What is 'Lad Culture' and How Are Universities Responding to it?: A Case Study of Two UK Higher Education Institutions

Alexandra Kendrick

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy

May 2022

University of Liverpool

Faculty of Science and Engineering

Department of Geography and Planning

Abstract

What is 'Lad Culture' and How Are Universities Responding to it?: A Case Study of Two UK Higher Education Institutions

Alexandra Kendrick

Drawing on qualitative data collected between 2018 – 2020 with students and staff at two case study Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the North West of England, this thesis is concerned with what lad culture means to students at the two case study HEIs, and how this manifests across online and offline spaces. This research highlights how these cultures are not only present within student nightlife spaces or sports clubs, but also within classrooms, on field trips, and on social media. Focusing on the ways in which gender intersects with class, race and sexuality in the context of student lad cultures, this thesis explores how lad cultures within UK HEIs manifest through small, everyday peer-to-peer interactions. In doing so, this thesis complicates previous understandings of student lad culture, bringing nuance to recent debates in presenting lad cultures and laddism as a form of student identity that is nuanced and not monolithic. This thesis also pays attention to the responses of the two case study HEIs to lad culture, harassment and sexual misconduct, through both staff interviews and students' accounts of the institutional complaints system(s). Within this, a number of key areas are identified for the two case study institutions, in order to improve their responses to these issues.

Acknowledgements

This research was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) through the North West Social Science Doctoral Training Partnership (NWSSDTP). Thank you for the opportunity to undertake this research.

Without the people who took part in this project, this research would not have been possible. Thank you to staff at both case study institutions for agreeing to take part in interviews. The biggest thank you especially to the students who gave up their time to speak to me at different stages of this research. Thank you for trusting me and for sharing your experiences with me.

Thank you to all staff in the Geography department at Liverpool, particularly those within the SPCC cluster, for sparking my interest in geography and research as an undergrad, and later for the support and interest in my own research.

Particular thanks goes to my supervisors. Thank you to Dr Lucy Jackson, for supporting my initial research ideas and for giving me confidence in this project early on. I would not have been on this path without you. Thank you to Dr Sarah Hall at the University of Manchester, for offering me insightful comments and support throughout. Thank you to Dr Mark Riley, our conversations and your helpful comments have shaped my thinking around my data, and have been incredibly appreciated. Special special thank you to Dr Bethan Evans. You have been a constant source of support for me in many ways over the last few years. The attention to detail you have given with your comments and reading of my work is so appreciated. I genuinely would not have been able to get this point without you!

Thanks to my family and friends who have offered me support and a welcome distraction along the way. Special thanks to my closest friends for being incredibly patient with me, particularly Michelle, Hannah and Paige. You've been there for me throughout, even when I haven't been able to be the most present for you.

The biggest thank you in the world to my partner, Kate. I am so grateful for everything you've done for me, I couldn't have got this far without your consistent love and support.

List of Figures

Chapter 4

Chapter 7

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

In this thesis I work to unpack students experiences of lad culture within two case study Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the UK. I focus particularly on the ways in which gender intersects with class, race and sexuality within the context of student lad culture, and how lad cultures occur and interact between online and offline student spaces. This thesis draws upon qualitative data collected between 2018-2020 at two case study HEIs within the same city in the North West of England. What I also offer in this thesis is a critical analysis of the institutional responses to issues surrounding lad cultures, for example harassment and student sexual misconduct, at both institutions. My findings reveal that 'lad culture' is not fixed or static, but rather a set of behaviors, practices and performances adopted and negotiated by students in different ways throughout their university life-course. What this means is that lad culture is not just something that select groups of students engage in, but a multitude of behaviors and practices that many students are able to adopt and re-negotiate during their time at university. My research on lad cultures and laddism sits within previous understandings of laddism, and what constitutes a 'lad', within wider UK cultures and academic discourse. Some researchers have considered lad cultures and laddism in the UK as synonymous with working class cultures, and working class youth cultures in particular (e.g. Wills, 1977; Hollingworth and Williams, 2009). Within the UK in the 1990s there was a move away from this, towards what Alison Phipps (2016) terms a 'more middle class' version of lad culture, that was intertwined with UK pop culture. Termed the 'New Lad', this was characterised by drugs, heavy drinking and casual sex, and was linked to bands such as Oasis, alongside the popularity of 'lads mags', for example *Loaded* (Phipps, 2016). This served to re-shape laddism into mainstream popular discourse, and provides the backdrop from which to understand student lad cultures.

In considering student lad cultures within a different geographic context, it is also important to turn to literature that has unpacked student lad cultures within US Universities, in particular within fraternity or 'frat' cultures. College fraternities within US Universities have been linked to campus sexual violence (Mazar and Kirkner, 2016). It has also been identified that US college fraternity culture perpetuates 'rape culture' through a focus on hooking up, disrespectful attitudes towards women and sexual competition, that manifests within parties and events through high levels of sexual violence towards women students (Jozkowski and Wiersma – Mosley, 2017). 'Hazing', otherwise known as 'initiations' in the UK context, are considered as central to students joining sports teams or fraternities, and involve drinking games and intimidating newer members of the group (Allan et al., 2019). Researchers have also explored dominant, harmful cultures on US college campus' that lead to victims of sexual assault and rape being silenced through a multitude of avenues, leading to a further (re)production of college rape cultures. This US context, although

different both culturally and structurally to UK University campus', particularly when considering the social power of fraternities within US college cultures, provides a useful backdrop from which to frame my own research on lad cultures and laddism in the UK.

I was compelled to undertake this research project at two UK HEIs after my own experiences as an undergraduate student at a Russell Group University[1] in England between 2013 and 2016. When I began my undergraduate degree in 2013, topics such as sexual consent were not widely discussed within institutions, and lad cultures and misogyny felt dominant within student cultures at this time. In one particularly prolific incident, a student society within the university that I attended was de-ratified from the student union, after a script was leaked for a play that involved jokes directed at the slogan 'no means no', and a satirical scene that involved a woman character being drugged and raped. This culture left me feeling alienated from some aspects of university life, such as student societies and sports teams, and also meant that I often felt unsafe within student nightlife spaces; particularly in light of the cultures of heavy drinking and the availability of cheap alcohol within the night time economy (NTE) at this time.

Since then, conversation around lad cultures, rape cultures, misogyny and consent within UK HEIs has progressed significantly. Issues surrounding lad culture and university 'rape culture' have received prolific media coverage since being investigated by the National Union of Students (NUS). Two key NUS reports, 'Hidden Marks' (2011) and 'That's What She Said' (2013) uncovered student sexual misconduct as rife within UK HEIs (NUS, 2011), and linked this to broader lad culture and rape apologetic attitudes (NUS, 2013). Associated media coverage has raised awareness of lad culture both inside and outside of the academic sphere. Outside of HEIs, other mainstream feminist movements, such as the '#Metoo' movement, have further fueled discussion on issues around rape cultures, gendered power dynamics and consent.

As I was undertaking this research (2018-2020), media coverage and popular interest around issues of lad culture and student sexual misconduct peaked again, particularly from early 2019 onwards. The most prolific coverage of this was surrounding the 'Warwick University rape chat scandal', that made national newspapers in the UK in 2019, due to the institution's handling of student complaints, centred around leaked screenshots of a social media group 'lads chat' between 11 male students at the university. This chat contained graphic remarks about 'wanting to rape' their women flat mates, as well as racist and anti-Semitic comments (The Independent, 2019). This included messages such as "cannot wait to have surprise sex with some freshers" and "rape the whole flat to teach them a

[1] Currently 24 'leading' UK Universities are part of the Russell Group. It is associated with high academic standards and prestige.

lesson" (The Tab, 2019). Following this, mainstream media coverage has continued to highlight the role of university student group chats, usually on the communication platform WhatsApp, in facilitating sexual misconduct on university campuses in recent years (BBC, 2019; The Guardian, 2019; Coventry Telegraph, 2019; The Tab, 2019). Such instances make evident the ways in which student lad cultures increasingly manifest a*cross* online and offline spaces, and that has been a key focus within this research.

1.1 Key Terminology

Laddism, Laddishness and Lad Culture

Throughout this thesis I continually refer to the terms laddism, laddishness and lad culture. I use laddism, laddishness and lad cultures interchangeably following the example of Phipps and Young (2013) in their work for the NUS. Phipps and Young (2013:53) describe 'lad culture' in UK HEIs as a form of hypermasculinity:

> *'a "pack" mentality evident in activities such as sport and heavy alcohol consumption, and "banter" which was often sexist, misogynist and homophobic. It was also thought to be sexualized and to involve the objectification of women, and at its extremes rape supportive attitudes and sexual harassment and violence.'*

The terms laddism and laddishness encompass a broader form of masculinity, that manifests in various ways across educational contexts. What is commonly accepted is that laddism and laddishness act as a form of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1989) within the context of UK HEIs.

Within the research process for this thesis, I chose not to share with participants a rigid definition of 'ladculture', but instead encouraged participants to explore, within the context of interviews and focus groups, what lad culture meant to them. This makes up the first part of this thesis, and has enabled me to disentangle what contemporary 'lad culture' looks like within HEIs, and how this manifests across both online and offline spaces.

Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct

In parts of this thesis I refer to the terms sexual assault and sexual misconduct. I use these terms interchangeably to refer to non-consensual sexual acts, such as unwanted sexual touching and rape. I do so following the legal definitions of sexual assault and sexual misconduct[2], and also choose to encompass rape within these terms in order to avoid identifying specific participants' experiences within this thesis (unless they have chosen to disclose them within those terms).

Sexual Harassment

I use the term sexual harassment to encompass a wide range of unwanted sexual behaviour. This includes both verbal and physical behaviour. Following the Equality Act 2010, sexual harassment is defined as conduct that 'has the purpose or effect of either violating the person's dignity or creating

[2] Following the Sexual Offenses Act 2003, as outlined here: https://rapecrisis.org.uk/get-informed/types-of-sexual-violence/what-is-sexual-assault/

an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them' (Rape Crisis, 2022:n.p).

1.2 Research Questions

1. What does 'lad culture' mean to UK HE students and how is it experienced by students of all genders?
2. How does 'lad culture' intersect with sexuality, race and class privilege*?*
3. To what extent is 'lad culture' resisted or reinforced by HE students?
4. What spaces (both online and offline) are important in the performance and resistance of 'lad culture' in HE?
5. How does lad culture link to the increasing neoliberalisation of UK HEIs?

1.3 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is structured into 8 chapters. The first two chapters draw upon both empirical and theoretical work to frame this project. *Chapter 2*, the first of the literature review chapters, draws on several key bodies of work: lads, lad culture and education; lad cultures and UK HEIs; masculinity and geography; student geographies; neoliberalisation of the higher education sphere and; online geographies, gender and online harassment. This situates my research within geographic work on masculinities and student geographies (e.g. Jackson 1991; 1994; Holton, 2018), considering lad culture as place-based, and as a form of student identity. Drawing upon scholarship within the social sciences on laddism within the education sphere, and gendered movements online, this enables me to map out previous research on lad cultures within UK HEIs (e.g. Phipps and Smith, 2012; Phipps and Young, 2015; Phipps, 2017) whilst considering how this manifests within peer-to-peer interactions, across an online/offline continuum (Ging and Siapera, 2018). The second literature review chapter, *Chapter 3*, outlines theoretical framings that I use throughout the thesis to unpack and understand my research findings. This work is broadly structured into five sections: feminist geopolitics; gender, sexuality and performativity; queer phenomenology, diversity and the feminist killjoy; intersectionality, and hegemonic masculinities. This work frames my findings in a number of ways: First, it provides geographic and spatial ways of understanding gendered relations beyond binary approaches to gender, using the work of Judith Butler to consider gender as performative (Butler, 1990). Secondly, work on intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989;1991) provides the means to explore participants' varying experiences of lad culture within UK HEIs. Finally, work on hegemonic masculinities (Connell, 1989), allows me to conceptualise lad culture as a form of hegemonic masculinity within HEIs, bringing in the work of other theorists such as Sara Ahmed to

bring nuance to this debate, specifically in considering experiences of lad culture that fall outside the heteronormative script.

Chapter 4 provides the rationale for the methods I have chosen for this research. This chapter provides an overview of my use of a multi-methods approach, in order to capture: 1) participants experiences of lad culture; 2) how this was experienced in relation to other aspects of their identity (e.g. sexuality, race or class privilege); 3) the ways in which participants resisted, or engaged in lad culture; 4) which spaces they identified as important within their experiences of lad culture, both online and offline; and 5) how both performances of, and responses to lad culture are influenced by the wider neoliberal context within UK HEIs. I chose several different qualitative methods to address my research aims. This included semi-structured interviews with students and university staff members, to explore their experiences of, and responses to, lad cultures. I also chose to incorporate a three-stage diary interview method with student participants, which involved an initial briefing, a period of diary or note keeping, and a follow-up interview using these notes as prompts or discussion points. By incorporating this method I hoped to capture more 'everyday' experiences, following calls from feminist geographers around the importance of exploring meanings bound up within experiences of the everyday (Dyck, 2005). I used a combination of online and offline focus groups throughout the research project in order to stimulate group discussion between participants, and chose to incorporate asynchronous online focus groups in order to reach students who were unable to attend in-person interviews, or wanted to engage with the research in their own time. Within this section I also outline the feminist epistemological framework that I adopted within the research process, outlining contributions that frame the importance of approaching research reflexively, considering my own positionality within the research process (Valentine, 2005). In order to do so I used auto-ethnographic notes throughout the research process. My empirical findings are divided into three chapters. *Chapter 5* explores participants' understandings and experiences of lad culture at the two case study HEIs. This chapter is broadly divided into five sections outlining a range of ways in which lad culture is experienced and manifests within participants' student lives, across both online and offline spaces. This chapter identifies several key elements that participants describe as constituting student lad culture within HEIs. These are 'banter'; the normalisation of misogynistic and homophobic views; the 'lads group'; harassment; drugs; drinking; peer pressure; and the key role of student societies and sports teams in (re)producing lad culture and hetero-sexed gendered norms. What this chapter also identifies is that for student participants, lad culture spans a variety of spaces and temporalities, and is woven into their everyday student lives in a multitude of ways.

Chapter 6 explores participants' intersectional experiences of student lad culture within the two case

study HEIs. This chapter looks specifically at participants' experiences with an intersectional lens, paying attention to the ways in which various aspects of participants' identities influence and shape their experiences of lad culture. This chapter looks broadly into the experiences of LGBTQ+ students; classed experiences of lad culture; and participants' varying experiences of lad culture based on their racialised and religious identities. What this chapter also considers is the ways in which these identity categories interact with one another, and how this influences participants' gendered experiences of lad culture.

Within *Chapter 7* I provide an analysis of the responses to lad culture at the two case study HEIs, across three key levels: 1) institutional responses; 2) collective response; 3) personal response. In considering institutional response, this chapter explores what I term the perceived 'boundaries of responsibility' of HEIs, and the implications this has for students accessing support, or filing complaints, for incidences that have occurred outside of these boundaries. In pushing this further, I also consider the role of online peer-to-peer interactions, and how institutions are currently equipped to respond to incidences that happen within, or partly within, online spaces. In light of the wider neoliberal context within HEIs during the time that I undertook this research, I also draw out the role this plays within institutional response, particularly in light of staff responses that often focused around reputational risk to the institution.

In considering the failings of both case study institutions in responding to some aspects of lad culture, within the final analysis chapter I also explore the collective responses of participants, both formal and informal. Some of these responses included: using online spaces to share their experiences; tactics adopted within various spaces to manage harassment, particularly within the night time economy (NTE); and the use of student societies as organised support networks.

Within this section I also explore the personal responses of participants to their experiences of lad culture. My analysis of participants' personal responses to lad culture is two-fold. The first element focuses on more practical responses that participants took to mitigate negative experiences associated with lad culture. This included tactics adopted to manage or mitigate harassment, particularly in the NTE or whilst walking alone in the city. I also look at participants' embodied personal responses to lad culture, including their perception of risk, implications to their mental health, and trauma and the lasting impacts of experiencing lad culture, sexual misconduct or the university complaints systems. Within this section I also consider the role of introspection from participants around their experiences of, and participation in, lad culture within their student lives.

The final chapter, *Chapter 8* draws out the key findings from my analysis. I suggest three key empirical findings: 1) lad culture is central to student identity formation; 2) viewing lad culture

spatially enables a geographic understanding of lad culture as hegemonic within student spheres, and; 3) engaging with institutional policy and complaints systems acts as a form of (re)traumatisation for many students. Within this chapter I also suggest directions for future research, and some recommendations for the two case study institutions, around student sexual misconduct and gendered harassment.

Chapter 2: Student life, Digital Geographies and Masculinity: A Literature Review

In this chapter I outline and explore the connections between three key bodies of literature that inform this project: (1) student geographies; (2) digital geographies and online movements; and (3) cross-disciplinary work on masculinity, lads and lad culture within education contexts.

My discussion of this literature is divided into six sections. First, work on laddism and lad culture within the education sphere. In this section I consider the ways in which masculinity manifests as a form of gendered identity in the education sphere, both within the context of HEIs and also within the mainstream secondary education system. In this section I provide an overview of studies that explore how hegemonic masculinity is formed within the education sphere, shaping how young men behave within these settings (Jackson, 2003; Jackson et al., 2009; Jackson et al., 2015; Jackson and Nystrom, 2015).

Secondly, work from within geography on masculinities. This body of work considers masculinity as both intersectional and place-based, culturally constructed, and specific to historical time and place (Jackson, 1991; 1994; Berg and Longhurst, 2003). This work also considers masculinity in connection with other markers of social identity, for example ethnicity, religion, and class (Hopkins, 2006; 2007). Here, I draw links between scholarship within geography and other work on intersectionality, with its origins in Black Feminist scholarship, that I will go on to explore in more depth within the second literature review chapter.

Thirdly, within this chapter I provide an overview of work on student geographies. This work, couched within the field of social geography, helps frame my research through considering how identity is formed within the context of UK HEIs. This section considers the role of widening participation within UK HEIs since 1992 that has increased students' encounters with difference whilst at university, namely classed differences (Kettley, 2007; Read et al., 2003; Reay et al., 2013; Holton, 2018). Researchers have also considered the role of several different student spaces in shaping student identity formation, for example student halls of residence (Smith and Holt, 2007; Holton and Riley, 2013; Holton, 2016a; 2018) and student nightlife spaces (Chatterton, 1999; Hubbard, 2008; Andersson et al., 2012; Holton, 2016b), particularly during freshers' week (Chatterton, 1999).

Fourth, I draw upon debates around the increasing neoliberalisation of the HE sphere, setting the context from which institutions handle complaints on lad culture and student sexual misconduct. This literature traces the neoliberal shift within UK HEIs in recent years (Cannella and Koro-

Ljungberg, 2017), and considers how this influences lad culture and misogyny on campus (Phipps and Young, 2015). Within this section I also draw on the work of Sara Ahmed (2012; 2021) in considering how institutions address student complaints, as well as issues of inequality within the context of these neoliberal reforms.

Finally, I discuss a body of work that explores the geographies of the online sphere, and work from within feminist media studies that explores the online sphere as a space for feminist activism and gendered movements. This work from outside of the field of geography informs my thinking into how lad culture is performed and adopted across students' social media platforms. This work particularly unpacks how misogyny manifests across online and offline spaces (Ging and Siapera, 2018), as a form of 'networked harassment' (Marwick and Caplan, 2018).

2.1 Lads, Lad Culture and Education

In this section I review work on lad culture to date, paying particular attention to how laddism and lad culture is adopted as a form of masculinity within the secondary and higher education spheres. Several scholars (Jackson, 2003; Jackson, 2006; Jackson and Dempster, 2009) have undertaken research on lad culture and laddism within a secondary education setting. Here, laddism has been considered a form of masculine identity, though one that is not monolithic. For example, Jackson (2003), through semi-structured interviews with year 9 (13 – 14 year old) boys in two schools in the North West of England, identified several different dominant groups of 'lads' at each secondary school, with distinct versions of masculinities. Jackson (2003:587) also found that there were aspects of masculinity or 'laddishness' that were adopted across these groups, such as 'popularity', 'going out or hanging around with mates', 'playing sport', 'wearing the rights sorts of clothes', and 'not being seen to work hard at school work'. Jackson (2003) also found that 'laddishness' within the context of the two schools was constructed as the antithesis to femininity, supporting theories on hegemonic masculinity (e.g. Connell 1987) that suggest masculinity is constructed 'in relation to and against femininity and subordinated forms of masculinity' (Jackson, 2003: 587).

Continuing a focus on laddism in the education system, Jackson (2003; 2006) and Jackson and Dempster (2009) have identified two key discourses: the 'effortless achievement' discourse and the 'uncool to work' discourse. Drawing on two research projects, one that included interviews within a secondary-school context, and a second that involved interviews with white, male students at a pre-1992 university in England, Jackson and Dempster (2009:344) found that the 'uncool to work' discourse, described as 'the core of cool, popular 'laddish' masculinity', demonstrated through 'a

relaxed, laid-back approach to academic work', was present across both the secondary school and HE contexts. These studies found that adopting 'laddishness' is primarily a presentational strategy, protecting self-worth through appearing to apply minimal effort into school work, thus if high marks are not achieved, providing boys with an excuse or a reason to fall back on (Jackson, 2003; Jackson and Dempster, 2009).

In later work, Jackson (2010) highlights that staff members within secondary schools also play a role in the (re)production or resistance of 'laddish' identities. What Jackson found through this study, which involved interviews with 30 secondary school teachers working in England, was that some teachers adopted a 'laddish' identity as a strategy in order to communicate with 'laddish' students and, through this, reinforced notions of hegemonic masculinity in the classroom (Jackson, 2010). In doing so, this created a somewhat exclusionary school environment for students who did not engage in 'laddish' behaviours, particularly girls, and also teachers and colleagues who were unable, or unwilling to adopt laddish identities in the classroom (Jackson, 2010). In the next section I explore laddism and lad cultures further, in relation to UK HEIs in particular.

2.2 Lad Cultures and UK HEIs

Similar to research in secondary school settings, contemporary work in this field has explored the implications of what has been termed 'lad culture' within the HE sphere. For example, research has explored sexism, sexual harassment and sexual assault (Phipps and Smith, 2012; Phipps and Young, 2015; Phipps, 2017), alongside other elements such as classroom disruption (Jackson et al., 2015) and hedonistic behaviours relating to the university nightlife sphere. This work suggests that, in its most extreme form, 'lad culture' reinforces rape supportive attitudes, and is also linked to sexual harassment and violence on university campuses (NUS, 2013; Phipps and Young, 2014; Jackson and Sundaram, 2015). This body of work has also begun to shift the discourse on class and laddish identities, away from a focus on working-class 'troublesome' young men (McDowell, 2000; 2002), towards more middle-class, privileged, well-educated young men (Phipps and Young, 2014).

There are 4 key themes that I have drawn out of this body of work that focuses on lad culture in HEIs. The first two are key spaces that have been identified as central to student lad cultures: university sports clubs and the student NTE. Both of these spaces have been linked to student drinking cultures. The third theme is the ways in which lad cultures (re)produce gendered binaries. The fourth theme is explorations of the potential for resistance to student lad cultures and dominant masculinities.

Several scholars (Clayton and Harris, 2008; Dempster, 2009; 2011; Jackson and Sundaram, 2015; Phipps, 2015) have begun to explore 'laddishness' and masculinity from undergraduate men's perspectives within the higher education sphere, linking this to key themes and spaces that serve to construct and uphold this form of identity within the university setting. One key example of this is university sports clubs (Dempster, 2009; 2011). Drawing upon data from a project that used questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with undergraduate male students at a pre-1992 campus university in England, Dempster (2009; 2011) identifies a form of hegemonic masculinity present within undergraduate sports clubs and teams, suggesting that there is a dominant form of masculinity apparent within these clubs and spaces that members adhere to. This is deemed to be centred on overt sexual behaviours and aggression (Dempster, 2009), and links 'being a student' to heavy drinking and partying (Dempster, 2011). Football clubs and rugby teams were identified as key areas where this form of masculinity was particularly prevalent (Dempster, 2009), and it was suggested that heavy drinking could turn what interviewees termed 'nice lads' into 'nutters'[3], arguing that this was further shaped by their peer group whilst at university. This is similar to findings by Clayton and Harris (2008), who undertook ethnographic research as part of a male university football team at a 'new' vocationally-orientated university in the south of England over a football season (September 2003 – June 2003). From this, Clayton and Harris (2008:314) identified a 'sport/alcohol/identity nexus' that supports male hegemony, citing the student bar as a key space for overt displays of heavy drinking and 'laddish' behaviours that are associated with this.

The second key space in which lad culture, laddism and sexism have been explored by researchers is within the student NTE (Dempster, 2009, 2011; Phipps and Young, 2013). Also relevant here is a body of work within student geographies that explores the role of the student NTE in shaping student identities (Andersson et al., 2013; Hubbard, 2013; Holton, 2017). Holton (2017:73), drawing upon data collected at the University of Portsmouth, highlights that student nightlife spaces are a key part of the 'student bubble', playing a part in the fluidity of 'learning, living and social environments' for students in their first year of university.

In considering the NTE as a key sphere for student lad culture, several studies consider sexism within the student NTE as a result of the increasing corporatisation of university campuses and university nightlife spaces (Chatterton, 1999; Andersson et al., 2012; Chatterton and Hollands, 2003).

[3] Within this study participants made distinctions between players in university sports teams who individually 'appeared to be '*really nice lads''* but who could also be 'misogynistic, menacing, alcoholic '*nutters*' when socialising with team mates' (Dempster, 2009: 493)

Andersson et al., (2012), explored the geographies of encounter at a British university, through the use of interviews and focus groups. Although the main focus of this study was how participants narrate their experiences of cross-cultural contact on this university campus, within much of this work, university drinking culture is cited as a strong influential factor on the way students behave and how they interact with the night time economy (NTE), and it is evident that this links with wider debates around lad culture and laddism on campus (Dempster, 2009; 2011). Andersson et al. (2012) identify students' reliance on heavy drinking as a means of socialising, and both the prevalence and normalisation of binge drinking on campus, emphasising the role of the NTE in shaping student identities. Geographers have also made important contributions towards unpacking the link between student identity, drinking culture and gender inequality, suggesting that the objectification and commodification of women, through the use of women's bodies in advertising on campus, is often used as a marketing tool for nightlife spaces (Chatterton, 1999; Chatterton and Hollands, 2003). For example, Chatterton (1999: 127) describes a student night club in Bristol using slogans such as 'GET IT HERE!', 'get laid' and 'where the men are fit but the birds are FITTER' in order to draw students into the venue. This research is furthered by Chatterton and Hollands (2003), who draw a link between mainstream clubbing, alcohol and increased sexism. Similarly, Hutton (2014) describes the mainstream NTE as a 'meat market' for women, due to harassment, expectations around casual coupling and sexist attitudes towards women within these spaces.

It is evident that there is scope to further explore the ways in which 'lad culture' is resisted or subverted as a form of identity, and the potential for alternative forms of masculinity on campus. Phipps et al., (2017) suggest that there are aspects of student 'lad culture' still to be unpacked and explored further. Phipps et al., (2017) comment that the 'everyday' element of lad culture and sexism needs to be explored further, specifically in relation to particular scales and contexts. This has been done somewhat by Nicholls (2016), through ethnographic and interview data collected at a Rugby Union club. In this context, , Nicholls (2016) suggests that 'banter', as a form of humour, can be used to both reproduce *and* challenge problematic or sexist views present within the club.

Phipps (2017) argues that current work on lad culture within HEIs lacks nuance, and there is a need for scholarship in this area to further unpack the perceived monolithic category of the 'lad' (Phipps, 2017). Since then, researchers have begun to unpack the ways in which other forms of identity category intersect with and influence lad cultures and the adoption of laddish identities. For example Diaz-Fernandez and Evans (2021) explore LGBTQIA+ students' negotiations with lad culture through semi-structured group interviews with the LGBTQIA+ student union society at a university in the Midlands, UK. Drawing on the work of Benjamin (2017) and Fraser (2000), Diaz-Fernandez and

Evans (2021) introduce the concept of 'laddish misrecognition', which refers to the ways in which LGBTQAI+ students make sense of themselves 'in-difference', in other words, how they are able to perform queer gendered identity within the heteronormative context of UK HEI lad cultures. This concept works to explain the complexities in performing masculinities within the wider context of the misogynistic lad culture present within UK HEIs (Diaz-Fernandez and Evans, 2021). LGBTQAI+ students face decisions on whether to adopt and perform aspects of laddish masculinities and face misrecognition as laddish or heteronormative, or to challenge these dominant cultures, risking alienation or retaliation from friends. This work suggests potential avenues for future research on lad cultures in UK HEIs, in the need to pay increasing attention to the experiences of students who are not heterosexual or cis-gendered. Recognition of the plurality of experiences of laddism also raises questions about the ways in which masculinities are relational and place-based. In the following section I draw upon work on masculinity in geography to explore this, considering how the specific places, spaces and contexts of UK HEIs and wider student spaces shape and are shaped by lad cultures.

2.3 Masculinity and Geography

In this section I will provide an overview of relevant literature on the geographies of masculinity, dividing this broadly into four sections (although due to the considerations of masculinity in geography as both intersectional and place-based, there is overlap). First, I outline debates on the role of masculinity in geography and the importance of thinking intersectionally when researching masculinity; Secondly, I consider locality in relation to place-based understandings of masculinities, particularly exploring the role of inter-generational links; Thirdly, I discuss the role of race, religion, migration and mobilities in shaping masculinities; Finally, I specifically focus on the role of sexualities in shaping masculinities geographically, considering LGBTQ+ identities here. Throughout these four sections, I pay attention to the ways in which masculinities are relational and shaped by place through attention to cross-cutting themes of age, and the spatial boundaries of masculinities (for example within institutional settings such as the school, the military, or domestic settings such as the home).

2.3.1 Masculinity and Geography: Thinking Intersectionally

Research within feminist geography has been key in bringing research on masculinity into the discipline. In early work Peter Jackson (1991; 1994) considered masculinity as culturally constructed, and specific to historical time and place, building on previous scholarship within critical masculinity

studies (discussed further in Chapter 3). In doing so, Jackson (1991:210) positioned masculinity as 'continually being forged, contested, reworked and reaffirmed', and in considering masculinities from a spatial lens, he demonstrated that place and cultural context are key to these renegotiations. Similarly, Berg and Longhurst (2003:352) also demonstrate that masculinities are both 'temporally and geographically contingent'. This work has also shifted understandings of masculinities within the discipline by considering them in relation to intersecting identity categories. For example, in drawing out the ways in which masculinity intersects with other identity categories, Elliot (2019) challenges conceptions of open and closed masculinities, breaking down the binary approach to considering masculinities as either margin or centre, or hegemonic or subordinate (Connell, 1989, discussed further in Chapter 3). Instead, Elliot (2019:1725) suggests moving towards considering masculinities as 'fluid, entangled, messy, leaky concepts', not structured around dominant or binary notions of gender, but changeable through time and place.

In considering how religion and cultural context interact with and shape masculine identity, there is a key body of geographic research on young, British Muslim masculinities (Dwyer et al., 2008; Datta et al., 2008; Hopkins, 2009; Britton, 2019). Dwyer et al. (2008) explore the everyday lives and renegotiations of masculinity through interviews with young British Pakistani Muslim men in Slough and Bradford. This study explores the role of religious identity and class, alongside local economies in shaping masculinities for these men. Dwyer et al. (2008) identify several different forms of British Pakistani Muslim masculinities, including what they term religious masculinities (men who prioritised their Muslim identity), middle-class masculinities (men who prioritised professional job prospects and education), rebellious masculinities (hard, performative masculinities), and ambivalent masculinities (neither middle-class or rebellious, ambivalent towards their previous masculine behaviours). Categorising these four key masculine identities means that Dwyer et al. (2008) were able to unpack the ways in which these young British Pakistani Muslim men understood their own masculine identity in relation to local labour markets, educational opportunities, and the dominant or hegemonic masculinities demonstrated through friendships. What this study highlights is that as well as identity categories influencing masculinity within the everyday lives of these men, place, cultural and economic context also shape how these men position themselves and perform masculinity (Dwyer et al., 2008).

Datta et al., (2008) in a study with 68 male migrants in London who are in low-paid work also show how masculinity is re-worked at different stages of the 'migration project', again highlighting masculine identity is not fixed, but changing as and with place and context changes. Through interviews and focus groups with younger Muslim men, Hopkins (2009) explores the role of the new labour market in shaping young Muslim masculinities, through educational and economic

opportunities. What was also found within this study is that leisure spaces also shape masculinities for these men, as they view themselves as conforming to hegemonic masculinity through a focus on sport, and use this as a reason for not applying effort to school work (Hopkins, 2009). Hopkins (2006; 2007) has also links the concept of masculinity to other intersecting markers of social identity – for example ethnicity, religion and class. It is these markers of social difference in relation to the construction of gendered identity within varying contexts that have played a prominent role within geographic scholarship (Hopkins, 2007), and inform my own thinking in how intersecting markers of social difference can influence how masculinity is adopted and negotiated within varying contexts, across both public and private spheres.

2.3.2 Place-based Masculinities: Inside and Outside of the Domestic Sphere

One key contribution that geographers have made to the study of masculinities is the conceptualisation of masculinities as place-based; constructed and performed in relation to place at a variety of scales. This has been explored in relation to local areas, such as Tyneside (Richardson, 2015), within institutional settings such as schools (Jackson, 2003) or HEIs (Dempster, 2009; 2011), or on a smaller scale, within the domestic sphere of the home (Gorman-Murray, 2011; Walsh, 2011). Geographic scholars have also illustrated the importance of generational links in shaping masculinities. For example, Hopkins (2006) work with young Muslim men in Edinburgh and Glasgow considers the role of racial or religious family connections in shaping masculine identity formation, particularly in influencing men's approach to gendered relations within and outside of the home. Hopkins (2006) notes that hetero-sexism can be (re)produced through generational familial practices. What this body of work suggests is that masculinity is place-based and generational, and that local context is key in shaping masculinities, as practices are normalised or passed down through generational links (Hopkins, 2006). Richardson's (2015) work with men in the Tyneside Irish Centre further highlights this, as he considers how masculinity is re-negotiated through men's life stages. What these studies emphasise, and is particularly relevant for my own research, is that hegemonic forms of masculinity can be influenced and disrupted by markers of social difference – emphasising the fluid and diverse nature of masculine identities (Hopkins, 2006; Richardson, 2015).

The role of home-making and inter-generational links within the private or domestic sphere in shaping masculinities has also been explored by several scholars (Hopkins, 2006; Hopkins and Pain, 2007; Gorman-Murray, 2011; Walsh, 2011; Richardson, 2015; Brandth, 2016). Gorman-Murray (2011), for example, consider the role of gendered bodies and masculine domesticities through a

study with 52 middle-class, white collar professionals in Sydney living in heterosexual family homes. This study considers the ways in which masculinities are constructed in relation to the domestic sphere, and how they are renegotiated within heterosexual homes. Through studying 'normalcy' or 'mainstream' masculinities within middle class homes, Gorman-Murray (2011) found that hegemonic notions of masculinity were often challenged by emotional and embodied acts within the home-sphere, such as connections with partners, physical intimacy and housework. As such, Gorman-Murray (2011:143) suggests that within the home, 'masculinities and men's emotional bodies are coupled in different ways to different urban spaces, and these micro-geographical body–space relations are constantly changing'. This study suggests then that not only are masculinities constructed in relation to place, but gendered norms differ across different spaces, suggesting potential for reconfigurations of the gendered order within everyday life (Gorman-Murray, 2011).

Similarly, Walsh (2011), explores the ways in which masculinity is spatially constructed through an 18 month ethnographic study, of both work and home-making practices undertaken by British migrants in Dubai. This research demonstrates the everyday importance of domesticity and home-making practices to men's identities and the reproduction of their masculine selves (Walsh, 2011). What this study highlights is that for these British migrant men, the co-constitution of their domestic lives and their masculine identity outside of the home is complex, as their masculine identity is constructed 'across the dichotomies of work/home' (Walsh, 2011:527). Brandth's (2016) study of the role of home-making and fathering practices within the farming community in Norway, also emphasises the ways in which masculinity is constructed around both work and domestic family relations. Moreover, Britton's (2019), study on Muslim men in Rotherham, illustrates that caring roles and domestic duties within the home were, for some men, a form of resistance to racialised constructions of Muslim masculinities within the wider public sphere (Britton, 2019). Each of these studies suggests that the sphere of the home is central to masculinities, and masculinities are constructed in relation to both public and private spheres.

2.3.3 Class and the Local Labour Market

A body of work within geography that pays attention to laddism and laddish identity suggests that laddism is interlinked with class discourses, and localised to specific places or areas (McDowell, 2000; 2002). Linda McDowell's work on young masculine identity and the local labour market in two British cities, Cambridge and Sheffield, grounds laddism in geographic location and place, as she considers the local economy, class position, the local labour market and unemployment in shaping access to what McDowell describes as historically more 'masculine' jobs (McDowell, 2000; 2002).

The changes in local economy within both Cambridge and Sheffield enable McDowell to consider the lived, geographic realities of laddism, within the backdrop of the wider policy context that considered 'lads' at this time particularly problematic. It is highlighted that the restructuring of local labour markets, particularly in deindustrialised parts of the UK, resulted in a mass reduction of unskilled manual labour jobs for local men (McDowell, 2000). This concept has also been explored by Nayak (2003) through research with young men in Newcastle, considering the role of a post-industrial society and changing local-global economy on white, working class masculinities, centralising locality and local practices in the ways in which masculinity is adopted and renegotiated. Wider discourses within the media and amongst policy makers have contested white, working class men as problematic 'others' within public discourse, highlighting the moral panic surrounding 'lads' and 'laddism' as inherently tied in with classed discourses (McDowell 2000; 2002). It is also argued that a change in labour market options for young people, and a shift away from more 'masculine' forms of low-skilled work, has resulted in an increase in young men working in more service-sector based roles, and the masculine, 'laddish' identities often formed within secondary school contexts are now less transferable into the workplace (McDowell, 2002). This highlights specifically the role of class, locality and economic context in which these identities are formed as particularly influential in the constructions of 'laddish', masculine forms of identity.

2.3.4 Masculinity and Sexuality

In paying attention to the role of intersecting markers of identity in the formation of masculinities, it is important to consider the intersection of gender and sexuality. Hopkins and Noble (2019) consider geographies of sexualities a 'cornerstone' within research on geographies of masculinity, particularly as it offers potential for understanding masculinities that contest patriarchal structures and knowledge. Several studies within geography have explored how masculinity is adopted in relation to sexuality, through research with men who are gay or bisexual. Waitt and Gorman-Murray (2007) consider the role of home-making practices in shaping masculinities for mature-age gay men living in a town outside Queensland. From interviews with 10 gay men in the town, Waitt and Gorman-Murray (2007) describe the home as a paradoxical space for these men, as their domestic spheres transgress dualistic epistemologies of margin and centre, as what would be considered both centre and marginal identities are played out within these spaces.

Masculinity and sexuality has also been considered within online spaces, through research into the regulation of masculinities on the dating app Grindr (Bonner-Thompson, 2017). Drawing on data from 30 interviews and 4 research diaries, Bonner-Thompson (2017) draws out the ways in which embodied regulations and practices followed by these gay men are used on Grindr as a way of

performing and marketing both their masculinity and sexuality within these spaces. Examples of this include exposing skin through hyper-sexualised photos on their profiles, marketing and showing 'active' parts of their lifestyle (such as sport or active leisure activities) on their profile as well as hiding their age for older men using the site (Bonner-Thompson, 2017). These examples draw out the ways in which offline regulatory practices around desirable gay male bodies shape the way these men present themselves on the dating app, as these practices are both embodied and marketed to other users and potential matches (Bonner-Thompson, 2017).

What these studies on masculinity within geography highlight that is particularly relevant for this research is the ways in which understandings of masculinity within geography are culturally constructed (Jackson, 1991), place-based (Berg and Longhurst, 2003), and intersect with other forms of identity category (Hopkins and Noble, 2009). It is also evident that cultural context (Dwyer et al., 2008) and class, influenced by local labour markets (McDowell, 2000; 2002) shape how masculinities are constructed as place-based. This is important to consider in light of the ways that laddism and lad culture is adopted as a form of student masculinity. The subsequent section will explore literature from within student geographies, in considering the role of student identity formation in shaping how lad culture is both adopted and experienced within UK HEIs.

2.4 Student Geographies

Within this section I draw on literature on student geographies from both within the UK and international context to frame this research project. A vast body of work within the UK context has explored the influence of widening participation (WP) in shaping the student landscape of universities (e.g. Kettley, 2007; Read et al., 2003; Reay et al., 2013; Holton, 2018). Key changes have occurred to the HE landscape in England in the last 25 years, particularly the expansion of the HE system in 1992 during which previous polytechnic colleges were granted university status. This served to expand the number of universities in the UK and worked somewhat to abolish the binary divide between the two forms of institution (Kettley, 2007). Along with this, there was also an increase in the number of students entering HE from previously underrepresented backgrounds, specifically students from ethnic minority backgrounds and lower income families, termed 'non-traditional' students (Kettley, 2007).

It is acknowledged that the widening of participation in HE can be seen to manifest socially on campus in several ways, through influencing both social norms and identity formation within the HE sphere (Kettley, 2007; Read et al., 2003; Reay et al., 2013; Holton, 2018). Researchers have noted

that the university campus is a space that holds great capacity in facilitating encounters of difference, through bringing disparate groups of people together in both education, social and accommodation settings (Andersson et al., 2012). Thus through widening participation within the HE setting, several scholars (e.g. Kettley, 2007; Read et al., 2003; Reay et al., 2013; Holton, 2018), have explored how this facilitates encounters with 'difference' in university campus spaces, and what this means for non-traditional students as they negotiate student identities within these spaces (Read et al., 2003 Reay et al., 2010; Webber, 2014).

2.4.1 University Spaces and Student Identity Formation

Sites and spaces in and around HE institutions have been highlighted by geographers as influential in student identity formation, particularly spaces that play a part in being, and becoming, a student. Researchers have considered what it means to adopt a 'student identity' whilst at university (Chatterton, 1999; Holdsworth, 2009; Holton and Riley, 2013; Holton and Riley, 2016), and this literature on student identity formation provides the context for understanding some of the ways that practices around laddism and lad culture have evolved and become a part of student life. In considering the role of space and place, geographers have identified campus accommodation spaces (Holton and Riley, 2013) as key in the formation of student identity, emphasising that being a student spans learning, social and living contexts. These spaces allow students to develop a way of living in line with a student-based identity that is both internalised and embodied (Holton and Riley, 2013). These student identities are argued to be reinforced through certain 'rituals' on campus, such as freshers' week, whereby students develop certain rules, expectations and behavioural norms (Chatterton, 1999). However, student identity is also widely acknowledged as fluid, diverse and contested, and a form of identity that can continually be redefined and (re)negotiated throughout a student's time in HE (Holdsworth, 2009; Holton and Riley, 2013).

The (re)negotiation of student identity both within and beyond university is captured by Tett et al., (2016) who, within a longitudinal study, traced 4 stages of transition for working-class students: first, from Further Education to HE; secondly, at the end of first year when they have begun to form student networks; thirdly, at the end of their degree, when their learning styles have tended to shift and they become independent learners; and lastly, post-university as HE has an impact on their identity through life. Furthermore, student identity does not exist within a vacuum, and thus intersects with, and is shaped by other forms of identity category. Student identities are not an all-encompassing way of life, but instead a set of behaviours and values that students can choose to engage with and perform within different stages of their university life (Holdsworth, 2009). This re-

negotiation is often evident throughout students' progression at university, as ways of enacting student identity developed at the beginning of a student's journey in HE are often contested and resisted, as students mature and distance themselves from typical student behaviours (Chatterton, 1999). Thus, students are diverse in their outlook (Holloway et al., 2010), suggesting that it is important to consider the nuances bound up with being a student, beyond the notion of students as one monolithic group. This is furthered by Holton and Riley (2013), who highlight that changes in the structure of universities, relating back to literature and research surrounding WP, as well as the increasing neoliberalisation of HE institutions, have served to create a complex picture of student life and student identities, again framing the contested and changeable nature of what constitutes as 'being a student'. For example, Brown and Kraftl (2019) explore the visible and invisible norms and commonalities within a cohort of students at the University of Leicester, to unpack the identities present within a cohort, and theorise what that means within the university context. What was found here was that being a student in this space was spatially and temporally contingent, whereby a set of collective norms were established on the basis of being together within learning environments, despite many individual differences between students (Brown and Kraftl, 2019).

Researchers within the field of student geographies have also considered the role of materiality, and specific student spaces in shaping and (re)producing aspects of student life and student identities within a UK HE context (e.g. Holton and Riley, 2016; Janning and Volk, 2017). Researchers such as Holton (2016a, 2018) and Smith and Holt (2007) have also paid attention to the role of halls of residence as spaces that shape interactions between students at university. University halls of residence allow students to prioritise social aspects during early stages in their student lives (Smith and Holt, 2007). The emotional drive towards living in university owned halls of residence within first year of university has also been noted, as students show preference towards university owned halls of residence as a 'coping strategy' to overcome anxieties (Smith and Holt, 2007).

Advancing these ideas, Holton (2016a) explores the role of university halls of residence with regards to inclusion, exclusion and cultural mixing between students. Holton (2016a) frames inclusivity and interactions within student halls through the lens of Bourdieu's (1986) social capital. Holton (2016a:69) outlines the 'complex hierarchies and power dynamics' that are present within university halls of residence that may stigmatise those who are not seen as a 'typical student', on the basis of social capital, or cultural or ethnic differences, for example non-traditional students from working class backgrounds and international students. In doing so, Holton (2016a) considers claims from institutions around student halls of residence as inclusive environments, suggesting that some students within halls of residence may not fit with the dominant student-centric social norms within these spaces.

