

Institution: University of Huddersfield		
Unit of Assessment: 34 Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management		
Title of case study: Informing Anti-Violence Strategies and Training for National Charities and Live Music Venues		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: January 2019 – February 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name: 1. Rosemary Hill 2. Molly Megson	Role: 1. Senior Lecturer in Media and Popular Culture 2. Research Assistant	Period employed by submitting HEI: 1. January 2019 – Present 2. May 2019 – December 2020
Period when the claimed impact occurred: May 2019 – December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Sexual violence at live popular music events is a widespread problem in the UK, as demonstrated by a 2018 YouGov poll that reported one third of women attending festivals have experienced unwanted sexual behaviour. This impedes women's musical participation and presents a challenge to venues and promoters. Between May 2019 and December 2020, Dr Rosemary Hill's research has had the following impacts of reach and significance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (1) increased access to anti-violence training for 13 businesses in Northern England; • (2) created sharable resources to facilitate high-quality safer spaces policies; • (3) altered the anti-violence strategies and training offered by national campaigning organisations Good Night Out and White Ribbon; • (4) created a mutually beneficial network of campaigning organisations; and • (5) increased funding for anti-violence training for music venues from the Musicians' Union, Music:Leeds and Kirklees Council. 		
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The incidence of sexual violence at live music events is a perennial problem, with over 22% of women reporting such behaviour at festivals. It is an issue which popular music venues and live music promoters are typically unprepared for. Sexual violence has profound adverse social, health and emotional impacts on victim/survivors. It also negatively affects the reputational standing of music businesses. Hill's previous work at University of Leeds (February 2018 – December 2018), found that sexual violence at live music events is a long standing and widespread issue, posing a particular problem for businesses and women concert goers. Since joining The University of Huddersfield in January 2019, Hill's work has focused on investigating the processes that music businesses undertake in implementing changes to combat violence, specifically around training and safer spaces policies – a new direction from her previous work.</p> <p>From May 2019, Hill and Megson, the project Research Assistant, analysed safer spaces policies used by music businesses. This led to their March 2020 publication [3.1], which found that safer spaces policies are an important tool in creating a cultural shift towards ensuring the safety of concert goers, musicians and venue staff, as long as they are well executed, highly visible and consistently enforced. To be executed well, safer spaces policies need to: (1) address those who are most vulnerable in the venue; (2) detail practical measures in place to improve their safety; (3) clarify what kind of behaviour contravenes the policy and what will happen in cases of transgression; (4) be founded on the premise that the targets of sexual harassment and violence are telling the truth; and (5) emphasise equal access to musical pleasure [3.1].</p> <p>Hill's previous research highlighted the need for training and safer spaces policies, but left a gap in understanding how grassroots music venues and promoters might make changes, and how a more joined-up approach between venues, local music boards and national organisations might work. From June 2019, Hill developed relationships with three national non-profit organisations campaigning for safer music nightlife: Good Night Out Campaign (GNO), Girls Against Gig Groping (GAGG), and White Ribbon UK (WR). GNO is a community interest company based in London which trains and accredits music venues, pubs, clubs and bars across the UK to respond sympathetically to victim/survivors of sexual violence and to develop relevant policies. GNO is the</p>		

only organisation in the UK offering this specialist training for music venues and promoters. GAGG is a national campaigning group who work with venues, bands and ticketing companies to fight sexual violence at gigs. WR are a national charity who campaign to end men's violence against women, focusing on engaging with men. They accredit venues and larger organisations who have taken steps to improve understanding of men's violence against women. WR is the only UK charity focussing on men speaking to men in the music industry to reduce gender-based violence. Hill and Megson's research and the actions it advocates filled the gap in understanding by analysing the processes of businesses undertaking training and considering safer space policies. Methods included conducting interviews, surveys and documentary analysis with campaigning organisations, local authorities and audience members. This research found that anti-violence training offered by UK non-profit GNO is in high demand from venues and promoters, but a lack of funding hinders access [3.2]. Hill and Megson's research found that local authorities and music boards (coalitions of local music businesses, local authorities and tourism bodies) such as Music:Leeds (M:L) can assist grassroots music businesses through funding training directly, or working with GNO to improve existing training offerings. This also fitted in with local authorities' strategic objectives in maintaining Purple Flag (safe nightlife) status [3.2].

The research also found that campaigning organisations operate on tight budgets, leaving few resources for aftercare work with venues, such as aiding writing safer spaces policies. Hill and Megson's research revealed that writing policies was difficult for venue managers as they lack confidence, skills and time to do this well, whilst the language of 'safer spaces' is alienating for some. To address these issues, the research led to the creation of a free, publicly available safer spaces policy template website [3.3] which emphasises the need to address vulnerable audience members, to make practical changes, to believe victim/survivors, and to use positive language which is suitable for the ethos of the venue. This policy template was incorporated into a short zine [3.4] which was written for a punk audience to address specific concerns and worries about safer spaces policies within that community, identified by the research.

