannot be determined on the basis of *a priori* assumptions about particular entities. Rather, understanding causality as emergent, and as shaped by encounters between bodies, objects and practices, might enable us to develop sharper insights into how certain ban effects take shape and change form.

Though we must be cautious about over-generalization, this study provide clues for the development of more informed policies. The findings suggest that patron banning policies should minimize the use of long-term patron bans as these are both difficult to enforce and likely to increase non-compliant behavior on the part of the banned. Furthermore, banning policies should also take into account democratic principles of proportional justice (Scott & Pearson, 2006). For instance, there seems to be a qualitative difference between committing a violent offence and being caught in possession of illegal drugs for personal possession, a difference which is also acknowledged in the criminal justice system. Yet, in Aalborg, these offences are punished with the same administrative sanction, a two year zonal banning order. A patron banning policy should also accommodate complexity. While police agencies might have a tendency to disregard or deny responsibility for enforcement practices' unintended or unforeseen consequences, by arguing that they are merely enforcing the law (Race, 2014), patron banning policy should acknowledge the potential negative side-effects of banning orders in the lives of the banned. As part of this, authorities should commit themselves to actively tracing, rather than ignoring, the wider and non-linear consequences of banning policies, as these can provide a basis for sharpened reflexivity, and for ongoing adjustments of policies and enforcement practices with the aim of countering and reducing the detrimental impact of banning policies on the lives of young people. One key pre-condition for accommodating complexity is to engage with the young people subjected to banning orders, as the insights of those with lived experience hold much potential to inform timely and equitable policy interventions.

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TABLE 1

Cause	Frequency	Percentage
Drug offences	247	70.6
Violence	78	20.1
Possessions of weapons	9	2.3
Theft	5	1.3
Unspecified	22	5.7
Total	388	100

TABLE 2

Issued bans	Frequency
2011	89
2012	63
2013	118
2014	71
2015	47
Total	388

TABLE 3

Caught for ban violation	Frequency
2011	102
2012	107
2013	83
2014	82
2015	26
Total	400