Several researchers also explore the university experience and student identity of students who live in their parental home whilst studying, choosing not to live in rented student accommodation (Holdsworth, 2006; Pokmy et al., 2016). For Holdsworth (2006), interviewing students who chose to live at home for university alongside prospective students, captured a range of education experiences in relation to class backgrounds. In reinforcing the notion that student halls of residence are a key space in student identity formation, Holdsworth (2006) cites the role of cultural capital in informing students' choices around university participation. In considering the role of class background, it is evident that for middle class students, moving away from home is equated with the university experience, yet for non-traditional students, living in the parental home is a more common occurrence (Holdsworth, 2006).

Paying attention to the role of mobilities within student geographies literature, Holton and Finn (2020) found, through data from two separate studies with students who live at home, one conducted at Portsmouth University and one at Lancaster, that students engage in complex and contrasting practices of "mobile dwelling" in their daily mobilities as students. In particular, their sense of place within their home town becomes dynamic and unpredictable as they progress through university, and their social mobility and identity changes in relation to this (Holton and Finn, 2020). This suggests a need for increased consideration not just of the physical dwelling spaces that university students inhabit, such as student halls of residence or houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) but also a focus on student mobility, and the spaces in-between in influencing and shaping student identity formation.

A significant body of work within the field of student geographies has also addressed questions around the impacts that students living in rented accommodation off campus have on local communities and neighbourhoods (Christie et al., 2002; Smith and Holt, 2007; Hubbard, 2008; Hubbard, 2009). This concept, termed 'studentification', explores the role of students as gentrifiers within areas surrounding universities (Smith and Holt, 2007). Studentification is identified as having negative impacts on local areas, demonstrated by visible political resistance to the increasing number of HMOs in university cities, and to growing concentrations of students within local communities (Smith and Holt, 2007). HMO's are considered to be cultural signifiers within the gentrification process (Smith and Holt, 2007). Smith and Holt (2007) identify living in student neighbourhoods as a liminal period for young people, highlighting this as a period that shapes students into young adults.

The role of student housing is also explored by Hubbard (2009), particularly in relation to HMO's and shared rental housing off campus. In considering recent changes to student's housing choices, in part

a result of the continuing expansion of HE and changing student demands, Hubbard (2009) identifies a shift in student preferences of shared rental housing off campus, towards purpose-built student accommodation owned by private student accommodation rental companies. Through interviews it was identified that students moving into private rental accommodation after their first year of university follows the pathway identified by previous research (Smith and Holt, 2007) as students progress through university (Hubbard, 2009). Smith and Hubbard (2014) explore how student accommodation is becoming increasingly commodified, leading to the increasing socio-spatial segregation of students through purpose-built student villages and student flats within city centres. Through the use of walking interviews with non-local students at the University of Portsmouth, Holton (2015:28) identifies a changing 'sense of place' for students as they progress from university halls of residence to privately rented accommodation in their second and third year of university, as students find an 'opening up' and 'closing off' of locations that 'fit with their particular stage of 'being' students'. This raises key questions as to how the student housing market, both university owned halls of residence and privately rented accommodation, serve as spaces in which student identity is developed and (re)negotiated, in relation to a changing use of space and sense of place for students, as they progress through university.

What this body of work also enables me to consider, and is particularly relevant for this project, is the ways in which sites and spaces in and around HE institutions shape student identity formation. Spaces such as student halls of residence (Holton and Riley, 2013), privately rented student accommodation (Christie et al., 2002; Smith and Holt, 2007; Hubbard, 2008; Hubbard, 2009), the student NTE (Chatterton, 1999) student sports clubs (Dempster, 2009; 2011) and student 'rituals' such as freshers' week (Chatterton, 1999) are all key in shaping student identity formation. This literature enables me to consider geographically the role of different student spaces in the adoption of lad culture and laddism as a form of student identity, and also to contextualise how lad culture interacts or is influenced by student identity formation more broadly. The next section will consider the current neoliberal context within HEIs and how this may hold influence over experiences of, or responses to, lad culture.

2.5 Neoliberalisation of the Higher Education Sphere

The HE sphere within recent years has seen, and continues to see, an increasing neoliberal shift. Focusing on the UK context first, in particular England, the neoliberalisation and wider marketisation of the higher education sector has shifted attitudes, working conditions and student experience over the last few decades in a number of important ways. Neoliberalism is an ideology based around

increasing privatisation, bringing with it individualism, flexible labour, free trade and competitiveness (Peck and Tickell, 2002). With increasing neoliberalisation within HE institutions in England, this has served to position students as consumers (Cannella and Koro-Ljungberg, 2017), partly stemming from the post-92 higher education restructuring, furthered by Conservative Liberal Democrat coalition trebling tuition fees in 2012.

Since then, researchers have explored the impacts of an increasingly neoliberal, commercial and marketized environment in HE institutions in England, both reflecting and sitting within a rightward political shift more broadly within the UK context (Phipps, 2017). With this has come further pressures on university staff, particularly through the increasing quantification of productivity as a result of frameworks such as the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) (Ball, 2012), creating a hyper-competitive environment within institutions. There has also been in increase in job precarity within institutions, reflecting increasing job precarity more broadly within the UK. This has served to create ever more challenging structural and institutional conditions for both academic staff and students within institutions (Peters and Turner, 2014). Alongside the increasing marketisation and neoliberalisation of the higher education sector in England, researchers have also identified increasing misogyny, laddism and sexism, alongside more serious incidences of sexual violence on campus (Phipps and Young, 2014; Phipps and Young, 2015; Phipps, 2016). As a result of this, researchers have begun to question both the contextual nature of lad culture on campus, and also the influence of an increasingly neoliberal environment on these practices.

In a more explicit sense, Phipps and Young (2015) argue that lad culture and laddish misogyny have been reshaped by the wider neoliberalisation of HE institutions in England, as neoliberal consumerist and sexual values drive laddism and competitive attitudes on campus. Phipps and Young (2015) suggest that popular misogyny and the hyper-sexualisation of women peers serves as a way to re-enforce male privilege in this context. Similarly, the competitive and individualistic values that characterise neoliberalism have also been identified as key in the formation of laddish identity on campus (Phipps and Young, 2015). This positions lad culture as both place and cultural context specific, shaped by neoliberal practices within UK HEIs. Furthermore, studies have begun to identify the class-based discourses bound up within contemporary 'laddism' and lad culture within higher education, as predominantly middle class rather than marginalised, suggesting a position of power that was previously not considered within research on young men and laddism (Phipps, 2016). Here the class-based nature of debates around 'effortless' masculinities are important to consider in upholding both classed and gendered privileges within the wider context of the neoliberal HE institution.

Looking at the role of marketisation and neoliberalisation on an institutional level, Phipps (2017) suggests that market competition between institutions, particularly how this manifests in competition for student recruitment, may be important in driving a reluctance from institutions to take action on incidents of sexual violence or misconduct that are reported. This works at a multitude of levels, around both incidences reported against staff and students, but this is particularly prevalent when senior staff members are the accused perpetrators, citing high scores on the REF alongside reputation within the academy as suggested reasons for lack of pursual over claims (Phipps, 2017). Phipps (2017) also suggests that the neoliberal university is apolitical in its view of difference, highlighting a shift away from the traditional view of campus as a sphere for student politics and activism, towards a system that views profit and market concerns as salient.

Sara Ahmed's work on institutional diversity is also relevant here, as diversity work is often used as a framework or smokescreen by institutions so they appear to be making positive changes towards inclusivity and diversity on campus (Ahmed, 2012). Ahmed (2012) describes an institutional 'wall' that diversity workers hit when trying to implement systemic changes, as institutional diversity work serves to reproduce the values and narrative of the institution rather than challenge them. The neoliberal values of the institution also shape reporting systems and how complaints around sexual assault or sexual misconduct are handled (Ahmed, 2012). Furthermore, the lack of care for victims, and also students more broadly within the neoliberal academy is also suggested to be reflective of increasingly neoliberal values from the top down, furthered by suggestions more widely within the media and public discourse that practices of care within institutions are holding a 'left wing bias' and infringing on 'freedom of speech' (Phipps, 2017).

Recent work (e.g. Ahmed, 2012; Smele et al., 2017; Tzanakou and Pearce, 2019) highlights the political and socio-economic climate within institutions from which incidences of laddism, lad culture, sexual assault and violence are occurring and being handled by institutions, within the wider context of what Bilge (2013:407) terms the 'neoliberal equity/diversity regime'. The role of neoliberal ideology within institutions has also been explored in relation to policy and gender equality programmes as part of this diversity work. In fleshing this out, (Tzanakou and Pearce, 2019) use the example of Athena SWAN (Scientific Women's Academic Network) to identify how the neoliberal university model that centres around market imperatives impacts the way policy is implemented to address gendered disparities within institutions through the use of 'neoliberal feminism', ignoring intersectional experiences and power inequalities. Symptomatic of the wider neoliberal conditions within the academy, Athena SWAN was founded by women in senior academic and management positions, to bring about institutional and cultural shifts in advancing the careers of women in STEM (Tzanakou and Pearce, 2019). It is argued that Athena SWAN relies on a binary

theorisation of gender[4], constrained by the neoliberal conditions in which it is implemented, particularly due to the individualist ethos of the programme, and the personal cost for individuals undertaking diversity with within HE (Tzanakou and Pearce, 2019), as also identified by Ahmed (2017). This provides one example of how policy within HE institutions aimed to address gender inequality is constrained by the wider context of neoliberalisation, and at times can also serve to (re)produce neoliberal cultures further.

Ahmed (2012) cites a 'performance culture' within institutions that priorities performing well within the current system, positioning equality as a 'performance indicator', meaning that equality becomes a neoliberal marker or target that an institution has to meet. Thus, through treating equality as an institutional performance, this eradicates the possibility of challenging or reforming institutional practices and structures that serve to uphold or perpetuate inequality (Ahmed, 2012). Furthermore, in line with the increasing use of metrics to measure success or failure within the academy, diversity becomes metricised on a system that does not 'do the doing' needed to change the practices that reproduce inequality systemically (Ahmed, 2012). For example, Ahmed (2012) highlights this as institutions writing documents and policies, often employing a junior, lone diversity or equality worker to draft these up.

It is important to acknowledge this literature in understanding the wider neoliberal context within UK HEIs in which my research was undertaken. In particular, the 'performance culture' in which institutions handle complaints around diversity and equality (Ahmed, 2012) and within my own research, complaints around lad cultures and student sexual misconduct. The neoliberalisation of diversity work as identified within Ahmed's work (2012) highlights the importance in taking a critical approach when undertaking research within the neoliberal university. Ahmed's further work on complaint within HEIs will be explored within the next literature review chapter. The final section of this literature review will review research on online geographies, alongside work that explores how gender and sexuality is presented and performed within online spaces.

2.6 Online Geographies, Gender and Online Harassment

The internet has created a new sphere for qualitative research, although this is bound in both methodological and ethical complexities (Morrow et al., 2015). Feminist geographers are well positioned to approach research on the online sphere, due to the potential for participatory and

[4] It is worth noting that since this research was published, the Athena SWAN charter has been updated to include non-binary gendered identity, and consider the importance of intersectionality, particularly in regards to race. See: The transformed UK Athena Swan Charter | Advance HE (advance-he.ac.uk)

reciprocal online research (Morrow et al., 2015). This raises interesting prospects for feminist geographical research of the online (Morrow et al., 2015). Feminist scholarship within the field of digital geography works to situate research on the online sphere through a feminist analytical lens (Richardson, 2016) and this means

> '*attending to and unpacking how people make sense and meaning of data and technologies in the spaces and practices of their everyday lives, and how they grapple with the effects and consequences of a digital society, and how these effects and consequences manifest different across spaces and subject/ivities'* (Elwood and Leszczynski, 2018:639).

In doing so, feminist theory brings intersectional discourses into the field of digital geographies, working towards teasing out how digital life re-iterates social difference, oppression and resistance (Elwood and Leszcynski, 2018).

Several key bodies of work make important contributions to considering how gendered powder dynamics play out across social networking sites (SNS), including Longhurst's work (2013), that considers Skype as a space for online communication that enables embodied encounters through visual mediums. Longhurst (2013) considers the role of Skype in mothering practices, within interviews and focus groups with mothers in Hamilton, Aotearoa New Zealand. What Longhurst (2013) found was that the visuality of Skype, compared with other forms of online communication such as phone calls and text messages, enabled mothers to communicate with their children in a more embodied, and emotional way, as their bodies were presented to one another through the screen. The visual nature of skype offered a form of comfort, and an emotional encounter through performative encounters online (Longhurst, 2013). This links to the work of Bonner-Thompson (2017) as discussed earlier, as the visual element of the dating app Grindr means that gay men are able to show or market aspects of their lifestyle or body image, highlighting the embodied nature of visual SNS.

Several scholars within feminist media studies have drawn out key links between gendered identity, harassment and the online sphere (Ging and Siapera, 2018; Koulouris, 2018; Marwick and Caplan, 2018). Scholars in this area have worked to flesh out the link between misogyny and gender-based experiences in online spaces, and offline manifestations of this, theorising this as a continuum, meaning experiences and interactions manifest across both online and offline spaces (Ging and Siapera, 2018). Within research by Marwick and Caplan (2018), harassment online is

considered as 'networked harassment', as encompassing a wide array of behaviour online that can vary from name-calling to serious abuse. Considering online harassment as ever-evolving behaviours, Marwick and Caplan (2018) trace the term misandry (hatred of men) across online spaces across three periods of time, 1990, 2000 and 2010. In doing so, Marwick and Caplan (2018) explore how language can be used by men's rights activist groups online to construct identity, oppose feminism and re-enforce gendered binaries. It is evident that within the online sphere, gendered norms and practices are (re)enforced through the hegemonic use of language, constructing an online community based on shared gender ideologies. Misogyny online has also been explored by Koulouris (2018), as linked to far-right movements, often masked by the term 'alt-right'. What brings together all of this research are the ways in which misogyny online is organised and networked, which in turn has influence on the level of misogyny that is deemed acceptable within the public sphere (Marwick and Caplan, 2018; Koulouris, 2018).

In addition to research focusing on misogyny and harassment online, there is also a growing body of work that explores young people's experiences of social media, and how interactions manifest across online and offline spaces. This is of particular interest to my research, as I aimed to explore how lad culture manifests *across* online and offline spaces. Madge et al., (2009) have explored how engagement with Facebook pre-university registration acts as a means of making new friends at university, online, working as a form of 'social glue' that enables students to settle into university life. Within this research by Madge et al., (2009) it is evident that social media, namely Facebook in this instance acts as a social tool for university students.

Several researchers have also explored the role of SNS in shaping young people's social lives and engagement with the NTE. Truong (2018) explores how young people's nightlife is shaped by engagement with SNS, particularly WhatsApp, as a form of orientation within the NTE. For Truong (2018), WhatsApp enabled young people to extend physical boundaries of nightlife spaces, enabling broader friendships, as well as sharing experiences in real-time through images and sounds, creating a form of 'synchronised spaces' across the online and offline spheres (Longhurst, 2013:676 in Troung, 2018). Halliwell (2020) also explores how young people negotiate identity through 'digital objects' such as laptops, televisions and social media platforms, using internet-enabled devices to perform Eurovision fan identities, alongside negotiating their sexual identity as gay, bisexual or straight. This body of work highlights the ways in which SNS are enabling interactions for students across online and offline spaces, as norms and values are created and shared across an online/offline continuum.

Several researchers (Haslop and O'Rourke, 2020; Haslop et al., 2021) have considered the link between harassment in the online sphere and on SNS, and student lad culture within UK HEIs specifically. Drawing on data from a large-scale study that used online surveys and qualitative interviews with students at a university in the North West of England, Haslop and O'Rourke (2020) emphasise how gendered online harassment affects women students more than men, although the group most affected by online harassment was found to be transgender students. The most common form of harassment identified was 'unwanted sexualisation', which includes 'unwanted sexual messages, images and requests' (Haslop and O'Rourke, 2020:1113). Another common form of online harassment experienced was the sharing of non-consensual sexual imagery within peer-to-peer online interactions, and this was most commonly experienced by women students, as the sharing of non-consensual 'dick pics' acts as a form of gendered power hierarchy within online interactions (Haslop and O'Rourke, 2020). This study highlights how harassment online can be in the form of both visual and non-visual practices, re-enforcing gendered powder dynamics through the sexual objectification of women, and demonisation of non-hegemonic gendered groups (Haslop and O'Rourke, 2020).

Furthering this, Haslop et al., (2021) explore through data from the same study, the ways in which students respond to online peer-to-peer harassment. What was found was that although online sexual harassment was commonly experienced by university students at the case study HEI, students were relatively tolerant and accepting of specific forms of online harassment, particularly 'non-consensual sharing of private content, including sexual images' (Haslop et al., 2021:1431), and were unlikely to report these experiences to the university or the police. It was also found that gendered harassment is a barrier to digital inclusion, acting as a form of gendered marginalisation (Haslop et al., 2021). It is evident that there is still some way to go within the field of feminist geography in considering how gendered practices and power dynamics manifest *across* online and offline spaces, particularly within the lives of young people.

2.7 Concluding Remarks

Three key bodies of work have informed my thinking in approaching this research project, on student experiences of, and responses to lad culture at two UK HEIs. The first, is work on laddism within the education sphere. There is a rich background of research within this area, with a focus both on the secondary education system (e.g. Jackson, 2003; 2006) and more recently, work on lad culture within HEIs (Phipps and Smith, 2012; Phipps and Young, 2015; Phipps, 2017). What this work draws focus on is the ways in which the space of the secondary school, or HEI, can act as an

institutional setting from which specific types of masculinity are adopted and performed. For example, Jackson's (2003) work on laddishness in schools identifies forms of hegemonic and subordinate masculinity, that influence acceptable and unacceptable ways of performing masculine gendered identity. This spanned across social and educational spaces, highlighting that the performance of hegemonic masculine identity starts at schooling age (Jackson, 2003; 2006). This is furthered by more recent work on lad cultures within UK HEIs. This work links laddism and lad cultures within HEIs particularly to university sports clubs (Clayton and Harris, 2008; Dempster, 2009), and the student NTE (Dempster, 2009; 2011; Phipps and Young, 2013). Drawing upon work on masculinity from within geography, this body of work informs my thinking in how laddism within UK HEIs is context specific, and influenced by various forms of identity category. This work emphasises the situated, place-based and intersectional nature of masculinity (Hopkins, 2006; 2007; Richardson, 2015; Hopkins and Noble, 2019).

In considering previous work on lad cultures within the education system, particularly within UK HEIs, research is only recently beginning to emerge on the ways in which this manifests across online and offline spaces (Haslop and O'Rourke, 2020; Haslop, 2021). This work to date is key in opening up avenues for research on the role of SNS in shaping or reflecting gendered power dynamics within peer-to-peer interactions. This work highlights the online harassment experienced by students within UK HEIs. Building on this, my own research considers how lad culture is experienced by students across online and offline social media spaces, and in considering social media as a form of 'social glue' (Madge et al., 2009), continues the discussion on the ways in which specific visual and non-visual social media platforms enable a form of 'synchronised space' between the online and offline world, posing specific challenges to both students and institutions in understanding lad culture and addressing its more problematic aspects.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framings

In this chapter I draw on several key areas of scholarship to theoretically approach and frame this research project. My discussion of this is structured into five sections. The first section on feminist scholarship grounds this project epistemologically, particularly debates that consider knowledge as situated, drawing on the work of feminist scholars (e.g. Sharp, 2001; Brown and Staeheli, 2003; Hyndman, 2004; Dyck, 2005; Marson et al., 2005; Pratt and Rosner, 2006). These are concepts that run throughout this thesis and have framed my approach to this project, both methodologically and theoretically. The second section within this literature review is on feminist geopolitics, unpacking geographic understandings around the politics of space from a feminist standpoint. The third section is on gender, sexuality and performativity, primarily drawing on the work of Judith Butler (1990; 1993), and work within geography that has utilised the concept of performativity. In doing so, this work enables me to adopt a non-binary, non-essentialist framework from which to view gender, taking into consideration how ideas around performance and performativity can be used to make sense of laddish gendered performances, or lad culture, in HE spheres. In looking beyond lad culture as a heteronormative performance by heterosexual, cis gender men on campus, Butler's postmodern stance on the formation of gender allows me to develop a geographic, or place-based conceptualisation of laddism as performed by students of all genders on and off campus.

In the fourth section, building on this, I draw upon Sara Ahmed's work (2006) on queer phenomenology, particularly the ways in which she considers heteronormativity to shape or code spaces – drawing out the geographic potential of considering gender and sexuality as 'oriented'. In understanding how different forms of identity category also shape gendered experiences in relation to student lad cultures, in the fifth section I consider work on intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991; Valentine, 2007). This work is particularly influential in my unpacking of how student experiences and understandings of lad culture are intertwined with varying forms of identity category, for example gender, sexuality, class and race. Furthermore, in the sixth section of this chapter, I draw on aspects of Connell's (1987) theory of hegemonic masculinity, using key critiques of this, as well as a remodelled version (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). Here I explore the relevance of different aspects of this theory in understanding lad culture as a form of hegemonic masculinity, and consider the ways in which this theory can unpack lad culture within UK HEIs. In doing so, within this section I also draw upon scholarship that conceptualises how heteronormative ideas around masculinity can be negotiated (Anderson and McGuire, 2009), drawing upon queer geography scholarship to demonstrate that gendered identity is not fixed, but can be performed and subverted (Bell et al., 1994; Nelson, 1999; Doan, 2000).

3.1 Feminist Geopolitics

Subaltern and feminist geopolitical thought provides important context for this research through providing a nuanced view to how power is dispersed spatially and politically. This enables me to consider how gendered power dynamics operate on a small scale, through peer-to-peer interactions, and how this constitutes lad culture within HEIs. Feminist geopolitics works to provide an alternative to the dominant geopolitical script (Sharp, 2011), which is often considered by feminist geopolitical scholars as re-producing a dominant masculinist narrative (Sharp, 2001; Brown and Staeheli, 2003; Hyndman, 2004; Dyck, 2005; Marson et al., 2005; Pratt and Rosner, 2006). In doing so, feminist geopolitical scholarship enables an understanding of everyday articulations of power through looking beyond the state, and state opposition, into the private realm; allowing an exploration of how power is experienced and articulated in more personal ways (Brown and Staeheli, 2003). Through considering the self as a point from which to begin research, this has also worked to break down the dichotomy between the public and the private sphere within feminist research.

Several feminist scholars (Marson et al., 2005; Pratt and Rosner, 2006) call for a realignment of how scale is theorised. Through introducing the role of intimacy within scale, Pratt and Rosner (2006), attempt to break down the barriers between the personal and the political, the global and the intimate; reconceptualising scalar assumptions that transcend both the 'public' and 'private' sphere. Through looking into the role of the everyday in constituting and upholding wider power relations, feminist scholarship has highlighted the importance of small scale, everyday interactions in contributing to wider systems of power (Dyck, 2005). It is these small scale, everyday interactions that frame my approach in this research, through considering how the everyday gendered experiences and performances of lad culture shape student experiences.

Several scholars have focused on the role of violence (Pain and Staeheli, 2014; Pain, 2014) and security (Sharp, 2007), using this feminist geopolitical stance to explore how power is articulated within these themes, looking across both the private and public sphere in their analysis. Pain and Staeheli (2014) draw the link between the private and the personal, the interpersonal and the institutional, calling for a greater focus on intimacy in the analysis of articulations of power. Through looking into the private realm in my analysis of articulations of power, for example student accommodation and living spaces, within this research I consider the role of 'private' spheres as important for articulations of power within the everyday, and apply feminist geopolitical theories of scale to this, as I unpack the ways in which gendered power operates structurally across both public and private spheres.

3.2 Gender, Sexuality and Performativity

Theoretical frameworks regarding both the construction of gender, and performances of masculinity, within the social sciences inform how we can understand gendered identity in relation to particular places and social and cultural contexts. Within this research I consider students' experiences of lad culture at the two case study HEIs geographically, considering the role of place-based context in shaping their experiences. I also view lad culture as performative; both a way of enacting masculinity, and also as a form of student identity. It is the theoretical frameworks that I discuss below that enable me to conceptualise lad culture in this way, particularly the work of Butler (1990), Bordo (1992) and Young (1990) in understanding gender as both socially constituted and performative. I also consider how these theoretical frameworks around performance and performativity have been used within Geographic scholarship, drawing on several key bodies of work in order to flesh out how this concept can be utilised in understanding gender, sexualities, race, and the context in which these identity categories are formed (e.g. Nelson, 1999; Gregson and Rose, 2000).

Butler's (1990) theory of performativity is key to draw upon in exploring how gendered identity is formed. Rooted in postmodern schools of thought, Butler (1990:45) situates the formation of gendered identity within wider social discourses and networks of power, arguing that 'gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being'. Butler (1990) argues that gender is formed through the repetition of acts that fall in line, mirror and reproduce wider gendered discourses, in line with 'regulatory regimes'. Butler (1990) also discusses the potential for transgressive and transformative acts, using the example of drag to highlight how performativity can subvert gendered expectations. Butler argues that the concept of gender is constituted through these performative acts, and does not exist as a 'naturalised' entity in and of itself (Butler, 1990). As well as this, the notion of sex is also not a natural or biological phenomena according to Butler (1990), but it is instead the bodily form mapped onto these gendered discourses that are constantly reproduced through performative acts.

Drawing this out further in relation to sexuality, Butler (1990:6) highlights how 'under conditions of normative heterosexuality, policing gender is sometimes used as a way of securing heterosexuality', emphasising that 'sexual hierarchy produces and consolidates gender'. Butler's (1990) approach is not just focused around the breaking down of binary gendered norms, but also heterosexual societal norms that are bound up within this. Susan Bordo (1992) expands this concept further in relation to racial identity, highlighting how Butler's theory of performativity can be used to break down and explore the formation of these identity categories. In reading Bordo (1992), it is

clear that Butler's key theoretical tools can be expanded to explain, in some way, the formation of several categories of identity:

> *'The performative approach is enormously insightful (and pedagogically useful) as a framework for exploring the ongoing, interactive, imitative processes by means of which the self, gender (I would add race as well), and their illusions of authenticity are constructed. What cultural gestures are involved in the performance of masculinity, femininity, heterosexuality, homosexuality, maternity, paternity, 'Whiteness,' and 'Blackness'? How is authenticity 'fabricated' and conveyed? How is the 'binary frame' enacted and regulated?*' (Bordo, 1992: 168)

Drawing upon the notion of performativity in this way, Bordo (1992) emphasises the role of binary power structures that serve to uphold dominant categories of identity, in relation to gender, sexuality and race. This suggests possibilities for Butler's theory of performativity as not only applicable to gendered identity, but also as a possible tool to explore how intersecting categories of identity are formed.

Performativity has been used conceptually by a number of scholars within geography (e.g. Mahtani, 2002) in relation to the performance of racialised identities, or racialisation. Mahtani (2002) suggests that Butler's theory has tended to ignore the role of space and race within discussions of performativity, and expands on Butler's work to explore how performativity can be used to understand how 'racial categories are socially constructed in different ways and in different places' (Mahtani, 2002:429). Mahtani explores the experiences of some women of 'mixed race', paying attention to the ways in which the racial identity of 'mixed race' women is often framed for them, and how 'mixed race' women respond to that form of racialisation (Mahtani, 2002). In doing so, Mahtani (2002:436) explores how race is a social construction, yet exists within the limits of wider regulatory forces that she terms 'racial border guards', practices and encounters that police the boundaries of racial identity. What Mahtani (2002) also unveils is the potential for some 'mixed race' women to subvert racialisation through playing into, rejecting, or performing, some aspects of their racial identity, for example switching ethnicities with their friend, or adopting interests such as music preferences that challenge socially constructed stereotypes around race. In bringing race into discussions on performativity, Mahtani (2002) outlines the potential for performativity to be used for understanding how varying forms of intersecting identity categories are adopted and performed, and also begins to unravel what the emancipatory potentials, or regulatory boundaries are within this.

Performativity has also been used in geographic work within the field of queer geographies, in relation to the performance of sexualities. Here, I explore how two key geographic papers (Bell et al., 1994; McDowell and Court, 1994) along with more recent geographic works that have adopted Butler's notion of performativity (Gregson and Rose, 2000; Doan, 2010), might inform my use of Butler's work to frame my own research. Looking into how Butler (1990) has been used geographically, Gregson and Rose (2000) cite Bell et al.'s (1994), discussion of gay skinheads and lipstick lesbians, whose performative sexualities can subvert hetero-sexed norms. Through grounding Butler's theory spatially, work here has linked the notion of performativity with the potential for transgressive identity construction. Whilst Nelson (1999) has argued that the two are incompatible (Nelson, 1999), there are aspects of Bell et al.,'s (1994) work that are a useful starting point to thinking about Butler's theory of performativity both spatially and geographically. In particular, Bell et al., (1994:33) highlight how 'what counts as radical and liberatory is contingent on time and space' drawing upon the importance of place and space based context in shaping the boundaries of gendered performativity. This notion is useful in thinking about how lad cultures are able to be (re)produced or reshaped by students, given the hegemonic gendered norms and power dynamics between peers within UK HEIs.

These ideas that spaces are inherently gendered can also be conceptualised when looking beyond binary notions of gender, as spaces can be constructed as heteronormative through the policing of behaviours that do not fit in line with presumed gendered binaries (Doan, 2010). Thus, it is through this work that I conceptualise gendered identity not as fixed, but existing beyond binary conceptions of gender, as fluid and changeable (Doan, 2010). Although there have been key developments within geographies of sexualities that have enabled geographers to begin to think beyond binary, heteronormative conceptions of gender and sexualities, (Binnie and Valentine, 1999), recent work has highlighted that there is still significant work to be done in challenging geographers to consider the normative and privileged places associated with being cisgendered (Johnston, 2016). It is from this position that I look into lad culture in HE settings, not as fixed to cismen and the male body exclusively, but as a set of gendered behaviours that can be (re)produced or rejected by students of all genders. I also consider the perceived heteronormativity of various spaces, in order to explore the subversion of dominant forms of gendered identity geographically.

3.3 Queer Phenomenology, Diversity and the Feminist Killjoy

Furthering my understand of gender as performative (Butler, 1990), I draw upon the work of Sara Ahmed to unpack the ways in which lad culture as a form of gendered performance within UK HEIs is

heteronormative, embodied, and 'oriented' in place. Her work on pain and memory shapes my thinking in considering the role of emotions, space and embodiment in shaping trauma and emotional response (Ahmed, 2012) and using this work enables me to consider the ways in which space, emotion and trauma are interlinked. Furthermore, her work on queer phenomenology and non-heteronormative identities (2006; 2017) also enables me to consider the ways in which lad culture reproduces heteronormative narratives within student spaces, and the ways in which students who do not affiliate with dominant heteronormative narratives may feel 'out of place'. Finally, Ahmed's work on institutional diversity work (2012; 2019) and complaint (2021) are central to my understandings of the wider institutional context in which both student and university responses to lad culture are formulated. In this section I will overview the key aspects of each of these works that aid my understanding of: a) how lad culture is reproduced and performed spatially and; b) both student and institutional responses.

Looking firstly to Ahmed's work on queer phenomenology (2006), this theorises sexuality as embodied, spatial and temporal, considering the ways in which queerness and heteronormativity shape or code spaces through considering sexuality as 'oriented'. Ahmed (2006:552) talks of bodily orientations, or in other words, an embodied understanding of the world around us that is shaped by 'contact with objects and others'. Ahmed (2006) further considers how heterosexuality is oriented in relation to space and objects, and thus queer or non-heteronormative sexualities are considered deviant from the spatial and temporal heterosexual norm. Drawing on the work of Butler and Foucault, Ahmed (2006) considers compulsory heterosexuality in relation to objects, creating a 'background', a heteronormative script or arrangement that takes both physical and embodied form. In doing so, Ahmed (2006) positions queer identities as a deviance from the norm, that present themselves as a form of spatial or temporal disruption, as the coding of spaces become heteronormative through 'repetitive performances of hegemonic asymmetrical gender and heterosexual desires congeal over time to produce the appearance that the street is normally a heterosexual space' (Valentine, 1996; cited in Ahmed 2006:563). Thus, in orienting sexuality in this way Ahmed (2006) also spatialises sexualities. This work is pivotal in my unpacking of lad culture not just as a form of gendered identity or performance but also in understanding lad culture as heterosexually oriented, working to police the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable genders and sexualities within different student spaces.

Also central in my understandings of lad culture within the UK Higher Education context are Ahmed's writings on institutional diversity work (2012; 2019). In particular, Ahmed's work offers a means to understand the reluctance or avoidance of institutions to take a meaningful, victim-centred approach within their response to lad culture and sexual violence on campus. Ahmed (2012; 2017)

offers theoretical explanations that unpack the structural nature of these reluctances from her own time as a university diversity worker. For example, in her 2012 book 'On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life', Ahmed discusses what she terms institutional 'performance culture', in which documents and policy on diversity work often replace the doing of diversity work, and become the focus for institutions.

Ahmed (2012:30) highlights how communications around diversity within institutions 'become an end as well as a means for certain kinds of work within universities', as diversity work is often centred around trying to circulate documents, or arrange meetings with people within the organisation who are willing to speak up about diversity in meetings. Ahmed (2012:26) also uses the metaphor of an institutional 'wall' in describing diversity work as: 'the feeling of doing diversity work is the feeling of coming up against something that does not move, something solid and tangible. The institution becomes that which you come up against'. In doing so, Ahmed describes diversity work as creating trouble (Ahmed, 2012). Thus, this resistance or 'wall' put in place by the institution means that diversity work within the context of the higher education sphere often produces little meaningful structural change, instead existing as a form of communication, or statements of commitments that often do not serve to reshape the landscape of (in)equality in HE. Although referring to racism and institutional racism within this work, these writings are key in my own understanding of institutional diversity work in relation to lad culture and sexual misconduct, in both understanding the wider institutional landscape as well as university responses to incidences both at a local and national level.

Another important concept for my research introduced within Sara Ahmed's work is that of the Feminist Killjoy (Ahmed, 2017). This concept is key to unpacking feminist understandings of the world, through feelings and memories that come from past experiences of gendered violence and injustice (Ahmed, 2017). Within Sara Ahmed's writings on the Feminist Killjoy, she highlights how 'feminist work is often memory work' (2017:22), as remembering past experiences shapes how we interact with the present. In particular, Ahmed (2017:23) considers how experiences of gendered harassment or violence are remembered by the body, and 'seem to accumulate over time, gathering like things in a bag, but the bag is your body, so you feel like you are carrying more and more weight'. In turn, this gendered violence becomes to be expected, shaping the ways in which you inhabit your body, or interpret danger, accepting the possibility of further violence; 'managing yourself as a way of managing the consequences' (Ahmed, 2017:24). This highlights the ways in which feminism identifies gendered violence as systemic patterns, ways of making sense of experiences and recognising that experiences are wrong, as a form of 'feminist consciousness' (Ahmed, 2017:31). This concept is key in my understanding of the ways in which participants'

experiences, understandings of and responses to lad culture are embodied, and exist within a wider system of gendered power structures.

In drawing together these three streams of Sara Ahmed's work, this enables me to understand a) how students both experience and perform lad culture and b) the neoliberal context in which institutions respond to disclosures of lad culture and student sexual misconduct. In considering the former, the concept of queer phenomenology enables me to build upon the work of Butler (1990) in considering gender and sexuality not only as performative but also as 'oriented' in place. This brings a geographic understanding of performativity, in considering lad culture as heterosexually oriented, working to police the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable genders and sexualities within student spaces.

3.4 Intersectionality

Work within geographic scholarship has begun to tease out the connection between gendered identity, constructions of gender, and other forms of identity category that may lead to oppression, through the concept of intersectionality (Valentine, 2007). I consider work on intersectionality as key within my own research, as 'gender is always bound up with other dimensions of human experience and subjectivity including those described by terms such as class, race, sexuality, age and so on' (Bondi and Davidson, 2003:325). Within my research, I look specifically to how these forms of identity category influence how students' experience and perform lad culture.

It is important to acknowledge the origins and key debates around intersectionality before considering how this has been used in contemporary and geographic scholarship. Developed originally by Crenshaw (1989), the concept of intersectionality emerged within academia in the late 1980s. Rooted in anti-racist and feminist legal work, Crenshaw developed this term in response to difficulties legally advocating for Black women in relation to the specific forms of sexist *and* racist discrimination they experienced. Conceptually, intersectionality seeks to theorise the relationship between gender and racial oppression not just as race and gender, but as a specific form of oppression faced at the intersection of these identity categories. Outside of academia, intersectional understandings of power structures were being developed within social movements and activist groups, particularly racially minoritised women's groups, across the world (Hopkins, 2019). Based around the experiences of women of colour, the emergence of intersectionality academically addressed the intersection of both gender based discrimination and racism (Crenshaw, 1991).

Rather than addressing gender and race as separate systems of oppression, intersectionality looks into how these systems of oppression contribute to, and mutually construct one another (Collins, 2015). This addressed a gap within both feminist and antiracist movements that often overlooked the struggles of women of colour, to cite Crenshaw (1991: 1252): 'because women of color experience racism in ways not always the same as those experienced by men of color and sexism in ways not always parallel to experiences of white women, antiracism and feminism are limited, even on their own terms'.

Since then, intersectionality has been expanded within academia to include a variety of different identity categories, including disability, class, gender and so on. Incorporating an intersectional approach towards research on gender, seeks to challenge the assumption that hegemonic masculinity and patriarchal theorisations of power and domination are strictly that of men over women, taking into consideration other aspects of identity that may contribute towards positions of power and oppression (Christensen and Jensen, 2014). This approach allows for the explorations of the construction of gendered identity at the microlevel, highlighting the importance of everyday, small scale practices in shaping gendered power dynamics (Christensen and Jensen, 2014).

It is important to carefully consider the limitations and uses of intersectionality, particularly within the context of studying lad culture as a form of masculinity. Intersectionality has received critique for venturing away from the original concept, which was focused on gendered and racial power structures, suggesting that this has led to a flattening of the differences that intersectionality was initially coined to outline, thus regressing actual intersectional social change (Luft, 2010). In questioning the relevance in applying intersectionality universally in this way, scholars have also questioned whether diverting attention away from key power structures, such as gender and race, to include all marginalised identity categories as intersecting in the same way, is productive or even logical within feminist scholarship (Collins, 1998; Luft, 2010).

Despite this, it is widely recognised that intersectionality offers depth of insight into the complexities of intersectional identities and the need to account for multiple grounds of identity within feminist research. Some geographic work on masculinities to date has incorporated intersectionality as a framework (e.g. Hopkins and Noble, 2009; Meth and McClymont, 2009). What this enables is a consideration of 'the intersectionality of masculine identities with other forms of identification, recognising that there are a range of vectors of relationality present within masculinities '*in different places* and *at different times'* (Hopkins and Noble, 2009:812). In considering masculinities geographically, intersectionality is a useful tool alongside hegemonic masculinity (as will be outlined below) to further unpack place-based understandings of masculinity, particularly given that campus

cultures within UK HEIs have previously been identified as 'the preserve of white, Western, middle to upper class, privately educated men' (NUS, 2013:33).

3.5 Hegemonic Masculinities

Hegemonic masculinity is central to scholarship on masculinity, and refers to practices that reinforce dominant masculine identities, through the creation of a gendered hierarchy of masculine ideals in relation to which men construct their own masculine identity (Connell, 1987). Through this, dominant and subordinated forms of masculinity are constructed, and forms of masculinity that do not fit heteronormative discourses more widely are deemed subordinate (Connell, 1987). Building on Gramsci's theory of hegemony, Connell (1987) first introduces the concept of hegemonic masculinity within several key pages of 'Gender and Power'. Connell (1987) argues that hegemonic masculinity shapes the power dynamics and framework of gender relations, and it is from these power structures that masculinity is constructed, and dominant forms of masculinity are upheld. Through understanding dominant forms of masculinity and power structures, Connell (1987) argues that this provides the framework from which to explore and understand other subordinated forms of masculinity. Defining hegemony as 'a social ascendancy achieved in play of social forces that extends beyond contests of brute power into the organization of private life and cultural processes', Connell reformulates this concept to explore systems of power that uphold dominant gendered power structures (Connell, 1987: 297). Key in my unpacking of lad cultures within UK HEIs, is an understanding that hegemonic masculinity creates a hierarchy of masculinity and masculine ideals, according to Connell (1987), a 'collective' strategy that masculine ideals adhere to.

In later work, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005:832) describe hegemonic masculinity as:

> *'the pattern of practice (i.e., things done, not just a set of role expectations of an identity) that allowed men's dominance over women to continue. Hegemonic masculinity was distinguished from other masculinities, especially subordinated masculinities. Hegemonic masculinity was not assumed to be normal in the statistical sense; only a minority of men may enact it. But it was certainly normative.'*

Taking this further, Connell and Messerchmidt (2005) also argue that men who benefit from these power structures without enacting overt male dominance could be described as enacting *complicit masculinity*. Compliance with hegemonic masculinity from men, and heterosexual women, reinforces hegemonic masculinity, reproducing its power and validation (Connell and

Messerschmidt, 2005). Despite these power structures and their reinforcement, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) also suggest that hegemonic masculinities are a product of specific circumstances and are historically grounded. This has opened possibility for this theory to be developed within geographic thought, situating hegemonic masculinity in relation to specific spatial and cultural contexts (e.g. Jackson, 1991; Berg and Longhurst, 2003; Atherton, 2009; Gorman Murray and Hopkins, 2018).

The notion of hegemonic masculinity has been adopted and reformulated by many scholars within masculinity studies more broadly. Often deployed as a framework from which to approach the study of dominant masculinities within groups of men, the works of several scholars are useful understanding how the theory of hegemonic masculinity has been developed since Connell's work in 1987. Looking into the structural order of gender and hierarchies bound up within this, Bird (1996) focuses on homosocial relations, or the friendships between men, looking into how hegemonic masculinity can be reproduced or upheld within small group interactions. Arguing that gender is relational, it is through consideration of these group dynamics that Bird (1996) advances Connell's (1987) framework, identifying three key shared meanings that serve to uphold and reproduce hegemonic masculinity. These are: emotional detachment, competition, and the sexual objectification of women. Arguing that these are not central to identity but are, however, key characteristics of hegemonic masculinity in practice, Bird (1996) highlights that through emotional detachment, men that uphold these hegemonic norms are able to mask perceived weakness or vulnerability.

This notion of hegemonic masculinity as (re)produced by men, specifically in group settings, is also explored by Anderson and McGuire (2009), who highlight that male dominated group settings can also facilitate the subversion of hegemonic masculinity. Through auto-ethnographic research and 24 interviews with a men's rugby team at a high-ranked university in England, Anderson and McGuire (2009) question the role of hegemonic masculinity as shaping dominant and subordinate sporting masculinities. Their study provides nuance to the theory, suggesting that alternative forms of masculinity outside of the hegemonic/dominant structures theorised by Connell (1987) can be constructed within what is considered to be a 'masculine' space, as players resist what they believe to be an out-of-date version of masculinity performed by their coaches, and instead choose to adopt a more inclusive approach to masculinity. What is also emphasised through both of these papers is the potential for mutually constructed masculinities in group settings to either (re)produce (Bird, 1996) or subvert (Anderson and McGuire, 2009) 'hegemonic' masculine or gendered norms, suggesting that this could also be the case in HE spaces within my research, opening potential for considering the resistance of laddism and lad culture.

Drawing on hegemonic masculinity in relation to space and cultural context also works to ground this theory geographically. Although masculinity as an aspect of study had previously been developed within other disciplines such as sociology (e.g. Carrigan et al., 1985), geographers widely began to address aspects of the construction of masculine identity following Peter Jackson's pivotal 1991 paper on 'The Cultural Politics of Masculinity'. This paper offered discussions of gender rooted in the notion of hegemonic masculinity, whilst situating this within contemporary geographic scholarship, by highlighting social constructions of masculinity as both relational and place-based. Incorporating a feminist framework of patriarchal understandings of society, Jackson (1991) highlights a gap in geographic scholarship on masculinities, in emphasising the importance of considering that there are limited forms of masculinity that are able to exist within a wider patriarchal societal context. Building on a critique of Connell, in advancing this theory geographically, it is important to acknowledge the geographical specificity of masculine identity (Berg and Longhurst, 2003), through a focus on the spatial structures that underpin the construction of contemporary gender relations (Jackson, 1991). This is illustrated through a number of empirical based papers, that highlight gender and masculinity as place-based, including McDowell's research on masculine identity and the local labour market (McDowell, 2000; 2010) and Richardson's (2012;2014) work on the family and the home (which I discussed in more depth in the previous chapter).

More recent work in this area has focused on notions of performed masculine identities, and geographic scholars have worked to conceptualise how this gendered performance manifests across varying spaces and contexts. Geographers have previously identified several key traits of what it means to perform masculinity. This includes lack of emotion, being passive and not being explicit about your own felt experiences (Richardson, 2015). Furthermore, masculinity is also presented as troublesome, dangerous, rebellious, and at times, out of control (McDowell, 2002). This feeds into wider notions of being masculine as being strong and able (McDowell, 2002), linking to the concept of 'warrior masculinity' that is seen to be present within the military sector (Hopkins and Noble, 2009). However, geographers have increasingly begun to pay attention to the intersectional nature of masculinity, looking into the complexities and nuances that underpin the shift in thinking about place and context within scholarship on the social constructions of masculinity (Hopkins and Noble, 2009).