3. References to the research

Evidence of the quality of the research: publications [3.1] and [3.2] were subject to rigorous peer review prior to publication in international journals. They present new, original data where previously no research had been conducted. [3.1] is the first systematic analysis of safer spaces policies. It has been tweeted about in the US and Europe. [3.2] is the first article to use rigorous research to discuss what can be done to address sexual violence in grassroots music venues. It has been tweeted about by activists and scholars in the US and Europe. [3.3] and [3.4] are public-facing outputs based on the original research of [3.1] and [3.2]. They are endorsed by national organisations Musicians' Union (MU), GNO, GAGG and WR.

[3.1] Hill, R. L., & Megson, M. (March 2020). 'In defence of safer spaces: punk, privilege and safer spaces policies'. *Punk & Post-Punk*, 9(1). https://doi.org/10.1386/punk_00018_1 [can be supplied on request]

[3.2] Hill, R. L., Megson, M. (November 2020). 'Sexual violence and gender equality in grassroots music venues: how to facilitate change'. *IASPMJournal*, 10(1). [https://doi.org/10.5429/2079-3871\(2020\)v10i1.2en](https://doi.org/10.5429/2079-3871(2020)v10i1.2en)

[3.3] Hill, R. L., Megson, M. (September 2020) Five Step Guide to Writing a Safer Spaces Policy for Your Music Venue (<http://saferpaces.org.uk>). Safer spaces policy writing guide and template to enable music venues to write high quality, practical safer spaces policies.

[3.4] Megson, M., Hill R. L. (September 2020) *Your Right To Party: A Zine About Venues, Fun, Equality, Liberty And Solidarity* (saferpaces.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/fanzine.pdf). A zine for punk and DIY venues arguing in favour of safer spaces policies. Includes a short version of the Five Step Guide to Writing a Safer Spaces Policy.

4. Details of the impact

To address the widespread issue of sexual violence at popular music venues, research into the support available, challenges faced and potential for improvement for venues was necessary.

Yorkshire has a vibrant music industry: music is one of Kirklees' strategic growth areas; Leeds and Sheffield have vigorous scenes with many venues of varying sizes. The two cities have local music boards, showing the importance of music to their economies and cultures. The collaborative and evolving nature of the research undertaken from May 2019 meant that the impacts detailed below emerged as the research took place through a diverse range of engagement activities undertaken by Hill. These included: three workshops for 35 venues and promoters, with a total of 57 participants; multiple meetings with national campaigning organisations; two meetings with Kirklees Council; development of policy guidance and a policy template [3.3] viewed 160 times (09/12/2020) in nine countries across Europe, in USA, UAE and Australia [5.1]; creation and distribution of a zine (short booklet), including the policy template [3.4]; strategic review consultation with two national charities; founding a network of campaigning organisations; and presenting the policy template to the American Union of Musicians and Allied Workers (UMAW) venues subcommittee. Within eighteen months, Hill's work has had significant impacts on music culture and campaigning organisations, with national and international reach. These impacts, outlined below, have shifted the discourse on sexual violence in music venues and the night-time economy: from being unspoken, the issue is now firmly on the agenda; from being too big a problem to deal with, there are now recognised solutions.

Increasing access to training for popular music venues and promoters

Hill organised workshops in Leeds (June 2019), Huddersfield (November 2019), and Sheffield (January 2020) for 35 music venues and promoters from across Yorkshire to introduce them to GNO and WR in order to arrange further research into the processes of music businesses implementing changes. These workshops successfully raised awareness and demand for training, benefiting music venues, promoters and audience members. Anonymised attendees said, *'The training would help us improve our policy and training for all staff and improve the safety of our audience'*, and *'The issue of "confidence" in dealing with incidents is the biggest barrier to action, so hoping to skill up in that regard'* [5.2]. Subsequently 13 music venues and promoters who attended the workshops gained GNO accredited status [5.3], with a further four trained in Liverpool as a result of connections generated through the campaigning network [5.4], and five in Sheffield due to be trained [5.5]. Training has led to better understanding of the contexts and impacts of sexual violence, bystander intervention, sympathetic responses, and the legal context. For example, the manager of a medium sized venue, capacity 800 (quoted in [3.2] and anonymised as part of research process), stated: *'There was a leechy horrible fella chatting to a group of young girls. [...] So [X] who's one of the male supervisors walked over [...] and said, "hey ladies, everything okay here?" And they were like, "no he's weird". And so [X] just went, "cool, you're freaking them out, you're going to need to move", [...] So that's just straight up, it's something that we wouldn't have intervened in previously I think. Cause you don't see it, but if you saw someone getting grabbed or something everyone's like, "oh that's horrible", whereas there's the subtle stuff that I think prior to that training people didn't know'* [5.6].