Geographers have also worked to explore masculinity empirically, highlighting the social construction of masculinity as relational and place based (Jackson, 1991) through the varying forms of masculinity that are performed and constructed within differing spatial contexts. For example, the performance of masculine identity within military institutions has been explored by Atherton (2009),

highlighting the role of tough, masculine ideals of the army in the construction of masculinities within this sphere. These ideals are constructed within the context of a strict hierarchy of power, using empowerment and disempowerment to shape hard-bodied masculinities, following heroic and 'warrior' ideals (Atherton, 2009). In turn, this serves to create a form of 'hyper-masculinity' within the disciplinary sphere of the army (Atherton, 2009), reflecting notions of hegemonic masculinity outlined by Connell (1987). This militarisation or institutionalisation of masculine identity again reflects wider notions that masculinity can be viewed as a collective practice, one that is relationally constructed through points of difference (Barrett, 1996). This work also raises questions around how institutional spaces shape and mould practices of masculinity in these spheres.

The notion of shaping masculinity relationally through points of difference is also expanded by Hopkins (2000), in relation to advertising. This paper raises questions surrounding the oppressiveness of patriarchal forms of masculinity over men as well as women, highlighting how dominant forms of masculinity can serve to restrict, and uphold power over men who do not adhere to these rigid rules of masculinism (Hopkins, 2000). This is presented in the need for young men and boys to have male role models, in order to uphold and reproduce this dominant form of masculinity, highlighting the patriarchal fear that without a male role model, young men may not be able to achieve desired levels of masculinism (Hopkins, 2000). This notion echoes research by hooks (2015), that masculinity is constructed within an inherently patriarchal society, and it is important to consider other forms of masculine identities beyond those that are dominant within any particular context. According to hooks (2015), it is also important for feminist scholars to consider that the concept of masculinity and masculine identity can be troubling to men given the unemotional, physicality focused nature of some dominant forms of masculinity to which a large proportion of men may be unable or unwilling to adhere. Taking this into account, new strategies and theories are needed in order to increase feminist scholars understanding of this (hooks, 2015).

In responding to critiques two decades after the original concept was coined, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) have published further on the notion of hegemonic masculinity, in 'Rethinking the Concept'. Highlighting that hegemonic masculinity is a contested concept, this work is a reconfiguration of the concept of hegemonic masculinity for contemporary scholarship. What arises from this are several key retheorisations of the original concept, including an attempt to move beyond theorisations of hegemonic masculinity that are based on essentialist notions of masculinity, instead addressing masculinity and gendered identity as a fluid and contradictory reality (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). This is also argued by Moller (2007:265), who suggests that Connell's work fails to engage with poststructuralist feminist critiques of 'the ways in which gendered subjectivities have been theorised as coherent, unified, whole'. Furthermore, with a strong focus on

gendered binaries, and overt examples of masculinity, Connell (1987) is at risk of overlooking masculinity in the everyday, and more mundane practices of masculine power (Moller, 2007).

As a result of this, Moller (2007) suggests that hegemonic masculinity encourages researchers to adopt an 'identifying strategy', in which researchers name what they are looking for, 'finding' overt incidences of masculinity performed by men, adopting a critical stance from a politically privileged position of power and using the concept of hegemonic masculinity to target and critique the behaviour or practices of specific groups of men. Thus, in doing so, researchers are often overlooking small-scale practices and the complexities of power matrices that make up the notion of masculinity, and also gendered identity more widely (Moller, 2007). In addressing this, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005:836) argue that 'masculinity is not a fixed entity embedded in the body or personality traits of individuals', and that there is a degree of overlap between hegemonic masculinity and complicit masculinity, particularly within formal organisations, citing educational institutions as one of these. In suggesting a reshaping of the theory of hegemonic masculinity, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) reject previously simplistic notions of a pattern of 'global dominance' of men over women, arguing that this is inadequate in explaining how masculinities can be developed as both dominant and subordinate by men and women.

Additionally, through focusing on the geography of masculinities, it is argued that through paying attention to masculinities at varying geographic scales, this can increase our understanding of gender politics (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). Thus, through considering these reformulations, alongside feminist geographic work outlined earlier, in going forward with feminist geographic scholarship in the area of masculinities I consider notions of scale and space to provide geographic grounding and thus an enhanced understanding of how masculinities relate to place, whilst including the work of Butler (1990) alongside this in moving beyond essentialist understandings of gender.

3.6 Concluding Comments

I have drawn upon several key bodies of work here in order to frame masculinity and lad culture within UK HEIs from a feminist, gendered, geographic perspective. In considering feminist scholarship as the broader framework for this research project, I work to deconstruct knowledge as situated (Smith, 1974; Hartsock, 1987; Rose, 1993; Harding, 1993), (re)conceptualising power as dispersed across society and space (de Certaeu, 1984), considering feminist understandings of the everyday as laden with power (Brown and Staeheli, 2003; Hyndman, 2004; Dyck, 2005; Pratt and Rosner, 2006). Furthermore, work around gender, performativity and masculinity enables a gendered understanding of the wider power structures that frame this research.

In considering debates on intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991; Valentine, 2007, Luft, 2010; Blige, 2013; Collins, 2015), these frameworks shape my thinking around this project not as focused just on lad culture as a form of masculinity or dominant gendered identity, but how this intersects with different forms of identity categories and wider discourses around heteronormativity. Whilst considering debates around the depoliticization of intersectionality (Blige, 2013; Ortner, 2014) and linking this to more recent debates on neoliberal discourses (Frazer, 2013), it is through revisiting Crenshaw (1991) and other key thinkers within intersectional schools of thought (e.g. Collins, 2015) that enables a careful consideration of how intersectional power structures influence gendered identity.

Additionally, through looking into the work of Connell (1987), a key theorist around the concept of masculinity, particularly within work on masculinity in educational settings, there are key aspects of this theory that I use to ground this project, particularly the notion of gendered power structures and dominant forms of masculinity. Through also considering critiques of this theory (Bird, 1996; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Anderson and McGuire, 2009), that suggest the over-simplification of masculinity through the theory of hegemonic masculinity, and the potential to restrict the scope of research through focusing on primarily the binary domination of men over women, it is through incorporating both an intersectional approach, and using the concept of performativity (Butler, 1990) alongside this that I aim to capture the particular nuances bound up within dominant and subordinate identity categories.

The work of Judith Butler (1990; 1993) enables me to conceptualise gender not as fixed, but as performative, and this shapes the overall scope of this research as non-essentialist in my conceptualisation of gender. In looking past fixed notions of gender, building on previous research in this area through not focusing specifically on the behaviour of men, or experiences of just women students, my research will consider the potential for students of all genders to (re)produce and resist lad culture on campus. In framing this further through queer theoretical frameworks, drawing on the work of Bell et al., (1994), Binnie and Valentine (1999), Doan (2010) and Johnston (2016), my work considers gender not through a fixed, heteronormative lens but existing as part of multiple genders, and also sexualities. It is also primarily the work of Judith Butler (1990; 1993) for me that provides the theoretical grounding from which to view how gender is also shaped geographically, in relation to wider spatial context and social and cultural norms. Incorporating the work of Ahmed (2006) on queer phenomenology, enables me to spatialise sexuality and gender, considering how lad culture manifests not only within gendered performances (Butler, 1990) but also how the wider heteronormative script perpetuated by lad culture takes both physical and embodied form. Using Ahmed's work alongside performativity in this way enables me to consider the 'coding' of student

spaces as a result of gendered and heteronormative power dynamics, and the ways in which lad culture plays into this.

Chapter 4: Methodology

In this chapter I explore the methods used within this research, and the methodological standpoint deployed. The research for this project was undertaken at two case-study HEIs in the North West of England. Following guidelines from my own institution's board of ethics, I keep the name and specific location of these two case study institutions anonymous throughout this thesis. Both of the two case study institutions are located within the same city in the North West of England. Case Study Institution 1 is a Russell Group University, and Case Study Institution 2 is a post-92 University, previously a polytechnic. Both case study universities are city universities. Case Study Institution 1 has a roughly defined 'campus' area, and Case Study Institution 2 has several smaller collections of university buildings in different locations around the city. These two institutions were chosen not to compare the two, but rather to paint a more complete picture of students' experiences of lad culture within the city. Particularly in considering how intersecting forms of identity category influence lad culture, undertaking research at both institutions enabled me to involve a wider range of participants than would be offered from one institution alone.

I used a combination of qualitative methods within this research project. These were: focus groups (both online and offline), interviews with staff and students, a diary-interview process, and auto-ethnographic observations. In addition to this, I also analysed policy documents around equality and diversity and bullying and harassment at the two case study institutions to frame my approach, and inform my interviews with staff members.

In framing this research epistemologically, within this chapter I draw on feminist scholarship in taking a grounded and reflexive approach to this research (Rose, 1993), considering my own position and standpoint throughout the research process (Hartstock, 1983; McDowell, 1992). I also explore how my choice of methods address my research questions, particularly how a combination of qualitative methods can be used to unpack the everyday gendered, intersectional experiences of students in layered and nuanced ways.

4.1 Reflections, Positionality, Methodological Challenges and Ethical Dilemmas

4.1.1 Feminist Epistemological Frameworks

Feminist theoretical concepts have underpinned both the epistemological framework of this thesis, and my approach to research. Several key thinkers are relevant in deconstructing how I consider knowledge production, my position within the research process and my epistemological position, including Smith (1974), Hartsock (1987), Rose (1993), and Harding (1993). In considering the

structural implications of knowledge production, and viewing knowledge as standpoints within wider power systems, these researchers, along with others, have argued that feminist research requires reflection on the research process, researcher positionality, and epistemological assumptions about gender, race, disability and other forms of oppression (Maynard and Purvis, 1995). These elements of feminist research epistemologies were key within my own research, as I strove to consider aspects of feminist geographic thought alongside work on intersectionality to unpack power-dynamics bound up within student experiences of lad culture. This also shaped my methodological approach, as I chose to use qualitative methods that aim to break down power dynamics between the researcher and the researched, such as interviews, a diary interview method and focus groups. A feminist epistemology also implies the need for a reorganisation of the way knowledge production is viewed to be constituted within the social sciences, namely a move away from positivism and the claim for an objective insight, towards utilising positionality and first-hand experiences of the everyday world (Smith, 1987). This also led to me selecting methods that allowed me to reflexively consider my own position throughout the research process, namely through my own auto-ethnographic writing, although this reflexivity also inevitably fed into my conversations with participants within interviews and focus groups. Feminist scholarship is a 'political movement for social, structural and personal transformation' (Maguire, 2001: 60) and it is through a feminist epistemological framework that I chose to approach this research, given that this project is situated in students' everyday experiences of lad culture, giving rise to gendered experiences within their everyday lives.

4.1.2 Navigating Positionality as a Student Researcher

Feminist geographers have considered the importance of writing our own position into research practice (McDowell, 1992). Upon approaching this research project, I thought I had a grasp of my own position in relation to the project and the research process. I saw my own experience of lad culture and sexual misconduct as an undergraduate student as intrinsically linked to the research process, and viewed myself as similar to, and having shared experiences with, participants as a result of this. Sharing the same background or a similar identity to participants can have a positive effect on the research, facilitating conversation based on mutual ground (Valentine, 2005). This worked to my favour within research in the higher education setting, as mutual points of identity such as student status facilitated a rapport between myself and participants. However, as my positionality changed and shifted, this 'insider' knowledge became less prominent.

During the beginning of my research, I often found it difficult to detach myself from the research project and topic at hand, feeling the responses of my participants in an acutely personal way, alongside a strong responsibility for my data; coupled with a fear of not presenting it in 'the right way'. Many feminist geographic scholars argue that all research is subjective in nature, and in order to overcome this, reflexivity and reflection of positionality is important throughout (Maynard and Purvis, 1995). I found that through this reflexivity, and particularly after I had had time to reflect on the research process, my position within the research project changed, as I felt myself moving from an 'insider' position to more of an outsider position. This was partly due to my progression as a research student, as several years had passed since my own undergraduate experiences, and was also reinforced by participants, who clearly saw a distinction and a difference in power dynamics between themselves and me. I documented the shift I felt in my own positionality within several excerpts of my research diary:

> 09/09/2019
>
> 'I am certain now that the 'insider' position I once thought I had within this research is slowly shifting and I have repositioned myself as a researcher throughout this process. 3 years is a long time […] things are constantly changing around me. Maybe we should be talking about position in the research as in flux, and the involuntary/natural (re)positioning during the PhD process?'
>
> 10/04/2020
>
> 'I am feeling ever distant from the mindset and emotional attachment I had to this project from the beginning […] I don't feel as 'in' the project anymore. […] Three years have almost passed since I started this PhD. I am 25 now. I don't go out! I don't go to clubs! I feel like lad culture is something that affects my participants but not me. There's a weird feeling of disconnect […] I know this is probably normal, my project has evolved over time and so have I.'

These are two extracts from my field diary that document the ways in which my positionality within the research process changed and shifted over time, as I considered my role within the research process reflexively throughout. It is natural that the researcher is an active influence within the research process (Cloke et al., 2004) and this can be addressed through consideration and reflection on how personal identity and views can be influential within research (Valentine, 2005). Thus, considering my own evolving positionality in this way meant that this changed the way I approached data collection, moving to assuming fewer 'knowns' with participants, particularly around the role of

social media use within their everyday student lives, and the ways in which this intersects with lad culture.

Adopting an auto-ethnographic approach, and keeping a field diary over the course of the research project, enabled me, as a researcher, to 'tune in' to my positionality throughout and modify the research process in relation to this. Maintaining such a reflexive approach, calls for 'self-critical sympathetic introspection and the self-conscious analytical scrutiny of the self as a researcher' (England, 1994:82). Thus, in (re)negotiating my own position in relation to the research project, I was able to consider how my own position may influence the research process and outcomes in varying ways as my positionality shifted.

4.2 Methods

I chose a range of qualitative methods for this study for a number of reasons. Firstly, qualitative research allows for a rich and varied dataset (Kitchin and Tate, 2000), enabling in-depth participant responses to be captured. Some previous work on lad culture within HE has tended to utilise quantitative data (e.g. NUS, 2011) in painting an overall picture of lad culture and sexual misconduct within the landscape of HEIs (although see Dempster, 2009; 2011; NUS, 2013 for qualitative and mixed-methods work in this area). I hoped that using a range of qualitative research methods would gain data that is rich, and addresses the research aims through in-depth narratives, listening to participants in order to understand how students at the two case study institutions experience and make sense of the research topic in their own words (Valentine, 2005).

Each method was selected in order to address the research aims in different ways, as well as to gain a breath of participants. For example, in order to involve students who are not politically active on campus or involved with student societies, or who may have limited time to engage with methods on campus, I chose to use online focus groups alongside face-to-face methods. My decision to use a diary-interview method, was informed by a hope that more 'everyday' experiences of lad culture would be captured through the diary, as well as more reflexive accounts in interviews. I used offline focus groups alongside diary-interviews and in-depth interviews, in order to involve participants who may want to take part collectively, talking about their experiences of lad culture within the context of friendship groups or student societies, enabling me to capture what lad culture means to them within that context. Finally, alongside policy analysis, I chose to use in-depth interviews with University and student union staff members at each institution, to enable me to delve deeper than the institutional or student union line that is often given in policy documents on these issues. In what follows of this chapter, I outline each of these methods in turn.

4.2.1 Offline Focus Groups

I undertook 4 offline focus groups in total as part of this research process, undertaking 3 focus groups at Case Study Institution 1 and 1 focus group at Case Study Institution 2. I chose to use focus groups for this research as they enable methodological insights around interactions and group dynamics that one-to-one interviews do not allow (Jowett and O'Toole, 2006). I used focus groups during the initial stages of this research project in order to stimulate group discussion amongst participants around what lad culture means to them. Focus groups allow for participants to probe one another's reasons for holding a certain view, enabling conversation between participants that would not be possible through one-to-one interviews (Bryman, 2015).

Focus groups were single-institution, and mixed-gender from pre-existing social networks and student societies. These societies included participants who were part of the LGBTQ+ society, the women's football team, a political society on campus and a society set up to specifically address issues around lad culture and student sexual misconduct. Several researchers (Kitizinger, 1994; McNaughten and Myers, 2004; Conradson, 2005) have noted the benefits of establishing focus groups based on pre-existing groups of friends or peers, who already have a relationship prior to the focus group, as this can mimic the social context in which decisions and ideas are formed (Kitzinger, 1994). This is known as a 'natural' focus group (Conradson, 2005), and was chosen for this research particularly due to the relevance of pre-existing social networks in the potential formation and experience of lad culture on campus. Focus groups took place in University campus spaces at the relevant case study institutions. I presented the topic for discussion to participants in the form of a set of questions, that I worked through in a semi-structured, conversational format. These questions were asked to the group, and participants responded, discussing answers with myself and each other.

Focus groups allow researchers to have less of an influence over the discussion in comparison with one-to-one interviews and have been used alongside feminist approaches in an attempt to break down the power dynamic between the researcher and researched (Jowett and O'Toole, 2006). I chose this method in the hope that group discussions between participants would shape the initial grounding of this research, and that I would be able to understand participants' interpretations of lad culture and laddism through group discussions. Previous research has documented focus groups as spaces in which issues could be discussed freely, allowing participants to lead the discussion and discuss issues that they may otherwise not have the opportunity to discuss (Jowett and O'Toole, 2006).

Focus groups can allow for several layers of argument, and the discussion of conflicting beliefs and different ways of framing such beliefs, and the exploration of group norms (Macnaughten and

Myers, 2004). Researchers have also suggested that in comparison with a one-to-one interview, some 'taboo' topics can be discussed more openly if more confident members of the group 'break the ice' for those less forthcoming (Kitzinger, 1994). This was a key consideration of mine in selecting this method alongside interviews, in the hope that participants may be more likely to flesh out issues and experiences relation to lad culture within group discussions than they may be on a one-to-one basis with the researcher. This method enabled participants to recall their collective experiences, and this was particularly useful when participants were discussing their experiences of university training on issues related to lad culture, or when discussing their collective response to lad culture, as they were able to retell their shared experiences together.

Issues such as men dominating the discussion, being more vocal in their disagreements with others and tending to speak before women have been highlighted in previous research with using focus groups of mixed gender (Jowett and O'Toole, 2006). Similar issues were raised by the official university ethics process in relation to my choice of mixed-gender focus groups, particularly considering whether mixed-gender focus groups would be appropriate if disclosures were being made around harassment or sexual assault. However, in an attempt not to perpetuate gendered stereotypes and reinforce gendered binaries, I chose to use mixed gender focus groups as part of this study. Furthermore, focus groups were the initial stages of my research, and used to discuss participants' understandings of what lad culture is and where it manifests within their student lives, rather than more in-depth discussions of their individual experiences, which were reserved for interviews.

4.2.2 Online Focus Groups

Alongside the offline focus groups outlined above, I carried out two online focus groups. These discussions took place on Focusgroup.It, an online platform for running digital focus groups. Online focus groups are a relatively unexplored research method within the social sciences (Moore et al., 2015). Several studies have used online focus groups previously, including Moore et al., (2015) who use them to explore young people's housing opportunities in the UK. Given the popularity of the internet as a communication tool for young people, it has been suggested that online focus groups may be a new methodological opportunity for engaging young people in research (Fox et al., 2007).

Online focus groups currently take two forms: Synchronous, a live, real-time chat room style focus group, or asynchronous, using forums or email lists. The latter was chosen for this study, as I decided that it would be useful for participants to be able to dip in and out of focus groups, and respond at times that best suit them around their schedules. Online focus groups are particularly useful because

they have the ability to bring together a group of people who may otherwise be relatively distant (Kenny, 2005), as well as the ability to facilitate participation by people who may not otherwise be able to attend a face-to-face focus group or interview (Moore et al., 2015). This was a specific consideration of mine, and I chose online focus groups in an attempt to recruit students who may not be able to attend face-to-face focus groups, due to factors such as time commitment, spending less time on campus or studying remotely.

Two online focus groups were held with a mixed group of participants from both case study institutions 1 and 2. I initially hoped to run more online focus groups, but there was little uptake on these and instead potential participants often opted to take part in face to face methods such as interviews or the diary interview process. What this method enabled was discussion from participants across the two different case study institutions. These were private focus groups, which members were only able to join via an email link distributed to their university email accounts, in order to confirm that all participants were students at the relevant case study institutions. A disclaimer was also sent to students before entering the online focus group in order to confirm that they are students at the case study institutions. Balanced representation from each institution was aimed for, although the final sample was slightly skewed towards Case Study Institution 1.

Previous work with online focus groups has suggested that around 5 people in each online focus group is an appropriate number, but also suggest over-recruiting in the assumption that there will be no more than a 50% attendance rate (Fox et al., 2007). This was an issue with recruitment, as when potential participants were emailed focus group links, some chose not to join after initially agreeing to. Similarly, some potential participants who received email links did follow the link and join the focus group, but once in the group chose not to contribute. This was an issue initially with focus group recruitment, but through over-recruitment, an acceptable number of participants for each focus group was eventually achieved, with six participants in one focus group and five in the other, although only four participants contributed to the discussion in each. Another issue that arose around recruitment for online focus groups was based around gaining the correct number of participants to engage in the focus group at the same time. For example, participants were emailed links to the focus group at the same time, yet it sometimes took several days for some participants to join the focus group, and sometimes over a week for them to contribute. As a result of this, the discussions within the focus groups were disjointed, with participants replying at disparate times.

Academic research has suggested that freshers' week is a key time in student identity formation (Chatterton, 1999). I chose to explore participants' experiences of freshers' week within online focus groups initially for this reason. I set the focus groups up by asking participants 3 questions:

1. What have your experience of freshers' week been like? What sort of things have you been doing/going to?

2. Have you found that you have used social media for freshers' week related things? If yes - in what ways has this shaped your freshers' week experiences?

3. Do you think your own identity has shaped how you have experienced freshers' week? (E.g. Gender, age, sexuality, race, disability etc...) both in relation to social media or any events you have been going to?

I asked these questions in order to open up the conversation for participants in an accessible way, and set the scene about their student lives, freshers' week (as this was shortly before the focus groups took place) and their social media use, considering how their intersectional experiences shaped their experiences of freshers' week and student life more broadly. When participants answered these questions, I then went on to ask further details about their answers, and encourage participants to discuss answers amongst themselves, particularly pulling out answers that relate to gendered experiences, bringing in the concept of lad culture in the second round of discussion in order for participants to consider the concept in relation to their own experiences.

Focus groups were moderated on a weekly basis in order to ensure both that the conversation was on topic and relevant to the research aims, and more importantly, that the discussion within the focus group was appropriate, and was not posing any potential harm to participants within the group. What I found within discussions is that the asynchronous focus group structure often led participants to structure their answers in a rigid or more formal format, for example answering questions as they were presented in a numbered format, and providing short, less detailed answers, whilst keeping interaction between one another to a minimum. This could be because participants did not have the time, or want to contribute more detailed answers, although I argue that the asynchronous structure did encourage participants to answer in this way. I initially selected an asynchronous format because I thought that this would give participants the opportunity to contribute more detailed answers at a time that suited them, although in retrospect the opportunity to 'dip in and out' of the focus group meant that any conversation between myself and between participants was disjointed, and the drop-out rate from the groups was high.

4.2.3 Semi-Structured Interviews with Students

I conducted 31 semi-structured interviews with students in total, and this comprised of 16 interviews at Case Study Institution 1, and 15 interviews at Case Study Institution 2. Of these interviews, 19

were dairy-based (more information in section 4.3.6). Students were given the choice to take part in either a one-off standalone interview or a three stage diary-based interview. All interviews were undertaken with participants on a one-to-one basis. I chose to use interviews as part of this research process in order to flesh out participants' individual experiences in more depth than online and offline focus groups would enable. A semi-structured interview approach enabled me to use an interview guide and a set of prepared questions (see appendix 1), but also enabled flexibility for participants to guide the direction of the interview (Bryman, 2015). All research aims were explored through interviewing, but I hoped that interviews would specifically allow discussion of how lad culture intersects with sexuality, race and class privilege, given that in-depth, qualitative interviews allow for the researcher to gain a deeper examination of experiences, feelings and opinions than other research methods are able to offer (Kitchin and Tate, 2000).

Twelve standalone interviews were undertaken with students who were unable or unwilling to commit to the three-stage diary interview process (discussed below), but still wanted to contribute to the research project. These interviews were conducted in cafés, social spaces and private study rooms around the two case study institutions' campuses. The interviews were undertaken with students of all genders. Participants were mainly undergraduate students, although 2 interviews were undertaken with students at postgraduate level, one at Masters level and one PhD student.

I audio recorded the interviews using a dictaphone, and also took some notes and observations throughout, in order to document non-verbal cues and contextual factors, painting a fuller picture that can be captured just through an audio-recording (Denscombe, 2010), whilst maintaining focus on the conversation in order for it to flow naturally between myself and participant. Taking notes, however, enabled me to note more subtle things said and gestures made during interviews, paying attention not only to participants' answers to questions, but also listening for pauses and silences within the interview, and paying attention to what this means in the context of the interview (Hyams, 2004).

Stand-alone interviews with students made up the majority of the dataset, despite me trying to recruit more participants for the three-stage interview process. In light of this however, I did not find that conversations with participants within stand-alone interviews were less rich or covered fewer of their experiences than the diary interview process, and in fact stand-alone interviews often provided more depth of data than interviews undertaken as part of the diary interview process. One possible reason for this may be that in stand-alone semi-structured interviews participants drew on their experiences across a wider timeframe, often drawing on their experiences of lad culture at school to set the wider context of their understandings of lad culture in HE, as well as considering a range of

experiences from throughout their time as a student. Upon reflection, in some instances, the diary-interview process constrained participants to talking about their experiences in the last week, or two weeks, when often their understandings of lad culture had been developed and contested throughout their lives, particularly their educational lives, within school and HE.

4.2.4 Diary Interview Process

Nineteen participants chose to take part in the three-stage diary interview process, 6 participants from Case Study Institution 1 and 13 participants from Case Study Institution 2. The table below documents the three stages of the diary-interview method deployed within this research:

Phase 1	A briefing interview with participants. This was used to discuss their interpretation of 'lad culture', which student spaces online and offline they were involved in, and what diary keeping would involve.
Phase 2	Participants kept 'diary entries' or notes about the experiences of lad culture within their everyday student lives. This was kept in the form of notes on participants' phones, screen grabs, voice recordings or paper if they preferred. This was kept over the course of two weeks, in as much or as little detail as participants wanted. Participants were asked to consider different student spaces and any online groups, sites or communities that they felt were part of their student lives. Participants were asked to send their notes over to me via email before the follow up interview.
Phase 3	A follow-up interview with participants, shortly after receiving notes from participants (when these interviews took place ranged from several hours later to around a week later depending on participant availability). Both participants and I referred back to the notes as a discussion point within the interviews, and at times I encouraged participants to discuss certain points in more depth.

Figure 4.2.4.1

In developing this method, I hoped to gain a more in-depth engagement with students' everyday experiences of lad culture at the two chosen case study institutions. In designing a three-part method, I hoped that each stage would build on participants' understanding and engagement with lad culture as a concept before the final in-depth interview, when they would have the opportunity

to talk through their experiences of lad culture at length, drawing on their notes and observations taken. I hoped that the final interview would provide the majority of the data, with the first two stages acting as preparation time or prompts for participants. Feminist geographers have long called for research to explore the meanings bound up within experiences of the everyday (Latham, 2003), and so I hoped to design a method that would capture participants' experiences of lad culture within their everyday lives, and I hoped that the diary part of this method would enable participants to do so.

The first stage of the diary interview method proved useful in reassuring participants and providing clarity around the research topic, as most participants questioned whether their definition of lad culture was 'correct'. In creating a sense of clarity that the research project was primarily being led by participants' experiences, in some instances this seemed to provide some level of confidence for participants around documenting their experiences and understandings of lad culture within their student lives. Documenting experiences via photos, videos or notes on their phones, enabled participants to record experiences as they happened, providing nuance to the data, and capturing things that may otherwise have been overlooked in one-to-one interviews. The data from this tri-stage process was used as prompts for follow-up interviews. This method follows Wilkinson (2016) who used mobile phones as a research tool when working with young people, given that this technology is generally readily at their disposal, particularly in the UK HE context.

This method also enabled participants to think about lad culture in more depth, overcoming a focus on more dominant narratives, perhaps engaged with through the media or stereotypes around 'lad culture', rooting this in everyday experiences and teasing out the complexities bound up within this. This enabled participants to capture any smaller, subtle incidents that they had experienced that may have otherwise been forgotten, and which often make up a substantial subset of experiences. This follows research on 'everyday sexism' (Swim, 2001) that suggests enabling participants to document experiences as they happen provides a clearer picture of experiences within the everyday that may otherwise by overlooked through interview narratives. These observations by participants took place in various student spaces on campus, including lectures, learning environments and the student union, and also wider spaces within the area including university accommodation such as rented housing or halls of residence, and social spaces such as societies, sports clubs, and bars and nightlife venues. This three-stage process also identified relevant social media sites, groups or spaces that participants felt contributed to, or facilitated their experiences of lad culture at university.

A similar method to this diary interview process has been adopted within several studies previously. For example this method has been deployed previously by Latham (2003) who uses the diary-

interview method for participants to document their everyday experiences. In grounding this in theory on gender and performativity, Latham (2003) conceptualises participants undertaking the diary interview method not as researchers themselves, but instead includes the diary method as a form of performativity in itself. In taking this further, Latham (2003) also suggests a gap between participant's everyday selves and their diary writing selves. This is an interesting consideration within the diary-interview process, but given that participants were writing about their experiences rather than situating themselves directly within this, or writing about their own identity, different methodological questions arose from this stage of the research process. Instead, the key issue that I identified within this method was that some participants over-thought the diary process, and did not document experiences that they later brought up within the semi-structured interview. For some participants, this may have been due to the time commitment of completing the diary-entries, although for others, this seemed to be rooted in uncertainty about whether they would be documenting the 'right thing', despite conversations had within the earlier briefing interview.

Often it was only when the discussion unfolded within the semi-structured interview part of this method that participants re-considered their experiences as relevant to the research process. What Latham (2003) also found was that the follow up interview offered clarification and redefinition of what participants had initially documented in the diary, and this was also the case within my research in the instances that participants had felt confident in documenting a wide range of experiences within their diary notes. This method has not been widely published on before in documenting experiences both online and offline from a qualitative, participant-led perspective and so my research offers novel insights into the ways in which this three-part diary interview process fits within qualitative research that captures experiences both in the online and offline sphere.

4.2.5 Policy Document Analysis

I analysed policy documents relating to equality and diversity and bullying and harassment from each of the two case-study institutions. I also analysed policy documents from the two relevant student unions, as well as attending student union training on Bullying, Harassment and Bystander Intervention at one of the case study institutions. Policy documents were analysed thematically through the qualitative analysis software NVivo. I found these policy documents on the relevant institutional websites, and also the websites of the student unions at the two case study institutions. Some policy documents were more difficult to find online, and often booklets of policy documents were also given to me during interviews with staff members at the two institutions and student unions. This analysis of policy documents provided a framework from which to formulate questions

to ask staff during interviews about policy, implementation and practice. I also asked student participants during one-to-one interviews about their knowledge and experience of policy relating to lad culture, harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct and reporting.

4.2.6 Semi-Structured Interviews with Staff Members

Six one-to-one interviews were also undertaken with key staff members at the two case study institutions. This included three interviews with institution staff members and two interviews with student union staff members at Case Study Institution 1, and one interview with a student union staff member at Case Study Institution 2. The imbalance here is as a result of staff at Case Study Institution 1 being willing to contribute to the research project throughout, keeping in contact with me as a researcher and requesting information from the project to inform policy and guidance both at institutional and student union level. Staff at the second of the two institutions were less receptive to email recruitment and requests for interviews, thus data from staff members is skewed towards one of the two case study institutions. As a result of this, only one student union staff member was interviewed from case study institution 2, as requests for interviews with institutional staff members were repeatedly ignored, and interruption from the Covid-19 pandemic meant that the staff interview I had arranged at that institution was cancelled by the staff member.

These interviews involved relevant staff members at institutional level involved with creation and implementation of policy on campus around equality and diversity and bullying and harassment, and more specifically policy that covers sexual assault, harassment and misconduct on campus and on social media. I also interviewed staff members and representatives from the relevant student unions, particularly staff members involved in delivering training to students around behaviours associated with lad culture on campus. Staff were asked about policy and training, particularly in relation to online harassment and social media (see appendix 2 for interview questions). Staff interviews took place in locations suggested by staff members, this tended to be in their office space or private meeting rooms on campus. Interviews with staff typically lasted 60-120 minutes. I was offered a second interview with two staff members, later on in the research process. This was useful both in following up leads and key themes that arose from student participants later in the research process with staff members, and also in feeding back information from the research project to relevant staff members.

Interviews with staff members took a semi-structured form, following research into the relevant policy areas in which they are involved. As mentioned above, my analysis of policy documents

informed the questions I asked to staff members, particularly around perceived 'gaps' in policy that fail to address specific issues around lad culture and social media.

4.2.7 Autoethnography

Autoethnography was chosen as a research method to 'write in' my experiences as a researcher. Autoethnography acknowledges the position of the researcher, and has a long-standing history of offering a reflexive approach within feminist research that does not appropriate the voice of others, but rather situates self-reflection within the broader narrative of the research (Rutter et al., 2021). Upon reflection of my own positionality within the research, particularly the ways in which I felt unable to detach my own experiences from the research project, I decided to acknowledge and include my own position within the research findings.

Autoethnography has been described as a form of 'self-interview', based in active interviewing and feminist standpoint theory (Crawley, 2012). Sara Crawley (2012:155) describes writing an autoethnography as: '(self)consciousness-raising in the old-school feminist tradition – simultaneously deeply personal, politically engaged, and theoretically aware of social organisations and power structures'. Thus, through writing myself into the research project, I was able to consider my own experiences of lad culture, harassment and gendered discrimination within my student life as part of the project, shaping both my approach and my findings simultaneously.

I took autoethnographic notes throughout the research process, beginning in October 2018 when I first started undertaking interviews with students, and ending in February 2020 as my research period came to a close. During periods of absence or breaks from undertaking research with participants I continued to keep auto-ethnographic notes when I felt compelled to as a way of keeping 'close' to the research during this time and to reflect on how I was feeling. I recorded my own experiences in campus spaces, nightlife venues and relevant social media sites and groups of which I was already a member. I was careful to maintain anonymity of others within reflections at all times, not documenting names. I also undertook observations at training events run by the student union at one of the two case study institutions around harassment, bullying and bystander intervention. I undertook this training as both a participant and a bystander, attending four training events over the course of the research process, the first two in October 2018 and then another two in October 2019. This gave me first-hand experience of the training offered to students at that particular institution around these issues, and also helped me gain further connections within the student union and student societies.

Autoethnographic notes were initially taken in a more brief form, and then upon reflection often added to and written up in more detail. This took place in the form of handwritten notes, notes written on my phone and screenshots of relevant social media posts. This was a reflexive, on-going research method that enabled me to understand issues discussed by participants on a personal level, and in situating my own experiences, reflect on issues of positionality and objectivity within the research process and my understandings of participants' responses in the context of my own experiences. Other than those used above to reflect on my changing position throughout the research, I have not included direct quotes from my autoethnographic writing within this thesis, but rather this data is used to inform and ground my understanding of participants' responses. At times I refer to or paraphrase these notes, in order to maintain the anonymity of others.

4.3 Data Collection

The table below shows the timeline for deploying each method within the research process. This timeline was re-negotiated throughout the research process as varying factors influenced the undertaking of this research, including participant recruitment, a period of sick leave that I had to take after the first block of research, the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions. Due to the research being focused on HEIs, data collection involving students was broadly restricted to university term time (October – May). Data was collected over three key data collection periods, the first being October 2018 – February 2019; the second October 2019 – December 2019; and the final January 2020 - March 2020. I was able to undertake interviews with staff members and collect auto-ethnographic outside of these research periods when necessary.

Date of Research	**Research Method(s)**	**Description**
October 2018 – February 2019	Face-to-face focus groups, online focus groups, auto-ethnographic data, diary-interviews, student interviews, staff interviews, policy document analysis	This was the first phase of my data collection period. During this period I firstly set up focus groups (both online and offline) at the two case study institutions. I ran 2 online focus groups asynchronously with a mix of students from each case study institution, in each focus groups. I also undertook 2 offline focus groups. I attended training on bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct at one institution, freshers fairs and university events at

		each case study institution. I also undertook diary-interviews and one-to-one semi-structured interviews with students at the two case study institutions, depending on their preferred method.
October 2019 – December 2019	Face-to-face focus groups, student interviews, diary interview process, staff interviews	This was the second phase of my data collection period, due to the first phase being interrupted by a period of sickness, and then term-time restrictions. During this second phase the aim was to collect more data to supplement the dataset from the first data collection period. In doing so, I organised 2 face-to-face focus groups, one at each of the two case study institutions. I also undertook interviews and diary-based interviews with students. I also contacted staff members at each of the two case study institutions to organise and undertake interviews. Interviews were undertaken with 1 student union staff member and 3 institution staff members at Case Study Institution 1.
January 2020 – March 2020	Student interviews, staff interviews	This was the final phase of my research. After the university Christmas break, I undertook interviews with 3 students who still wanted to take part in the research process. I also undertook an interview with 1 student union staff member at Case Study Institution 1 and 1 student union staff member at Case Study Institution 2. I also had 1 interview organised with an institutional staff member from Case Study Institution 2, but this was then cancelled due to the Covid-19 restrictions in March 2020, and the staff member did not respond to any further correspondence about rearranging the interview.

Figure 4.3.1

4.4 Sampling and Recruitment

I aimed to sample a representative range of participants from both case study institutions within my research, across all undergraduate year groups. Although not completely equal between the two institutions, I have included a range of participants from both institutions, across all year groups. The

breakdown in participant demographics can be found in Appendix 6.

Following feminist and queer scholarship, I adopted a non-binary view of gender, and decided that it would be appropriate to ask participants of all genders to take part in this study. This differs from previous scholarship on lad culture in HE that focuses either on the experiences of women students (Phipps and Young, 2015), or the experiences of men within student sports clubs (Dempster, 2009; 2011). In recruiting participants of all genders, I frame 'lad culture' not as a form of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1989) as theorised in previous work, but attempt to think beyond the gender binary, capturing the fluidity and the performative nature of gendered identity (Butler, 1990) and consider 'lad culture' as a form of identity performed by students of all genders. In recruiting participants, a number of avenues were used. This included advertisements, that were posted around the relevant campus spaces, including university halls of residence notice boards, AU notice boards and student union notice boards (see appendix 3). Advertisements were also posted on social media groups and sites relevant to the two case study institutions, using 'gatekeepers' of these groups to approve and post these advertisements.

Using a gatekeeper as a form of sampling method is described as utilising points of contact with an organisation that have the power to provide access to the group of people you are looking to interview (Valentine, 2005). Following Phipps and Young (2013), alongside open call-outs using posters, I also approached 'gatekeepers' within each student union, student societies and sports clubs along with lecturers as initial points of contact. Where access was given, I attended society meetings, sports training and lectures to advertise my research. This involved a brief introduction to the research project, followed by the circulation of a sign-up sheet for participants to write down their names and university email address in order to receive more information about the research.

In addition to using gatekeepers in this way, I also used a form of snowball sampling, using established contacts to reach out further to potential participants (Valentine, 2005). This was particularly useful in the case of staff interviews, being passed on email addresses of other staff members within the relevant institution that may be of interest.

4.5 Analysis

In order to collect and record data, focus groups, interviews with staff and students as well as briefing and follow up interviews within the three-stage diary interview process were recorded on a digital dictaphone, and notes were also taken throughout. For online focus groups, transcriptions were downloaded as word documents directly from the online focus group website after the focus groups had ended. Taking notes enabled initial themes and patterns to be noted down, particularly

during in-depth interviews, as further questions and discussion points arose in response to participants' answers. Once focus groups, interviews, and the diary interview process had been undertaken, the recordings then had to be transcribed. The majority were transcribed using a University approved transcription service, although I had to listen back through each interview in order to check and edit the transcripts once returned. Through the transcription and editing process I was able to initially code data, drawing out emerging themes or sub themes (Hall and Hall, 2004). Once transcribed, interview and focus group data, along with autoethnographic notes, and policy documents were coded using NVivo. This combination of manual thematic coding of data throughout the transcription editing process, as well as digital coding using NVivo, is considered useful (Welsh, 2002). This allows for manually determining themes, which was done whilst transcribing and editing transcriptions of the data, and through initial reflections, whilst collating these electronically in order to maximise the capacity of the data (Welsh, 2002). This was useful in collating large amounts of data from a variety of different methods, grouping these into themes and sub themes. This coding then formed the framework for chapters within this thesis.

Thematic analysis involves grouping similar ideas or materials together (Hall and Hall, 2004), and the key themes that I identified from my data are presented below (presented thematically by chapter):

Analysis Chapter 1: Student identity formation and participants experiences of lad culture	Alcohol, banter, drugs, everyday experience, freshers week, friendship, harassment, loneliness, media (news, social media), normalisation, pressure, relationships, sexual assault, sexualisation, student societies, spaces (boundaries, campus spaces, city centre, gym, lectures, living spaces, nightlife, public transport), sport, student identity
Analysis Chapter 2: Intersectional experiences of lad culture	Intersectional identity (accents, age, caring responsibilities, class, culture, disability, LGBTQ+, race), money, personality, work
Analysis Chapter 3: Response (institutional, collective, personal)	Complaints, fear, institutional response, lasting impacts, mental health, recalling experience, response, staff, student union, support, the neoliberal university (reputation)

Figure 4.5.1

These themes were selected based on commonly mentioned ideas by participants, following a thematic analysis approach as outlined by Bryman (2015). I collated a broad list of themes based on notes from interviews and input them into NVivo, and added to this any other themes that were commonly mentioned by participants within the data. I then created a level of sub-themes out of this higher level of thematic analysis. I continued to code the data to these themes through NVivo, adding more as they appeared in the data in order to enable participants' responses to lead and shape the thematic analysis. These themes were then used to inform the three data analysis chapters.

I chose to include the selected quotes within this thesis in order to offer depth of analysis. This means that although many participants contributed important, nuanced and varied narratives to this research, I chose to focus on the contributions of some participants within more depth, including quotes from selected participants across several chapters of the thesis. I did so in order to provide the reader with a more complete picture of participants experiences over time, tracing their experiences through each analysis chapter and giving light to the full complexities of their experiences.

4.6 Ethical Practice and Considerations

4.6.1 Consent (online/offline)

Participant information sheets (see appendix 4 for an example of one of these) were circulated to participants prior to taking part in the research, for all research methods used. This was done electronically, usually via email, although sometimes via other messaging avenues such as Facebook messenger. This information was sent in response to participants emailing me first to express interest in the study, or writing down their email contacts in response to lecture shout outs or society meetings. The participant information sheet outlined the aims and objectives of the study, what their participation in the research project would involve and also information on how their data will be managed and stored. This gave participants a chance to ask any questions via email before taking part in the research.

Consent was sought from participants before taking part in each research method. For the three-stage diary-interview process, consent was sought before the initial briefing interview took place, for the whole process. This was agreed as the easiest way to seek consent for this process, although verbal consent was clarified with participants at each stage of the three-part process. Participant information sheets and consent forms (see appendix 4 and 5) were read through with participants where necessary, and participants had the opportunity to ask questions about consent and data management throughout the research process. Consent for online focus groups was sought by the

circulation of consent forms via email before participants entered the online focus group.

'Consent seeking constitutes a difficult topic in auto-ethnographic research' (Winkler, 2018:241). I did not seek informed consent from people I shared spaces with during my autoethnographic writing, as this would have been infeasible. Instead, I chose to avoid taking autoethnographic notes about specific individuals, focusing instead on my own experiences, reflecting on my positionality throughout the research process, alongside notes and reflections on student cultures and lad cultures more broadly. I also, as mentioned earlier, summarise rather than directly quote from my research diaries in the subsequent analysis chapters.

Several researchers have raised questions around consent and research on social media, and this was important to consider in relation to my autoethnographic notes taken on social networking sites. Von Benzon (2018) questions the degree to which 'lurking' on social media sites for research purposes is ethical, and questions whether individuals that generate this online data should be treated as 'authors' or participants. I found it important to consider whether taking auto-ethnographic notes based on observations from my own online social networks, or similarly participants presenting me with screenshots or notes from their social media networks, would require informed consent from the users within those spaces. Von Benzon (2018) navigates this through their research on blogs as deeming those publishing this online data to be 'authors', and treating this data as such. This arguably does not work within this research, as participants through the diary interview process would often present me with screen grabs, or notes made from online comments on social media made by fellow students that they either follow, or have as a 'friend' on these social media sites. This created several complex layers of interaction within the data collection process that meant I was then able to access social media data that would have otherwise been inaccessible to me as a researcher. I sought to protect the identity of the original authors of these post by ensuring that no direct quotations or names are used. Instead, this data was used as a discussion point within follow up interviews as part of the three-stage diary interview process and my own autoethnographic notes are summarised or paraphrased. This follows an approach taken by Ahmed et al., (2017), to preserve the anonymity of social media users.

4.6.2 Confidentiality

I maintained the confidentiality of participants, and the institutions studied as part of this project, throughout the research process. To do so, audio files were deleted as soon as the focus groups and interviews were transcribed in full. Furthermore, no real names were used in the transcription or dissemination of the research. At the beginning of both online and offline focus group discussions,

participants were verbally reminded that they could not record, save or share any of the discussion. Although there is a possibility that participants didn't adhere to this, I reminded them of this before each focus group started. I ensure anonymity for participants within this thesis by using pseudonyms for participants names, and removing any identifying information. This includes information such as participants real age and where they study or live. The only information that I provide on participants within this thesis (within the appendix) is the course that participants study and whether they are a student at Case Study Institution 1 or 2, as this information is key for the reader to contextualise and trace participants stories, and participants cannot be identified by this alone.

4.6.3 Dealing With Sensitive Information Within Interviews

One key ethical consideration I had entering into this research project was the handling of sensitive information, particularly disclosures of sexual harassment or sexual assault within student interviews. I took several steps to ensure that I would be able to respond to disclosures of this nature in a sensitive and supportive manner. Key to positioning myself to respond appropriately to disclosures was to ensure that I was well equipped to signpost students to the relevant services after the interview. To do so, I put together a 'debrief sheet' that was given to participants after the interview had finished. I used this sheet to signpost local services, both inside and outside of the two universities that may have been useful for participants. This sheet and the debrief discussion surrounding it, was used both to signpost participants to these services and also as a form of 'check in' after the interview, during which I was able to ask participants if they needed any more information on where to access support. I was unable to include a copy of this in my appendix as the signposting of local services would compromise the anonymity of the institution.

Chapter 5: Understanding Lad Cultures at Two Case Study HEIs

In this chapter I explore what lad culture is, what it means to participants and how it manifests within their student lives. I also draw in debates from within the social sciences on cultures of masculinity, considering how lad culture within the context of HEIs speaks to, or can be understood through, wider understandings of hegemonic masculinity and gender performativity. Within this, I consider several key elements of lad culture that participants drew on within interviews and focus groups, exploring what this means within the HE context. These include 'banter', the normalisation of lad culture, the 'lads group', harassment, drugs, drinking, as well as the role of dominant heteronormative narratives within student lad cultures. In considering lad culture geographically, I also draw out the ways in which some student spaces and student societies reproduce laddish gendered norms, whilst paying attention to how the norms and practices within these student spaces and student societies interact and are influenced by peer-to-peer interactions within online spaces, across an 'online/offline continuum' (Ging and Siapera, 2018). What this chapter emphasises is that although lad culture is more prominent within certain student spaces or student societies, it is present within the everyday lives of many participants, spanning a variety of spaces and temporalities.

5.1 Heteronormative 'laddishness' and The 'Lads Group'

Central to participants' experiences of laddism and lad culture within their university lives was a dominant heteronormative narrative, that manifested in a number of key ways – predominantly through involvement in a 'lads group'. Participants described the 'lads group' as a key aspect of student lad culture, across both offline university spaces as well as on SNS and group chats. Adam describes the role that the 'lads group' plays in his university life:

> Adam, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *I think lad culture, it just means to me… It's the same as a boys' boy group, it's… The common ground is built upon similar things like, it sounds horrible to say but girls and drinking… Sports, it's these kind of groups that form the lad lads' group. We're all similar in interests and them interests are commonly perceived as masculine interests, so from experience I don't have a connection with many females based on football or based on attraction to females, it's like it's more of a thing that's gender specific between the males. […]*

So is that, this sort of like laddy group, is that something that like you've experienced at uni?

Yeah, it's everywhere to be honest. So in my flat especially, because it's a male dominated flat, I think there's four girls compared to twelve boys, something like that, so it's heavily male orientated, so you do start forming these connections with the boys where… We're still friends with the girls and we still socialise perfectly but we don't talk about the things that we would with just the boys when the girls are there.

Right.

Because I think we feel… like we don't want to make them uncomfortable.

In this extract, Adam (re)produces binary conceptions of gender, emphasising the 'lad lad's group' as based around drinking, sports, and perceived masculinist interests. This finding echoes work by previous scholars that highlight undergraduate drinking cultures and sport as key within undergraduate masculine identities (Dempster, 2009; 2011; Clayton and Harris, 2011). Adam continues to illustrate his experiences of lad culture as based on heteronormative narratives:

Adam, Case Study Institution 1

And what kind of things is that? What do you think might make them feel…

I'm not really sure, it's just certain topics where you can openly talk… I think it's mainly based around… It sounds horrible but opposite sexes. So the boys might talk about girls who they're attracted to, which also makes the girls in the flat uncomfortable because of some of the terms which may be used or the ideas and all that.

In considering heteronormativity as a form of 'public comfort', in which 'bodies extend to spaces that have already taken their shape' (Ahmed, 2017: 123), it is evident that the 'lad lad's group' acts as a form of hegemonic undergraduate masculinity that shapes the dominant narrative within these student spaces as heteronormative. Adam's experiences of lad culture illustrate that the 'lad lad's group reproduces dominant social norms as Adam and his friends bond through conversations about

'the opposite sexes'. In considering heterosexuality as a form of 'public comfort' (Ahmed, 2017), it is also evident that this comfort manifests spatially, as Adam describes the 'connections' and 'similar interests' that form the 'lad lad's group' as 'football' and 'attraction to females', and the ways in which this creates a form of 'common ground' within his living space, a flat in university-owned student halls of residence. In constructing his undergraduate masculine identity around the 'the lad lad's group' in this way, Adam brings to light the ways in which the space of the flat can be shaped by the dominant narratives present within the lad lad's group, and for those that are able to fit in with these laddish practices the student flat becomes a space of comfort and friendship. In the following section I will explore how dominant laddish narratives are (re)produced within UK HEIs through several mechanisms, most notably online, through WhatsApp group chats, and also through the use of 'banter' within peer-to-peer interactions.

5.2 Banter and Normalisation

This section explores the role of 'banter' and jokes in (re)producing lad culture, through peer-to-peer interactions across virtual and non-virtual spaces. What the following data extracts show are the ways in which participants consider lad culture to be entangled in everyday student life and interactions, and how 'banter' or jokes are integral to this. Previous research has looked at the role of banter within student lad culture, particularly how it is used to mask sexist, misogynist and homophobic views (Jackson and Sundaram, 2015). This section explores how banter is used within peer-to-peer social interactions across online and offline spaces, and how it works as a tool to normalise aspects of lad culture, such as misogyny, homophobic views and heavy drinking within students' everyday lives. What I also consider is banter as a performative aspect of lad culture, that students of all genders are able to engage with, suggesting that lad culture is not one-dimensional or monolithic, but is adopted and performed in varying ways by different students.

The majority of participants mentioned within interviews their involvement in group chats on SNS, primarily on the platforms Facebook and WhatsApp, and these were commonly considered by participants as being an integral part of 'becoming a student' and settling into university life. Many participants detailed the number of group chats that they are involved in:

> Tom, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *I mean most of my social media obviously is in group chats and that sort of thing, so I'd be doing that, and we'd use that a lot to like arrange going out to places and people arrange sort of like… Just meet-ups and gatherings and that sort of thing…*

So you have quite a lot of group chats?

Oh yeah definitely… there was quite a lot that were sort of just set up beforehand, like months in advance, and it was just people trying to just get to know some people before going there, so you'd at least go there with like… Maybe not like a core group of friends but like just… You know a general idea of some people who were going there, just so as you didn't feel too alienated or like you know… on your own.

Like Tom, participants described how these group chats started long before they got to university, and how they were used to make friends and connections before moving away from home. Tom's account highlights how students are virtually proximate before they are physically proximate, as SNS play a key role in forming pre-university connections for participants. Facebook has previously been described as a form of 'social glue' that aids students settling into university life (Madge et al., 2009). Participants within my research tended to use a mixture of SNS, including Facebook, but also WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat in order to connect with other students both pre- and post-registration, forming social bonds across online and offline spaces.

Several participants highlighted experiencing or engaging with lad culture on social media, particularly within WhatsApp group chats. This was most prominently through laddish jokes, or 'banter' within these chats. One participant, Sarah, described ways in which they became involved in 'lads WhatsApps' through group chats with friends from their course, highlighting how lad culture is prevalent in online and offline education spaces, both in lecture and seminar spaces and in course related group chats, as the moving of group discussions online blurs the line between educational, personal and social spaces:

Sarah, Case Study Institution 1

Things like WhatsApp chats and stuff, boys group chats […] like even the people I knew in [name of degree subject] in first year, like I was friends with a group of boys, and it was just me, and it was basically that I was in a lads group chat. And it was just like some of the stuff they would come out with, I was just like, what the fuck, you realise who you're friends with then, because they just say whatever. But like I think there's like a normalisation of that in boys group chats of like, oh I just did this, or I just did this, and it's just meant to be funny, like how funny is this… But if people actually scrolled through, not like all boys on there or

whatever, but say like on those laddy group chats, but if people scrolled through them I think they'd be disgusted at what's on there. Like my mates used to be like oh don't go on my phone, there's like random stuff on this boys group chat.

Within this extract Sarah illustrates how the 'private' boundaries of WhatsApp group chats are policed within face-to-face interactions on campus. Through the memory of a friend from her course telling her not to go on his phone because there's 'random stuff on the boys group chat' and 'weird videos on there', Sarah highlights the ways in which the boundaries of the lads group chat are policed and protected, upholding the shared understanding amongst these peer groups of the WhatsApp group chat as a private space. In building on this, considering SNS as a form of 'social glue' (Madge et al., 2009) for students during their transition to university, it is evident that the 'lads chat' on WhatsApp acts as a tool to centralise lad culture within student identity formation. This creates insiders and outsiders based on who is able or willing to perform and uphold hegemonic 'laddish' masculine ideals across online and offline spaces.

Sarah's experiences of the WhatsApp group chat as a key space for lad culture and banter to take place was also echoed by another participant, Eve, who described within a focus group her experiences of the women's football team 'banter' chat, a group chat that is kept separate from the coaches, and separate from the more public Facebook page:

Eve, Case Study Institution 2

On Facebook I'd say that's more like the football side of stuff, like can you come to training, can you come to matches? Whereas the group chat is… we literally have two separate chats, one is football like serious chat with the coaches in for example, and one is literally named like banter chat, like, it sounds really stupid saying it out loud, but do you know what I mean, one is genuinely for fun things and things outside of football, and one is for football. Like "meet here at this time", the coaches are in it, there's not much like joking or whatever, and then the other one it's like, "are we going out tonight?", "are we doing this, are we doing that?", "who wants to come for food?" or whatever. So there is a difference between like how we use social media.

This excerpt from Eve emphasises the role of WhatsApp chats in creating perceived 'private' virtual spaces for students to adopt and negotiate laddish identities within. Eve continued to detail the role

that the group chat plays in facilitating the social aspects of the women's football team, and the ways in which the social life of the women's football team, centred around nightlife and drinking, is intertwined with the WhatsApp 'banter chat':

> Eve, Case Study Institution 2
> *I mean… I think they kind of just go hand in hand. Like if we go out on a night out, we'll talk about it in the group chat the next day and then that's where like the banter comes in, where like the private jokes or the funny jokes about like what happened on that night out and obviously like a lot of it is revolved around how much people drink, like how drunk they were, like kind of who got with who, like people sleeping together and all stuff like that, that will all be in the group chat. And then I guess if you look at the media and the group chat, it's going to be like photoshopped pictures of like… I don't know, just like us in the club or like people making fun of things that have happened while we were out.*

In this extract, Eve demonstrates the role that the 'banter chat' has to play in relaying the events of the night before, revolving around heavy drinking, casual sex and clubbing. This extract demonstrates the blurring of lines between virtual/non virtual spaces in the instance of the women's football team, whereby the group chat becomes the post-script to the night out, as it is relieved through virtual means the following day. Central to blurring of the online and offline social spaces of the women's football team are jokes and banter, as 'inside' jokes from the night before are continued within the WhatsApp group chat through the sharing of photos and messages. In considering the role of banter in (re)producing lad culture in this instance, it is evident that the group chat enables the constant continuation of lad culture and banter within the women's football team away from the physical space of the nightclub or sports pitch.

Several participants cited laddish banter as central to university lad cultures, and as happening both within virtual and offline spaces. Participants drew upon their experiences of banter in online spaces, framing the online/offline connectedness of banter as central in (re)producing lad culture across virtual and non-virtual spaces. This was explored by Joe:

> Joe, Case Study Institution 2
> **And so do you think social media can facilitate that quite a lot?**

Yeah, definitely. Because again with the jokes I saw on Facebook, I think that it enables people to share it with their friends and they can… people can laugh about it, they can comment, and I don't think that if they couldn't share it, it wouldn't have, you know it wouldn't have been the same, it wouldn't have... maybe they wouldn't have even done it because it wouldn't have been funny to them. So I think it definitely enables that to happen.

According to Joe, the more public nature of some social media platforms, e.g. a Facebook profile in this instance, means that those who participate in laddish banter within this sphere do so as they are able to connect with a number of others who would also comment and engage in the jokes and banter within this sphere. The connectedness of social media means that through various social media platforms, for example Facebook and WhatsApp, the jokes and banter present within offline student spaces can also manifest online, spanning geographic boundaries or limitations.

Scholars have explored the role of banter within (re)producing or reaffirming masculinities within specific contexts. Of particular note here are several studies that have considered the role of banter in shaping masculinities within sporting contexts (Nicholls, 2016; Lawless and Magrath, 2020) and schooling or education contexts (e.g. Kehily and Nayak, 2010). My findings extend this research by drawing out the ways in which banter manifests across online and offline spaces, constructing laddish identities not just as located in specific spaces or groups (e.g. a school, or within a sports team), but as continually re-affirmed through the medium of jokes and banter across spatial and temporal boundaries through social media, or in the instance of several participants, the medium of the WhatsApp Group chat.

Eve reflects on her role in (re)producing lad culture through banter and heavy drinking as part of the women's football team, and considers the ways in which this can be exclusionary, or alienating for some students:

Eve, Case Study Institution 2

I wanted to ask you like do you think that it's like harmful in any way or is it like… When you're kind of like involved in that, is it just a bit of fun?

I think it completely depends on your kind of personality and what you have anticipated maybe before uni or like what you think is acceptable or not. Because personally, I came to uni, at first I was really intimated by like all the drinking and I was like I can't do this, I had like a freak moment where I was like, I don't want to join this team, like I won't be able to fit in, I'm not a big drinker, I'm not this and stuff like that. But then I like slowly made friends and then I've kind of become part of it, where I do enjoy the like binge drinking or whatever! Like I do enjoy like that kind of part of it, but I know people who have joined the football team or wanted to join, seen what goes on, on a social level and decided like this isn't for me or these people are too rowdy, these people are too loud and like I won't fit in here, which is completely understandable because I felt like that at first, but I just kind of… Not learnt to fit in but like I wanted to fit in and like I did find it kind of enjoyable in the end. Whereas there are people who literally… This is not for me. So I think it is like scary for some people and it will… It's not fun, it's not fun for a lot of people.

Despite a recognition that the binge drinking, banter and rowdiness of the football team isn't deemed 'acceptable' for some people, Eve highlights the ways in which many students, after joining , 'mould well to it', adjusting their behaviour to reflect the culture of the team. This extract challenges the perceived masculinist, heteronormative, binary notion of lad culture that is detailed in several previous studies of men's sports teams at university (Dempster, 2009; 2011; Jackson and Sundaram, 2020) as something limited to certain groups of men on campus, and generally something that is *experienced* but not performed by women, non-binary students or LGBT+ students. Instead, Eve highlights how almost anyone could take part in lad culture on campus if they are involved in the right team or group, and are willing to go through this adjustment period, as in this example, allowing themselves to become used to the norms within the women's football team. This mirrors previous research that conceptualises lad culture not as confined to certain 'problematic' men on campus, but as something which students of all genders can 'dip in and out of' (Phipps & Young, 2015: 310).

In this example of the women's football team, the notion of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1987; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005) is useful in understanding the ways in which women can also uphold this masculinist hierarchy. In creating a hierarchy of laddish behaviour within the women's football team, it is apparent from these extracts that there are dominant norms or discourses within the team that newer members adjust to, or strive towards achieving whilst settling into the team. Eve's account of her experiences on the women's football team problematises the assumption that

laddish forms of banter uphold heteronormative gendered power structures, suggesting perhaps that banter in *some* instances can be used to uphold a heteronormative form of laddism rooted in sexism and homophobia, but can also be used within sports teams, for example, as a way to re-enforce the dominant laddish culture within these teams based around heavy drinking, rowdy behaviour and socialisation. It is evident that this hierarchy is maintained primarily through the social aspects of the women's football team, and in turning to Clayton and Harris' (2011) 'sport/alcohol/identity' nexus, this excerpt also challenges the notion that this is a form of *male* hegemony on campus. In extending this concept to include all genders, Eve's retelling of her experiences of lad culture within the women's football team demonstrate how perceived masculinist notions of heavy drinking, sports, and hegemony within a sports team can be adopted by students of all genders within certain contexts.

Several other participants also considered the role of banter within their experiences of lad culture. For some participants, banter was seen as a means for those who engage in lad culture to mask offensive or problematic opinions as 'just a joke'. One participant, Sasha, explained their views of banter and jokes as part of lad culture as potentially harmful:

> Sasha, Case Study Institution 2
> *Yeah, I think that people probably consider the more obvious and direct things to be problematic, so you know if people are harassing people in bars and things like that, I think people definitely would consider that as the most kind of dangerous issues. But I think you know making jokes about sexuality or about women, I think that is problematic because that can influence people's behaviours in the long run and you know if people don't change the way they think about those things […] it probably won't go away either.*

This notion was also echoed by Simon and Jodie, who highlight the role that banter plays within lad culture in enabling unwanted comments or harassment to go unchallenged:

> Simon, Case Study Institution 1
> *Yeah, I think banter's fine and having banter with your friends is fine, but it's as soon as it comes at the detriment of another person that they can't see the joke in it anymore. […] Like I have banter with my mates and you know like the girls have banter and I'm sure you have*

banter with your friends, and everyone has banter, but I think it's when you're then making a joke at the expense of somebody else and they aren't in on it, I think that's where it becomes a problem. And often with lad culture and banter, the people that they're laughing at aren't laughing with them, which I think is my big problem with it. And a lot of my friends, if we're having banter and someone is like, I'm not OK with that, the joke stops because we know that it's not banter anymore, you're now making fun of somebody else. But I think that's where they've taken this word and they've turned it into "you can't be offended because it's just banter, like we're just having a joke", but it is offensive, and the things that you can say can be offensive.

Jodie, Case Study Institution 1

Obviously like you've seen the stuff with Warwick and stuff, like they were joking about raping their friends and stuff, and they thought that was fine, until their friends actually saw it and they were like what? And reported it but like… It's obviously like… It makes it seem like ok- it makes it seem like less of a big deal to them I guess?

My findings here highlight how banter can enable those who engage in it to mask prejudiced views or unsolicited comments that are often rooted in misogyny or homophobia as a joke, meaning that they are often able to avoid taking responsibility for the gravity of their comments and views. As emphasised by Simon, this also makes these comments difficult to challenge for those they are directed at. The notion of banter has been problematised by several scholars in relation to laddism and lad culture (Phipps and Young, 2013; Jackson et al., 2014), and the potential for it to be a tool to mask more oppressive dynamics or exchanges has been highlighted (Kehily and Nayak, 2010). My findings build on this, suggesting that banter is an integral aspect of lad culture that enables offensive, often sexist or homophobic jokes or comments to be framed as a joke.

Several participants highlighted that context was key in identifying whether comments or cat calling on social media or face to face, would be received as a joke, or banter, or viewed as more offensive or as harassment, whilst also identifying that there was a 'fine line' between the two. The excerpt below from Joe emphasises the ways in which banter and offensive jokes bound up within lad culture could be interpreted or received by different people in varying contexts:

Joe, Case Study Institution 2

It depends on the (laughs) it depends what we're say… Like the cat-calling thing, like if it was just a randomer in the street, you know rude type thing, you know… But at the same time if it was a friend or someone you knew or you were at least a passing acquaintance, I think that's somewhat acceptable, you know, as long as there's an understanding that it isn't… It's more… Banter than harassment.

Yeah.

I know it's a very fine line, and that's also a lot of… That's the excuse a lot of people would use when it comes to sexual harassment, oh it was only a joke. But at the same time like because I've sort of been in these situations where it's like I don't know where I'm crossing a line here just being friendly or having a bit of banter, so I'm always very wary of people's opinions on that.

Joe highlights in this extract that in his opinion, there is 'a very fine line' between banter and harassment, and that often as the person engaging in the banter it can be difficult to negotiate where this line lines. My findings here contribute to recent debates around whether banter exists in both inclusionary and exclusionary forms (Lawless and Magrath, 2020), suggesting that there is line between the two, and that those engaging in banter often do not know whether it is being received as offensive or even as a form of harassment.

Other previous research by Owen (2020) explores the notion of a 'light' and 'dark' side of lad culture, with the 'light' side being considered as playful and acceptable forms of lad culture and the 'dark' side as more harmful, unacceptable behaviours. Owen (2020) acknowledges that this is not unproblematic, and within this there are 'grey areas' that can be hard to conceptualise, using the example of a kissing challenge whereby male students pretend to kiss women students on the cheek, and then instead kiss them on the lips. My findings here challenge the notion that there is a 'line' that can be defined between dark and light, or even an easily defined 'grey area', as Joe describes in the above extract experiencing 'situations where it's like I don't know where I'm crossing a line here'. My data here suggests the need for a less-simplistic framing of what Owen (2020) terms as the 'light' side of lad culture, as it is evident from my findings that the 'light' side of lad culture can perpetuate, or mask Owen's (2020) conceptualisation of the 'dark' side, through covering up sexual harassment by passing it off as 'only a joke'. Participants considered the role of

banter in this masking of the seriousness of sexual harassment, both verbal or physical, whilst simultaneously making it difficult to challenge or even to conceptualise in some instances.

Participants also identified that, through not challenging sexist or homophobic jokes or banter by a peer or friend, they felt themselves becoming involved in lad culture, and increasingly unable to challenge or resist more problematic or offensive aspects:

> Joe, Case Study Institution 2
>
> **Yeah. Would you say that you're kind of part of that in a way though?**
>
> *Yeah, I think being a friend… When your friend makes a joke, like if they were a good friend, and this person, is a good friend and someone who I do consider to be a really nice person, I think that… sometimes you might just humour them and you know you laugh with it or…*
>
> **Yeah-**
>
> *…you dismiss it and you won't be like, hey lads you know that might be wrong, I think definitely you can become involved in that sense, you become kind of a bystander I guess.*

Through the dismissal, or unwillingness to challenge a sexist or homophobic joke made by a friend, Joe situates himself as a 'bystander' to lad culture, emphasising how the boundaries between being a 'lad' or 'not a lad' on campus are blurred, through the ease in which even those who are critical of these forms of behaviours can become personally involved in offensive jokes or harassment. This again frames lad culture as a form of behaviour that all students can 'dip in and out of' (Phipps and Young, 2015: 310), and illustrates the more subtle ways that participants felt themselves becoming involved in lad culture. This emphasises the ways in which participants became complicit within jokes and banter, enacting a form of complicit masculinity (Connell and Messerchmidt, 2005), using banter as a form of social currency (Jeffries, 2017) to fit into peer groups whilst at university.

5.3 Student Societies and the (Re)production of Hegemonic Masculinities

Several participants detailed student societies as key in their experiences of lad culture within their student lives. Participants described their experiences of lad culture through 'initiations' into student

societies, both sports teams and other non-sport related societies. Participants identified a 'cycle of normalisation' that initiations (re)produce, through a two-fold process, firstly through introducing new students, either students in first year or students who are new to the society, to the cultural norms within the group, and secondly through normalising lad culture and laddish behaviour within these societies, both overtly and in more subtle ways:

Jenny, Case Study Institution 2

So can I just ask, in your opinion, what do you think the key issues relating to lad culture are on campus?

I think it's a typical… I did it, so you need to do it. It's… it's breaking the cycle of that one person being like no, actually I'm not going to do it. And I think that's just a traditional thing […] because you sort of were in the little position you think oh well I can go do that to somebody else now. And I think that's just the issue that it's a terrible cycle. And I think as well that because people have been in these sort of say like rugby teams, the example that I used earlier, they've been in them from such a young age, they've sort of been brought up with the culture. So a lot of them might not even realise that it's wrong, and I think it's the new people that come in that haven't really played before and have sort of come in at university level and thought, yeah do you know what I want to try that, and then are made to do these things such like initiations, sort of… Get like scared off by it. But the people that sort of carry on and just go along with it have probably done it for quite a while, so they've done it for years because of the team that they've been in. So I think that's like the issue with it, it's a rough cycle of… It just seems normal.

This extract from Jenny emphasises a 'cycle of normalisation' of laddism and lad culture within UK HEIs, highlighting how social norms within university sports teams can (re)produce lad culture. According to Jenny, as students' progress onto their second or third years of university, they have elevated social status within sports teams or student societies, and as a result of this they often play an active role in (re)producing lad culture through pressurising first year students to take part in initiation rituals.

In considering these practices though the lens of hegemonic masculinity (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005:834), it is evident that student societies can enforce 'mechanisms of hegemony', reinforcing hierarchies of masculinity through laddish norms, that students feel they have to engage in or adopt in order to fit in. These mechanisms of hegemony are presented both within everyday norms in the groups or societies - such as through the banter chat identified by Eve before - as well as more symbolic or overt practices whereby the collective dominance of these laddish norms could be enforced. This is exemplified by Sarah's experiences of an 'initiation' into her course, at the beginning of first year, which happened on a trip organised by students as part of her degree subject society in her first few weeks of university:

Sarah, Case Study Institution 1

And like, there was no like [subject content] in this trip, I didn't expect there to be but it was like… It wasn't just a piss up… You have like… You'd have like challenges to do, they put you in a team and you'd get points for challenges. And like… It was like super, like, awkward… Like the challenges would be like, 25 points if a girl kisses a girl and 20 points if someone kisses someone of a different sex and it was like… Disgusting… Like even in first year I was like that's grim as fuck [laughing]… Like, 25 points if a girl kisses a girl? [laughing]… Like, that's grim… And you'd get like weirdo [degree subject] girls, like straight girls being like, "give me a kiss", and I was like, fuck off! [laughing]… Get away from me! Like straight girls walking around being like "okay, I'm kissing a girl, I'll just do it for like a second, it's fine"… [laughing]

That's so weird

So yeah that was like grim as fuck, and I was just like, what the fuck am I into? All these like weirdos [laughing] like all these straight girls coming up to me like "oh come on just do it for 5 seconds"… [laughing]… I was like, no-one kiss me! No-one touch me! [laughing]… Also part of that trip is like, it was like, you get points for like taking off all your clothes and like running around the house? Obviously I didn't want to see all these like, men, naked and like, all these people naked, I didn't want to do that… Like is this [degree subject]? Why has no-one got clothes on? Like I didn't want to run around the house naked… Like lose all my dignity, thanks… [laughing]… Like the rest of you! Everyone was a freak. Everyone was like running round naked… And then like everyone decided that, instead of just doing it once,

everyone would just stay naked? So I was like right, I'm going to bed, so I went up to my room, I went upstairs but I was sharing a room, I found a room with like the normal people, so it was like me, that girl who was like traumatised and dropped out, and like these three people from [halls of residence] that thought they were too cool for like, too cool for [degree subject], but they still fucking do it, right, so these people from [degree subject] were like doing ket[5] in the corner of the room… [laughing]… This is the first time I've seen drugs in my life! [laughing]… So I was like, what the fuck is that! They were like doing ket[3], they were like "do you want some ket?", I was like, we're in Wales, on a [degree subject] field trip, everyone is running around naked downstairs… And you want me to take ket? I… Like I'd literally never seen or done drugs in my life… Like I was like [laughing]… Two weeks into uni… [laughing]… I don't know, I was like, is everyone like this? […] That was the first time I met my friend in the year above as well and I just thought she was a [degree subject] weirdo. […] Clearly, because she like organised this trip, and then like… She was complaining because they got in trouble for it, because that girl dropped out, and I was like, well obviously you got in trouble for it? Like you forced people to run around naked? Like you basically like… Big [degree subject] men would be like… "Take off your clothes, come here"… And it was like me being like, fuck off! It was just like, it was grim as fuck.

In this extract, the behaviour that Sarah details older students on the trip act as 'mechanism of hegemony' (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005:834) as some students were forced to take their clothes off and run around naked on the trip, enforcing laddish masculinities as socially central to this subject society. Sarah also goes on to detail the ways in which the behaviours displayed on this trip were normalised by older, second year, students on the trip and highlights the ways in which engaging in these challenges felt compulsory due to the age-graded power dynamics within the society:

Sarah, Case Study Institution 1

And all the second years… Like I felt like all the second years in [degree subject]felt like they had something over us, like because we were first years. And I was like… At the time I was like… That's weird, but nobody saw that as weird? All the second years were really laddy and

[3] Participant is referring to ketamine, a Class B drug.

like, oh do you remember when we did this last year? Like… I don't care. This is for weirdos. You're all weirdos, can't you see that?

Here Sarah highlights the potential power dynamics, based on age and supposed 'seniority', in which this laddish hierarchy can be abused through initiations, leading to a reproduction of lad culture in these student society spaces as younger students feel pressured or forced into engaging in lad cultures. Although in many instances students are able to choose whether to engage in laddism, and control the extent to which they do this, it is evident that initiations, particularly within more geographically remote locations away from the University campus can mean that younger students are pressured into engaging in activities that they often do not feel comfortable with, or are forced into potentially dangerous situations with older students.

Previous literature (Dempster, 2011; 2013) has explored the role of cultural norms and practices within sports teams as (re)producing lad culture on university campuses, but my findings extend this in highlighting the ways in which sports teams are not unique in (re)producing lad culture, but this is something that manifests across a variety of different student societies. In considering this further, what potentially makes my findings problematic is that participants were often not expecting these cultures to be present within other student societies, particularly those linked closely with academic courses. This meant that participants were unable to assess the risk in taking part in these societies, and often found themselves in situations in which they felt unsafe. I will return to Sarah's experiences in Chapter 7 where I highlight the ways in which these mechanisms of hegemony (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005:834) are engrained into educational and institutional practices, as members of staff in the [degree subject] department went on to defend the continued running of the trip despite several student complaints, and one student dropping out of university after the events of the trip.

It is evident from the data I have presented within the previous two sections is that students are faced with a 'sink or swim' mentality when it comes to engaging in lad cultures or laddish practices. For example, Eve and Adam were able to adopt or mould to laddish masculine identities within their student lives, which enabled them to bond with the women's football team and the 'lad lad's group' within the student flat. On the other hand, participants such as Sarah, who did not feel comfortable engaging in initiations with the [degree subject] society ended up moving onto a different course during her first year of university, and her friend who also attended the trip left the university all-together. This highlights the ways in which lad cultures are bound up in student identity formation,

and how adopting laddish masculine identities enable students to fit in and form social bonds. The following section will explore how this is particularly prominent within the student NTE.

5.4 Student Drinking Cultures and the Night Time Economy (NTE)

In this section I explore the role of student drinking cultures and the NTE within participants' experiences of lad culture, with a focus on three key aspects of lad culture that emerged from my data analysis: Drugs, alcohol, and pressure to participate in lad culture and laddish behaviour within the student NTE. In exploring the role of heavy drinking and socialising within the NTE as central to student identity, particularly laddish student identities, I also pay attention to the experience of students who don't drink, illustrating how lad cultures are normalised and engrained within student identity formation.

My findings within this section expand on previous studies that have identified student drinking cultures and the student-centred NTE as central to lad culture (Dempster, 2011, 2013; Diaz-Fernandez and Evans, 2020), in exploring how the pressure to engage in laddish student drinking cultures and excessive drinking span across a variety of student spaces, and are felt by a large majority of students, not just those who consider themselves to be 'lads'. In this section, I also unpack the ways in which forms of student-centred socialisation, often based around nightlife and heavy drinking are marketed to undergraduate students, particularly through Freshers' Week events. I also pay attention to the ways in which the commodification of the student-centred NTE can be reinforced or reproduced by students through social media.

Participants' narratives explored the role of drugs and alcohol as intertwined with lad culture on campus in several ways. Predominantly, this was centred around the prevalence of drinking cultures within student life. Several participants explained how, as soon as they got to university, they found that drugs and heavy drinking played an important role in freshers' week socialisation:

> Kate, Case Study Institution 2
>
> *In my first year I was absolutely petrified, like I think first year's the one that sticks out in my head the most because my flatmates all went out but they were all heavy on the drugs and I'm not! [laughs] And I was in this whole other country like literally had just moved over from Northern Ireland on the Sunday night and everybody was going out then and going out for the whole week, and I didn't know where I was, I'd never visited [university city] before, I*

didn't know any of my flatmates and they were all doing coke[4] at like 4pm in the kitchen. So I just thought no… I think to be honest that's what's put me off actually doing it [freshers' week] for the next two years, like I've… Since then I haven't had an interest at all in actually participating in like freshers' events or anything, it's just like heavy alcohol based I think. And like I drink a bit but I prefer like going for a few drinks with friends type of thing.

This view of freshers' week as based around drinking, drugs and clubbing was also echoed by John:

John, Case Study Institution 1

It was very different from what I'm used to, I come from a very like small town, thirty miles South of London, so it was just crazy! There was things going on every night, I was out three nights in a row clubbing probably, three nights in a row! Very new for me!

Here Kate and John highlight the role of heavy drinking within their experiences of freshers' week, and the feeling of having to adapt to this after moving to university from their home town. What Kate also highlights is the ways in which this culture spans into university living spaces, such as halls of residence, as the pressure felt by participants to engage in heavy drinking and drug use spanned across a variety of spaces within their everyday student lives.

It is also relevant here to consider the ways in which this form of socialisation within the student-centred NTE is marketed at undergraduate students, particularly first years, both by nightclubs and bars in the city centre, as well as the Student Union at both institutions. One key marketing tool that added to the pressure felt by participants within my research was freshers' week wristbands sold by each student union at the two institutions studied. These wristbands enabled students to access all freshers' week events, hosted either at the student union nightclub (Case Study Institution 1) or various bars and clubs around the city centre (Case Study Institution 2):

Beth, Case Study Institution 1

That was like a really big thing, the Student Union wristband. So every night for the first week there was always different nights to go to and if you had the wristband you could get in for free. But like at the start, the price for the wristband was like £5 and as like the week wentn… this was like before you started, and as the week went on it went up to like £30, which isn't worth it, because it doesn't really cost you that much to get into these nights anyway…

[4] Participant is referring to cocaine, a Class A drug.

So you felt like a lot of freshers' week was kind of to do with going out, like people were focusing their time on going out?

Mm, and it made me laugh because on the Student Union page they were like, right, this year we're not focusing drinking on the and the alcohol and stuff. Then they did because the main thing was the wristband.

Here Beth frames the pressure around socialising through heavy drinking, attending nightclubs and bars every night during freshers' week and taking drugs not just as peer-to-peer pressure, but as a result of the marketing tactics of nightlife events to undergraduate students by student unions, and the commodification of nightlife spaces more broadly. This narrative that created pressure for students around attending freshers' nightlife events was also present within marketing material for freshers' events within the city in which the two case study institutions are located. Online marketing material that I noted down in my own autoethnographic notes in relation to freshers' events at one case study institution promised students the '*best week of their lives'*. This pressure, exacerbated by the marketing of freshers' week events, was described by James:

James, Case Study Institution 1

Do you think like first years feel more pressure towards that sort of thing?

Absolutely because I think if you come to university and you see all your friends going to all these nights out, you're more inclined to do the same thing and… You see people scrambling for freshers' bands and tickets and all the group chats are like filled with does anyone have eight tickets for this event which has been sold out since March. Like I think it's just way too much to put on new people who are moving to a new city and making new friends, they don't need that added stress on top of it. Like there should be enough space for everybody, for everybody to have to a good time if they want to have a good experience and there should be no pressure… If you don't feel like going out, you're not going to miss out because you wanted to stay in one night, which I feel like, my first freshers' week I took a couple of nights off and I felt like I was missing out on everything and I was… It was like I didn't have as good a freshers' week.

Jamie describes the 'added stress' and pressure during freshers' week to attend organised freshers' events, and the 'scramble' for tickets to attend events at nightclubs in the city centre that are specifically targeted towards first year undergraduate students. Andersson et al., (2012) highlight a tension between contrasting experiences of alcohol consumption on campus. This was echoed within my research, particularly centred around the narrative that alcohol consumption and attending nightlife spaces was the 'normal university lifestyle'. This was evident through many accounts of participants' who did not go out clubbing every night during freshers' week that they would be perceived, or feel like, they were 'missing out'. This was explained by Zara:

> Zara, Case Study Institution 2
>
> *I think first year it was harder because you were wanting… Like everybody was drinking, everybody kind of… That was the normal university lifestyle.*

This form of socialisation, based around heavy drinking and drug taking also led to many participants positioning themselves as 'outsiders', describing feeling out of place, particularly amongst flatmates and in living spaces. Participants' who drank less alcohol than the perceived 'norm' or took 'nights off' during freshers' week whereby they did not go out clubbing or socialise described feeling out of place as a result. This was felt particularly acutely by participants who did not drink alcohol at all, either for religious reasons (1 participant) or personal reasons (2 participants). Although these experiences of not drinking alcohol at all whilst at university were less common within the study, I thought it important to include them to illustrate the extent to which student identity and the 'normal university lifestyle' was perceived to be based around heavy drinking and socialising in nightlife spaces:

> Julia, Case Study Institution 2
>
> *So my first year, it's been different for my second year, because I don't drink, I've not had an interest in drinking and I'm fine with that, I know that like unless I want to I'm not going to do it, but it does mean that I am slightly on the… I wouldn't say isolated because I make friends through the course, so I'm not necessarily feeling like I'm not making friends, but it does almost feel like everybody's going out and you're kind of like … I'm just in my room.*

Whereas last year it wasn't too bad because I had a friend from home who was also in my flat, so it was very… It was kind of like well we would do the same thing… But then this year, there was nobody, like everybody in my flat, although I knew one of them, they… She was a big drinker and so it was kind of slightly different. know that nobody's going to pressure me into drinking, unless it's my choice I'm not going to make myself do it, so I don't find it too bad, but it does sometimes feel like, oh they're all going out and I'm kind of like, well I don't want to go so I'm just going to stay here alone.

OK and do you find a lot of the social events are based around drinking?

I mean you don't … I know that you don't have to drink but it's almost like, well it's not… It's going to be different if you're not drinking because it's… You know they're all having fun and… But they're drunk, they don't… They're not aware of it, like whereas I would remember it all and I… So I can still have fun and not drink but it kind of… It's a bit… Like if you went, you might feel a bit more out of place than if you just stayed behind.

This feeling of being 'out of place', or being 'judged' for not drinking, particularly by flatmates, was also echoed by Jamie:

Jamie, Case Study Institution 2

I wasn't like daring enough to be like, oh I'm going to go to the pub and drink and be under age or whatever… Because like to me that's just wrong, so I never did. So then coming here and everybody's like partying every night and stuff and drinking and drinking, I'm just … I can't do that, it makes me ill and like I just didn't want to. So I felt a little bit like, oh they're going to judge me.

This quote from Julia emphases the spatial tensions that exist within student living spaces between the more dominant narrative, based around heavy drinking, drugs and going out to clubs and other nightlife venues, and those who don't drink, who are often in the minority within student living spaces. This extract also highlights the ways in which 'social identity' within HEIs is centred around heavy drinking and the NTE, echoing previous research (Nairn et al., 2007). This means that non-drinkers occupy alternative subject positions within these social spaces. What makes my findings

unique is the ways in which these prevailing/alternative subject positions based around drinking/non-drinking shape the space of the home within student halls of residence. This means that students who don't drink, like Julia and Jamie, can often find themselves confined to their room or more isolated from communal living spaces. This is furthered by Julia who describes how 'if you went' [out clubbing, as a student who didn't drink] 'you might feel more out of place than if you just stayed behind'. This suggests that the dynamics of these living spaces reflect wider dominant narratives, around heavy drinking and drug taking as integral to student identity formation, that are both performed by and marketed at undergraduate students.

Holton (2016a:62) frames student households as 'multifarious social spaces in which sharers must perform and manage complex negotiations between their familial past and their interdependent present'. Understanding drinking and engaging in the NTE as a form of 'social currency' (Nairn et al., 2007) within HE halls of residence, reveals the ways in which students who choose not to drink are considered lower down the social hierarchies within these spaces. For some students in my research, their lack of social capital around drinking and engaging in the NTE meant that they were unable to adapt to the social hegemony within student halls of residence as well as others. For example Jamie (Case Study Institution 2), who describes how she 'wasn't daring enough to go to the pub and drink and be underage' before coming to university, because in her view 'that's just wrong'. Due to her experiences before coming to university, coupled with her choice to continue not drinking, Jamie positions herself as an outsider, lower down in the social hierarchies within her living space of student halls of residence, feeling like her flatmates will 'judge' her for not 'partying every night'. Wilkinson (2018) explores a peer-to-peer stigmatisation between young people in relation to their drinking habits, understood through the spatialised boundaries of drinking spaces, particularly between those who drink in the park and those who do not. It is evident from several accounts within my research that this stigmatisation is present within the university sphere – and young people who do not enjoy drinking feel excluded from peer groups as a result of this. These accounts highlight the ways in which drinking and socialising through alcohol consumption and attending nightlife spaces shape the student experience, particularly within the boundaries of the flat in student halls of residence, creating 'insiders' and 'outsiders' based on their drinking habits. In turn, this creates spatial dynamics whereby those who do not drink, or drink less than others in the flat feel isolated and spatially restricted, feeling unable to use communal spaces and often being confined to their private bedroom.

Several participants also explored the role of social media as increasing the pressure to drink and attend nightclubs during their time at university, particularly during freshers' week. Jenny describes the pressure to drink and 'have a good time' during freshers' week as increased by her use of SNS,

particularly through viewing photographs and videos of friends having 'what looks like a really good time' during freshers' week, and their first few weeks at university:

Jenny, Case Study Institution 2

But like especially seeing people that like you were really good friends with and then seeing them have what looks like a really good time and then you're like maybe not having that, it is a little bit more difficult. But I don't know, like I talk to them regularly and like I think like it does help knowing how they feel in terms of like… Because they actually might not be having as great a time as it looks.

And do you think there's a pressure when you come to uni to have a really good time?

Yeah, I mean everyone goes on about it being like the best time of your life and like you'll make all your good friends, like blah blah blah and like freshers' week is amazing. But actually like it is so stressful and like I've had a lot of anxiety and like all that kind of stuff, like it has been not as like amazing as everyone said, but… I don't know… I feel like everyone's felt like that though, like I talk to so many people about it and they've all said that.

Many participants' described anxiety, worry, loneliness and feeling overwhelmed during freshers' week, a contrast to the freshers' week that is marketed by student unions, institutions as well as private businesses as 'the best time of your life':

Jane, Case Study Institution 2

So I think freshers' week was quite overwhelming. I think initially like the first few days was a bit of a struggle, like you don't really know the people you're living with, it's a bit overwhelming.

This was especially an issue for students with pre-existing mental health conditions:

Jessica, Case Study Institution 1

I have anxiety. So for me, going out and … OK so I don't know the people… If I don't really know them very well… Takes a lot and it's quite intense for me personally, whereas other people don't have that or have that mentality, they're like, yeah, let's go out and drink all the time.

Holton (2017:73) outlines the 'narrow geographies' of first year undergraduate students, based around living spaces, socialising and studying, which 'intensify the student experience'. This intensity is evident within my own research, particularly through the accounts of Jane and Jessica here, who are struggling to fully immerse themselves within student life in the ways that they perceive to be expected of them.

The role of social media is also important in the production and formation of student identity, enabling some students a means of sharing their 'student experience' with friends from university *and* from 'back home'. This was explored by Adam:

Adam, Case Study Institution 1

I was using it more as a social thing to meet new people, by posting my experience at freshers' week I've met… Gained the attention of other people who go to this uni, so now I know a lot more people than I did to start with, which is good.

And is it to show the kinds of-

I think to be honest it was to show people that I am actually having a good time at university and I am making new friends, which like anyone I was scared of coming to university in case I never connected with people, I couldn't find anyone, so now that I've found so many people who I get on with, I feel somewhat proud of it, so I'm happy to share it, yeah.

James reflected critically on his own use of social media during his first year of university:

James, Case Study Institution 1

I think in the first year I was on like every Facebook page and every… I followed everything on Twitter and on Instagram and be like, I'm going to make sure I know everything that's going on and be like up to date with everything, and posting photos all the time. And I think that

just kind of… It stopped freshers' week from being an enjoyable experience and it turned into like a marketing experience, that I need to take all of these photos so I can document everything that I've done so people know I had an amazing time. But ultimately I wasn't having a good time because I was too busy focusing on taking photos and stuff and wanting to be engaged in it… I think there's such a notion of pushing, like there's everything going on every day and you can do all of these things and you have to make sure that you're at the best place so you have the best time, and it's very like aggressive marketing technique I think. It makes… It's almost like bullying you into enjoying something sometimes.

Here James explores the way in which the 'commodified campus environment' (Andersson et al., 2012:506) extends beyond marketisation by student unions or private businesses, untangling the ways in which the pressure to enjoy freshers' week and have an 'amazing time' leads first year students to embody this 'aggressive marketing technique', and reproduce these discourses through their own use of social media. This highlights the role of performance and performativity (Butler, 1990) within participants' everyday student lives not just in relation to gender or sexuality, but through performative actions that constitute their identity *as a student*. This, for participants, worked across the online/offline continuum (Ging and Siapera, 2018) through student unions and nightlife promoters marketing the 'student experience' to students via promotional material, whilst students also (re)produced and embodied this marketing peer-to-peer, through sharing photos and videos of freshers and student nightlife events via social media. This emphasises student identity performances not just as influenced by their changing activity spaces (Holton, 2016), but by the *marketisation* of these spaces, as the hegemonic student identity rooted in drinking and partying becomes a commodity that can be bought, sold and advertised both to and by students.

Participants linked the pressure to drink and socialise within nightlife spaces, particularly during freshers' week, with lad culture:

Ellie, Case Study Institution 2

And then another factor that I think influences lad culture, going out, nightlife and like freshers' week I think impact it hugely. I think going out [clubbing] is such a big part of being at uni, and I think that's what everyone thinks, once you go to uni you're out every night… Especially here, is probably one of the most prime places for lad culture, you see it all the time. But yeah, I think especially in freshers' week, lad culture is probably at like its peak when it was the highest time to pull girls, go out drinking, bring people back. And even when

you're out and you can see it for yourself… I think the nightlife kind of plays into like peer pressure and drugs and alcohol, so pressuring your mate to go and get with a girl, oh go over there, talk to her, or like drinking a bit more or people who may have come from a quieter background back home have met someone from somewhere else and they're all for example in a flat together, and some of them might do drugs and then one of them might not, he might, you know, think "well I'll do that as well now".