Providing resources to facilitate high-quality safer spaces policies

The research identified that the quality of venues' safer spaces policies is patchy. Moreover, due to their flatter hierarchies, grassroots and collectively-run organisations were not well-served by GNO or WR strategies. This prompted Hill and Megson to create the *Five Step Guide to Writing a Safer Spaces Policy for Your Venue* website [3.3], and the *Your Right To Party* zine [3.4]. These two resources are highly praised by the MU, GNO, WR and GAGG, and M:L. All of these organisations benefit by being able to recommend the *Guide* [3.3] as part of their resources for venues [5.4, 5.5, 5.7]. The Managing Director of GNO writes: *'The Five Step Guide to Writing A Safer Spaces Policy website [3.3] is really useful. It acts as a kind of safety net for when someone contacts us and it becomes very evident that they're not ready or can't afford to get accredited. The Five Step Guide website is a place where we can send them for the basics: if you're coming from nothing, then this is how you could approach it. [...] There is nowhere else like that that exists, so it fulfils a purpose in a very helpful way'* [5.5]. A member of the UMAW venues subcommittee and safer spaces trainer in the USA, said, *'this is an invaluable website. It fills a void and is one of the pillars of creating safer spaces'*, expanding that she would be *'adding this to the resources I suggest to people'* and including it in the 2nd edition of her book *Making Spaces Safer* [5.8].

The website has also benefited venues and promoters, who have praised it as a valuable tool that can be used multiple times and that empowers managers to deal well with incidents of harassment and violence. Speaking at the launch event of the *Five Step Guide* in September 2020, Events Organiser D3 Creations said: *'Because I [...] run things in different venues I love the whole concept, because you have to change your language for whoever you are speaking to. Now, I do music events, I've done fashion shows, I do writing workshops. I do all sorts of events [...] so I like the way you can just adapt it. [...] I'm going to use this platform many times depending on what event I am working on and change the language and change the different specifications'* [5.2]. This was echoed by the Manager of Northern Quarter, a small venue in Huddersfield: *'The website is so brilliant because it allows you to [...] ask] what is right? How do we want to [...] talk to people? What language do we want to use? How can we best get the message across and how can we share our message with other people? And allow [...] event organizers [...] and customers or whatever to engage further with our policymaking? [...] Reading the website really makes you question things, [...] allows you to think about things from new angles and new perspectives.'* [5.2].

The *Guide* [3.3] has proved useful beyond music venues: WR recommend it to all the c. 100 organisations they work with, including local authorities, football clubs, and fire services [5.5]. The Chief Executive of WR writes: *'We are not equipped to give organisations draft policies and it was very difficult to find something suitable to signpost organisations to. We are now able to signpost the Five Step Guide to Writing a Safer Spaces Policy for Your Venue. This is a really valuable resource which we confidently recommend, knowing that it is backed up by research. [...] We hadn't previously thought about how our work with music venues might be relevant for other kinds of venues and organisations, but this new aspect of our work has come through our collaboration with Dr Hill. The Five Step Guide has applications for other kinds of venues that don't often have live music, for example cinemas and conference venues'* [5.5].

Altering strategy and training offered by national campaigning organisations

Hill undertook consultation with GNO, observing a training session in July 2019. As a result, GNO benefited through amending their approach in the classroom in order to pay closer attention to how gender dynamics play out amongst trainees, so that participation from all trainees is facilitated [5.5]. The How to Make Gigs Safer workshop in June 2019 led to a large number of venues and promoters seeking training in Leeds [5.3]. This demand led GNO to partner with a local charity, Support After Rape and Sexual Violence Leeds (SARSVL), thus increasing capacity. It also enabled GNO to test and develop their new events promoter training, which is now a significant income stream for the charity [5.5]. The total value of this work to GNO was £2,725.

Hill and Megson were consulted by WR regarding their venues action plan (September 2019). The consultation identified that a one-size-fits-all approach would not work for smaller and collectively-run venues. WR benefited as they amended their strategy, implementing a new strand of work for 'supporter' organisations, who make seven commitments instead of working on a long action plan [5.5, 5.9]. WR recognised that the point made in Hill and Megson's consultation was applicable to other kinds of small organisations, thus the consultation had broad application beyond music. The Chief Executive of WR writes: *'The feedback was not only useful for our work with music venues, but also helped us to revise our action plans for other kinds of organisations'* [5.5].