Here Ellie identifies freshers' week as a time when lad culture is 'at its peak', due to it being the 'highest time to pull girls, go out drinking, bring people back'. Ellie here highlights the links between lad culture, alcohol and nightlife spaces during freshers' week, through identifying 'peer pressure and drugs and alcohol' alongside 'pressuring your mate to go and get with a girl'. This also makes evident ways in which peer pressure and heavy alcohol consumption may facilitate sexual harassment within nightlife spaces. My findings here suggests that heavy drinking is central to inclusion within peer groups for students of all genders whilst at university, although when discussing lad culture more broadly, interviewees such as Ellie tended to associate heavy drinking and laddism predominantly with male students.

The role of nightlife spaces in facilitating lad culture has been explored within previous research (Dempster, 2011; 2013), citing heavy drinking as central to masculine student identities, as heavy alcohol is central for inclusion into male peer groups. This was also teased out further in accounts from participants' who themselves took part in heavy drinking, society initiations or drinking rituals. One participant, Mark, described his experiences of a bus tour around the city, as part of one of the freshers' events organised for his course:

Mark, Case Study Institution 1

They had like sort of bags of wine they were spraying at people! We were trying to all sit on the back of the seat, chanting, that kind of thing. But the thing is, I wouldn't say that's lad culture because everyone on the bus was involved in that, like women etc as well. It's just that everyone was there and they were having fun, so I wouldn't say that's… Even if that was lad culture, I wouldn't say that's bad, because everyone's… Everyone's enjoying it, and it makes it OK because people are enjoying it and like… Yeah. Because people, obviously if they weren't enjoying it, they didn't have to participate in that bit, there was plenty of people who weren't chanting and so on or drinking wine out of bags or… Having a funnel put on the top

of the bus and alcohol poured down it and drinking out of the bottom of it. Yeah, it was really fun!

Here Mark conceptualises his experiences on the bus tour of 'chanting', 'drinking wine out of bags' and 'having a funnel put on the top of the bus and alcohol poured down it' not as lad culture, as 'everyone's enjoying it'. This highlights the ways in which the marketisation and commodification of 'student identity' through the promotion of nightlife spaces interlinks with lad culture at the two case study institutions, as the pressure to drink heavily, engage in sports teams or society socials and attend student nightlife events is (re)produced both through social media and also through laddish student identities within these nightlife spaces, whereby students are encouraged to drink more, take drugs and engage in casual sex in order to engage in the full 'student experience'. My findings here extend previous work on lad cultures with HEIs through suggesting that participants' reasons for engaging in lad cultures and laddish behaviours at university are complex. Previous work has considered lad culture as intrinsically linked with student drinking cultures and sports teams (Dempster, 2009; 2011), but my findings suggest that it is not just social networks within these spaces from which lad culture is (re)produced. Rather, lad culture in varying forms is intrinsic to British undergraduate identity formation, and pressure to engage in heavy drinking, casual sex and laddish 'banter' is felt by students through peer-to-peer interactions online and offline, alongside the marketisation of the student NTE by institutions, student unions and private businesses.

5.5 Geographies of Everyday Harassment

In this section I explore the role of harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault within participants' experiences of lad culture on campus. I expand previous research that has identified harassment, sexual assault and homophobia as a key part of student lad culture (NUS, 2010; 2013; Phipps and Young, 2015; Jackson and Sundaram, 2015; Phipps and Young, 2015; Phipps, 2016; Phipps et al., 2017), drawing out the ways in which these experiences influence participants' use of space, both campus and city-centre spaces, as well as on social media.

The normalisation of lad culture at university, outside of student societies, was drawn upon by participants, particularly the ways in which their experiences of lad culture and harassment span a multitude of spaces, and are ingrained into their everyday gendered experiences of student life. One participant, Kate, described how lad culture and harassment is pervasive in her everyday life, spanning her university life, social life and work life:

Kate, Case Study Institution 2

Do you have any examples of like times that you've experienced that?

Like every night out when I get groped. Even just walking down the street and you have people like whistling at you or like tooting their horns or I've had boys like literally stop in my path to try and speak to me and it's like, I'm walking here, like I need to get somewhere and they were like making a physical barrier to stop me because they want to speak to me. Like I remember one time I was doing an event where we had school kids coming in, I think they were like year 11, so like fifteen, sixteen and they were mostly girls, I can't remember if it was an all-girls' school or just the group I had was mostly girls, but it was summer but I was wearing my work uniform, so I was wearing trousers and a T-shirt, like there's nothing provocative or anything about that. And I was taking this group of like about twenty girls, and these guys in like… there were like two vans, and we were walking down the road and the guys in both the vans starting shouting at us, and I was so embarrassed because I'm in a position to protect these girls and I felt like I was letting them down, but it's the men that were shouting at all of us, and they're young, like they're like fifteen, sixteen, they're not even adults, and like that's something that really sticks out in my head as something that I … it was just so disrespectful. And to do it to me at work, like in a work uniform, that has the logos on it and everything, I just, it was horrible, it was horrible. So things like that, like I just get it all the time, like I get people like whistling and honking their horns at me all the time, and it doesn't have to be when you're dressed up all nice, like I've been walking around just like with my hair chucked up in a bun and a big like… Big Puffa jacket on, do you know what I mean, just going to uni or something, I don't look good, and they're still doing that... Yeah. I've had people like honk at me, you know when you're walking quite close to the car, so like on the footpath and they're like next to you, and like I just ignore, like I don't respond most of the time and then if I ignore it, then they'll call me a bitch or call me like awful, awful names. Like I was walking back from the gym, I was all red and sweaty one day, and it's literally a three minute walk from the gym to my flat and I was walking past these two men and they were like, oh the things I'd do to you and all this, like it's just disgusting, you get it so often.

Here Kate illustrates how lad culture and harassment spans almost all of her everyday spaces at university. This sentiment was echoed by the majority of participants' who considered harassment to be one of the most prevalent ways that they experience lad culture whist at university. This extract highlights the scale of the problem, and highlights how whilst some spaces are more prolific

in students' experiences of lad culture, for example the NTE, lad culture and harassment is present across all student spaces. Sills et al. (2016: 940) identify a 'matrix of sexism' experienced by young women students: 'An environment in which sexism, misogyny, and elements of rape culture merge as a normalized backdrop to everyday life', and this notion was echoed by several participants' in their retelling of their experiences of lad culture at university. My own data furthers this, as the societal backdrop to these experiences was identified by a number of participants, and feeds into the perceived normalisation of lad culture on campus.

Several participants also drew upon their experiences of online harassment in framing lad culture as something that is not confined to specific spaces either online or offline, but is an everyday experience for them that manifests *across* virtual and non-virtual spaces. Jodie, a student officer at Case Study Institution 1 also explores the reoccurrence, or persistence of harassment online as what makes it problematic, through her experiences of running the Feminist Society Facebook account:

> Jodie, Case Study Institution 1, Student Officer
>
> *Yeah so it wasn't really so much me specifically but it would just be like, the feminist society page. So we used to get like, I think like our page or something must have been put on some horrible reddit thread, or a 4chan page or whatever, because we'd go through periods where like we'd get like 6 messages a day from random men, from all over the UK and other countries, being like, can I speak to the man in charge, you all belong in the kitchen, stuff like that. And obviously it wasn't really like scary, or like, particularly like horrible or anything, it was more just like the frequency and the influx of them. That's what makes it really frustrating. Like to constantly get like a notification, obviously I had it all on my phone, to constantly get a notification like every time you looked at your phone, it was like a man being like, saying something stupid, that's what was annoying. And I remember we went to the student union about it, and was kind of like, it's a bit of a long shot but is there anything you can do, or anything you can recommend we do on Facebook, or whatever, erm like, maybe you've seen this before? And their answer was basically like, no. We can't stop people sending you messages. Which is the response we thought we'd get but we thought we'd just ask anyway. But it's like, how do you police people? So that was really annoying. We'd also get like, posted on like, I can't think what they're called but like, you know like groups on Facebook, that are for students from our uni that are like, have stupid names like Uni of [x] banter, or whatever, like shit like that, like our stuff will get posted on that all the time, for people to like mock, or people would post jokes about us on that or whatever. And again like,*

it didn't like, really affect us that much, because we were just like, it's just random stupid men on campus, it's fine. But then sometimes it does give you the feeling of like, because you're so insular, like when you're in that community, and obviously all your friends are like, "goodies", is that you're kind of like… When you see like a post mocking that's got like 300 likes or whatever, you are like, oh god like, you forget that you are just a joke to people. Because you get it in your head of oh I'm serious about this stuff, and oh we really care, and there's all this stuff that we think is really great, oh but like, to half the people on campus we are just a joke, because we're called the feminist society. So that wasn't very nice.

What this extract, along with several other participants' accounts of harassment suggests is that harassment experienced by participants as part of lad culture spans not only across their everyday student lives in offline spaces, but is also networked, manifesting in online spaces, social media and groups online. Here Jodie suggests the ways in which harassment online can happen across a multitude of scales. Her experiences of harassment on University 'banter' pages are experienced differently than harassment on a larger scale, such as after being shared on the forum sites 4Chan and Reddit, that have a reputation for alt-right sub-cultures and men's rights movements and are accessed by users worldwide (Valkenburgh, 2018; Dignam and Rohlinger, 2019).

On a smaller scale, receiving harassment as part of the feminist society on university 'banter' pages meant that Jodie felt less able to express her feminist opinions on campus, and felt like the demands and work of the feminist society were not taken seriously by other students. This highlights how the 'banter' that has been identified by participants as part of lad culture on campus manifests online at university level, and the anti-feminist rhetoric evident within lad culture is particularly prevalent within these online spaces. This draws into question the potential for students to create or alter the spaces they use within their everyday lives to avoid lad culture, as these online spheres create an ever-growing arena for harmful 'banter' and the mocking of certain groups of students.

The ability for users to maintain anonymity within online spaces heightens harassment, and the potential for individuals and institutions to challenge those posting harassment within this sphere is limited. Banet-Weiser and Miltner (2016:172) highlight the ways in which 'popular misogyny responds in part to the unprecedented frequency of expressions of popular feminism articulated on multiple media channels and in a variety of contexts'. From the empirical examples presented here, it is evident that the use of 'banter' and harassment online works as a response, and push back against the feminist society, which was seeing increasing popularity within the two case study institutions at the time this research was undertaken, particularly within Case Study Institution 1

where two sabbatical officers were elected to full-time student officer positions at the student union on a feminist campaign platform.

More than half of participants described sexual harassment as a key part of their experiences of lad culture at university, including physical contact such as touching or groping, as well as other forms of harassment. Most of the incidents that participants discussed were experienced in nightlife spaces:

Kate, Case Study Institution 2

I think that's kind of… what's expected… I think because… it shouldn't be expected but it just is and you can blame it on the alcohol, it's like, oh I wouldn't have done that if I was sober. So yeah, I think that is sort of the main kind of… the setting most of the time. Because if I go to the library, I don't get that do you know what I mean?

Yeah.

It's the same guys in the library on a Tuesday night as it would be in the nightclub on a Wednesday!

Poppy, Case Study Institution 1

I think it can be quite disempowering to women because I'm not sure you've experienced it yourself, when you go on a night out, you have a boy come up to you and they kind of grab your arm or they come up to you and make some sort of chat up line, you know you are flattered, but then when someone kind of comes up to you and grabs your bum, it's like… you're almost like, get off me, who do you think you are, it's that kind of thing. And I think that is definitely a huge thing that plays into the lad culture, showing confidence that you can have any girl that you want is definitely part of lad culture.

Several participants also gave examples of this happening to them during the day time, in spaces in the city centre:

Hannah, Case Study Institution 1

So I'm trying to explore the city and different places. So I went to [city landmark/museum], I went on my own, just after a lecture because I had some time and this guy was following me around, apparently the same age as me, and was asking me all kinds of questions and like what's your name, are you a uni student, how long have you been here? It takes a lot to make me feel very uncomfortable, I feel like I'm quite tolerable, within about ten minutes of this guy following me I was like no … So literally I went back to reception as quickly as I could and said to the woman there, do you mind if I just stay with you until he disappears? He poked his head round the corner and said, "you don't have to report me you know".

What was evident from these accounts is that these experiences spanned almost all spaces used by participants within their student lives, and incidences of harassment and sexual assault were committed by both students and non-students, and sometimes participants were unsure about which one of the two the perpetrator was. Almost all participants who had experienced harassment or sexual assault whilst at university altered their use of space as a result of this. Kate describes how being groped in nightlife spaces means that she no longer feels safe attending nightlife venues such as nightclubs or bars:

Kate, Case Study Institution 2

One of the reasons I really don't like going on nights out is that I get groped every time, but nothing's going to be done about that and I think that's part of lad culture, but like they have absolutely no right to do that… So many people do it anyway then there's not enough people to question it kind of thing. And like of course with like the #MeToo movement and all that sort of thing, it's not trickling down to the small things, it's like putting me off going out with my friends and having fun on a night out because I just don't want to get groped that night.

This changing of the way participants inhabit space was most commonly recalled in relation to nightlife spaces, as participants described not wanting to go out at night, particularly to more 'rowdy' nightlife spaces such as busy bars and nightclubs, due to fear of sexual assault or harassment in these spaces. My findings here suggest that due to lad culture and gender-based harassment across a variety of spaces, particularly within the NTE, some women students felt unable to attend nightlife spaces due to fear of sexual harassment or assault. Previous research from the NUS (2011), found that one in seven participants had experienced physical or sexual assault during their time as a student. Despite developments since then, both policies and campaigns at institutional level, and also wider feminist movements such as the #MeToo movement mentioned by Kate,

participants within my research still felt that lad culture perpetuated a culture or environment whereby sexual harassment was normalised, and commonplace within participants everyday interactions. This will be explored further in the following section.

5.6 Harassment and Sexual Assault

Experiences of sexual assault and harassment were most common amongst participants who identified as women, although several LGBTQ+ participants of all genders also described avoiding certain nightlife spaces due to lad culture. For LGBTQ+ students, this manifested as being subject to homophobic attacks (both verbal and physical) both in and on their way home from nightlife venues in the city centre. Previous work on lad culture within student life (NUS, 2010; 2013; Phipps and Young, 2015; Jackson and Sundaram, 2015; Phipps and Young, 2015; Phipps, 2016; Phipps et al., 2017) has linked lad culture to sexual assault and sexual misconduct on campus, as well as rape supportive attitudes. The accounts within this section expand on this, suggesting that not only do these incidences of sexual assault and harassment shape the way participants experience student life, but they also lead students to (re)negotiate the way they use space. Sophie recalls witnessing her friend being harassed in a nightclub:

> Sophie, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *So from my experience, not me, but like one of my friends, was sort of showing a bit of an interest and then she was like no, and then the guy just sort of wouldn't really leave her alone, like thought that… Because she'd shown a bit of interest to start with, like it was OK, and then we just had to like pull her away. And then eventually sort of got the… The gist that she didn't want anything but sort of… It's happened a few times where they like, they just keep trying, do you know what I mean?*
>
> **Is that something that you think happens often?**
>
> *I think… I think it probably occurs pretty much every time you go out in like a… In like a small instance, not like… It's nothing really big, it's nothing like you think about at the end, but like at the time you're like, oh OK no, and then you just sort of like help each other out… A bit of extra support! But if you're in that situation by yourself, then I suppose that could be pretty intimidating because you didn't have anyone to be like no, and then… Someone to go back to afterwards if the person is like not leaving you alone.*

It is evident from this account, and accounts from other participants, that individual incidences of harassment seem to be considered as 'nothing really big' by participants. However, the frequency in which they are experienced is what often led to participants reflecting on these incidences as problematic, and reconfiguring their use of space, particularly nightlife spaces, in response.

One participant also detailed how harassment in a nightlife space continued into the living space of her two friends, who were living in student halls of residence at the time. Many other participants also detailed in varying ways the interaction between nightlife spaces and living spaces, through pre-drinks and socialising before attending nightlife spaces, and through continuing to party and socialise within flats and houses after nights out. This account details how harassment can span across student social and living spaces, as the harassment experienced within the nightclub continued on the way home, and then into their student halls of residence:

Jill, Case Study Institution 1

I've had someone grope my ass when I've been in a club, which was really awkward and I turned around and was like don't do that again please. And I've had someone like grab my waist, because I was looking around, because I was really bored at this point, the club was actually terrible! So I was like trying to entertain myself and I think he caught my eye but I looked away and went back to doing whatever I was doing, and then he like grabbed my hips to try and get my attention, and I just kind of pushed him off and then like was like, no, no, thank you. And then he tried to grab me again, and then I just went and grabbed one of my flatmate's hand, held her hand and was like, no we're together, just stop!

Do you feel like that's something you experience quite a lot then?

Yes! I can give you a really good example, like my flatmates, they went out, like I left early with one of my other ones, and these two of them got… Went on their own and like these two guys wouldn't take no for an answer, ended up coming back to the flat and then they needed someone to tell them to leave because they would not leave.

God, that's really scary.

It was for them, I was asleep at this point! (both laugh). No but like they didn't know how to deal with it, and that's what concerns me, because I know a lot of people don't. Like I know

how to deal with it because I know like… For example, they called like the Uber when they were still with these guys.

This form of recalling experiences was common amongst participants, as they untangled their experiences verbally throughout the interview, relating to things that they'd experienced themselves as well as the experiences of their friends or flatmates. From this extract it is evident that the harassment faced by students in nightlife spaces can easily spill over or escalate into living spaces, such as student houses or halls of residence, suggesting a lineage of harassment that spans across student spaces, making it difficult for participants to challenge.

5.6.1 Harassment Online

This interaction between nightlife and living spaces, as well as online and offline spaces was evident through the majority of accounts from participants about harassment that they have experienced whilst at university. Sara explained her experiences of sexual harassment online:

Sara, Case Study Institution 2

And dick pics!

Yeah-

Why?! Why?! You just get it like DM'd to your Instagram, my Instagram's private, so it all comes up in the requests, like you don't know me, you can't see anything from me, I don't know you, why are you sending that?

And is that just random people?

Yeah, just random, yeah, people I don't know, that's all. But like the thing is like it's not just me, like every girl I've talked to, like I'm sure with you as well, we've experienced it all. And more than once.

Several participants cited receiving unwanted sexual images on a regular basis, and considered this a key part of their experiences of lad culture as a student. These images were sent without consent, and from people that they didn't know previously. This was also noted as significant in recent research by Haslop and O'Rouke (2021), who consider the role of unsolicited 'dick picks' as practices

that (re)produce hegemonic masculinity in digitized spaces, by 'enabling males, whether intentionally or not, to exert their gendered and sexual dominance over young females' (Haslop and O'Rouke, 2021: 1114). Several participants suggested that the anonymity available to harassers in online spaces is one of the reasons why sexual harassment on social media is so prevalent within their everyday lives:

> Kate, Case Study Institution 2
>
> *I think it gives anonymity, which makes people a bit freer for… and I think because it is… it's strangers, like it's not other students that I know that are sending dick pics and like I've got this since I was like fourteen, do you know what I mean, like I'm so young to be getting that. And so many other girls are, whenever I hear girls who are at school age like talking about it, I'm just like, oh it's just awful. And I think it does kind of … you don't think you're talking to a real person. And you also have the anonymity yourself, like you can give yourself a different profile picture, a different name and do that. So I think people do feel a lot more protected than they would in real life. So I think that does enable it in that way. I think like the things you see in like group chats and things, you know when screen shots get sent out and stuff, it is disgusting, but it's their own little bubble where they can just delete it after and it's gone type of thing, even though it's not gone but like you think it is. Yeah. I do think it enables quite a lot.*

> Sophie, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *I think if they're there, and it's like … Like a one-time sort of thing, like on one night out, they're there and they won't leave you alone, I think it's annoying and it can be upsetting but they're gone afterwards, like once you leave there… As long as… Well if you haven't taken like their social media details or anything they're gone. But on social media, I suppose there's no barrier of what can be said and how the other person actually feels and reacts to it, so they could potentially just keep going and keep… I don't know what the word is… Harassing basically. So I think that probably is worse on social media.*

Sophie details here how she considers her experiences of harassment on social media worse than in nightlife spaces, as the connectedness of social media, and its ability to overcome spatial/temporal boundaries means that there is little escape from harassment experienced within the online sphere, and it could 'potentially just keep going'. My findings contribute geographically to recent scholarship on online harassment experienced by students in UK HEIs (Haslop and O'Rourke, 2020; Haslop et al.,

2021). Through considering the lack of spatial restrictions in relation to harassment on social media, for participants, this meant that this harassment could be continual and on-going despite the victim and perpetrator not being physically proximate. This, alongside the face-to-face harassment as explored in the previous section, was pivotal to participants experiences of lad culture and gendered marginalisation within their everyday student lives.

5.6.2 Sexual Assault

Several participants also recalled experiences of sexual assault whilst at university. Whilst this was relatively uncommon amongst participants (3 participants recalled experiencing serious sexual assault during their time at university), many referred to similar experiences happening to their friends. The extract that I draw upon within this section is from an interview with a participant with whom I had built up a rapport throughout the study, who in light of this felt comfortable sharing her experiences in depth. The experiences she refers to here also happened around two and a half years prior to the interview taking place, perhaps another reason why she felt ready and able to share her experiences in detail. I have chosen to include Olivia's experiences here as a case study that I will refer to at several points in the remaining analysis chapters of this thesis, as I explore both her experiences of sexual assault at university, and the institution's response to this; given that she has also been through the reporting system at the student union. Olivia chose to share her experiences:

Olivia, Case Study Institution 1

Err… Erm… So at the end of my… Erm… [silence]… So basically something really bad happened to me at the end of a night out […]So basically… ,Like when I was on a night out, well not when I was on a night out, I was like really pissed on a night out…

Yeah so this is only in first year, so you're like 18?

Yeah […] so I was like young, I was 18, and like I'd never been dru… I went out with him to… He was like come out with me to this part of [name of city], like

we'd been to this party thing where all of my mates were, then he was like come out with me to this part of [name of city], erm, and I was like, okay… Erm… And then I was like… I don't know… I was like really pissed… And, erm… [silence]… Basically he was obviously like, come back to his, and I didn't know where I was, so I was like oh I don't really want to come back, I don't want to come back, and I was just saying over and over I don't want to come back, but I didn't know where I was and he was like, oh it's near where you live, so I was like okay, went back, and then basically like it was… Like it was… I went back, and then something bad happened, and then… Obviously like the next day I left and walked back and I was like, fuck, like trying to find my way around a random place, like I was in first yearand I'd like, not been away from that area [where I lived] so it was quite bad. And then afterwards it was like even worse, because like… If I was in the student union I'd have to see him. So I avoided the student union, but it was like, like honestly it made my mental health really bad. It put me in a really bad way. And I didn't… I told like a few people, but not that many people about it, so it just made… Like it put me in a really bad… I was like in a really bad way, for like months. I didn't go into uni, and that was when I was like keen on going in and stuff, I literally stopped going to uni, missed all my assessments, everything, and it just like totally changed the end of first year for me.

This account illustrates the level of gendered violence that is experienced by some students within their university lives, and particularly suggests the ways in which this is bound up with unequal power relations, drinking and NTE cultures. Olivia identifies several factors that contribute to the uneven power dynamics within this situation, including her age, as she was only 18 at the time, her unfamiliarity with the area, particularly where she was whilst on the night out as she did not know how to get home from the nightclub that she was in at the time. What this extract also hints at is the wider network of gendered power dynamics that students negotiate within their everyday student lives. Participants' experiences of harassment within the NTE, for example, do not exist in a vacuum, but rather within a wider network of power. To frame my findings here, previous data suggests levels of sexual harassment within student communities is high, as 68% of respondents to a survey suggested that they had experienced either sexual harassment or serious sexual assault during their time at university (NUS, 2010). It has also been suggested that levels of reporting are low (4%) (NUS, 2010). Olivia's experiences will be drawn upon further in Chapter 7, where I explore how institutions and student unions respond to disclosures of this nature.

5.7 Concluding Comments

In drawing together the key themes outlined within this chapter, it is evident that lad culture is experienced by participants within their everyday lives, and this manifests across an 'online/offline continuum' (Ging and Siapera, 2018). My findings presented within this chapter suggest that lad cultures and laddism are key to student identity formation, working to centralise hetero-sexism as normal within undergraduate student identities. These norms are centred through several key mechanisms both online and offline, for example involvement in 'lad's groups' that shape social norms within student halls of residence, and WhatsApp group chats that cement lad culture as a form of 'social glue' within UK HEIs (Madge et al., 2009). The data within this chapter also draws out the ways in which lad culture is performative (Butler, 1990). For participants, the performative aspects of lad culture manifested in heavy drinking, jokes and banter, rowdy behaviour, and casual sex, across both face-to-face contexts and online, particularly on WhatsApp group chats. What is also evident from my findings is that students of all genders can engage with and perform lad culture as a form of gendered identity, for example Eve's accounts of the women's football team highlight how women can perform and adopt aspects of lad culture and laddism as a form of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1987) within their student lives.

What is also evident is that the more problematic aspects of lad culture, such as sexist or homophobic comments are often masked through jokes or banter, making them difficult to challenge. In light of this, my data suggests that students, even those who engage in lad culture themselves, are also aware of the ways in which lad cultures can be exclusionary for some students. This makes apparent that a hierarchy of masculinity (Connell, 1987) exists within peer-to-peer interactions, as participants suggested that students who were unable or unwilling to perform laddish masculinities, demonstrate interest in sports, particularly football, or engage in heavy drinking would be less likely to 'form connections', and this was referred to in relation to various contexts, including student societies, sports teams, and within student halls of residence.

Several spaces, particularly the student NTE, as well as student sports teams and societies, are also key in (re)producing laddish norms within participants student lives. My findings build on previous research that links lad cultures to student drinking cultures (Dempster, 2009; 2011), in considering the pressure to engage in lad culture not just as peer-to-peer pressure, but also pressure from the wider commodification of the student NTE, particularly marketing tactics from institutions, student unions and nightclubs around freshers' week. My findings also highlight how this marketing within the wider context of the 'commodified campus environment' (Andersson et al., 2012) can be embodied and (re)produced by students through visual mediums such as Instagram and Snapchat. Through posting pictures and videos of them 'having a good time', participants illustrated to peers

that those not engaging regularly with the student NTE, for example by not attending all freshers' week events, were 'missing out'.

What my findings here also indicate is that for many participants, lad culture and 'everyday' harassment spans across many aspects of their university life, social life and work life. Participants detailed how gendered harassment both online and offline was central to their experiences of lad culture, including groping and unwanted touching, particularly in the NTE, and also experiences of sexual assault and misconduct. My findings here highlight how everyday harassment is central to students' experiences of laddism and lad cultures, however this is not unique to their student lives – this manifests within, and outside of student-centred spaces. This emphasises how student lad cultures exist within a wider 'matrix of sexism' (Sills et al., 2016:940) for participants, across a variety of scales.

Chapter 6: Intersectional Experiences of Student Lad Culture

In this chapter I consider the role of intersecting categories of identity in influencing participants' experiences of lad culture at the two case study HEIs. In building on the previous chapter that frames lad culture as a gendered phenomenon within HEIs, this chapter works to unpack the ways in which participants' experiences of lad culture are also understood through other forms of identity, for example LGBTQ+ identities, class, race and religion. In doing so, I build on work within the field of feminist geographies in considering the role of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991; Valentine, 2007, Luft, 2010; Blige, 2013; Collins, 2015) and intersecting identities in influencing and shaping, the ways in which masculinity is performed and understood in the context of lad culture and within the boundaries of two UK HEIs. Previous work within geography has considered the role of intersecting forms of identity in shaping masculinities (Hopkins, 2006; Hopkins and Noble, 2009; Richardson, 2015), and this chapter works to unpack this notion further. Within this chapter I also draw upon the work of Sara Ahmed (2006) in framing how lad culture works as a form of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1984) within the context of HE spaces to police the boundaries of acceptable forms of gender and sexualities that can be performed or expressed in these spaces.

6.1 LGBTQ+ Students and Lad Culture

In this section I draw out the experiences of LGBTQ+ participants, in exploring how their sexuality and/or gender identity shapes the way they experience university life, and subsequently their experiences of lad culture and laddism within student spaces. These accounts are from participants who identified as both LGBTQ+ and heterosexual, although within this section I aim to center the experiences of LGBTQ+ students. I do so in order to address gaps in previous research that has tended to focus on the experiences of heterosexual students in relation to lad cultures and sexual misconduct within UK HEIs (Dempster, 2009; 2011, Phipps, 2017).

In framing LGBTQ+ experiences of lad culture at university, I draw upon the work of Sara Ahmed (2006; 2017) in conceptualising the role of lad culture in reproducing heteronormativity within the university sphere. I also look to work on queer and lesbian geographies (Valentine, 1995; Browne, 2007) in framing LGBTQ+ participants' experiences of lad culture. In doing so, I argue that lad culture within the higher education sphere works to solidify the dominant influence of white, heteronormative, middle-class identities within HEIs. Furthermore, I also argue that lad culture works to police the boundaries of acceptable forms of masculinity and sexuality within HEIs, primarily based around dominant hetero-sexed norms, working to marginalise LGBTQ+ identities as a result of this. I argue that student spaces, particularly around freshers' week are both subtly and

overtly 'coded' as heteronormative, both through the marketing of student nights and themed events based on heteronormative coupling, and the ways in which this presumed heteronormativity manifests within the everyday lives of LGBTQ+ students. I also explore the ways in which lad culture works to re-enforce hetero-sexed norms on campus, through 3 key avenues: 1. homophobic jokes and banter; 2. the overt sexualisation of women; and 3. through homophobic attacks, and the extreme policing of the boundaries of heteronormativity through the use of violence. In doing so, I paint a picture of the diverse ways in which LGBTQ+ students experience lad culture within HEIs.

6.1.1 Heteronormativity and student social life

Participants described university life, particularly social aspects of university life, as broadly heteronormative. This was explored by Jessica, who described the 'coming out' process that LGBTQ+ students often have to go through when coming to university in their first year, particularly during freshers' week, which is a pivotal point for students to socialise and meet other students:

> Jessica, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *I would say I found it quite awkward [freshers' week] because like you kind of have to go through this phase where you have to come out to people again. It's like with the people I'm living with, like none of them obviously knew and I had to come out to them at some point, which I have now and they were all really lovely about it. But it is… it does make it quite awkward, especially in freshers' week because you don't know… You can't really gauge how they're going to feel about it, so you awkwardly are like… For me I'm completely gay, so I'm not really interested in guys, whereas… So like they ask me about stuff like that and I really don't know how to engage in those conversations because obviously I'm not interested in guys at all. So it made it a bit awkward at the beginning I'd say because you don't really know how they're going to feel about it.*

Here Jessica reflects on the dominant heterosexual narrative prevalent within her university life, that is reinforced through her assumed heterosexuality. This is outlined as being (re)produced in several ways by Jessica, including her flatmates asking her about heterosexual love interests, and thus presuming that she is heterosexual. This narrative builds on previous work on student homes and home-making (e.g. Holton and Riley, 2013), through considering the space of the student flat as coded with heteronormative assumptions and practices. Using Ahmed's Queer Phenomenology as a starting point from which to view LGBTQ+ students' experiences of lad culture, it is evident that the

orientation of student spaces are predominantly felt to be heterosexual by LGBTQ+ participants. Feeling 'out of place' in these spaces is amplified by having to come out to peers when entering student spaces for the first time. Sexual orientation shapes how we inhabit spaces (Ahmed, 2006). In assuming that Jessica is heterosexual, her peers are continually illustrating to Jessica that the space of the student flat is heteronormative. It is evident from Jessica's account that for LGBTQ+ students, place-making practices at university go beyond simply 'learning the rules of the student game' (Holton, 2015:2373), instead having to establish and re-configure the dominant, heterosexual student norms within living spaces.

This coming out process was also explored by participants in relation to other student spaces, including academic settings such as in lectures or seminars, within the broader context of lad culture. Phoebe described the process of coming out as a lesbian to peers within lectures and seminars:

> Phoebe, Case Study Institution 2
> *I decided that I didn't want to hide anymore. I thought it would be even worse for me if I did because then you become friends with someone and then it's like, well at what point do I say this?*
>
> **Yeah.**
>
> *At what point do I mention it? So you know it was very much an impulse decision of meeting someone, I would decide, OK, I'm going to tell them I have a girlfriend within this conversation and just see how it goes. So… Yeah, no it was… Relieving I think to have people so… Just go, oh that's fine, you know… Or they'd say something after a lecture we've been in going, you know… And they'll come up to me and say, I don't mind if you're gay or you have a girlfriend you know, you're still a person to me. It's really nice to see that.*

In reflecting on her experiences as a lesbian woman during her first few weeks at university, Phoebe highlights the ways in which heterosexual norms are dominant across various university spaces, including learning spaces, such as the lecture theatre. Phoebe mentioned how after coming out to her peers, some offered verbal conformation that they accepted her sexuality, or told her that they 'didn't mind' about her sexuality. In offering verbal conformation of their acceptance, this nonetheless polices the boundaries of heterosexuality within these spaces further,

positioning her lesbian identity as 'other' in this sphere. Browne (2006) explores Othering of lesbian identities in relation to restaurants as a sexualised space. It is evident that this form of Othering acts as a tool to maintain heterosexual norms within students' everyday lives, whilst adding a layer of complexity through considering the ways in which these norms are bound up with student identity and lad culture for some LGBTQ+ students.

Despite hetero-sexed norms being present within student life, for some LGBTQ+ students, coming to university was seen as an opportunity to express their LGBTQ+ identities more freely, outside of the parental or familial home. This was explained by Sam:

> Sam, Case Study Institution 2
>
> *I'm not out to my parents or anything, so obviously when I came to uni I could like… Like not be who I wanted to be... But like be what I wanted to be basically! So like I went to like the gay town, which I could never do back home, and like obviously I would like meet people, just like friends that I know my parents wouldn't approve of back home!*
>
> **(laughs)**
>
> *So that was like… That was good to like do what I wanted for once […] Just like when I go to like the gay bars, it's just so much more… I can do what I want, and you can just like… Back home I always say I'm a bit more different because I have to be, so like when I'm meeting new people here I can actually like… Like actually be myself, rather than having to be careful in case it gets back to my parents, you know what I mean sort of thing […] like I do think about it because like my parents came up the other day and I had to like… Remove… Take a lot of things out of my room, just like flyers from like gay bars and things like that. And like I had some nail polish remover because I painted my nails, and my mum saw it because I forgot to hide it and she was like, why's that there? And I was like, because I painted my nails! And she was like, why would you do that? And I was like because I wanted to! Do you know just things like that, it's like… She's just very strict with things like that.*
>
> **But I guess they're things that you wouldn't necessarily think of that are just like a normal part of your life here?**

Yeah, but like I think of it as normal now. Like I had to walk round my room and actually look for things that she could possibly like pick up on.

This account illustrates how the boundaries of the student bedroom become a space whereby LGBTQ+ students are able to express their sexuality and gender identity more freely. This stands in contrast both to life in their parental home, and also the heteronormative discourses often present within the wider communal spaces of the student flat. Student place-making literature within geographic scholarship outlines the communal space of the student flat as 'multifarious social spaces in which sharers must perform and manage complex negotiations between their familial past and their interdependent present' (Holton, 2017:62). My findings suggest that this is particularly relevant for LGBTQ+ students, who may be exploring their LGBTQ+ identity for the first time freely, away from home. For Sam, material objects within his student bedroom, such as flyers from LGBTQ+ nights and nail polish remover, represent the negotiation between his past self within the familial home, and his new freedom to express his LGBTQ+ identity within his student life.

This notion of the student bedroom as a space whereby students are able to express their sexuality and gender identity freely also sits within geographic scholarship on LGBTQ+ young people and the 'coming out' process (Valentine et al., 2003). Valentine et al., (2003) describe the 'vulnerability' of young LGBTQ+ people in coming out to parents, as they are often reliant on parents financially and for housing. This was the case for several LGBTQ+ participants within this study, who describe their 'coming out' process as starting when they got to university, due to fears around expressing their sexuality freely within the family home. For Sam, this was due to his parents being unaccepting of his sexuality:

Sam, Case Study Institution 2

Like four years ago my dad was like… when I was like twelve… he told me that if I was gay, he'd kick me out the house, which is horrendous I know but like… that's why I moved away for uni..

For Sam, coming to university presented an opportunity to express his sexuality freely for the first time, outside the family home. Previous studies have considered the familial home as a site of tension for young LGBTQ+ people (Bell and Valentine, 1995) and therefore the student bedroom here becomes a space whereby LGBTQ+ students such as Sam can express their sexuality, often for

the first time, as student place-making happens as bound up within their queer identities. My findings here also build on previous work from within geography that conceptualises gay bars as a paradoxical space for LGBTQ+ young people, that can act as both inclusive or exclusionary dependent on social pressures, social differences and how individuals negotiate the LGBTQ+ 'scene' (Valentine and Skelton, 2003). Sam's experiences here highlight the role of gay bars both in his transition into student life and also into LGBTQ+ adulthood, as he negotiates being able to express his sexuality freely for the first time in both performative and intimate ways, across both the public space of the gay bar and the private space of his student bedroom.

Despite several participants viewing their move to university as an opportunity to express their sexuality more freely, many participants described feeling out of place at freshers' week events, or unable to express their sexuality to peers, as the dominant discourse prominent within freshers' week and the formation of student identities was considered by participants to be overwhelmingly heteronormative. Both accounts from Phoebe and Sam above highlight how others questioning their sexuality acts as a form of policing of queer identities (Ahmed, 2006; 2017). As above with Jessica's flatmates asking her about potential heterosexual love interests, this questioning is present within everyday interactions for LGBTQ+ students, and works whether inadvertently or otherwise to maintain heteronormativity as the dominant discourse. In using questioning to police the boundaries of normativity in LGBTQ+ students' lives, this contributes to feelings of being 'awkward' or 'out of place' from their first experiences of university as freshers.

It is evident that for many LGBTQ+ students, coming to university and experiencing freshers' week is a paradoxical time, whereby they often have to negotiate freedom from the parental home to express their sexuality or gendered identity more freely, with the heteronormative backdrop of student life whereby the remits of this expression is policed by peers across a number of student spaces. For many LGBTQ+ participants, freshers' week was a particular time whereby they found themselves feeling more 'out of place' due to their sexuality or gender identity. This was often worsened by the dominant heterosexual narrative present within organised freshers' week events within the NTE, and at mainstream nightlife spaces in the city centre. Samira recalled her experiences of freshers' week nightlife events:

> Samira, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *[They were] heterosexual orientated, definitely. Like I could probably count on one hand for the whole time I've been at uni the amount of like gay people I've seen, yeah… Like excluding*

the LGBT thing because obviously they all congregate… Like on nights out, I can imagine like three maybe maximum.

OK.

So definitely heterosexual orientated but I think that might be due to like less gay people actually going to those types of clubs anyway because they are straight orientated, and all my flatmates are all heterosexual so that wouldn't not be an option really.

This was a common issue that LGBTQ+ participants identified, as nightlife events organised during freshers' week by the university and nightlife venues were seen by participants to be marketed predominantly at heterosexual students, particularly due to the spaces or locations in which these events are held. The city in which the two case study institutions are located has one key area in which the student NTE is located. This area is a mainstream nightlife area, and LGBTQ+ friendly bars within the city are located around a 20 minute walk from this. For many participants, the choice of this location for freshers' week events creates the notion that these events are targeted at heterosexual students, as this area is relatively well-known locally for being an unsafe area for LGBTQ+ people, and is regularly in the media due to homophobic attacks taking place there. Many LGBTQ+ participants described the location of these events as unwelcoming and unsafe for those who deviate from the heteronormative student script:

Jonny, Case Study Institution 2

Like all the like nights out were in like straight town, everyone calls it! (both laugh) But like all the events were there, but there wasn't many events in like the gay town or anything like that, which I noticed.

Simon, Case Study Institution 1

I think [mainstream clubbing area in the city-centre] and places like that are very… You know hetero-dominated and very straight-centric […] it's not necessarily a product of the place, it's a product of the people that go to those places.

The nature of the location of these events creates a culture within these nightlife spaces not only as commodified (Andersson et al., 2012; Hubbard, 2013) but also as (re)producing dominant

heterosexual narratives that participants deemed to be closely tied in with lad culture on campus, and in the wider university sphere. Not only this, but these spaces for LGBTQ+ students were often unsafe, and there was a legitimate concern about the potential for homophobic violence. This was an issue for LGBTQ+ participants within all year groups in this study, as they progressed through university and their identity as both an LGBTQ+ person and a student was continually (re)negotiated. Simon highlights how during his second year of university, freshers' week raised further questions about how LGBTQ+ students fit in to the wider student sphere:

> Simon, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *I think this freshers' week was, this time round, has been much more difficult because going into university for the first time, first Freshers' Week, you're much less open about possibly being a queer person and expressing that in a way that you would want to, especially in such a straight kind of atmosphere. Like a lot of like nightclubs are very like straight orientated, and you're not going to be pulling much, you're not going to be like interacting with people the same as you, so you can feel very like ostracised and very… Put out by it. I think the first one I was much less confident in who I was, so I wasn't like bothered by it, I wasn't thinking about it, but now I think I'm much more confident and out as a person. So it was the kind of thing that I think now was much more difficult being in that kind of world, especially now being in a relationship that there is no pulling going on at all, because also there's not really any space to be like that, there's no… Gay freshers nights, there's no… Unless you're like part of a society, which is where you have to explicitly go and find… There's nothing that really caters to queer people during freshers' week. So I just… I think this one was much more difficult just because I didn't feel like I had a place, whereas the first one I was fresher like everybody else, whereas it's now I'm a… In a group of friends but I don't have a place outside of that. So yeah, it was just weird, very difficult and very like… Kind of messes with your head a lot because you start to really consider where your place is in a group of friends and then in a city and in a university. So it was weird, very difficult I found it.*

This extract from an interview with Simon demonstrates the changing difficulties faced by LGBTQ+ students as they progress through their university life. In feeling more open in expressing his sexuality, Simon illustrates how he found freshers' week to be increasingly less inclusive as he became more confident in his queer identity. The hegemony created around freshers' week, based around going out, heavy drinking and heterosexual coupling leads LGBTQ+ students to feel 'out of place'. Simon describes the wider impacts of this, as the 'out of place' feeling that comes with

freshers' week for LGBTQ+ students can lead them to question their own identity and sexuality in relation to the dominant heterosexual narrative on campus. When faced with the 'comforts' of heterosexuality, Ahmed (2014:145) suggests that many queer subjects may feel uncomfortable, as the body does not 'sink into' a space that has 'already taken shape'. Thus considering the space of freshers' week as coded in ways that reproduce heteronormative student discourses, for LGBTQ+ participants this feeling of being 'out of place' manifests both spatially and in embodied ways, as the 'straight atmosphere' of freshers' week shapes a form of student hegemony rooted in compulsory heterosexuality.

6.1.2 Homophobia and Safety Within the NTE

Perceptions of safety in student NTE spaces was a common theme mentioned by LGBTQ+ participants, particularly during freshers' week. For LGBTQ+ participants of all genders, freshers' events created an unwelcoming environment, based on the notion that queer people within these spaces disrupt the hetero-sexed norms that lad culture (re)produces within these spaces, and at these events. As a result of this, some participants also altered their behaviour within certain spaces as so to 'mask' their sexuality, due to experiences of lad culture whilst at university. Several participants mentioned feeling out of place within a perceived 'lads group' due to their sexuality or gender identity:

> Daniel, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *I just see a group of straight boys are just unnecessarily nasty! That's what I… Like just to make each other laugh and just try to look cool in front of each other.*
>
> **Can you think of a time when you might have like experienced this kind of behaviour…**
>
> *It's like just on the first night out, I went out with Jack and his friends from back home, and obviously like most of my friends are gay or girls so I'm not used to it, but I've never like… It's… It just… It doesn't scare me to be with like groups of lads... I'm not like them and I don't like what they do, so I just try to stay out of it…*

LGBTQ+ participants' described several 'tactics' they felt they had to deploy at university whilst around lad culture or 'lads groups'. This ranged from just staying 'out of it', to masking their sexuality in whilst in public, in perceived 'unsafe' heteronormative dominated spaces:

Simon, Case Study Institution 1

Like we went, me and my partner like out, if we see a group of lads, we immediately like stop holding hands, stop being couple-y and we're just like two friends. And I think that's awful because I don't want to have to feel like that, and neither does he, and people shouldn't have to feel like they have to change who they are or be affected by like a very toxic attribute of that… So yeah, I think it is really harmful.

It is evident from this account that lad culture both reflects and (re)produces the dominant heterosexual narrative on campus and shapes the way that LGBTQ+ students are able to use space. Many participants identified homophobia as a key aspect of university lad culture, ranging from homophobic jokes or comments, to experiencing both verbal and physical homophobic attacks. The role of homophobic jokes and banter in (re)producing lad culture and policing heteronormative boundaries was explored by several participants, manifesting in both online and offline spaces. Previous research has emphasised the role of homophobia within masculine student cultures in both UK HE (Jordan et al., 2022) and secondary school contexts (Warwick and Aggleton, 2014). In particular, previous research has characterised homophobia as a key aspect of student lad culture within UK HEIs (Phipps et al., 2017; Jackson and Sundaram, 2018). My findings here build on this, in not only identifying homophobia as a key aspect of lad culture within the two UK HEIs, but in also highlighting how LGBTQ+ students are unable to integrate into some friendship groups, and feel unsafe freely expressing their sexuality due to their experiences of lad culture and homophobia within their everyday student lives.

When considering their experiences in online spaces, participants mentioned homophobic jokes and banter as a key aspect of lad culture at university:

Joe, Case Study Institution 2

I think that when you usually think of lad culture, you might just think that it's about women or it's about men being rowdy, but I think definitely things like gay jokes would be included in it, and it's not, again it's not something that I'd thought about until afterwards, because I was kind of thinking back over the past week, and I was like, yeah I did see that on Facebook and that probably would… Would be included. But I'm sure people would have different definitions perhaps.

Do you think that this is something you see regularly in like online spaces? Is it more online than offline?

Yeah, definitely. I actually… It happened again since I wrote this, and I think that … I think it kind of, in my mind I would tie it in more so about lad culture when it is online because in relation to things like gay jokes because of the fact that he could post that and his friends would comment and it was kind of seen as humorous and banter between them. So I think that that makes it… More akin to like lad culture, because if he had have just said that maybe to like his partner or his family or whatever, maybe people wouldn't classify that as lad culture, but with saying to his friends, and obviously with something like Facebook, it's quite a public forum, so…

This was also noticed by several other participants, particularly those who engaged with the diary-interview method, who tended to pay more attention to everyday interactions within online spaces:

Annie, Case Study Institution 1

What sort of thing was it that you saw the other day?

It was just another homophobic joke but (laughs) I can't remember exactly what they were! They were probably what people would consider kind of in good taste if you would call it good taste, what people would probably consider harmless, it wasn't supposed to be offensive but it certainly could be.

It is evident from these accounts that homophobic jokes or banter are used as part of lad culture to police the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable forms of sexuality and gender expression, as homophobic jokes posted on public platforms were considered a key aspect of student lad culture. In doing so, these jokes indirectly shaped the ways in which participants felt able or unable to express their sexuality, as the public nature of the Facebook pages and groups in which these comments were posted meant that LGBTQ+ students were exposed to these comments and jokes regularly. Previous work has identified banter within laddish student groups as a form of social currency (Jeffries, 2017), and it is evident that through engaging in homophobic jokes and banter on Facebook, this reshapes the scale in which this social currency can be used to police acceptable and unacceptable forms of masculinity.

As well as homophobic jokes or banter as part of lad culture working to re-produce hetero-sexed norms, several participants who identified as gay men also recalled experiencing homophobic

attacks or threats of attack during their time at university, specifically during freshers' week when many participants recalled lad culture and hetero-sexed norms to be heightened:

> Simon, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *On the Monday, so last week, I was like fully chased home by a group of thugs, like homophobic thugs. So like in a straight place, even being the slightest bit outwardly queer can get you in a lot of trouble and like… Like luckily they didn't catch me or anything, but they chased me all the way to campus from the city centre, it was all uphill, and it was just like the worst way to end a night, because I went home on my own. But you don't get that in like queer spaces. So I think like it's not a safe… Like freshers isn't a safe space for queer people I think, so… That's something what I take from it now, and I think I'll definitely reconsider going out for freshers next time.*

This recount of experiencing a homophobic physical attack during freshers' week demonstrates the risk that LGBTQ+ students often feel like they are taking by being outwardly queer presenting in what they consider to be heteronormative spaces, particularly in this instance, freshers' week. What is evident from this account is the link between the dominant heteronormative discourses present within freshers' week and homophobic violence and attacks on LGBTQ+ students. Although a physical attack of this nature was only experienced by two LGBTQ+ participants, many others recalled experiencing verbal harassment, and others explored the ways in which the fear of being physically attacked, particularly in or on the way home from nightlife venues, shaped the way they used spaces within the city centre.

My findings here extend research within geography that suggests that the gendered division of space acts as a form of 'tyranny' for transgender and gender variant people, highlighting how gendered expectations within everyday spaces are present, that are shaped by a narrow gender dichotomy (Doan, 2010:365). Recently, Weier (2020) suggested that that this notion, although not the same form, can also extend to sexuality. My findings here suggest that this is the case, building upon this in considering how hegemonic forms of masculinity, such as lad cultures within UK HEIs, can reproduce a form of heterosexual homogeneity for students that upholds and (re)produces heteronormative expectations around sexuality. When students are unable to meet these rigid heterosexual categories, they face harassment and violence to varying degrees. In the next section I will unpack students' experiences of lad culture further, through considering the role of class discourse in shaping how lad culture is performed and understood within the two case study HEIs.

6.2 Lad Culture and Class Discourse

In this section I draw upon the intersections between background, social class and lad culture within university life. Previous work in this area has considered lad culture within the higher education context to be adopted predominantly by white, middle-class students (NUS, 2013; Phipps, 2017).

Several key classed aspects of lad culture are explored within this section. The first of which is the way in which lad culture is viewed by participants through classed discourses, as participants often linked the more problematic aspects of lad culture to negative working-class stereotypes, suggesting that participants understanding of lad cultures within UK HEIs are bound up within class prejudice.

Participants considered lad culture to be adopted by both middle-class and working-class students on campus, but lad culture was perceived by participants to be more problematic when tied in with working-class identities. This was indicted by participants in several ways, for example through the spaces that they associated with lad culture and the language they used, as classed language around certain spaces created a hierarchy within participants narratives around middle-class (less problematic) and working-class (problematic) forms of lad culture. Participants also positioned working-class locals in relation to middle-class students, a classed understanding previously termed 'town and gown' (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003; Hubbard, 2008). To frame classed discourses around lad culture within HEIs, in this section I draw upon the concept of hegemonic masculinity (Connell and Messerchmidt, 2005) to unpick how hierarchies of masculinity within UK HEIs are influenced by interactions with other aspects of identity and privilege. I also consider both gender and class as performative (Butler, 1990) and spatially and temporally located. In considering the role of HEIs in shaping classed masculinities, I also pay attention to the 'institutional contours of privilege' (Sparks, 2018:1498) that shape what is considered acceptable and unacceptable forms of lad culture within participants student lives.

Through participants' responses around classed masculinities it is evident that lad culture was often viewed by participants through classed discourses, in particular themes around perceived problematic and/or acceptable forms of masculinity. This was illustrated by Mark, in this extract about his experiences on a society social for his course:

Mark, Case Study Institution 1

So you think stuff like chanting, it could be seen as lad culture but you don't think that's a bad thing?

> *No, we were chanting eggs on the back seat of the bus, of the bus, eggs on the back seat of a bus, trying to get more people onto it. So it wasn't, I wouldn't say that was like chanting in the maybe of like a football chant or whatever when it's like… With football chants and that kind of thing, I wouldn't say that's inherently bad, it's the content and so on, I wouldn't ever want to… I wouldn't really view our chanting as a bad thing, no, I'd view it as a neutral thing generally, it's a way of expressing an idea, whatever the idea can be, like good or bad or whatever, but just because it's impressed in a chat doesn't necessarily make it good or bad. And like yeah you can… Yeah, because I said chanting there, I don't know what you'd have thought of that, but I know what I would have thought when I said drinking and chanting and so on!*

Mark's account illustrates the ways in which participants viewed lad culture on campus through the lens of wider classed prejudice surrounding problematic, working-class 'laddish' identities. Previous work by Dempster (2013) has explored the role of sport in (re)producing laddish masculinities within HEIs, following Connell's description of sport as the 'embodiment' of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005; in Dempster, 2013). These conceptions of sport as inherently linked with problematic forms of hegemonic masculinity are tangled up in classed discourses, given that hegemonic masculinity is 'locally specific' (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). What was outlined by several participants accounts was a context-specific understanding of lad culture as problematic or unproblematic based around acceptable forms of classed masculinity within the context of HEIs. For example within Mark's account, he forms a contrast between 'academic' forms of lad culture, such as heavy drinking and chanting as part of a subject society social, and chanting at a football match. This suggests that hierarchies of masculinity within HEIs are interlinked with classed discourse in that the 'institutional contours of privilege' (Sparks, 2018:1498) form a classed hierarchy around acceptable and unacceptable forms of lad culture for participants.

This positioning of the working-class other in relation to student identity has also been explored in relation to tensions between local, working-class people and student populations (Holt and Griffin, 2005; Hollingworth and Williams, 2009; Wattis, 2013) termed 'town and gown' (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003; Hubbard, 2008). These extracts from Mark and Ellie (below) highlight how this extends further, and links to hierarchies of masculinity within HEIs that are shaped by place-based understandings of class. For Ellie, her understanding of lad culture was constructed in relation to certain spaces within the local NTE:

Ellie, Case Study Institution 2

And are there specific places that you would associate with lad culture, like specific pub.. like student-y pubs?

It would be either/or. The ones that I would tend to go is things like Spoons or Rileys, or [name of local pub], is another one, any of those places that I would frequent with my friends would be full of guys watching football. I think any little pub as well, there's one on the corner of my accommodation, always full… Definitely Spoons though, a bit of a chavvy pub and always full.

In linking lad culture to 'chavvy' identities, it is evident that Ellie views student lad culture as bound up with working-class-identities, understanding lad culture as problematic through classed understandings of laddish drinking spaces. In viewing lad culture through a classed lens in this way, many participants Othered perceived problematic forms of masculinity through positioning themselves as separate to this in a uniquely classed way. Hollingworth and Williams (2009) explore the use of the term 'chav' as a key discourse through which participants express markers of classed differences, as they view the world through the dominant classed (and gendered, sexualised, racialised etc.) terms that are available to them. Despite this, many participants did offer critical reflections upon the role of middle-class students in (re)producing lad culture on campus, and these narratives suggest that the Othering of working-class identities, both student and non-student can be used as a tool to shift the focus away from the potential problematic nature of behaviours engaged in by middle-class students within the confides of student societies. This raises questions about the position of working-class students within this, as they try to assimilate into university life.

In considering the intersections of lad culture and class as key in the formation of hegemonic masculinities within the context of HEIs, discussions around the role of 'non-traditional students' in shaping the landscape of HEIs are also relevant. Some participants, such as Natalie, suggested that the presence of 'non-traditional students' within HEIs has led to an increase in lad culture within this sphere:

Natalie, Case Study Institution 2

You see at first I'd be like, oh no that's just… People who haven't come to university… Like people who I… I don't know, from my year like back at home who… I don't… It's really bad, like not that they're uneducated or anything, it's just that that's what they choose to do I

suppose, go out at night and just walk around forever and drink and then cause trouble I suppose. But considering that now it seems like a lot of people do go to uni and that like there's not like a… There's [not] one way to get in, so there's lots of different ways in, people can get in, then I guess it's sort of come into university life a bit more.

Yeah.

So I guess that's why… What people are like really into drinking and just sort of used to it I suppose, some do well in A Levels or a BTEC or anything and get in. Yeah, I suppose in the past […] people who were educated like really highly go to uni and do really well and… but then it's just broadening… so they want more people to come, so then they get all sorts of different types of people and everybody's different and culture changes.

This extract further illustrates the entanglement of lad culture and classed-discourses, as problematic aspects of lad culture such as drinking and 'causing trouble' are linked with non-traditional routes into university. This emphasises the ways in which class prejudice, and the othering of working class student identities within UK HEIs, is central to how some participants understand student lad cultures.

Some participants also suggested that classed power dynamics manifest on a structural level within institutions:

Nina, Case Study Institution 2

I think there's even more element of getting away with it in uni because it's like well these are quite… The men are assumed to be intelligent, they're assumed to be of a certain background maybe… And I think that sort of like justifies it, like if you hear these men as in like, oh well they come from a good family.

Mm.

I've heard before, oh you know he's going to become a doctor, well what the fuck does that mean like? I think when it's in maybe a football match or if it's like in a working-class pub or somewhere, it's like, oh you know these men are just being like rowdy, like typical men. When it's in like a higher educational setting, and I think it really is prominent in like these Russell Group unis, because they… These men have like a sense of entitlement that pushes

forward, that they can look at women in any sort of way. And they do, and I think they do getaway with it. Like that Warwick Uni[5], like I think the parents paid something, they paid to have it brushed under the carpet and… Yeah, so they must know that they can get away with it.

This notion of 'getting away with it' explicitly outlines the 'institutional contours of privilege' (Sparks, 2018:1498) from which hegemonic masculinity is performed within HEIs, as institutional responses to complaints around sexual misconduct are shaped by the cultural and financial capital of the students whom the complaint has been lodged against. This quote illustrates the ways in which student lad culture as a form of hegemonic masculinity is not only rooted in classed-discourses, but is also actively shaped at an institutional level by students who have high levels of financial and cultural capital, allowing them to influence cultures within HEIs through working with the university to reach mutual agreements.

Other participants suggested that middle-class students were seemingly more familiar with the concept of lad culture, and thus saw the implications of lad culture in relation to other middle-class students as less problematic. What is also evident from these accounts is that, for many students, lad culture is something that pre-dates their time at university, a set of behaviours and social cues that have been performed in relation to their own gendered and classed identity from school-age. Several participants recalled experiencing or engaging in lad culture at school, prior to coming to university:

Grant, Case Study Institution 1

I've seen it before, because I went to an all-boys' school, there was a lot of kind of laddish behaviour sort of thing around.

This was also mirrored by several other participants':

William, Case Study Institution 1

Well about the thing about lad culture? We'd been kind of talked to about… They talked to us about it at our old school.

OK.

And… Because there's… There's quite a bit of like… It's an all-boys' school and there's always

[5] https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-47060367

going to be kind of rugby lads and that kind of thing. So we've kind of been told like… Not told not to do it, just kind of told what it is basically, and if you get talked about it, more often then you're more likely to kind of see it and like subconsciously kind of recognise it maybe?

OK. And when they talked to you about it in school, was it just to like inform you about…?

It was more like saying what lad culture is and laddish behaviour and stuff like that. But it wasn't saying don't do it, it was just saying this is it, it's not good… And then you know we're meant to be grown up and we're meant to kind of know that we're not meant to do a bad thing, so they make us put two and two together really.

In considering masculinities as 'temporally and geographically contingent' (Sparks, 2018:1495), it is evident from these accounts that lad culture is not something that is new to students when they start university or begin adopting a student identity for the first time. Instead, it is a form of hegemonic masculinity, in relation to which some students have been (re)negotiating their own masculine identity since childhood. These accounts also suggest that there is a lack of moral policing around lad culture in some schools, which raises concerns given that the institutional responses around these issues tend to focus on the socialisation and understandings of masculinity that students develop prior to attending university.

Some participants also reflected on the ways in which their own working-class background shaped their experiences of lad culture at university in more positive ways, offering them a space to discuss their feelings and issues around their mental health that they may not otherwise have had outside these spaces:

Adam, Case Study Institution 1

And the thing is, which I'm glad about, I've got male friends who will happily talk about issues with us, because sometimes it's difficult to talk, especially where I come from, I come from Sunderland, it's quite far behind on everything, mental illness, all these kind of things, it's not really brought to the attention of people in Sunderland, even though we've got the highest suicide rate in the country, it's still an issue which isn't talked much about. But down

here, I feel like I'm able to talk to my friends about any issues that I have or any time that I'm feeling down or annoyed about anything, so that's really good for me anyway.

OK, so you've found like conversations that you've had with people since you've gone to uni, with the lads, are they-

They're more productive, they feel a lot more adult, they feel more… Not more formal but more… It's not the correct word, but more grown-up.

Yeah.

We can talk about issues more, whereas at home, if you bring an issue, someone might take the like… Take the mick out of you for how you feel, but here it's… The conversations are a lot more what I perceive as adult, so I feel we can talk about issues and we can debate issues, whereas where I come from there's… If you have an opinion you might not be able to change that, so yeah.

Taken together with the previous extracts, this highlights the multifaceted and temporally contingent nature of lad culture and laddish masculinities. Adam's experience suggests that lad culture and 'the lads group' can offer some students a sense of belonging that they did not otherwise have prior to coming to university, or similarly, offer working-class students a sense of belonging in an environment that is typically centred around middle-class forms of identity. For Adam, this was in the form of discussions around mental health, or conversations about 'any issues' that he may have. This extract cuts through the more prominent accounts of lad culture as problematic and suggests that these groups and friendships may hold potential for more progressive forms of masculinity, particularly in extending to offer a sense of belonging whilst at university. Despite this, Adam's earlier accounts of lad culture and his experiences of the 'lads group' (see section 5.1, page 68) do highlight that this often comes with hetero-sexist or hyper-sexualised discussions amongst these groups, and raises questions around who this belonging extends to. The complexity of this is unpacked in recent work on lad culture, including Nichols' (2018) work on mischievous masculinities, which highlights the two-sided nature of banter and laddish jokes within the context of lad culture, that can be used to both challenge or re-enforce sexist views or values.

The research presented within this section offers nuance to debates on class and student lad

culture, highlighting how the link between social-class and laddish student identities is complex and multi-faceted. What is apparent through these narratives is that class acts as a form of social currency within UK HEIs, and is a driving force behind how participants view and understand student lad culture. Participants often viewed the more problematic aspects of student lad culture as linked to working class-identities, whilst positioning their own, middle-class adoption of laddish norms as unproblematic in comparison. This mirrors further narratives that suggest white, middle-class students are able to engage in laddish norms such as misogynistic, homophobic and racist banter, as well as more serious aspects of lad culture such as sexual assault, with very little retribution, as a result of their social and financial capital within UK HEIs. Within this section I highlight class position as a form of social currency within UK HEIs, that shapes how students are able to engage with or adopt laddish norms.

6.3 Lad Culture, Racism and Religion

In this section I pay attention to the intersection between race, gender and religion in participants' experiences of lad culture across a variety of scales. I pay particular attention to the ways in which participants experience lad culture in relation to everyday experiences of racism, often masked in jokes or banter, and the ways in which racism is (re)produced structurally within institutions. Viewing lad culture through a racialised and gendered lens enables me to unpack the ways in which lad culture, and particularly the banter and jokes bound up within this, can (re)produce everyday forms of racism that mirror the structural inequalities faced by participants.

Participants referred to their racial and religious identities in a multitude of ways within interviews and focus groups. This was something that participants referred to directly, as something that they (re)negotiate within their student lives and within the new context of their university city. This was also sometimes referred to indirectly, mentioning cultural beliefs, e.g. that they don't drink for religious reasons. The (re)negotiation or reframing of participants' racial identity was often done through contrasting their racialised and gendered experiences at university with the experiences they had at home, prior to attending university. Sara Ahmed writes about 'those little encounters and their very big effects' (155:2012) and the extracts I present in this section draw out the ways in which 'little' everyday encounters bound up within lad culture reflect or amplify structural racism or barriers faced by participants.

One participant, Sara, discussed becoming more aware of their own racial identity and racism that she had faced within her own life after learning more about institutional racism within her university course:

Sara, Case Study Institution 2

Something that I felt quite a lot last year… I really struggled with my identity regarding my race. I thought coming to England [from their hometown in Northern Ireland] and coming to like… Like such a diverse city and everything, I'd find so many more people that were like me, like being like mixed race, like half Indian half Irish, it's quite… It's not a common mix! But I think this is maybe sort of emphasised by my course because on my course we studied things like institutionalised racism and that sort of thing, and I realised then, oh (laughs) people have been racist to me my whole life but because it was my normality, I just never really questioned it all that much. I started to be aware of the way people were treating me. And I did feel like my race was erased a little bit or like people would always question it, people would like say that I'm lying, like I'm just joking about whenever I say I'm mixed race, I'm not dark enough for people, I'm not this, that and the other for people, and I've never really felt like I fitted in properly with different groups. Yeah that was something I dealt with quite a lot last year, and still now, like I'm still… Uncomfortable isn't really the word, I don't really know how to describe it, like I just don't… I'm not fully content with that kind of part of my life yet. But I will be in the future I hope.

This 'coming to terms' of their racial identity at university was explored by several participants, who (re)negotiated their culture and identity in light of their new student identity, and what they learned at university about structural racism. Mahtani (2002) suggests that considering race as performative, enables an understanding of the ways in which mixed race women engage with their racial identities on their own terms. Using Mahtani's (2002) notion of 'racial border guards' , we can understand why, when coming to university, participants such as Sara and Sofia (see extract below) began to think about their own racialised identities in response to other students acting as 'racial border guards' (Mahtani, 2002). For example, for Sofia, discussions within lectures with another student highlight the ways in which her own identity as a Muslim led to the teasing out of racial prejudice within her experiences of lad culture and student life more broadly. Sofia describes engaging in a debate with another student during a lecture:

Sofia, Case Study Institution 2

So I'm Muslim, so it really, really bothers me that nobody… Well not nobody but I feel like I can generalise and say nobody in terms of like our politicians and our news outlets cares about the concentration camps in China with Muslims in at the moment. And I said that to him, like I was just… I was quite like upset about it and he said, well we can't be bothered

about everything that's going on in the world […] He is definitely part of like the UK system where we are made to hate Muslims… So that's why people aren't interested because they're like, oh yeah but you know terrorism and whatever. Like it's awful. And so people are actually less kind of liberally minded or open-minded as I assumed university students would be, I'm actually quite disillusioned by the whole thing, and in actuality university students aren't really that progressive, it's a handful. Yeah, I'd say I'm disappointed by that, and I'd say lad culture is very much synonymous with toxic masculinity but it's every single thing that they're doing.

This was also explored by Grace, who shared her experiences of racism within conversations with another student during a lecture, in a discussion about their hometowns:

Grace, Case Study Institution 2

He didn't even feel any shame in saying that where he's from… "Like everyone's just white but we do have a couple of village blacks", like and I don't… I really… I still… I just remember it so vividly when he said that, I was absolutely appalled.

This was a response highlighted by several participants, who said that university life was not as open minded, or as accepting towards markers of difference as they perceived it would be before they came. In highlighting these racialised comments, participants cited lad culture and misogyny as bound up with racial prejudice and racist attitudes and behaviours. The university classroom has long been considered a gendered and racialised space (Ng, 1993), and these everyday racist encounters shaped the backdrop to these participants' university experiences. This influenced the ways in which they experienced lad culture in nuanced, embodied ways at the intersection of their gendered and racial identities. Expanding further, Sara, who I introduced earlier, highlighted her everyday experiences of people questioning her racial identity whilst at university, that would often be masked as jokes or 'banter':

Sara, Case Study Institution 2

In both places, like people will say, "oh where are you from?" I'll say I'm from Northern Ireland, and like at home I'd just say like whereabouts in Northern Ireland I'm from, they're like no but like where are you from, like your colouring's different, I'm like, "oh well my dad's Indian" and they're like, "oh no he isn't", or like they'll tell me like, "oh that's so funny", but

they'll keep bringing up like how funny it is that my dad's Indian, or make jokes about it, there's a few people that do that. Or like people will talk to me in like mock Indian accents and things like that, and I feel like here it's covered up as a joke, like people say it because it's funny and it's always a joke, and you can't be offended because it's funny and just joking with you. But it's not funny! I find it quite offensive to be honest!

This ties in with the role of banter identified in Chapter 5 as masking the more problematic aspects of lad culture, through passing offensive comments off as 'just a joke'. This extract highlights how banter and jokes as part of student lad culture work to mask racist comments, positioning those that these jokes are directed at as unable to challenge the racism bound up within this. My findings illustrate how lad culture is used to mask more everyday forms of racism for participants, exposing how it works within and plays upon intersectional realities of power, creating every day, intimate forms of racial violence (Fluri and Piedalue, 2017) within the UK HEI context. For participants, this was often set within a backdrop of more structural aspects of racism that they experienced within their everyday lives. For example, earlier on in the interview, Sara also explained her difficulty getting a job because of appearance, or her Indian surname:

Sara, Case Study Institution 2

I find it really difficult to get a job. Whenever I was in Northern Ireland and people said to me, yeah, don't apply for here because they'll look at you then they'll throw out your CV. And like even my boyfriend, he used to be a supervisor in Primark, he'd be with the manager when they had people applying and the manager would say, oh that's a Muslim name, put them out, oh that's a Polish name, they're going to work hard, put them in the good pile. So I feel like I haven't seen that but I know I've experienced that because I could not get a job just like minimum wage, part-time like B&M or something like that, and people always said to me, like people that worked there, they were like, don't bother applying or if you do you won't get a job here, and I would apply and I never, ever was considered for anything.

For participants such as Sara, the structural, often less visible forms of racism such as those outlined in the quote above, form the backdrop for the racist jokes and banter tied up with lad culture. My findings emphasise the ways in which racism and sexism are embedded in institutions (Ng, 1993), and are (re)produced across a multitude of scales, as lad culture serves to (re)produce wider

structural racism within the everyday context. Viewing lad culture, and the intersectional spatial orderings (Valentine, 2005) across a multitude of scales and spaces further works to question some conceptual framings around the 'dark' and 'light', or less problematic side of lad culture and banter (Owen, 2020), as my data exposes how the banter and jokes that are part of lad culture are reflective of, and sit within wider racial, gendered and sexualised power structures.

Participants also reflected on the ways in which their religious identity meant that they experienced lad culture at university differently to others, and their gendered experiences at university were altered because of this. For example, for Faiza, her beliefs of abstaining from sex before marriage meant that she felt she experienced lad culture differently to other women at university:

> Faiza, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *Yeah so [lad culture to me is] partying, drinking, that freedom culture. So I think that ties into it as well, that idea of like freedom, men, you know… Want to get as many women as possible. Even one of my friends, my mate, he just speaks like that as well, it's very much like, I just want to get women, and I just want them to have sex with me, one night stands, he was saying that to me and I was like, right… I think because I don't really contribute and like… Because I believe in no sex before marriage, so I feel like he doesn't really see me like that, that's why he just like tells me everything and says everything. So it's like, I'm not… I'm not going to be one of his options. So it's like he just tells me everything... Because he knows that he won't be getting anything from me, that's why it's alright, put you in that category… For now.*

Faiza highlights here that due to her own Muslim identity and views on sex before marriage she is not hyper-sexualised by her friend, as the axis between both her religious and gendered identity puts Faiza in a unique position, whereby her friend feels able to confide in her about his sexual endeavours. Despite this, it is evident that Faiza feels that there is potential that this objectification could extend to her, as this sits within the context of her wider experiences of lad culture within her university life, raising her 'feminist consciousness' (Ahmed, 2017) in light of both his attitude towards other women students, and her past experiences of lad culture and harassment.

Participants also reflected on the links between lad culture and heavy drinking at university, and the ways in which this can lead to the Othering of some students, particularly students who did not drink for religious reasons (e.g. Muslim students). This was also (re)produced on an institutional level, as

participants drew upon examples of instances that funding allocated to events, for example from the student union for society events, was withheld from events that did not serve alcohol. This was also furthered by the student union having 'partner' venues within the city whereby student union and student society events were held, that were all bars and nightclubs that serve alcohol. This meant that some Muslim students did not feel comfortable attending these spaces, and as a result of this, had society events cancelled, or had to push back against the student union to enable events to be held in non-drinking spaces and venues:

Sofia, Case Study Institution 2

There was something quite recently where there was going to be an event for Muslim students but they didn't want it to be in a place where, basically all our partner bars are obviously bars, and they wanted it to be in a place, hire out a place where there was no bar because Muslims, not all Muslims are happy or comfortable being that close to alcohol or whatever, and you can completely respect that. And someone, a white girl, said, well you shouldn't have to change the location because of one person.

Sofia went on to explain that eventually the event was cancelled because the student union was not fully supportive of allocating funds towards hosting an event in an alcohol-free space:

Sofia, Case Study Institution 2

So that event where I said they wanted to have it where there wasn't a bar, that event has now fallen through, because it wasn't approved, like the other vice presidents weren't supportive… They were like, "oh but why, why do we have to pay like £100 to hire out somewhere without a bar". But then we're having international day next week after reading week, and for every country, if you're having a stall with your country, you get £70 no problem, like you know to make food or buy whatever you want for your stall. And it's like oh my God, that is an underlying kind of discrimination against Muslims, it's not understanding… It's like they should conform to… To like Western ideals or Christian ideals or whatever.

This extract highlights the ways in which structural barriers, such as not organising events in spaces that don't serve alcohol, exist alongside discursive everyday practices bound up with lad culture,

such as a focus on heavy drinking and socialising in spaces such as bars and nightclubs, leads to barriers for some Muslim students to participate in university social life. This also highlights the role of the institution in (re)producing barriers for Muslim students through a lack of will to organise suitable social spaces for Muslim students, alongside outwardly signalling that they support diversity within the institution through food stalls for international week. This illustrates a 'promoting' of diversity, giving off the 'right image' (Ahmed, 2012) whilst the lived reality for some students at this institution is structural social barriers reinforced by decisions made within the student union. The role of institutions and student unions in responding to students' experiences of lad culture, harassment and sexual misconduct will be explored in more depth within the following analysis chapter.

6.4 Concluding Comments

Within this chapter I have drawn out how intersecting categories of identity influence participants' experiences of lad culture at the two case study HEIs. I have done so by considering four key aspects of identity category that emerged from interviews and focus groups with student participants: sexuality, class, race and religion. The overall aim of this chapter was to break down students' experiences of lad culture, emphasising how lad culture can (re)produce pre-existing heteronormative, white, masculinist societal structures within the context of UK HEIs. Considering LGBTQ+ students experiences of lad culture through the lens of Sara Ahmed's work on queer phenomenology (2012), has enabled me to consider how LGBTQ+ participants experiences of lad culture manifest spatially. In particular, how lad culture 'orients' student spaces as heteronormative through a number of key mechanisms, including homophobic jokes and banter, assuming that lesbian, gay or bisexual students are heterosexual, as well as through physical violence towards LGBTQ+ students. This chapter also considers the ways in which student identity formation is not monolithic, but is instead shaped by other aspects of participants identities. For example, students such as Sam not only negotiate lad culture in the context of student identity formation, but also in the context of becoming a young LGBTQ+ adult, living away from home for the first time.

In considering classed discourses bound up within lad culture, within this chapter I have illustrated how lad culture is shaped by place-based understandings of class within the two UK HEIs studied. It is evident through participants' accounts that for some students, more problematic forms of lad culture are understood to be linked to local working-class identities, in contrast with laddish masculine identities constructed within the 'institutional contours of privilege' (Sparks, 2018:1498). In exploring the role of race and religion in participants experiences of lad culture, I have highlighted

the ways in which participants understand and experience lad culture across both a gendered and racialised praxis. Here everyday forms of racism as part of lad culture, intersect with and reinforce structural and institutional forms of racism within universities, student unions and wider spaces and institutions, such as employment and NTE.

It is evident from my discussion within this chapter that more attention needs to be paid within future research to the ways in which intersecting forms of identity category influence lad culture, particularly the ways in which lad culture is negotiated by students who do not fit white, heteronormative, middle-class identities within UK HEIs. In the following chapter I explore responses to lad culture at the two case study HEIs across a multitude of scales, including institutional response from the university, as well as participants collective and personal responses to lad culture.

Chapter 7: Response

In this chapter I explore participant, institutional and student union responses to lad culture, across three different scales. The first, looks at institutional responses to lad culture. This section maps institutional policy and practice around lad culture and sexual misconduct at the two case study HEIs. This section also outlines the gaps in policy, and issues with its implementation in practice, based on participants' experiences. I consider institutional response through a spatial lens, through what I term the perceived 'boundaries of responsibility' of the institution. Secondly, I consider the ways in which participants use a collective form of response to lad culture. I divide this collective response into three temporal categories: Preventative collective response, reactionary response and recollective response. In dividing collective responses in this way, I seek to understand how participants respond to lad culture across a range of temporalities, and the factors that shape these responses. The final section explores personal responses to lad culture. For participants, these personal responses often took the form of changing or re-configuring their use of space as a student, as a result of their experiences of, or fear of lad culture and harassment.

7.1 Institutional Response

In this section I offer an in-depth analysis into institutional responses to lad culture, harassment and sexual harassment at the two case study institutions. Considering responses, training and complaints systems at both student union and institutional level, I draw on interviews with institution staff members, student union staff members and students. Through analysis of these data, I paint a picture of the institutional responses to lad culture, sexual harassment and sexual misconduct at both universities. I also consider participants' grounded experience of the training on these issues that is offered by both student union and institution at each case study university. In this section I also explore the university complaints process, considering the role of institutional rhetoric around reputational risk as key in shaping how the two case study universities structure their complaints and reporting systems, and the ways in which complaints are considered, and complainants are supported throughout the process. In considering the increasing neoliberalisation of the HE sector and market competition between universities, what staff and student interviews within this section also demonstrate is the ways in which media coverage of high-profile scandals relating to issues of sexual misconduct or harassment at other HEIs shape levels of perceived reputational 'risk' for universities. In this section I also consider the ways in which online spaces, social media and online harassment are currently considered a 'grey area' in university policy and reporting systems, and the remit of universities to act on complaints that take place within online spaces.

7.1.1 Training Around Lad Culture, Bullying and Sexual Misconduct: Preventative Methods?

Both case study institutions offered some form of training or response to issues around lad culture, harassment and sexual misconduct to both staff and students. This was delivered by both universities, and student unions. In this section I provide an overview into training and information offered to students, in line with the research in this project. Within this section and the rest of the following chapter I pay specific attention to the ways in which participants engaged with training, policy and the complaints systems offered by the institution and the student union.

Figure 7.1.1.1 shows the training, complaints process and information available to students at the two case study institutions, highlighting the distinction between those offered at student union and institutional level, although there is some linkage between the two as complaints at student union level can be escalated to institutional level, when deemed appropriate by advisors at the respective student unions.

	Case Study Institution 1	**Case Study Institution 2**
Student Union	Bystander intervention training	Local anti-bullying campaign
	Local campaign to address gendered harassment	Student complaints system
	Student Complaints System	
Institutional Level	Online training modules	Online training modules
	University complaints process	University complaints process
	Signposting (student welcome packs and on student intranet)	Signposting (student welcome packs and on student intranet)

Figure 7.1.1.1

Alongside policy on these issues, Case Study Institution 1 offered 'bystander intervention training' through the student union, the aim of which was to give those who took part in the sessions the tools to challenge bullying and harassment happening to themselves or others (Student Union Website, post from 2017, paraphrased). This training was the most targeted training or information offered to students on issues relating to lad culture, such as sexual harassment, across the two institutions. The bystander intervention training 'targets student leaders' (staff interview, Case Study Institution 1), meaning that students offered the training were usually committee members from student

societies or sports teams. Previous research suggests that effective bystander intervention programmes should 'be able to impart knowledge and awareness regarding what sexual assault is, prevalence rates, negative consequences associated with victimization, learning to identify possible warning signs, and the opportunity to develop the skills and confidence to effectively intervene with minimal negative repercussion' (Labhardt et al., 2017:14). Participants identified the risk in intervening in some situations, particularly within the student NTE, as will be explored further on in this chapter (section 7.3.3). One staff member from Case Study Institution 1 described the intervention training as 'something that has a chance of actually achieving real and sustainable culture change'. This training was developed by both the institution and the student union at Case Study Institution 1. This was offered to students in the format of one two hour session, and covered intervention as an 'active bystander' (intervening in situations when appropriate) in relation to sexual harassment, discrimination and bullying.

Additionally, an online learning module titled 'Consent Matters' was also available for students to access on a voluntary basis, and this was signposted within welcome packs during freshers' week. In an interview with a member of staff responsible for equality and diversity at Case Study Institution 1, they described uptake on the online module as 'slow'. When asked whether anything was being done to address this, he said:

> Diversity and Equality Senior Staff Member, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *We've done anti-bullying week, we did promote it via [e-learning site], you know it sends automatic emails, so there's a bit of a spike in uptake then, but not a huge amount. I'm talking about the on-line D&E [diversity and equality] module, maybe when I looked at it a couple of weeks ago, about seventy students had done it out of 25,000… actually I think about 35,000 had access to it.*

This excerpt suggests that the reach of this online training module is minimal, largely due to the fact that this module was optional for students, limiting its potential impact. Students at Case Study Institution 1 were also able to access a 'Bullying and Harassment Advisor Network', which acts as the first point of contact for students wanting to report incidences of harassment or sexual misconduct at Case Study Institution 1. According to the equality and diversity staff member I interviewed, the advisors in this network:

Diversity and Equality Senior Staff Member, Case Study Institution 1

Provide impartial advice to students on anything relating to bullying and harassment, acting as a sounding board to talk through the situation, the bullying and harassment adviser can either say it's not a bullying harassment situation, it's something else, or whether the solution is not university related, it's a police matter or something else.

Student participants from both case study institutions discussed not knowing how to report or access the complaint systems, or training, outlined above. Those who did, said that most of the correspondence from the university on these issues happened around freshers' week. Throughout the rest of the year, students were able to access the online training modules, although many did not know where to find them. Information on this was included in information packs during freshers' week at both case study institutions:

Tom, Case Study Institution 1

So it was initially probably about a week before I arrived and I got sent this email and it was just a booklet to look through about like halls and like student life and all this kind of stuff, just kind of telling you in a really basic way about various things about like doctors and things. And then one of the sections was about consent and it went through like just you know using protection and also making sure there's consent and all that kind of thing. And it was very, very like clear and explicit about it.

Richard, Case Study Institution 2

During our induction week we were given like, I think it was a booklet was it or something… I remember being given out like a booklet or a leaflet or something that had like the code of conduct expected of a [case study institution 2] student and we had to like sign off on it and such. The same when I was moving into my accommodation because it is [case study institution 2] accommodation, we had to like sign off and say that we agree the code of conduct and stuff.

Like Tom and Richard above, some participants did recall communication from the respective institutions around issues such as consent and the university code of conduct during their induction

week, or before they arrived at university. Those who engaged with these forms of communication found that both institutions offered booklets or handbooks for students that signposted them to training and support services within the institution and the wider city. Some participants however did not recall these communications, and were unaware of how to access support or complaints systems. Lauren explained that she was unsure of how to make a complaint to the university or access support, following a conversation within our interview about one of her friends having their drink spiked on a night out in the city centre:

Lauren, Case Study Institution 1

OK, are you aware of like any university policy or like support that's in place for this sort of thing? As you said happened, if you were on a night out and your drink got spiked, would you know what to do?

I'm not 100%. Like I mean I guess you'd speak to like the wellbeing team, but I'm not 100%.

OK, so you've not had like any communications that you're aware of…

No.

… which come to your mind or what to do?

No!

OK and do you think people are generally aware of what to do or…?

No, I don't think so.

This response was common amongst several participants, who said they were unaware of how to access support systems when they needed to. For some participants, this information was lost amongst promotional materials and other information given to them during freshers' week:

Richard, Case Study Institution 2

Because when you went to the freshers' fair, you just got given like loads and loads of leaflets and all sorts of stuff, so I'm sure in the bags of stuff that I have somewhere in my room that there will be like information on there of the numbers and stuff like that.

From my own observations of freshers' fairs and freshers' week at both of the case study institutions, they were heavily commodified, centred around promotional stalls from fast food companies, chain businesses, taxi companies, to name a few. This often made it difficult to find relevant information on these issues. This highlights that clearer communication from the institution and from student unions is needed for students to familiarise themselves with training, support and complaints systems on issues around student sexual misconduct, bullying and harassment. In the following sections I will consider staff attitudes within interviews towards how policy around bullying and harassment was implemented and enforced within Case Study Institution 1.

7.1.2 Barriers to Institutional Change

Interviews with both staff members at institutional and student union level, including student staff members (e.g. elected student officers within the student union), exposed how reputational risk was considered central within the decision making process around how policy was enforced within the institution. This was referred to both implicitly and explicitly within interviews. Given the current market competition between universities for student recruitment, coupled with stories in the media at the time that this research was undertaken around the mishandling of complaints within other institutions, most notably the University of Warwick, reputational risk and damage was a key discussion point throughout these interviews. For many staff members, being able to informally resolve a complaint was viewed as a way of managing reputational risk within the complaints system:

Diversity and Equality Officer, Case Study Institution 1

And our experience always is, is the best course of action is to informally resolve the complaint. That can mean multiple [things], from the two people to just have it out between each other and someone apologise, or it might be that they have to agree to disagree and move on. The ultimate question is what's the end point, what do people want to actually happen? If you're in the first year and you're in this person… you're going to be in this

classroom for the next three years with this individual, would you want them to actually be disciplined or do you want to, you know have them recognise that what they did was not nice, move on amicably? I would say moving on amicably is a better solution. As soon as anybody gets complained about, everyone's backs against the wall. You know when you start using official investigational procedures, you start getting witnesses, statements… panels, committees, and at the end of that it doesn't mean that someone's going to be removed from university, it just means that they're going to be disciplined or fined or made to apologise, but you've still got to rebuild that relationship afterwards.

This was also furthered by another staff member who stated: '*there's guidelines but lots of flexibility on the interpretation*'. This flexibility, and narrative that '*there's always two sides'* was central to discussions around the complaints process, and reflects the narrative from students who have filed complaints on these issues on the way their complaint was handled by the university or student union. Ahmed (2021:184) highlights how 'so often a response to a complaint about harassment is to minimize harassment, as if what occurred was just a minor squabble between two parties'. This notion is reflected in the narrative here that there are 'two sides' to complaints, working to minimise students' experiences of harassment and (re)frame them as a disagreement between two parties. This approach manifests structurally within the complaints system, as this staff member went on further to outline:

Diversity and Equality Officer, Case Study Institution 1

So the current procedure for student disciplinaries would be the local resolution, whether that's a discussion with your personal tutor or your department head, after that it might go to university level, board, appeal.

Ahmed (2021) describes how complaints get "stuck", within departments or with complainants. This push towards an informal or local resolution is one way in which complaints get "stuck" within Case Study Institution 1. This also benefits the institution in that this lowers reporting figures for certain incidences, which is key when market competition exists between institutions (Phipps and Young, 2015).

Staff members also discussed a level of flexibility of interpretation within institutional policy. Within interviews with elected student union staff (student officers) at both institutions it was suggested that the ways in which the policy was interpreted and procedure was undertaken was often based around perceived institutional risk or damage. This was explored in depth by Jodie within our interview:

Jodie, Student Officer, Case Study Institution 1

Yeah that's the thing, their concern is very much like, everything is like… it comes down to, is it a reputational risk? And they don't want to be… no-one wants to be Warwick. No-one wants to be the next Warwick. But to me, to not be the next Warwick, you put procedures in place, and you put in proper support, and like, you put in people that are trained.

Yeah

But to them it's just like… They wouldn't want anything to come to light-

Just ignore it-

And hope that it will just go away, and like no-one will say anything. Yeah.

Jodie further went on to discuss the ways in which she feels rhetoric and concern around reputational risk shape the way policy is implemented:

Jodie, Student Officer, Case Study Institution 1

But then I also think it's like, as I said earlier, in terms of actually making like real concrete changes on campus, it is just the lack of interest. The university just aren't bothered. Especially like, if it doesn't come with a reputational risk at all, so like if someone like isn't interested in reporting it or anything like that, and they just want to talk to a counsellor about it, someone who is specially trained in sexual violence, like they're just not bothered, because there isn't going to be a scandal out of that, because like, it's like… It's not like a reported incident.

So are you suggesting that there's an understanding that the less informed people are, and the less they know about how to report-

Yeah. Exactly. Like if they get an influx of reporting, they've just got an influx of potential scandals.

And is that something you've noticed?

Yeah, but I don't think it's anything that anyone would say explicitly, because obviously that's really bad, and I don't think anyone is that stupid. But that's very much the feeling I get from meetings. Which is quite difficult to explain, like how you get a feeling, but you just know, when you're talking to certain men, you just know, and like, it's very clear from wider conversations that reputation is what always comes first in everything. So like, why would that not extend to this issue?

Jodie refers to a 'feeling' in meetings of the unspoken narrative driving institutional policy and direction on these issues; at best, not funding services or suggesting that there is no budget for the changes needed, at worst, pushing students to resolve complaints at a 'local level' and minimise potential scandals or reporting figures that could reflect poorly on the institution. Ahmed (2021: 191) describes how: 'the effort to stop complaints from being made is an effort to stop people from knowing about each other's experiences'. When complaints get "stuck" or are blocked by the institution, this prevents a potential influx of reporting from students. Jodie gets a 'feeling' within meetings that this is intentional, in order to protect the reputation of the institution.

This was also reflected in a focus group discussion, as participants suggested that the institutional rhetoric around sexual violence did not match up with the willingness of the university to implement structural change, even when presented with suggestions or ideas within meetings with student officers and staff members:

<u>Chloe, Case Study Institution 1</u>

I don't know, I don't think they're going to be that receptive to changing stuff, like I think they'll probably be like, why don't you work on the bystander training? I feel like they don't know the scale of the problems themselves. Or maybe they do, and they're just like ignoring it, I don't know. From my understanding unis just seem to like get it wrong all the time, and

don't really understand…. They use terms like 'we take sexual violence seriously', but then in reality they don't, really. So I think that it might be difficult to start with to have those communications with them… they're always just like, we do take sexual violence seriously, there's a system in place, do you know what I mean? Or like, say that they don't have money to have trained people to do it (laughing). So… erm, part of the thing as well, like the end goal, and something that I found really interesting is like once the uni know the scale of the problem, they should really, once they realise how big the problem is, they should employ someone to look at the problem, and deal with it and like, someone that's trained to try and tackle it, and look at the reporting system, and look at why people aren't reporting. Because there's no reason why someone can't be trained on it.

Micaela, Case Study Institution 1

I also wanted to do some stuff around the support element of it. So like there isn't anyone who works in the universities mental health services who specialises in sexual violence, even though there is loads of sexual violence happening at university, and like that's just a bit ridiculous, there needs to be someone there who is specialised, so that people don't just get passed onto the rape crisis centre. Because like, they just won't go, because it's like [half an hour away in a suburb north of the city, an area not usually familiar with students] if you're like a first year who has just got here, you're just not going to go, and if you do go it'll be like, really scary, and it's just unnecessary.

Yeah

Especially when obviously like, things like rape crisis centres are already strained, and like the university has got loads of money.

For student activists and student officers undertaking work in this area, the suggestions presented to senior staff members on changes needed were often met with the rhetoric that changes could be built into the existing system or model, or that the current model in place around these issues was working already. This positions the suggestion of change as disruptive to the current working model and therefore disruptive to the diversity work that is already being done. Here Chloe and Micaela are

challenging the 'institutional performance' (Ahmed, 2012) on these issues, by exposing aspects of the system that are not currently working, such as sending students to access a rape crisis centre located outside of the city centre, rather than training staff within the university.