Creating a network of campaigning organisations

The research identified that the groups campaigning about sexual violence at live music events were not in contact with one another, and were therefore duplicating work and not benefiting from sharing information and co-ordinated campaigning. Thus, Hill arranged meetings in May and September (a December 2020 meeting was postponed due to Covid-19 until January 2021). These were attended by the MU, WR, GNO, GAGG and Safe Gigs For Women (SGFW). The meetings were beneficial as they enabled the organisations to come together on an equal footing, share information and resources, and recognise their distinct contributions. This network also enabled organisations to work together for the first time. For example, the MU and GNO formed a collaboration to train venues in Liverpool in Summer 2020, from which four venues benefited. These meetings included discussions of future mutual campaigns around licensing laws and security staff training [5.5]. The Co-Founders of GAGG write: *'We [now] have an ongoing*

exchange with Good Night Out in terms of sharing information and resources, and publicising events. Working through the network means being able to push with more force [...]. One thing we are in discussion about taking action on is changes to event security staff training' [5.5]. For smaller organisations involved in the network, the community emerging as a result of the research has been transformational. As the Co-Founders of GAGG write: 'Participating in Rosemary's research has been transformative for us. We would not have formed some of the good working relationships we have right now without it' [5.5].

Increasing funding for training from the Musicians' Union, Kirklees Council and Music:Leeds

The research revealed that funding training was not within every promoter and venue's budget and that external funding would be highly valued [3.2]. Hill met the MU in May and June 2019 and as a result they decided to fund GNO training for venues in Liverpool, at a cost of £700 for four venues [5.4]. Hill met with Kirklees Council (June and July 2019), and a representative attended the workshop in September 2020. This resulted in Kirklees Council funding GNO training, initially for one venue, at a cost of £500 to the council [5.10]. The Strategic Lead for Cultural Development of Kirklees Council writes: '...we're focused on how the area [Kirklees] completely embraces music, how music is embedded in the whole [...] societal structure. That's why Rosemary's work and Good Night Out training are really important. It's about promoting a cultural shift and changing behaviour in the district, raising awareness through those venues. It promotes Kirklees as somewhere that is treating music differently. On a broader level, Kirklees is working towards Purple Flag (safe city) status, and having venues accredited helps us to gain that status. [...] Sexual harassment in the night-time economy is a sticky problem, but Rosemary's research showed us that there are ways to deal with it. The Healthy Music Audiences project identified the problem and suggested a solution. This is so valuable to us and has helped us to shape our Year of Music [2023] strategy' [5.10]. Meetings between Hill and M:L in March and August 2019 convinced M:L to fund training for promoters in Leeds [5.7]. The Director of M:L writes that: 'As a result of Dr Hill's research, we were encouraged to create a workshop for live music venues and promoters in the city in July 2019. This workshop involved training from Good Night Out, who were recommended within the research. Music:Leeds paid for this training from our Arts Council funding as we saw that there was the clear potential for positive impact. The cost to us was £2,725' [5.7]. These funding streams made training accessible to venues who otherwise could not afford it, as articulated by a promoter in Yorkshire (Promoter 4 quoted in [3.2], anonymised as part of research process): 'We couldn't afford to pay to do Good Night Out training just for us [so this] was an opportunity that we had to take up. [...] And that's why [local music board] funded it, to make it accessible to DIY promoters cause everybody in that room, not a single one of them would have paid Good Night Out themselves to get trained' [5.6].

The project has reached beneficiaries from national organisations, including the MU with 32,000 members and GNO supporting venues across the UK, to individual concert goers in Yorkshire, significantly improving resources for dealing with sexual violence at popular live music events, ultimately taking steps towards equality in the music industry.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- [5.1] Website analytics for <http://saferspaces.org.uk>.
- [5.2] University of Huddersfield Evaluation Reports: *How to Make Gigs Safer Workshops Evaluation Report* and *Five Step Guide to Writing a Safer Spaces Policy Launch Event Report*.
- [5.3] List of Good Night Out accredited venues and promoters.
- [5.4] Testimonial: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Official, Musicians' Union.
- [5.5] Testimonials: Chief Executive, White Ribbon; Co-Founders, Girls Against Gig Groping and Managing Director, Good Night Out.
- [5.6] Hill, R. L., Megson, M. (November 2020). 'Sexual violence and gender equality in grassroots music venues: how to facilitate change'. *IASPM Journal*, 10(1).
- [5.7] Testimonial: Director, Music:Leeds.
- [5.8] Testimonial: American Union of Musicians and Allied Workers subcommittee member and safer spaces trainer (USA).
- [5.9] Supporter Organisation Information, White Ribbon.
- [5.10] Testimonial: Strategic Lead for Cultural Development, Kirklees Council.