It became evident through several interviews and focus groups that the institution makes clear to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) workers and students campaigning on these issues that the budget will not stretch to make the changes that they argue are needed, in order to better support students with these issues. Jodie also went on to detail issues arising in meetings around budgets and funding:

> Jodie, Case Study Institution 1
>
> **So with the sexual misconduct work, how are you getting on with that?**
>
> *Well, not very well in terms of the university, because their problem is, they've got no budget. Like they just say, we've got no budget. And that's quite something… That's something that's really difficult to be up against, because if they're telling you they've got no budget, you can't make them shift money around really […] I also think it's a lack of interest with more senior members of staff. Because there are people who are more junior members of staff who are genuinely really interested and I know if they had their way they would want these things done as well, but like, they just don't have like... the budgeting power. The budget doesn't have anything to do with them. So I think with more senior members of staff, most of them are men, they just don't have the interest in it, and like, it's because for them it's not shiny or exciting, or they can't put it in an open day booklet or anything like that, so they're just not arsed. That's what's frustrating about it, is that it just comes down to - will this man find it boring? And often the answer is yeah, it is boring to them.*

Ahmed references a 'wall' that diversity workers often hit within institutions, that end point that signifies the 'lack of institutional will to change' (Ahmed, 2012: 26). For these participants who were involved in campaigning and working to make changes on these issues, many found that the institutional budget was the first 'wall' (Ahmed, 2012) that they faced when trying to implement changes on campus. For Jodie, having to present her ideas on changes that needed to be implemented within the institution, in this instance having an advisor within the university who is trained on issues around sexual misconduct to senior members of staff within meetings meant that

her meeting this institutional wall was often met in a setting whereby she felt like she was alone in pushing for these changes:

> Jodie, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *We have meetings every month with like certain members of staff. Essentially you can just go to these meetings and be like, I'm thinking about this, this and this, and then like see what their response is. And sometimes you get really good responses, and sometimes they're just not interested at all. And then the other one is through committees, you can raise things through committees you sit on. But then it's the same problem of like, the committees that you sit on that are more like, lower level, they tend to be really responsive to your ideas and really like them because its more junior members of staff, but then there's the problem of like, they really like your ideas but they don't have the power over them, but then the ones who are more senior they do have the power but they don't like them. So it almost feels pointless bringing it up there, because you'll just be shot down in a room full of people and it's really embarrassing.*

Ahmed (2012:91) describes how 'the uneven distribution of responsibility for equality can become a mechanism for reproducing inequality', and my data here highlights how this is evident, in the disparity between the institutional model of diversity and inclusion and the narrative within meetings on whose ideas are taken forward or taken seriously. It is evident from Jodie's narrative that staff members wanting to make institutional change in this area are up against more senior staff members when pitching their ideas. By 'shooting down' Jodie's ideas and embarrassing her in meetings, this acts as a "blockage" (Ahmed, 2021), or a warning from senior members for Jodie, and other staff wanting to make change in this area, not to raise these suggestions again.

7.1.3 Complaints and the Institutional 'Boundaries of Responsibility'

Interviews with students and staff members exposed issues around what I will call the 'boundaries of responsibility' for the institution, or in other words the spaces or areas of students' lives that university policy extends to. This narrative was prominent throughout discussions, as staff explained that the 'boundaries of responsibility' were ever-shifting, a 'balance' that needed to be continually (re)negotiated by the institution. One staff member questioned these boundaries throughout our interview:

Student Support Director, Case Study Institution 1

To what extent should the university be taking disciplinary action? So I think there is a broader narrative at the moment that is about universities being responsible for the behaviour of their students at all times. Which I think is quite… it's a really interesting narrative because… in the… in each specific example I would, yeah, I would say, yes those behaviours are unacceptable. However, if you moved to a point where the university is always responsible for the students' behaviour, actually you're moving back to quite a paternalistic culture.

Yeah.

So I just think… I think it's really difficult to get the balance of that right.

Several staff members referred to the 'balance' when considering the boundaries of responsibility for the institution, both in reference to institutional responsibility as well as the sanctions or actions taken towards students in light of complaints. Despite both institutions studied being city universities, with vague 'campus' boundaries, many staff members within interviews referred to a false on/off campus dichotomy, often with off campus spaces being considered beyond the boundaries of responsibility for the university:

Diversity and Equality Officer, Case Study Institution 1

The bullying harassment policy doesn't really go into huge amounts of lists of activity because it does become such a case by case basis, that you need to take all the facts into account. If somebody's walking down the street wearing a university hoodie, does that mean they're liable for university sanction for something they did because they've got the hoodie on or not? So it does become a bit of a… you have to be fairly flexible and… around what they did… I'm trying to think of a good example here but if… I don't know… if somebody was being a bit… shouting at their neighbour and they happened to be a student of the university, does that mean we should discipline them for shouting at their neighbour. If they were being… shouting sexual or racist slurs at their neighbour, does that then change the nature of the incident to be something that actually we need to act on? If it was sexual assault, then does that mean we should actually act? So the nature of the situation would kind of determine

how you would investigate. There's not a policy that says if you do these ten things you will be disciplined or you will be sacked, even if you do list them in staff disciplinary policy and the student disciplinary policy, I think there is lists of activity, but even then it's kind of… you'd have to on a case by case basis determine whether you would really act on that […] a warning might be reasonable, a transfer might… training might be reasonable, almost like repeated offence, what was the nature of the offence? What was the … I'm not saying provocation, but what's the other side of the complaint? And there's always two sides, well actually probably three sides! Their side, your side, the truth in the middle. So you've got to kind of pull that out and what can you really evidence.

This ambiguity around on/off campus boundaries and the boundaries of the responsibility of the institution was commonplace within university staff interviews from Case Study Institution 1. The 'case by case basis' narrative that was also present within staff interviews worked to create further ambiguity around potential ramifications for those who complaints are filed against, and in particular creates a lack of transparency for complainants. This is problematic for a number of reasons, particularly from a victim-focused perspective, as this means that often students who are making the complaint do not have a clear framework or sense of what the implications of their complaint might be, and what the complaints process would look like.

The disconnect between the official EDI narrative at the institution and their concrete plans to change cultures is evident, highlighted particularly within the previous extract as the institutional EDI officer states: *'There's not a policy that says if you do these ten things you will be disciplined or you will be sacked, even if you do list them in staff disciplinary policy and the student disciplinary policy'.* Ahmed (2021:31) describes the complaint procedure as an 'unused path […] hard to find, difficult to follow'. Through creating a lack of transparency around the circumstances in which university complaints processes could be useful or even applicable, the institution in this instance is evoking confusion that, in turn, deters potential complainants from entering onto the path of the complaints process. It is evident that this manifests structurally within Case Study Institution 1, as the focus on gathering information, and the role of the Bullying and Harassment advisor suggests, whether implicitly or explicitly, to students approaching the university with a complaint that there is a potential for the complainants case to be disproven, or unpacked to be one side of a disagreement.

The questioning or breaking down of the boundaries of responsibility of the institution was also discussed within an interview with the director for student support:

Student Support Director, Case Study Institution 1

I think one of the challenges is that it's… I think lad culture extends beyond campus. And it's something that people come to university with. It's something that's reinforced by broader society, and I think universities absolutely have a role to play in challenging it, but I think one of the more difficult things is that whilst we may be challenging it, it's getting reinforced across pretty much the whole of society. So I think that we… there's something about recognising that… because sometimes I think it is positioned as a university problem.

Mm.

Whereas I would say it is… it is a societal problem that manifests at universities.

Yeah.

And I think that that's… it is quite an important distinction.

In drawing on this 'distinction', this staff member when interviewed further went on to question the role of the university in handling these issues from an institutional perspective, stating that: 'there seems to be an overarching narrative at the moment that universities are responsible for various problems experienced by society, and particularly by students'. Despite this, it is evident from my data presented in Chapter 5 around freshers' week and university marketing that the institution does have a key part to play in shaping the environment from which many of these instances occur. When asked about how they feel the university should be supporting them, the majority of student participants stated that they feel that the university should enforce policy that applies to off-campus spaces, and that there should be less ambiguity around this:

Nina, Case Study Institution 2

So you think that policy should extend to off campus spaces as well?

Yeah, I think it should extend to off campus spaces, and I think there should like be this pressure that you know if you do want to come to a good university, and if you do want to have like a respectable degree and come across as that sort of person, then you need to adhere to like these… these rules. Because it doesn't matter if you're doing a medicine degree and you come from like a family of millionaires, you are not beyond like these rules and you can't get away with like sexually harassing other students.

Feminist scholarship that has worked to break down the dichotomy between public and private spaces throws into question the distinction that the institution(s) studied put on on/and off campus spaces and their boundaries of responsibility. In understanding gendered violence as intimate (Pain and Staeheli, 2014), it is evident that gendered violence experienced by participants is bound up within wider power relations within their university lives, and this has influence over how the institution handles complaints from students. In drawing set 'boundaries of responsibility' around campus and off-campus spaces, the institution is overlooking intimate gendered violence as 'a set of spatial relations' (Pain and Staeheli, 2014:345), that are unable to be distinguished into on campus or off campus dichotomies.

For many students who took part in interviews and focus groups, the lack of transparency from the institution surrounding the 'case by case' handling of student complaints on these issues also left space for these policies and rules to be enforced in some instances but not in others. This meant that participants often felt that some students were treated unfairly due to their social, economic or cultural capital within this context. This was also highlighted by another participant, Sarah (Case Study Institution 1) in relation to her experiences on a trip with the subject-based society that I discussed in Chapter 5. When complaints were made about the trip to the institution and student union, and after a student dropped out of university due her experiences on the trip, lecturers within the department came to the support of those who organised the trip, and the activities involved:

Sarah, Case Study Institution 1

But this trip happens like, it has happened for like… 30 years in the [degree subject] department. So like the [degree subject] lecturers defended them. That's why they didn't get

kicked out of uni or anything harsh. Because the [degree subject] lecturers were like "this happens every year, it's fine"'.

This was a common conception amongst participants that the case-by-case basis and flexibility within institutional policy meant that in practice, if the *right person* was able to defend the incident happening, or if it was done within a context deemed more 'acceptable' than a sports team initiation, in this instance a degree subject trip, then it was unlikely that there would be any ramifications or steps taken to create an environment free from lad culture or sexual harassment. This extract also highlights the ways in which these practices are woven into the fabric of the institution, as staff members are institutionalised to defend these practices as the norm. Ahmed (2012:26) suggests that 'the habits of the institution are not revealed unless you come up against them'. This was evident for the students making formal complaints about this trip, as layers of institutional practices were peeled away to reveal the ways in which the ingrained mechanisms of hegemony (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005) that enable lad culture and sexual misconduct are (re)produced by students, staff in leadership positions, as well as academic staff members. The following section will explore how university policy is implemented in relation to harassment in online spaces, and how these institutional 'walls' manifest in relation to online harassment in particular.

7.1.4 Online Spaces

Another key uncertainty around the 'boundaries of responsibility' for the institution enforcing policy or handling complaints was around online spaces. Shortly after these interviews were undertaken, one of the two case study institutions (CSI 1) developed an online training module available to students on harassment in online spaces, and also added online harassment to their bystander intervention training model. At the time that these interviews were undertaken there was little to no training or guidance at either of the two case study institutions on harassment and sexual misconduct within online spaces. Speaking to staff members about this within interviews involved discussions around the 'boundaries of responsibility' for the university in relation to online spaces. For several staff members, they considered harassment in online spaces as beyond the 'boundaries of responsibility' for the university:

Student Support Director, Case Study Institution 1

We're very clear that conduct and discipline covers students' behaviour on campus, off campus and in online spaces. I think it is however more difficult in online spaces… If it's between members of the university in online spaces, again that differs to offence caused to members of the public by someone who is a student, and I think there is still a discussion to be had about to what extent the university should then be taking disciplinary action, because there's a question as are you a private citizen or… or yeah, how far should the scope of the university's disciplinary powers go? If someone's clearly linking themselves to the university, that's different to somebody who a member of the public believes to be or knows to be a student of the university but doesn't state that explicitly on their Facebook page for example. So I think that those things are challenging. It's also about having the resource to… to look through some of that… I mean you know in the same way that we're seeing from police cases that you know you get such a huge amount of material and one of the real challenges from a disciplinary point of view is making sure that we've got complete records.

For some staff members, there was ambiguity or confusion around where online spaces fit into the realms of institutional policy on these issues and how, practically, institutional policy can be useful within online spaces. Ahmed (2021) highlights how complaints end up as files. This staff member questions the boundaries of responsibility for the university within online spaces – suggesting that the 'real challenge' is making sure there's 'complete records'. Ahmed (2021) highlights how files can be buried, and how files are often the end point within the complaints process. It is evident that for these staff members interviewed, the real focus on whether to follow-up a complaint and take disciplinary action is based on whether the reputation of the university would be in disrepute, 'if someone's clearly linking themselves to the university'. This notion was also echoed within another staff interview:

Diversity and Equality Senior Staff Member, Case Study Institution 1

One of the challenges of that would be social media, Facebook, Twitter is really out of the reams of the university's responsibility. The overlap would be where the conduct relates to university business. So if you were on a university type of Facebook group, so it's your programme, you know the life sciences module Facebook group, it could be argued that any content that happened within that would be within a university space, and you only engaged in that space because you were students. If you were on a university activity off campus, then that could relate. If it was a Twitter account where it was explicit that you were… if it was a

university Twitter account doing the sexual harassment, for example, then that could be deemed university business. If it was someone who was clearly, during the tweet or Facebook post, was in some way connected to the universities or it was clear that they were from the university, then that would be something that we would act on. So for example, you'd bring the university into disrepute, so if you're, I don't know, the captain of the football team, and it's quite clear you're the captain of the football team by your Facebook posts, then are you connected to the university in that ream? So it's a fine line between what's private and what the university could reasonably act on.

It is evident from both of these extracts that the focus of the institution is not on supporting students who experience harassment in online spaces, but rather protecting the institutions corporate interests. Phipps (2017:14) draws out a link between neoliberal frameworks present within UK HEIs, particularly the ways in which institutions can be 'complicit in overlooking the harassment and violence which can be part of lad cultures'. My findings here bring nuance to this discussion in suggesting that this is the case particularly in relation to online spaces, highlighting how policy and practice particularly around online spaces is directed towards protecting the reputation of the university, rather than specifically addressing the harassment that participants have discussed experiencing within my research.

Coming back to Jodie, the student officer at Case Study Institution 1, who detailed her experiences of liaising with the university on supporting students with harassment in online spaces:

Jodie, Case Study Institution 1

Yeah I think it's one of the things the uni is finding really difficult. Because they've become more aware of people, when I say people, women, get harassed all the time on social media, like I was when I was in the feminist society, but it's quite hard to like police almost, because it's like the question of like, who does… the internet… is it real? It sounds really silly but they're like does that come under our remit? Because what is the internet? How do you do it? Do you do it like if they've posted it on campus its ours but like if they posted it when they're back home it's not ours? Like how do you decide when it's their job to intervene and when it's not. Sometimes it would be more clear. Like if it was one student constantly sending another student horrible messages, that's clearly within their jurisdiction, but I think they also really struggle knowing what's harassment, and when it's just something "that young people do",

because often these are people that are a bit older, and they're just like, is that… like they don't even know how to use the site. Or like what young people do on it, I would actually say that's the main barrier. Because there are people who want to do stuff about it, but again like, the more junior members are staff, are like people who work in student services and things like that, but some of them are like I don't even know what Snapchat is, I don't know if that's acceptable. But I don't really think that's a good enough reason because surely you can like use your brain and be like oh it's not, surely it can't be a social norm to send someone this hideous message?

Yeah so there's general confusion around…

The internet? Yeah. Which is really strange because the internet is not new anymore.

A similar narrative was also reiterated within two interviews with university staff members at Case Study Institution 1:

Student Support Director, Case Study Institution 1

But I do think there's a challenge around judgement calls on that. And similarly with you know misogynistic stuff, it's about can we be clear it's a member of the university that's posting that. So yeah, online spaces are quite a challenge I think.

Diversity and Equality Staff Member, Case Study Institution 1

As I say I do think that's a challenging space for institutions… in terms of us… the extent to which we… sort of like the extent to which we should be in the students' lives.

Earlier on in this thesis (Chapter 5) I identified SNS as key in both student identity formation practices and practices and performances around lad culture. It is evident here that enforcement of institutional policy that works to protect students within these spaces needs to be developed further. Framing online spaces and SNS as beyond the 'boundaries of responsibility' for the institution enables the institution to shift the responsibility for interactions happening within online spaces onto individual students, suggesting a lack of understanding from the institution of the ways

in which interactions within these spaces often exist within a wider network of harassment across online and offline spaces. Previous research has found that amongst young people, there is a level of acceptance towards gender-based harassment within online spaces, and it is often viewed by university students as the 'norm' (Haslop et al., 2021). This suggests that although participants within this study have identified online harassment and 'lads chats' as a particularly problematic aspect of student lad culture, they may not expect the institution to be involved in, or provide support or protection for them, within these spaces. This is particularly problematic given the number of group chats and peer-to-peer online interactions that participants said they engage with as part of their everyday student lives. For example considering Sarah's experiences (that I introduced in Chapter 5) of finding herself involved in a WhatsApp 'lads chat' when she was added initially to communicate about work on her degree course. This, and similar experiences that other participants reported, highlight a connection between online and offline learning and social spaces for students, as these laddish practices within group chats, particularly on WhatsApp act as a form of 'social glue' (Madge et al., 2009) between peers. It is evident through institutional 'non-performativity' (Ahmed, 2021) relating to peer-to-peer harassment and misconduct within online spaces, that by prioritising the University's corporate interests over student safety and well-being on SNS, students are being left increasingly vulnerable to experiencing gender-based harassment.

7.1.5 Institutional and Student Union Complaints Processes

Several students within interviews detailed their experiences of the university and student union complaints process, within both case study institutions. For all participants who detailed their experiences of the complaints process, lack of information or transparency about what the process entailed was a key issue for them, and this often led to a form of (re)traumatisation. For some participants, this began with not knowing where or how to submit a complaint to the university:

> Chloe, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *No-one really knows how to report sexual assault or harassment, like I wouldn't know. It's not very widely advertised. And it's all about accessibility as well, like you could have the structures in place to report something, but you might not know where to start, and that's not the greatest thing when you're going through potentially a traumatic experience.*

When students did submit a complaint, they often found that there was a lack of transparency around what the complaints process would involve, and they were unable to make an informed choice around whether to go through the complaints process as a result of this. For many who did, this had a profoundly negative impact on their mental health and well-being. My data here builds on findings from Smith and Freyd (2013), who measure 'institutional betrayal' around incidences of sexual assault. Their research highlights how institutional betrayal around disclosures of sexual assault leads to increased post-traumatic symptomology. For participants within my research, this institutional betrayal began early on in the complaints process, when initially submitting a complaint:

Lara, Case Study Institution 1

People don't know what to do when it happens to them, or where to put in a complaint, and I don't know how many people actually do go through that complaints system. I imagine it will be similar for other people who have been through that, it was really traumatic and you weren't really kept in the loop… you feel like you're on trial instead of putting a complaint in.

Micaela, Case Study Institution 1

And I do think the complaints system, yeah, it's quite a big problem at the uni, I feel like it's, it's the same at quite a lot of other unis, but the complaints system is like really inaccessible and you're not told before you enter into a complaint, you're not told exactly what's going on or how many things you're going to have to go through to get to like a final outcome of it. People should know exactly what they're going into.

For many participants who had been through the complaints process, as well as the way the complaints process was structured having negative implications on their mental health, acting as a form of (re)traumatisation, participants also felt that there was a lack of support from the institution or trained specialists throughout the complaints process:

Chloe, Case Study Institution 1

At the moment it feels like there is a due process, and they have to go through all these official things, but it seems as though no-one is actually caring about the stuff the victim will have to go through. You know, there's no real support system for them, so it's… it's hard, like, obviously if you're going through the complaints system there has to be an official process but it seems like that is the main focus instead of you know, how the victim might be feeling every step of the way.

Also, for participants, getting 'their side of the story' as mentioned earlier by a staff member proved particularly traumatic in some cases, as they were made to continually reiterate details from the time of the incident:

Olivia, Case Study Institution 1

Like one example is, at the start of the complaints system when you go to report, they will ask you to go through the whole of the night's events, right, like from like as soon as you went out the house basically until like the next day. But obviously, well for me, loads of that wasn't relevant. Loads of that night wasn't relevant. But it seemed like they used that to be like, do you think that they thought this? Do you think that they could have thought that? It was always like victim blaming you… And it's certain things like that that can be changed, because it wasn't done by a professional who knows what they're talking about, it was done by someone who works in like the HR department (laughing).

This was a common point made by students and student officers involved in the complaints system at student union and university level, and mirrors the ways in which legal systems are often hostile towards victims of sexual misconduct. Olivia's experience suggests that for students, the procedures involved in the institutional complaints system act as a form of victim-blaming, as students are asked to recall details of their experiences several times over to members of staff. Ahmed (2021:81) describes how complaints involve 'communicative labor', through 'making the same complaint to different people in the organisation'. For Olivia and Chloe, this communicative labour manifested in their re-telling of their experiences to different staff members as they went through the complaints process, and in the instance of Olivia, the questioning of her account.

Previous research has suggested that within the legal system, persistent questioning of the victim acts as a way to undermine evidence, 'testing' stories for inconsistencies (Wheatcroft et al., 2009; 276). For Olivia, this questioning around the events of the night left her with a sense that her complaint was being undermined, or that the institution was looking for evidence that Olivia was in some way to blame for misleading the perpetrator. Often those taking details of these institutional complaints were from the Human Resources (HR) department, and those sitting on disciplinary panels for these cases were often staff members who had no training on these issues, for example lecturers or other staff members from various parts of the university. This was outlined by Jodie, who detailed her experiences as a student officer sitting on university disciplinary panels:

Jodie, Case Study Institution 1

Yeah this is the thing, it's really strange, the way we sit on boards of discipline at university level, and it's just the thing of like, I have no training for this. Because this is one of the things I want to do [change about the complaints procedure], the way the board of discipline is set up the people on them are like basically random, like there's no… people aren't specifically trained for it. So like say if it's a sexual misconduct case it'll be like a student officer, and then just like, random academics or whatever, and it's just like, this is ridiculous, none of us are trained in this what so ever, and like… it's the thing of like, I wouldn't mind sitting on it, obviously I have no training in it but I'd rather it be me than like, like I'm someone who can understand the situation a bit more, but it just so happens this year that we have a student officer who like is particularly interested in these issues. Like, it could be anyone. It just seems crazy that no-one is trained. And like we're given, not even a booklet, nothing, for disciplinary panels. Like, it's mad. Yeah it's horrible. Yeah. It's horrible. Why would you trust a random student officer and like, an English lecturer, with your rape case. Like, you wouldn't. Of course you wouldn't. It's no wonder that people don't want to do that. I wouldn't want to do that.

The staff chosen for the disciplinary panels on complaints around student sexual misconduct, coupled with no trained specialist working in this area to support students, either within the university or the student union at the time that this research was undertaken, exacerbated the 'communicative labor' (Ahmed, 2021) involved for participants who had made these complaints. As Jodie's account highlights above, participants often felt that after making a complaint, there was a

lack of understanding from staff at the institution about the potential for re-traumatisation through the continual retelling of their experiences that was expected of them within the complaints process.

As well as this, for student participants who had gone through the complaints process, the lack of transparency around what the process would involve often led to further re-traumatisation, as they felt unable to prepare for the process as a whole or make informed decisions before entering into a formal complaint. This was explored by Olivia in relation to making a complaint to the student union after experiencing sexual assault:

> Olivia, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *I'd like written things down anyway because I was like, confused, so I was like telling them and they were like asking me all these horrible questions and I was like, fuck that, and then they put me in this panel in front of all these people and they were like, you need to read his statement? They were like, you need to read what he's said. About what happened. Because he obviously like categorically denied it. So I'm like well… I don't want to read it, like I'm not reading it, like fuck that, I'm withdrawing the complaint, I don't want to read it, I don't want to read what he said happened, because he obviously denied it, so I was like, I don't want to read it, and then they like blamed me for not wanting to read it, they were like, well, you know, it would make it so much easier if you just read it. And I was like I'm not going to read it. So then there was that. And then basically the outcome was, I went home, and then I got an email saying "just to let you know he's allowed back on campus". So I was like fine. And that's it. That was the outcome of it. And I didn't get like any… anything afterwards, I mean like, the advisor person I was with was like, you can speak to me after if you want but I was like, no not really [laughing]… So I was like… That was the outcome of it afterwards, like he was allowed back on campus. He obviously left, because everyone was like [disapproving look], but he was allowed back on campus. So I was like well, so basically that was all pointless, like, I shouldn't have done that. But I didn't know at the time that they would like try and make me read that.*

For Olivia, this led to further alienation from the institution and university campus, as the perpetrator was allowed back onto campus when the complaint was considered to be 'resolved', when Olivia refused to read the statement in front of the disciplinary panel. This meant that she was

unable to access the student union, and this eventually led to full alienation from the institution as she stopped attending lectures and seminars as a result of her declining mental health. Ahmed (2021:38) highlights that: 'What is required to proceed with a complaint […] might be what is eroded by the experiences that led to a complaint […] What leads you to make a complaint is what makes it hard to complain'. In making Olivia read her perpetrators testimony in order to progress with the complaints process, this led to her having to make the decision between reading the account, or having to withdraw the complaint. This only created further emotional distress and re-traumatisation for Olivia. Olivia's experiences here highlight how 'blockages' (Ahmed, 2021) can manifest structurally within university complaints systems, as barriers that complainants have to overcome if they want to continue to pursue their complaint. In the following section I will explore how participants use both formal and informal collective forms of response to address shortcomings that they have experienced with the university complaints systems.

7.2 Collective Response

In this section I explore the collective responses of participants to experiences of lad culture, sexual harassment and sexual assault during their time at university. There is some overlap between this section and the following section on personal response, as participants' responses did not exist in a vacuum, but rather on a continuum, across a multitude of spaces and scales and within peer and friendship groups. Broadly, collective responses included responses on social media, or networked responses, for example calling out or documenting lad culture online, alongside warning others of potential 'risky' spaces through sharing experiences online. Other forms of collective response drawn upon by participants were centred around both formal, or more structured support networks such as student societies, and responses organised through informal networks, such as peer groups, flatmates and friends. In order to understand this collective response, both online and offline, I draw upon Ahmed's concept of 'feminist consciousness' (Ahmed, 2017) highlighting how these social media responses to lad culture act as a form of 'feminist consciousness raising' within participants' everyday student lives. In this section I also highlight the ways in which collective responses from participants are situated often as a direct response to institutional shortcomings on issues related to lad culture, particularly around sexual misconduct reporting. As well as this, feelings of unsafety and fear that have been explored earlier in this chapter are also key here, as participants form collective responses around this, and collective responses shape, and are shaped by these fears.

7.2.1 Sharing Online

In this section I draw upon the ways in which social media enabled participants to form collective responses to their experiences of lad culture, sexual harassment and sexual assault within their everyday student lives. Within interviews, focus groups, diary-notes and my own auto-ethnographic notes, the use of social media as a form of collective response was continually documented and drawn upon. This section firstly explores the role of sharing experiences online in participants' responses to lad culture, secondly what form that sharing takes, and lastly how participants responded to seeing posts being shared online.

Sharing experiences of lad culture, sexual assault and harassment online was drawn upon both by participants in interviews, and in my own auto-ethnographic research. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram were commonly used by participants to form collective, networked responses to their experiences of lad culture and harassment. Participants used social media to share their experiences online with other students, posting 'warnings' about certain spaces or areas where they had experienced harassment, lad culture or sexual misconduct. Within my autoethnographic research, these forms of collective responses (documented as part of my own notes on observations made from both social media platforms Twitter and Facebook) were often triggered by an initial post in which someone shared their experiences of lad culture or harassment. For example, one post that I documented from Facebook showed someone I knew from my student networks sharing her experiences of online harassment, along with an influx of responses from friends and peers commenting on the post, sharing similar experiences. These experiences included receiving persistent messages from men they didn't know to their account, that often became abusive or offensive if they did not reply, as well as repeated harassment in the form of sending and re-sending friend requests despite them being ignored or deleted. These experiences were shared collectively on Facebook and Twitter, as comments on tweets or Facebook posts, as a form of 'speaking together' (Keller et al., 2018).

Another example of this was given by a participant, Theresa, who recalled a friend sharing her experiences on a university sports trip as they happened, as they both took different coaches to the destination for 'tour' – a university sports team away trip to France:

> Theresa, Case Study Institution 2
>
> *When we went on tour, there was a girl that I know who was on a coach with another university group, they were rugby lads, and she was sending us videos, pictures [via Whatsapp group chats] and just keeping us updated of stuff that they were doing and I*

would have deemed that like lad culture, they were like all naked on the bus, they were drinking horrible concoctions and stuff like that, and making the freshers do it in particular, just because they were freshers. So I am aware that it goes on and… You are aware of stuff.

Several participants recalled using social media as a tool to respond to lad culture collectively, sharing and documenting experiences with friends and peers both retrospectively as they happened. Social media is used here by participants as an avenue to resist lad culture through sharing experiences online, creating an avenue for participants to 'call out' laddish or unacceptable forms of behaviour to peers. This form of 'calling out' lad culture is done online in what could be deemed a more safe environment, away from potential risk of harm that may arise from confronting these behaviours within the environment of the nightclub for example, or in this instance, the confined space of the coach/team bus. Whilst scholars have explored a continuum between online and offline gendered violence (Ging and Siapera, 2018), these extracts from participants suggest that there is also an online/offline continuum of responses. What is unique about this form of networked online response to lad culture is the ways in which it shifts between online and offline spaces. As participants are experiencing harassment, or witnessing forms of lad culture that they do not feel comfortable with in offline student spaces, they are simultaneously documenting their experiences as they happen, online. What this then leaves is a digital trail of their experiences, warning other students, particularly women or LGBTQ+ students, that some student spaces, for example within the NTE, may be unsafe.

Sharing and engaging with other's experiences on social media shaped participants' perceptions of risk and safety within their everyday student lives. For some participants, this shaped their perception of risk in student nightlife spaces:

<u>Lauren, Case Study Institution 1</u>

I think you hear about it more online, like you hear about it from other people. Like a lot of my friends at other unis, they'll like share stuff [on Facebook] like, oh my God this has happened or… Stuff like that, rather than like you've actually seen it for yourself or experienced it for yourself. So I think it makes you a bit more aware of it. But when you're actually out, I don't think you see it as often. So like my friend went out the other night and like got spiked, and there was like a big group of guys like trying to torment her, I mean she was fine because her flatmates were there and they stepped in but… It was like that sort of story you tend to hear a lot, yeah.

Many participants discussed this form of online collective response as central to both how they responded to lad culture and harassment, and their perceptions of risk and safety within their everyday student lives. For participants, hearing about other students' experiences via social media became interwoven with their own everyday experiences of lad culture and harassment. Within Sara Ahmed's writings on the Feminist Killjoy, she highlights how 'feminist work is often memory work' (2017:22). Sharing these experiences on social media for participants is a form of memory work, as a form of collective 'feminist consciousness' (Ahmed, 2017:31) is made and (re)made. Several participants discussed seeing other students experiences of harassment and sexual harassment being shared regularly within their student social media networks, particularly on pages or groups specifically for their university or their university city, 'not like every day but probably like once a week' (Sara, Case Study Institution 2). This form of memory work shaped participants' responses to lad culture, harassment and sexual assault, as over time they (re)negotiated their use of space both from their own experiences, and through their knowledge of the experiences of others:

> Lauren, Case Study Institution 1
> *Yeah, I think it makes you more like have a guard up when you're out and I mean sometimes it's a bit like mm, like do you really want to be going [out to nightclubs]? Like even put yourself at risk in that situation?*

Here Lauren reflects on how engaging with other students' online posts about experiences of lad culture, sexual assault and harassment shapes the way she uses nightlife spaces, negotiating her perception of risk not only based on her own experiences, but from the collective responses that she reads about online. As Ahmed highlights - 'violence does things. You begin to expect it[…] It might be your own experiences that lead you here, to caution as withdrawal, but it might also be what you have learnt from others' (2017:24). It was evident from participants' responses that this form of collective "feminist consciousness" (Ahmed, 2017: 31) existed within a network whereby the sharing and re-sharing of experiences happened regularly. In doing so, participants situated their own experiences within the networked experiences of others, creating perceptions about certain spaces within their everyday student lives as safe or unsafe, and taking precautions based on this.

Participants also reflected on the ways in which high profile, popular/mainstream feminist discourse on social media shaped the offline environment in which their questioning and challenging of lad culture would be received, as these posts influenced and shaped the opinions of the wider student sphere, including those not typically engaged in forms of feminist activism (online and offline).

Ahmed suggests that feminist consciousness involves beginning 'to identify what happens to me, what happens to others' (2017:27), and for many participants this form of networked feminist consciousness, through sharing personal experiences and reading more mainstream feminist posts online, shaped and influenced their offline, everyday lives in a number of ways. For example, many participants felt that engaging with these posts on social media gave them more confidence in challenging lad culture when they experienced it, as using social media as a tool for feminist consciousness worked as a form of collective memory work, enabling participants who engaged with these posts to 'make sense of how different experiences connect' (Ahmed, 2017:22).

Alongside using social media to synchronously document experiences within nightlife spaces, participants also described how, through sharing feminist posts on social media, this also meant that within their everyday student lives, lad culture and harassment became easier to discuss and ultimately challenge. Although this is feminist consciousness raising in a different way, participants drew upon the sharing of feminist posts on social media as key in increasing their confidence in having conversations with peers about feminist issues, including experiences of lad culture and sexual harassment at university:

> Sam, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *I think seeing it all the time, like seeing things like about female positivity and like about you know all this stuff going on in America, like seeing things, fighting back against that, like even in this country, I think it does really help because it means it always like means you have to have the conversation. Like I had a conversation with my boyfriend about it the other day and I was like, oh this is so wrong, and he was like, yeah, I totally agree, I think women should be able to do whatever they want with their bodies. And I was like… Like having that conversation, and if they, you know if they do say like, oh… You know oh abortion's wrong or whatever, like and then they start saying something that's very kind of against women or whatever, you can actually have that conversation, rather than it just being an unsaid thing.*

Some participants however raised limitations to the impact of engaging with these posts on social media, particularly in relation to potential 'echo chambers' that are created in relation to feminist activism online:

> Jodie, Student Officer, Case Study Institution 1

I mean I think that's the only hope we can have with social media is that it creates more of an awareness of it. But I think then again the issue is I… I think you have to be in that circle already of criticising it to know it's going on. You know I follow like loads of different accounts that are do with like sexual harassment in higher education settings, to do with like Call It Out, Reclaim the Night. And if I wasn't following those people or those accounts, if I like read an article about it or came across it, I might think, are they over exaggerating it, is it really an issue? I remember I was having a conversation with my friend about the Reclaim the Night march and they were like, oh so what it's about? And I was like well it's calling out like cat calling and you know violence against women. And he was like, oh is that like… He got the violence against women but was like, oh is the cat calling like a big thing? And I was like it is, I was like you might not notice it, very much the same as I might not notice something that makes you feel uncomfortable.

In this respect, participants questioned the sphere of influence that activism or sharing their experiences on social media may have in challenging the overall perception of peers towards their experiences of lad culture, within their everyday student lives. Despite this, for most participants who discussed online activism and social media as a tool for sharing these experiences, they outlined the possibility for social media to make visible aspects of lad culture that are usually hidden or ignored, creating a means of collectively sharing experiences that are usually experienced individually. These findings sit within previous academic work that has explored the potential for the online sphere for feminist digital activism (e.g. Matich et al., 2019), and in considering this sharing of experiences as a form of 'everyday digital activism', this highlights the ways in which participants engage with feminist activism within their everyday lives. It is evident that for participants, posting on social media about their experiences of harassment, sexual assault and gendered violence within their university lives makes visible their experiences, whilst providing a collective, shared 'feminist consciousness' (Ahmed, 2017) that shifts and moves across online and offline spaces.

7.2.2 Student Societies as Organised Collective Support Networks

A key form of collective response that was identified by participants at the two case study institutions was more organised forms of collective student support networks. These networks took the form of student groups, registered student societies, and worked within and alongside student unions, with the aim often to elect sabbatical officers into the student union officer team from these groups. These groups were often formed as collective responses to formal institutional responses and institutional complaints systems. Participants at both case study institutions from

these student societies and student groups had direct experience with the university and student union complaints systems, had taken part in training run by the student union on sexual assault, harassment and lad culture and also had experience of university and student union run campaigns on these issues.

These experiences of institutional systems and responses were drawn upon within interviews and focus groups, and are relevant here because of the ways in which their experiences of these processes shape their collective responses to this. I was contacted by several participants who took part in the study, towards the end of my data collection period, who had worked to set up a more formal network at one of the two case study institutions, in the form of a student society to address issues around lad culture and sexual misconduct on campus. When discussing what it was that they wanted to address as a collective, Micaela said:

> Micaela, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *One of the things that was really obvious to me is that there wasn't like a society or like a specific campaign. Like there was [the student union bullying and harassment campaign] and stuff, that seemed to be around everything, but there wasn't like a specific campaign, or specific campaigning on campus around like sexual assault or sexual harassment. My sister goes to another uni, and she said that on her campus there was a society specifically around supporting survivors, and specifically about campaigning around the issues on campus, and then I looked… I've sort of been keeping in touch with this wider UK network, and it's called Not on my Campus UK, and it sort of comes from an American campaign which I knew about. I spoke them to see if it would be possible, setting up a society around that, around those issues and stuff, and then they actually got me, like linked me up with people around the country that have these societies, in unis and stuff, so from then I was like, so how can we start it up basically. Because I knew it was going on in other campuses, I was like well then we can have it here as well. That was basically the main idea around it.*

The setting up of this society was the most formalised student network aimed to address issues around lad culture and sexual misconduct at each of the two case study institutions at the time of this study, although this sat against a backdrop of wider student networks nationally that had were continually working to campaign on these issues. The collective response on these issues led by

students was often based around their own personal experiences with institutional structures and complaints systems. Chloe, who was also involved in the running of the society, said:

Chloe, Case Study Institution 1

So when we did the campaign for student officer, it felt like, I don't really know… Well you all know people who potentially have like gone through the system of like reporting sexual assault or like people have been through it themselves, and it's a worldwide problem, or a nation-wide problem at least, and you know that the victims are just not properly supported. It's very like… No-one really knows how to report sexual assault or harassment, like I wouldn't know. And it doesn't… It's not very widely advertised, and we just wanted to address that properly. And it's all about accessibility as well, like you could have the structures in to report something, but you might not know where to start, and that's not the greatest thing when you're going through potentially a traumatic experience.

The response to this was organised in a multitude of ways, from student societies to putting forward candidates for student officer positions, to the desire to create spaces, societies and groups that could act as support networks for students who had experienced sexual assault, harassment and sexual misconduct during their time at University. Chloe and Micaela, within a focus group, spoke about their motivations for setting up a student society to offer a more formalised support network to students, outside existing institutional support networks:

Chloe, Case Study Institution 1

With the society, it would be good to get students involved and feel like they have a place to go to with people who are also students, and potentially other people who have gone through it, it's quite a nice thing for students to feel safe in, as well as also campaigning.

Micaela, Case Study Institution 1

Yeah so I think like, there's like a big part of the society as well, not only campaigning but also a place that students could come to as well. Because, obviously, as like Chloe said it's not really accessible to people, people wouldn't know where to put in a complaint, or submit a

complaint about like another student or someone else, or a staff member, about sexual assault or harassment, so then that feels like… Obviously if there's like a society it might be like a place where people can ask how to do that, obviously whilst we're like hopefully going to change how we, how the student union and the uni address sexual violence on campus.

Chloe, Case Study Institution 1:

Yeah and they may not even, if they don't want to report it or tell anyone at the uni, at least they can go to other people their age who'll just be there for them and support them, a group of people who would be understanding and feel like they would be supported somewhat, that kind of thing.

Additionally, through setting up these more formal student networks, that are recognised by the student union and the NUS as a registered student society, it was hoped that this would provide a continual support network for students outside of institutional frameworks of support, including those who chose not to report incidences:

Chloe, Case Study Institution 1

Yeah and hopefully the society continues, if I don't run for student officer next year, and you elect four people who aren't interested in it, at least there's already a society there with relations to the student union officers, who can continue to push for it. Even if I'm not there, Micaela's not there, at least there's a society there that can campaign for that.

For student participants who were involved in these networks, wanting to create a system that had longevity, and would continue after their time at University was key. Although these networks were often organised through the student union the majority of students involved felt that student union policy and practice on these issues was no better, or in some cases worse, than institutional policies. For the student groups working within the student union, this was not seen as working *with* the student union on these issues, but rather a means to gain support and recognition on an institutional level that they felt would be impossible without being recognised as a student society or as a student officer. In considering again the complaints process as an 'unused path' (Ahmed, 2021:31), my data here suggests that through creating formally recognised networks within institutions,

students are attempting to forge paths through the complaints process for others to follow. The need for these informal support networks is unsurprising given my own findings, alongside recent data from the 1752 Group (2018) around student/staff complaints, that illustrates how complaints were blocked or complainants dissuaded from reporting by several forms of institutional barriers. For example, barriers took the form of three-month time limits on complaints of sexual harassment and, as I highlighted earlier, institutional policy that favoured informal resolutions in which the victim was encouraged to approach the person who was carrying out the bullying and harassment before making a formal complaint. The following section will explore how participants responded to their experiences of lad culture and sexual misconduct in personal ways.

7.3 Personal Response

This section explores responses to lad culture, in particular participants' personal responses to experiencing lad culture and the harassment bound up within this, across a variety of spaces. Many participants reported fear, and a consideration of risk, within their use of space, particularly in the NTE. Fear within the NTE is common amongst women of all ages (Sheard, 2011). My findings within this chapter highlight that fear particularly influences the ways in which students use space, particularly after dark and within the NTE. Participants developed personal responses in a variety of forms, for example changing and negotiating use of space, alongside a variety of tactics deployed within the NTE to avoid or stop harassment and increase feelings of safety, such as 'coupling' with friends to avoid or manage unwanted attention. Previous research has termed these tactics "safety strategies" (Gunby et al., 2019), and I argue within this section that although these strategies can be useful in mitigating harassment in some instances, the individualisation of these tactics can lead to a further sense of disempowerment for those who are unable, or unsuccessful in using these strategies to avoid harassment or sexual assault. As well as this, my data also highlights how some participants placed undue pressure on peers to be able to manage or mitigate harassment.

Participants also detailed responses or ways of managing lad culture online, using social media platforms to negotiate potential safe or unsafe spaces and practices. Alongside these more physical, spatial forms of personal response to lad culture, participants also outlined emotional personal responses to experiences of lad culture, including negative mental health implications, feelings of disempowerment, and longer lasting impacts such as withdrawal from their student social life or studies, and long-lasting trauma manifesting in a variety of different ways. I draw upon Sara Ahmed's (2004; 2019) work to untangle participants personal, spatial, emotional and embodied responses to experiences of lad culture, bound up with emotional responses such as trauma, fear and safety.

Within this section I also untangle spatial and temporal aspects of lad culture, through participants' continual (re)negotiation of space.

7.3.1 Changing Use of Space

Physically changing and adapting their use of space was outlined by women and LGBTQ+ participants as a response to experiencing, or fearing experiencing, negative aspects of lad culture, such as harassment, sexual harassment or unwanted touching. Participants suggested that this (re)negotiation of space was something that happened over time, as they continually experienced lad culture and harassment. For many participants, this stemmed from a fear of walking around the city alone, after dark:

> Kate, Case Study Institution 2
>
> *I have my headphones on when I'm walking around in the daytime all the time! But as soon as it gets dark, like I'm hyper aware of everything that's around me. I love going to the theatre, but obviously the theatre finishes at like ten, half ten at night, and there's always just the worry in the second half of like OK what route am I going to take home? What way's going to be the brightest? Where's going to have the most people? And then coming into winter, like now, it's dark at like four pm and I just don't really want to be out.*
>
> **Yeah.**
>
> *Yeah, but even like the gym, I love going to the gym and I love doing classes, but I go because there's a structure, you're in the for that amount of time, you know what you're doing, you go home. Because I'm scared of the real gym! And like I go in… Whenever I lived in… My student accommodation in first year had a gym there, I used to go to the gym at midnight, because from like four to eleven it was just full of like lads! (laughs). And like even if they weren't going to do anything, like I just wouldn't go in anyway because I don't want to open myself up to anything like that. And I feel like vulnerable because I'm in like leggings and a T-shirt and I would normally be quite like covered up, I wear leggings all the time but I still feel a little bit more vulnerable when I'm at the gym. And I just won't go if I think there's a lot of men in there or something like that. So that's why I just do classes. So yeah, it does influence like the things that I do and the things I want to do.*

The changing of use of space in this way, across a variety of spaces, was commonplace for many participants due to fear of assault or harassment. For some participants, such as Kate, this was contextual, as certain spaces within their student lives made them feel more 'vulnerable', such as the space of the gym within her student accommodation, and walking home alone after dark. This led to a number of self-imposed restrictions and regulations that participants placed on their own use of space. This looked different for different participants, but for most, this included not walking or travelling alone after dark around the city:

> Dominique, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *I mean as a girl, it's a lot harder to get home at night than like I suspect it would be as a boy. I mean I don't know, like obviously it's the status quo that like everyone likes being at clubs and stuff, but as a girl I feel really like… Like I can't walk home on my own, like that's something that I really feel I can't do, which is like you know the reality but it does kind of like mean that if I'm tired and I want to go home and everyone else is like still kind of having a good time, I feel like I need to be there, it means that I can't get home or like I can't go out to certain things because I'd have to walk home in the dark and that's very restrictive.*

This extract illustrates the temporality between fear and changing use of space for participants, as many participants who defined themselves as women described feeling unable to go out at night, or after dark:

> Michelle, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *I'm the type of person that my absolute dream is to be able to go out at night and like just walk around and like see like lights and like see all the people and stuff, and I like to be by myself, but I can't do that because I'm like scared of like getting raped or mugged, whatever. Just stuff like that, like there's always a threat, so I think it's kind of like relative. But definitely in the city I feel a bit more safe in terms of like where there's a lot of people. And even when I walk home like it's directly on a busy road, so it's not as bad but yeah, definitely like it does suck not being able to like just do what you kind of want at night.*

Their awareness of this was (re)enforced through their everyday experiences and encounters with lad culture, particularly through experiencing regular low-level harassment (e.g. street harassment,

or harassment in nightlife spaces). For Ahmed (2017), this fear and risk-based use of space is a form of self-management, rooted in expectation of violence, shrinking and restricting use of space based on previous experiences of gender-based violence. For participants within this research, this manifested across online and offline spaces, as space was re-negotiated based on previous experiences, perceptions of danger and 'warnings' that had been given from friends, peers and strangers on social media.

Understanding harassment through the politics of everyday spatial practice, several researchers within geography have explored how fear shapes women's use of space within cities (Valentine, 1995; Koslela, 2010) leading to a form of gendered spatial exclusion (Koslela, 1999) shaped not just by their own experiences but also other's perceptions (Wilson and Little, 2011). Building on this, my research here highlights how fear and restrictive use of space is not just shaped by harassment that is experienced across a variety of physical spaces within participants' everyday lives, but also by being continually aware of others' experiences though the sharing of experiences on social media, and also others' perceptions of what are considered safe and unsafe places, particularly for women and LGBTQ+ students.

7.3.2 Negotiating the Night Time Economy

Alongside changing their use of space and how they use city spaces, particularly after dark, many participants described having developed specific, personal, negotiation tactics in order to mitigate or avoid harassment within the NTE, when out at bars or nightclubs.

> Charlotte, Case Study Institution 1
>
> **Do you feel like that's something you experience quite a lot then?**
>
> *Yes!*
>
> **OK, and do you feel like you know ways to like handle it all, like mitigate it or …?**
>
> *I guess telling them to stop. Like what I've done quite a lot is like I'll… Because a lot of clubs have different floors obviously, I'll switch floors! To get away from them!*

For some participants, these tactics involved changes in behaviour and use of space, such as moving to a different floor in a nightclub. This was a common response to harassment amongst participants,

as they moved around nightclubs or bars, negotiating their use of space to avoid what (Gunby et al., 2019) term "the pick-up routine". Many participants considered it necessary to move around, or leave clubs or bars to avoid this, as well as having other tactics in place, such as 'buddying up' with friends to avoid unwanted attention or harassment. One participant described the importance of having these actions or tactics in place in order to feel safe going out to clubs or bars in the city centre:

> Ana, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *So if I ever do go out, which I do on occasion you know, I prefer to have that… Action or tactic in place, just for my own I don't know, paranoia. Yeah, because I'm not used to it, I've not grown up in it, like my room-mate, she goes out all the time in [name of city], in [name of another city], in [name of university city], and she's quite happy in that life, she'll happily walk home on her own.*
>
> **OK.**
>
> *I was like, can you text me when you get up there please, can you text me when you get home?*
>
> **Yes.**
>
> *I'm just like… I don't think I could do that very comfortably, I could do it you know walking home is not a hardship but.. It's feeling safe isn't it?*

Many participants described having tactics in place in order to negotiate feelings of unsafety within the NTE. These tactics can be seen as an extension of what Gunby et al., (2019) refer to as "safety strategies" that are used to manage unwanted sexual attention within the NTE. For participants, this included texting friends when they got to clubs or bars, phone-calling friends when walking home, only getting taxis home instead of walking alone, and texting friends to 'check-in' when they arrive home from a night out.

Participants also adopted 'micro-strategies'. One of the most common micro-strategies outlined by participants to negotiate feelings of safety within nightlife spaces was 'buddying up' with a friend who would then pretend to be their romantic partner for the night, in order to avoid or negotiate

harassment through feeling able to offer an excuse when expressing that they were not interested in unwanted sexual advances:

Hannah, Case Study Institution 1

I've done that before, like if you're out with a group of mates, you buddy up at the beginning of the night and say, if anything happens you're my girlfriend, and you have that. So if I go out with my flatmate and my boyfriend's not there, he becomes my honorary boyfriend for that night. So if there is a situation where I'm uncomfortable or he's uncomfortable with a girl, you're just, you're there and you… I feel like you have to do that just to stay safe, not that anyone would do anything but for your own, I don't know, protection, for your own mentality maybe.

This tactic was detailed by many participants as a way of feeling safe and protecting themselves from potential harassment within nightlife spaces, particularly in instances where they faced persistent unwanted sexual attention and harassment. Participants described arranging this pre-night out, by choosing a 'buddy' for the night, and this was detailed by participants to be either a friend of the same or opposite gender, although participants suggested that it was most effective when they buddied up to form imaginary heterosexual relationships. Following the heteronormative script within this buddying process was deemed beneficial to participants in a number of ways, due to the perception that men would be 'respected more' and therefore harassment would be less likely to occur, as well as avoiding the potential 'questioning' of non-heterosexual relationships that participants often experienced as bound up in harassment within nightlife spaces:

Joe, Case Study Institution 2

So I was in a bar once with one of my friends who was… She's engaged, she's a lesbian, and this guy was hitting on her in a bar and she was like, oh you know I have a girlfriend, and he was like, no I don't believe you, you're not lesbian, I don't believe you.

Classic!

Classic! Classic's right! And you know she's so used to it. And he didn't believe her, so he was like trying to talk to her for ages.

This highlights the role of the buddying tactic deployed by participants as having potential to reinforce the dominant narrative of mainstream university nightlife spaces as heteronormative. This reinforces the boundaries of 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' types of relationships within these spaces, through the performance of pretend heteronormative relationships in order to ward off harassment. This further (re)produces the Othering of non-heteronormative relationships within these spaces that are, as illustrated within the extract above, continually questioned and dismissed. This links back to findings outlined in Chapter 5, as this, alongside the coding of student spaces as hetero-normative, acts as 'double layer' of harassment for LGBT+ women in these spaces, as the delegitimisation of lesbian relationships is bound up within harassment and unwanted sexual advances.

Participants also described the performative nature of this 'buddy' system, through how 'far' these tactics had to be taken to effectively ward off harassment in these spaces:

Hannah, Case Study Institution 1

And do you think it works, like do you think they actually respect that?

It depends, it depends how far you go, because if you just say, oh you know he's my boyfriend and they're still there, put your arm round your waist or you know a kiss on the cheek, something like that and then they soon get the message. But if it's just, oh no he's my boyfriend…

Yeah, OK, so you have to actually like show that …

Yeah. It's so bad! Like you shouldn't have to do that on a night out but… I don't know, sometimes it's just… Sometimes it's just easier to do that than go through the whole hassle of saying no and then them following you round the dance floor or to the next club or whatever it is. Sometimes it's just easier to say, do you know what, I've got a boyfriend, he's over there, can you back off a bit please?

Despite deploying a number of tactics to avoid or mitigate harassment within the NTE, participants identified lack of confidence as a key barrier to challenging lad culture and harassment within these spaces. One participant suggested that through experiencing harassment a number of times within the NTE, that this had given her more confidence in negotiating potential risky scenarios that her flatmates, who had recently experienced harassment and stalking (this harassment had spilled over from the NTE into the space of their student flat) did not have:

Jill, Case Study Institution 1

Yeah, I suppose it's hard though if you've just started uni and …

Yeah.

… maybe having the confidence to say that, yeah.

Just turn round and say it. It is the confidence that comes with it, because like one of my flatmates then said later on in the day, and she was like, I need to be able to do what you do and just turn around and tell people to go away! And she was like… And I just turned round and was like that comes with a lot of practice, like I've had to deal with people like that before, so I know what you have to do and how to deal with it like that, instead of… Letting it keep going and escalating. Because like they got into the Uber with them and like this is what I would have done when I got out of the Uber was walk them towards the direction of reception instead of the flat.

Yeah.

Because if you walk into reception, the security guards are there and you just say these guys are following me, can you get them to leave please?

Yeah.

And then it would have all been dealt with like that, instead of what it was at five o'clock in the morning, we had these two random guys in our flat.

Accounts similar to Jill's were discussed by several participants. This shines a different light on the 'tactics' deployed within these spaces, as by individualising these incidences of harassment, this pushes the blame for incidences 'escalating' onto peers who are seemingly unable to mitigate or 'deal with' this harassment. This feeds into wider narratives of blame on those experiencing harassment or assault. Gunby et al. (2019) highlight a 'fine line' between wanted and unwanted sexual attention, and although my findings here suggest a more definitive difference between reciprocated sexual attention and what participants would consider as harassment in nightlife spaces. What was evident from participants accounts was that the tone of interactions could quickly shift from a conversation, to harassment or unwanted attention within the NTE:

> Charlotte, Case study institution 1
>
> *Yeah, I do it at concerts too, like if people keep on pushing into me and they're just being dicks, just I push them like after that, so like I know I can handle myself in that sense. But like when it comes to guys like… If I'm just talking to someone, to a guy and he starts… Starts like trying to be inappropriate, I just sort of freeze up and like I don't know what to do! I can't really be confrontational about it but I try to like go away, and I stand like… I stand like a certain distance away and like I have to get my friends and everything. But it's just… It's not a good situation to be in.*

My findings here suggest that interactions can quickly shift between friendly conversation, and harassment. This made harassment difficult to challenge as it was often unexpected. What is also evident from this extract is that Charlotte does not want to disrupt the norm within NTE spaces that are often coded around heterosexual coupling, suggesting that challenging this form of harassment may be more difficult than more obvious or noticeable forms of harassment, such as pushing into her at a concert. Several researchers have highlighted that young women within the NTE are often expected to manage risk and minimise harassment for themselves (Nichols, 2017; Gunby et al., 2019). My findings suggest that participants did hold this expectation of themselves, and put this into practice by attempting to manage harassment across a number of spaces. This included developing and organising tactics at home before a night out with friends, moving around different spaces within the NTE to mitigate potential harassment or assault. Despite this, it is evident that harassment can arise in unexpected scenarios, and leak out of the NTE into the street, or living spaces, and that participants felt that

without the confidence or preparedness to challenge harassment that their safety may be compromised as a result of interactions within the NTE.

7.3.3 Risk

Participants stated a number of risks, or fears that they held in relation to challenging lad culture and harassment on a personal level. This fear and acknowledgement of risk operated for participants over a number of scales. This included fears around challenging lad culture and harassment in certain contexts due to potential risk of violence, to fear of repercussions from reporting incidences of sexual assault or sexual misconduct to the institution. These risks are arguably further exasperated by the added burden of expectation that participants will challenge or manage harassment, particularly within the NTE. Participants mentioned that some campaigns present on campus heightened this burden, particularly for example the anti-bullying and harassment campaign run by the student union at Case Study Institution 1, that encourages those who experience or witness harassment to 'call it out', or to act as 'active bystanders' to intervene or manage harassment when they see it happening to others'. On the student union website, as part of the campaign the student union offered a number of 'tips' for students to intervene in instances of harassment before or after they have happened. This included intervening to stop the situation, distracting the perpetrator, as well as reporting the incident after it had occurred. A number of participants mentioned risks and fears around this campaign, and their ability to manage assault, harassment or sexual misconduct in this way:

> Lauren, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *There's [the student union campaign] isn't there, which is about sexual assault or like sexual misconduct which I think is like a really positive thing to have on campus but I think it can be a very daunting thing to do, like go and say to someone like this happened to me and naming and shaming and stuff is a very like scary thing to do.*

As outlined above, less confrontational, more preventative tactics such as buddying up with friends were viewed as lower risk by participants. For many participants, the expectation to 'call out' or diffuse harassment added another layer of fear and risk within their experiences of the NTE in particular. This is to be expected, as Nicholls (2017) highlights, for many young women (and some men and non-binary participants within my own research) their experiences of the NTE are shaped

by fear of violence, rape and sexual assault. Participants also discussed fears of escalated violence, which were further fuelled by high profile stories in the mainstream media, as a key risk in responding to lad culture and harassment:

Sofia, Case Study Institution 2

Do you feel like you challenge that or do you just not like engage with that…

I'd say I'm quite… I challenge people more than my mum would like, because my mum worries on like… Like in London there was... The lesbian couple on the double decker bus who were homophobically attacked or whatever and I mean, I think, if I'm not mistaken, I think one of them had actually responded back to the grief they were getting from the attackers like before they were attacked. And my mum worries about how… Like where I am! You have to pick where you… Like who you're actually challenging because sometimes… You have to weigh up the risk really which you shouldn't really have to live like that.

This 'weighing' up of risks was suggested to be undertaken by a number of participants, as a form of assessment around the potential of escalating violence, when challenging lad culture and harassment. Participants discussed this as context specific, as 'who' they are challenging and 'where' they are able to challenge these behaviours shape and alter their perceptions of risk and violence. Some participants suggested that this would be easier to do within the context of education spaces, and suggested feeling comfortable challenging prejudice within the context of the lecture theatre or seminar:

Sofia, Case Study Institution 2

And yeah, so I do challenge people, especially when it comes to like feminism and because I hate the ignorance of, because also a lot of the lads in like in university you come across, they're not… Like the way that I would say, like being like a democratic Socialist and being a feminist are like right to my core of my being, their ignorance towards feminism isn't right to the core of their being, it's a couple of like phrases that they've got off Twitter and they just regurgitate and think it's funny. And then so I'm very… I'd say I'm very quick to just actually challenge that and then it turns out that they actually end up being embarrassed and no one laughs at whatever they've said.

However, participants suggested that within nightlife spaces, such as bars and clubs within the city centre, the risk of challenging lad culture, harassment and unwanted sexual advances could be greater. The hyper-sexualised nature of these spaces also made harassment more difficult to challenge, as it was often both verbal and physical:

Charlotte, Case Study Institution 1

Do you like challenge that or is it just kind of accepted as part of-

I do challenge it when I can, but… I'm a little bit drunk and they're a bit drunk and I don't get plastered, like I know what I'm doing, like I just get a little bit fuzzy, so it gives you kind of liquid confidence to turn round and tell them it's not OK. But then sometimes you see them swing and you're like, right maybe get out of this situation! Sometimes they're literally doing it as they're running past. Like it's been times where there's been like a group of guys going past, someone's grabbed my ass, I turn round, I don't know who it is, and they're gone, like they haven't stopped to do anything, they don't want anything from you, they've just done it because they can and they've kept going. So you can't challenge that. But if someone does do anything to me, I do turn around and challenge them, but I think it's because I've had a few drinks as well. But I'm still scared because it gives… Like I know other girls that have challenged it and got punched, I don't want to be punched by a big boy! Because they're a lot stronger than I am!

For participants like Charlotte, this risk was further perpetuated by unwanted sexual advances that they were unable to challenge, both in relation to street harassment and nightlife spaces, when 'they're literally doing it as they're running past'. This left participants with a sense of disempowerment and lack of control over managing or resisting harassment within these spaces, despite deploying a toolbox of tactics to try and mitigate instances of this nature. This led to a cycle of fear and harassment for participants, as changing their behaviours, being hyper-aware of harassment and shaping their use of space based on this often proved insufficient in deflecting or avoiding harassment in these spaces.

For many participants, being able to personally challenge lad culture gave them some feeling of control over this, but many acknowledged that their ability to challenge these forms of harassment on an individual level had limitations:

Kate, Case Study Institution 2

It just kind of gives me the peace of mind that like I didn't just stand behind and let it happen, at least I did something. But I don't think it really makes a difference that much, I don't think me turning round and saying to someone means they're going to not do it to the next girl, they're just going to go and do it to an easier target. So yeah. Yeah, I do try to challenge but only like on nights out and stuff, like if it is someone shouting at me from a van, I just keep walking and I don't say anything then.

This extract highlights the responsibility that participants felt towards challenging lad culture and harassment when they experienced it, despite feeling that this would do very little in preventing others from experiencing the same thing in the future. This, within the wider context of the risk and disempowerment that participants felt as a result of experiencing harassment, suggests that institutional campaigns that encourage intervention on an individual level could be ineffective at best, and unsafe at worst.

Despite being aware of potential risks, in some spaces, particularly university learning spaces, participants did feel confident challenging lad culture and harassment. However it was evident that their ability to challenge lad culture was dependent on the individual, their level of confidence, perceived levels of risk, and where the harassment took place. Previous research (e.g. Labhardt et al., 2017; Gunby et al., 2019) has outlined how 'U.K. bystander intervention programs have been based on U.S. data, despite a lack of evidence around the factors that facilitate (or inhibit) bystanders from intervening and the inevitable cultural distinctions' (Gunby et al., 2019: 42). Within this research, Gunby et al. (2019:42) suggest that programmes on campus 'must be culturally sensitive and based on a nuanced understanding of the factors that influence harassment and assault'. Building on this, my data suggests that participants' ability to challenge harassment happening to themselves or others, or engage with 'bystander intervention' methods, is dependent on various factors such as risk perception, individual confidence, fear of retaliation and where the incident happened. The push for participants to challenge harassment or assault often added another level of individual pressure or risk.

7.3.4 Mental Health, Trauma and Lasting Impacts

Many participants discussed embodied personal responses to experiencing lad culture and harassment within their student lives. This was generally related to their mental health, and the lasting impacts that these experiences had on their lives, in a variety of ways. Several participants discussed feeling disempowered, and suffered trauma as a result of their experiences. As has been

discussed earlier in this chapter, the institutional or student union reporting systems that several participants turned to in order to file complaints often led to a double layer of trauma for participants, leading to alienation and ostracisation from the institution as well as some peer groups. Sara Ahmed draws on the intimacy of complaints, highlighting that 'the personal is institutional' (Ahmed, 2019:163). Several participants described the lasting mental health implications of experiencing lad culture and harassment within their student lives. One participant discussed experiencing lasting feelings of disempowerment:

> Ellie, Case Study Institution 2
>
> *I think it can be quite disempowering to women because I'm not sure you've experienced it yourself, when you go on a night out, you have a boy come up to you and they kind of grab your arm or they come up to you and make some sort of chat up line, you know you are flattered, but then when someone kind of comes up to you and grabs your bum, it's like… You're almost like, get off me, who do you think you are, it's that kind of thing. And I think that is definitely a huge thing that plays like the lad culture, showing confidence that you can have any girl that you want. But yeah, things that lads say you know if you're walking past, they come up to you, say the most ridiculous things and they joke about you, your body, the way you look, which is never always nasty things but it's something that I think makes you feel so self-conscious, body image, mental health… Anything you might say about the way someone looks or someone is, you never know what their mental health state is like or their wellbeing at that time.*

The lasting impacts of these experiences were referred to by participants as a result of a multitude of smaller incidences happening, as well as in relation to more serious incidences of sexual assault. Sara Ahmed (2004:25) suggests that 'the sensation of pain is deeply affected by memories, one can feel pain when reminded of past trauma by an encounter with another', and for some participants who experienced trauma from previous experiences of assault or harassment, their student lives became shaped by these memories, and the 'embodied existence' (Ahmed, 2004) of this pain and trauma. For some participants, this meant alienation from peer groups and a lack of trust in those around them (both peer groups and the institution).

As well as this, several participants withdrew from participation in their studies, often on an unofficial basis (still submitting assignments but not attending university in-person) due to the lasting trauma of these incidences. This was not deployed as much as a tactic to avoid or mitigate harassment, as outlined above, but as an emotional response to the trauma they experienced as a

result of sexual assault or harassment. Ellie further described her response to experiencing harassment and stalking after a night out:

Ellie, Case Study Institution 2

So has that meant that you're like going home earlier now and stuff like that?

Yeah, I nip home a little bit earlier. I make sure if I'm going back, I've got someone to go back with, flatmate or friend, I wouldn't go back on my own, I will push for Ubers, I tend to get Ubers and taxis, because I know it's a short distance to walk back, but I'll push for one of them rather than walk on the road, especially, if we go out in the week.

For some participants, this meant avoiding some nightlife spaces all together, such as mainstream nightclubs which, as outlined previously, were considered to be heteronormative spaces. Similar accounts were also detailed by other participants, for example Simon and Olivia who I introduced earlier, who felt unable to attend some student spaces (mainstream nightlife spaces and the student union).

For these participants, it wasn't only fear that shaped the way they were able to use these spaces, but also the potential for re-traumatisation. For Olivia, this also affected her university attendance, as incidences of assault and harassment, coupled with another layer of trauma from difficult interactions within the university reporting system, impacting their mental health and ability to engage with their studies:

Olivia, Case Study Institution 1

Yeah it did. Well it changed my uni experience. That's probably why I didn't go into uni. At the start of second year. I didn't go into uni, because I was like… I didn't want to be going into uni and now I've just like got into a bad habit. [laughing]… Now I'm in a bad habit [laughing], I can go into uni now but I'm just like, I can't be arsed. I'm literally telling people, like they sent me an email the other day being like, oh are you alright? They're like, you're attendance is quite low [laughing] and I'm like just say it… Go on [laughing]… My attendance is zero.

This example illustrates how through experiencing these incidences, participants were often left

alienated from their studies, often reinforced through negative experiences with university and student union reporting systems. This is relevant to acknowledge here in relation to the ways in which participants responded in personal, embodied ways to these experiences and how this subsequently shaped their use of space. Olivia elaborated further, on the lasting impacts she faced, that eventually resulted in her failing the year at university:

> Olivia, Case Study Institution 1
>
> *I was going to change courses anyway but I wasn't thinking that I was going to like, fail, completely, because I like failed some modules then because I stopped turning up completely. I don't know, I was also, I also like, I went… Like I don't really remember it, those few months, because I went insane. Like… When like… People… I don't know, I think people like some of my friends and that met me during that time, and I was like literally insane so they must have been like, what the fuck, she's mental, but I was actually just like insane for the whole month, like doing mad things, and so I don't really remember it that well. But yeah, that's why. That's why I failed first year.*

It is evident from these accounts that students' experiences of harassment and sexual assault have lasting impacts throughout their time at university. The pain and trauma felt by participants manifested in embodied ways, as university spaces served as both a reminder of their experiences, and also a potential unsafe space during the complaints process, as participants such as Olivia avoided campus spaces in order to avoid the perpetrator. Through considering the 'embodied existence' (Ahmed, 2004:25) of pain in this way, my data here suggests that university spaces become particular sites whereby pain is recognised through the trauma of past experiences for participants, 'affected by objects of perception that gather as one's past bodily experiences'. For some participants who had experienced sexual assault and harassment, avoiding campus all-together was seen as the only way to avoid the pain bound up within these spaces. This not only led to these participants being isolated from peers and support networks, but also led to them being unable to engage with their studies.

7.4 Concluding Comments

In this section I have explored responses to lad culture across three scales: institutional, collective and personal. I have structured this chapter in such a way as to highlight how participants often had

to form their own support networks and responses to lad culture and student sexual misconduct through both formal and informal avenues, as a result of institutional failings both within and around the official complaints system.

My data here offers an insight into specific approaches from Case Study Institution 1 that work as 'institutional airbrushing' (Phipps, 2020:230) around lad culture and student sexual misconduct. Staff interviews within my research highlight how, what I term the 'boundaries of responsibility' for the institution are not fixed, but rather shift and change dependent on the case in hand, and there is a particular grey area around whether it is the responsibility of the institution to handle complaints on harassment experienced within online spaces. Complaints are dealt with on a case-by-case basis, leading to a level of flexibility within the application of complaints procedures. Furthermore, staff are keen to push students towards informal resolutions between themselves and the perpetrator. Overall this creates a lack of transparency around the institutional complaints system which can be confusing and alienating for students who want to make a complaint and access support from the institution, acting as one of several institutional 'walls' (Ahmed, 2012) present within the system.

Students within this study formed their own collective responses to institutional failings in this area. This manifested in several key ways, in particular the formation of a student society to inform and support students who have faced these issues and may want to make a complaint, and also through electing student officers to undertake work in this area, in an attempt to reform the institutional complaints system from within. For participants, this collective response acted as a form of feminist consciousness raising (Ahmed, 2017), in an attempt to forge a path for future students who experience sexual assault or harassment to navigate through the complaints process.

Many participants who experienced sexual assault or harassment within their university lives described lasting pain and trauma, and this manifested in personal, embodied ways. Drawing on Sara Ahmed's (2004) work, in this section I have illustrated how student spaces, such as campus spaces or the NTE, become laden with pain for participants who have had traumatic experiences within and around these spaces. Recognising this is vital in order to understand how participants become both emotionally and geographically isolated from their usual university lives as a result of these experiences. I have chosen to include this as the final analysis section of my thesis, to highlight how students' emotional responses to these issues should be central to future discussions around policy reform in this area. Participants experiences here highlight the real-life implications of institutional failings in handling complaints around lad culture and student sexual misconduct, often leading to further pain and trauma, forming a sense of institutional betrayal (Smith and Freyd, 2013) for students.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

In this thesis I have offered an in-depth, intersectional analysis of what lad culture means to students at two case study HEIs in the North West of England, and the spaces in which it manifests both online and offline. I have also worked to unpack institutional responses to these issues, alongside collective and personal responses that participants formed as a result of their experiences. In the previous three chapters I have discussed this in relation to: 1) students experiences of lad culture at the two case study HEIs; 2) student's intersectional experiences of lad culture, taking into consideration the influence of sexuality, class, race and religion in shaping their experiences of lad culture within their student lives; 3) responses to lad culture at the two case study HEIs on three key levels, institutional, collective and personal.

There are four key contributions of this research that I outline within this chapter. The first three contributions of this research are empirical contributions. The first key finding is that lad culture as a form of gendered identity is central to student identity formation, which happens across both online and offline student spaces. The second, is that lad culture is not just harmful to women students, or uniformly harmful, but affects students who belong to minority groups in specifically harmful ways. Viewing lad culture through an intersectional lens within this
thesis has enabled an unpacking of the ways in which lad culture works to 'code' specific student spaces in ways that are experienced differently by different students. The third contribution of this thesis is that engaging with institutional policy and practice around lad culture and student sexual misconduct can often be problematic for students, leading to increased trauma as a result of 'institutional betrayal' (Smith and Freyd, 2013).

The fourth key contribution is theoretical in nature, outlining how my research advances previous theoretical understandings of masculinity within Geography, particularly how this can be understood as intersectional, advancing discussions on the pluralities that exist within masculinities on the intersection of other forms of identity category.

Within this chapter I also offer a number of reflections and suggestions, based on participants' experiences, to improve the ways in which Universities handle complaints and disclosures surrounding lad culture, harassment and student sexual misconduct

8.1 Lad Culture as Central to Student Identity Formation

In speaking to debates around lad culture and laddism within HEIs (e.g. Dempster, 2009; 2011;

Phipps and Young, 2013; Phipps et al., 2017) and student identity formation (Holdsworth, 2009; Holton and Riley, 2013; Holton, 2016), the first of my key findings is that lad culture is central to student identity formation, and this manifests across an 'online/offline continuum' (Ging and Siapera, 2018). My findings emphasise that the behaviours that participants identified as central to lad culture, for example heavy drinking and engagement with the NTE, jokes and banter, tight-knit friendship groups (the 'lads' group), initiations into student societies or sports teams, and private WhatsApp chats, were also considered by participants as integral to 'becoming a student' and assimilating into university life.

As previous research within student geographies has illustrated, as students progress through university, their interests and habits change (Chatterton, 1999). This was also the case with students' experiences of lad culture, which manifested as a form of performative gendered identity that they (re)negotiated throughout their student life-course. For example, for many participants, the groundwork for these 'laddish' bonds was set before attending university, as WhatsApp and Snapchat group chats were set up to connect students living in disparate places before they moved to their university city. This then progressed during freshers' week, as participants felt pressure to attend specific nightlife events, drink heavily, socialise regularly with flat mates and engage in society socials and initiations in order to get the full 'student experience'. These practices emphasise the ways in which laddish student identities are central to student identity formation, creating a sense of 'insider'/'outsider' between those who are able, or willing, to engage in lad culture, and those who aren't.

Alongside this, more WhatsApp group chats were set up for students to stay in contact, including 'banter' chats with sports teams or flatmates and chats for students studying particular subjects. Interactions between peers happen across online and offline spaces, for example through re-living the events of a society social the night before, or through connecting with flat-mates when away from the physical space of the student flat. The importance of this research finding is that it draws out more specifically the ways in which lad culture manifests across the online/offline continuum as part of student identity formation.

It is also evident from participants' accounts of social media use within their everyday student lives that 'learning the rules of the student game' (Holton, 2015:2373) is not just a face-to-face practice that manifests within physical student spaces, but is something that is developed and (re)negotiated *across* online and offline spaces. Geographers have previously argued against a binary between virtual and physical space, suggesting that 'online and offline interactions are constituted and constructed together to sustain and transform the complex temporalities and spatialities of everyday urban life' (Crang et al., 2007:2406). My findings here speak to this in relation to lad culture

within student identity formation, as the distinction between online and offline interactions between peers becomes blurred. This blurring of online and offline also makes evident the problems inherent in institutional boundary drawing around responsibility for student interactions within online spaces, that I explored within Chapter 7 of this thesis.

8.2 Viewing Lad Culture Spatially

The second key contribution of this research project is an understanding of the ways in which lad culture is specifically harmful to minority student groups, and how this manifests spatially. This finding has emerged through taking an intersectional lens when researching lad culture, and builds on previous work within geographies of masculinity that has considered masculinity as place-based and locally constructed (e.g. Hopkins, 2006; Hopkins and Noble, 2009; Richardson, 2015). My data shows that lad culture works to police the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable forms of masculinity within students' everyday lives.

In order to build on the findings of previous research that illustrates how lad culture acts as a dominant form of masculinity (e.g. Dempster, 2009; 2011; Phipps and Young, 2013; Phipps et al., 2017) and explore the ways in which this manifests *spatially* within UK HEIs, I turned to Ahmed's understanding of the 'comforts' of heterosexuality, in which the 'body sinks into a space that has already taken shape' (Ahmed, 2014:145). This has enabled me to pay specific attention to the spatialities of heteronormative and masculinist gendered power dynamics within student spaces. The centrality of lad culture within student identity formation means that student spaces are shaped or 'coded' in relation to this dominant form of student identity. Using the space of the student flat as an example, participants emphasised how bonds are formed between men in the flat who are able to engage in laddish interests, centred around girls, drinking and sports. Participants who identified as LGBTQ+ drew upon their experiences of feeling out of place within spaces of the student flat, due to peers assuming that they are heterosexual, in an attempt to make bonds based on dominant heteronormative assumptions. Drawing on Ahmed (2014), I suggest that heteronormativity is (re)produced through lad cultures within these spaces, acting as a form of 'public comfort' for students who fit the heteronormative mould, whilst making LGBTQ+ students feel out of place within these spaces. This understanding of how lad culture manifests spatially, provides a geographic understanding of the ways in which lad culture acts as a form of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1989) within everyday student spaces.

As well as this implicit 'coding' of spaces, my data also shows that there are several practices that are central to the (re)production of hetero-normative laddish masculinities within UK HEIs that further work to police the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable forms of masculinity and

sexuality within student identity formation. This included homophobic jokes and 'banter', which manifested across online and offline spaces for participants. Building on previous work that has identified 'banter' as a form of social currency (Jeffries, 2017), my data highlights that these jokes and banter are central to positioning heteronormativity as the dominant, and acceptable sexuality within UK HEIs. Racist jokes or 'banter' were also mentioned by participants as central to their experiences of lad culture, and for participants, this was reflective of racial prejudice and structural racism that they experienced in their wider everyday lives. Through masking sexism, racism and homophobia as laddish 'banter', this made these comments difficult to challenge for participants, working as a mechanism to centralise white, heteronormative, middle-class masculinities as hegemonic within the context of UK HEIs.

8.3 Institutional Policy and Complaints Systems

The third key finding of this research is that for students who experience sexual assault and harassment, engaging with the institutional or student union complaints processes can often add a layer of institutional trauma, stemming from perceived 'institutional betrayal' (Smith and Freyd, 2013). My findings show that this trauma stems from several key problems that participants encountered with the institutional complaints system.

One key issue that was highlighted by participants was the institutional push towards an informal resolution of complaints. Institutional staff members suggested throughout the research process that a 'case by case' basis for student complaints was most appropriate, as this would enable the institution to tailor the potential ramifications for the perpetrator to the severity of the incident, as well as encouraging students to resolve the complaint informally where the institution deemed appropriate. Ahmed (2021:180) refers to this approach to complaints as dealing with them 'behind closed doors' – meaning that the institution can choose to push students down the route of informal complaints without the right level of care or support. For some students, this meant that they had to undergo aspects of the complaints process that were in place in an attempt for the complaint to be resolved informally, before then proceeding on to make an official complaint. For many participants this left them fatigued, disillusioned with the process or too traumatised to carry on, often leading to them dropping the complaint. This, in turn, lowered the reporting figures for each institution and gave staff members a vastly underestimated sense of the number of students experiencing these issues.

A second key issue relating to the reporting system was a lack of transparency for students, from the institution and student union, both before they made a complaint and during the complaints

process. It has been suggested that senior leadership teams 'may be hesitant to encourage disclosures out of the (misplaced) fear that increased disclosure rates will negatively impact the institution's reputation' (Humphreys and Towl, 2020:110). For many participants, before they entered into the complaints process they did not know what this process would look like, meaning they were unable to make informed decisions about whether to make an official complaint. In following Ahmed's (2021) understanding of institutional complaints processes, I argue that this lack of transparency acts as a form of institutional violence as students are often not equipped with the tools to undergo official complaints processes. Some of the trauma experienced by participants within the complaints process was a direct result of this lack of transparency, as students were unable to adequately prepare, or have adequate support in place, before making their complaint. Participants who logged a formal complaint also were unsure what the potential ramifications would be for the perpetrator. For participants this meant that they often had to drop their case mid-way through the complaints process, leading to a further re-traumatisation and distrust in the institution.

A third key issue relating to the reporting system raised by participants was the lack of trained staff members to help students make informed decisions about accessing support and the complaints process. This was the focus of a student officer campaigning at Case Study Institution 1, although the institution repeatedly told student officers and the student union that there was no budget for this. This response reflects what Ahmed (2017:37) suggests is common in institutional diversity work, 'when you expose a problem you pose a problem'. For Jodie, a student officer at Case Study Institution 1, diversity work within the institution meant that she was invited to sit on panels and suggest ideas for improvement, but when she did suggest practical measures such as a trained staff member to support students on these issues, she faced repeated 'institutional barriers' (Ahmed, 2012) under the umbrella of budgeting issues. This also reflects increasingly neoliberal values within HEIs (Phipps, 2017), as profit and monetary gain are prioritised over student safety and wellbeing.

In analysing staff interviews, I found that institutional staff members often used manufactured boundaries of on/off campus and offline/online as an explanation as to why institutions were not 'responsible' for students within non-campus spaces. I argue, however, that these boundaries are blurred, and students would feel reassured to know that they could access support, or make a complaint to the university, regarding all aspects of their student life. This is particularly important given that perceived 'private spaces', such as commercial nightclubs in the city centre, online group chats and student house parties in privately rented accommodation, have all been identified as spaces in which students are most likely to experience assault, harassment or sexual misconduct. In drawing set boundaries of responsibility around on-campus and off-campus, and online and offline

spaces, institutions are overlooking the ways in which gendered violence moves across spaces and spheres, as a 'set of spatial relations' (Pain and Staeheli, 2014:345). These spaces are also a key part of what is 'sold' by institutions as part of 'the university experience'. Based on these findings, in the final section of this chapter I offer suggestions for improvements at institutional level.

8.4 Theoretical Contributions

Please add one more contribution focused on how your work furthers theoretical knowledge. This should focus on how you are progressing understandings of intersectionality and masculinity and complicating notions of singular student and lad identities. Reflect on what your work means and please be confident in demonstrating what you are able to illuminate in new and important ways.

The fourth key finding of my research is focused on the theoretical contributions that this research makes to several fields, namely work on masculinity and student identities, within Geography. The first of these contributions advances work on masculinity within Geography, particularly work that has explored how masculinity as a form of gendered identity is situated within, and shaped by, other intersecting forms of identity (e.g. Hopkins and Noble, 2009; Meth and McClymont, 2009). In considering lad culture as a form of masculinity within the context of UK HEIs, my research spatialises masculinity, through considering how lad culture as a form of masculinity is place-based, within the frameworks and context of UK HEIs. Framing this through the work of Sara Ahmed (2006), I apply Ahmed's theory to consider how lad culture as a form of dominant or hegemonic masculinity within student spheres 'shapes' spaces to 'fit' some student bodies over others. Theoretically, this spatialising of student lad cultures shines a new light on how lad cultures centralise white, heteronormative, middle class masculine identities as the norm within UK HEIs. This suggests that not only are student lad cultures shaped *by* student spaces, but in turn, student lad cultures also shape spaces that are central to student social life, through creating not quite visible boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable forms of gendered identity and sexuality.

Furthering this, the second of these contributions complicates previous work on students and student identity both within Geography, and work that has explored laddism and lad cultures within UK HEIs (e.g. Phipps and Smith, 2012; Phipps and Young, 2015; Phipps, 2017). In advancing work on lad cultures in UK HEIs through paying attention to how intersecting forms of identity shape and influence lad culture, my research complicates singular notions of 'student' and 'lad' identities. Through using an intersectional lens, as outlined above, my research adds nuance to existing research, particularly through a consideration of how student lad cultures sit within students racialised identities, sexuality and classed discourses. This is outlined in depth within the second analysis chapter of this thesis, but is also something that underpins discussion throughout the thesis as a whole. It is evident from my

findings that not only is lad culture a form of identity that students within UK HEIs can 'dip in and out of' (Phipps, 2017?), but is also a form of identity that exists within the complex and multiple forms of identity that students (re)negotiate throughout their time at university. One particular contribution of my research in this area is the nuanced understanding of LGBTQ+ students negotiations with lad cultures, specifically how lad culture is enacted as a performative form of masculinity, that centres hetero-sexed norms. This leads to lad culture being felt in particular ways by LGBTQ+ students, as they negotiate their own gendered identity and sexuality in line with the 'regulatory norms' centred by lad culture within student spheres.

These findings speak to work on laddism and lad cultures, unpacking the plurality in student masculine identities, particularly within the context of student lad culture. What this also suggests is that moving forward, future research on student lad cultures and laddism would do well focus increasingly on the nuanced, every day, *intersectional* experiences of students within the context of lad cultures.

8.5 Suggestions for Improvements at Institutional and Student Union Level

Although some participants' responses refer specifically to student union or institutional responses, I am suggesting a number of improvements for each, and overall would like to see a more streamlined approach coordinated between the student union and the university at each case study institution. Previous research has also suggested that where student unions and institutions worked together, this had the greatest impact on cultural change (UUK, 2016). Within my research, student union staff often felt that staff members at the institution were not supportive of their suggestions for improvement, blocking funding for trained staff members within the institution on student sexual misconduct. My suggestions are as follows:

1. **Building a transparent, robust institutional reporting system**

To improve this process, the two case study institutions need to adopt a robust reporting system in which students can make an initial point of contact with a trained professional on this issue. Students need to be offered mental health support throughout the process. Students also need to be able to access information on what the reporting process entails, exactly what they will be required to do at each stage, who will be able to view details of the complaint, who will be on the disciplinary panel and what the possible outcomes are for the perpetrator. If students are equipped with substantial knowledge about the complaints process prior to their first point of contact about the complaint, then they will be able to make an informed decision about whether to make an

informal or formal complaint. Several staff members within this research suggested that an anonymous complaints process would be a step towards helping students feel more confident in making complaints to the university. Although this may encourage students to come forward with complaints, I have concerns about the lack of support in place for students who do make anonymous complaints, particularly within the context of the current mental health crisis amongst students. If students were fully informed about the complaints system in an easy-to-access format then this would alleviate some of the barriers to making a formal complaint, though this must be backed up with appropriate mental health support.

2. **Trained staff members as a first point of contact to support students to make informed decisions**

In order to support a transparent, robust complaints system, it is imperative that the University and Student Union employ trained staff members who are able to support students in making informed decisions around the complaints system. Having trained staff members employed at institutional level to support students on issues related to sexual misconduct is needed urgently at both case study institutions to support students through disclosures. What this will also ensure is that students are able to access support when making a disclosure, and are also aware of a named point of contact to which they are able to make disclosures. This has also been recommended by the 1752 Group (2020) in relation to staff-student sexual misconduct. Within this, they also suggest that this contact should be a 'named, trained first point of contact' (1752 Group, 2020).

3. **Trained staff members on university disciplinary panels**

Another key issue that was raised by participants and student union staff members was the lack of trained staff on institutional disciplinary panels. Disciplinary panels were made up of institutional staff as well as other staff members from the university, usually academic staff, who had no specific training on issues related to student sexual misconduct. Elected officers from the student union who sat on disciplinary panels, also had received no training on these issues. One student union staff member who took part in my research said that she felt unequipped to take part in disciplinary panels of that nature. Although some diversity and equality training is offered to staff members that cover these issues at each case study institution, this is an online module that is optional. In order to improve the support given to students within the complaints process and to ensure a fair outcome from disciplinary panels, staff who take part in these panels should undergo compulsory training on handling disclosures and disciplinary procedures around student sexual misconduct.

4. **Move away from the institutional push towards informal resolutions**

Data within this thesis, particularly from within staff interviews, highlighted a clear institutional push towards informal resolutions between the victim and the perpetrator. This was clearly the preferred method of resolution for the institution over the formal complaints process. This meant that for complainants, such as Olivia whose experiences are discussed in Chapter 7, this often meant having to liaise with the perpetrator. Concerns with this approach have previously been identified by the NUS and UUK (2016:27) as this works to create 'an additional barrier to disclosure', as the victim often 'understandably does not want to, or feels unable to, approach the alleged perpetrator'.

5. **Clear duty of care established at all levels towards students, across both online and offline spaces**

In considering the perceived 'boundaries of responsibility' as outlined in Chapter 7, my fourth and final recommendation for each of the two case study institutions would be to establish a clear duty of care towards students, across online and offline spaces. As detailed in Chapter 7, at present the approach is to delineate a line of responsibility to protect the university from reputational damage rather than an approach that centres the care needed by a student who has been a victim of sexual assault or harassment. In contrast, I suggest that what is needed is a duty of care that should extend to all areas of student life, including online spaces, particularly given the blurring of online/offline spaces in relation to lad culture and student identity formation that I have discussed throughout this thesis. This would mean moving beyond current binary conceptualisations of online/offline spaces that are held within institutional policy and practice, and the development of policy that is applicable to both offline and online spaces, such as peer-to-peer WhatsApp group chats. This would also require communicating this policy clearly to students, and signposting them to a trained point of contact if they need support or are considering making a complaint.

8.6 Reflections and Directions for Future Research

A potential avenue for future research that would build on my findings from within this project is a further consideration into the ways in which aspects of student lad cultures are adopted and performed by LGBTQ+ students. Considering the intersections of gender and sexuality, some participants within my research suggested ways in which LGBTQ+ students of all genders adopted and performed lad culture in varying contexts. Participants considered the ways in which lesbian and bisexual women students adopted laddish forms of identity through their engagement within student sports clubs, such as within Eve's account in Chapter 5 of lad culture on the university

women's football team. Others explored the potential for lad culture to be present within LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces, manifesting as a form of competitive gay masculinity within the mainstream gay clubbing venues within the city centre. Although this has only been briefly explored within the context of this thesis, what this suggests is future avenues of research relating to student lad culture and LGBTQ+ identities. How LGBTQ+ students experience lad culture has only recently begun to be explored within research (Diaz-Fernandez and Evans, 2021). My research suggests there are future avenues of inquiry around how lad culture is adopted and 'queered' by some students, and how this can act as a form of hegemonic masculinity within the context LGBTQ+ student groups.

References

Ahmed, S. (2004). The Cultural Politics of Emotion. Duke University Press: Durham and London.

Ahmed, S. (2006). Orientations: Towards a Queer Phenomenology. QLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies. 12(4). 543-574.

Ahmed, S. (2012). On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life. Duke University Press: Durham and London.

Ahmed, S. (2017). Living A Feminist Life. Duke University Press: Durham and London.

Ahmed, S. (2021). Complaint!. Duke University Press: Durham and London.

Ahmed, W., Bath, P. and Demartini, G. (2017). Chapter 4: Using Twitter as a Data Source: An Overview of Ethical, Legal, and Methodological Challenges. 79-107. In: Woodfield, K., (ed.) The Ethics of Online Research. Advances in Research Ethics and Integrity. Emerald Publishing Limited: Bingley.

Allan, E., Kerschner, D., and Payne, J. (2019). College Student Hazing Experiences, Attitudes, and Perceptions: Implications for Prevention. Journal of Student Affairs, Research and Practice. 56(2). 1-17.

Andersson, J., Sadgrove, J. and Valentine, G. (2012). Consuming Campus: Geographies of Encounter at a British University. *Social and Cultural Geography*. 13(5): 501–515.

Anderson, E., and McGuire, R. (2009). Inclusive Masculinity Theory and the Gendered Politics of Men's Rugby. *Journal of Gender Studies*. 19(3). 249-261.

Aronson, P. (2003). Feminists or "Postfeminists?. *Gender and Society.* 17(6). 903-922.

Atherton, J. (2009). Domesticating Military Masculinities: Home, Performance and the Negotiation of Identity. *Social and Cultural Geography.* 10(8). 821-836.

BBC News, 2019. Inside the Warwick University rape chat scandal. [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-48366835> [Accessed 30 September 2020].

Ball, S. (2012). Performativity, Commodification and Commitment: An I-Spy Guide to the Neoliberal University. *British Journal of Education Studies.* 60(1). 17-28.

Bargh, J., and McKenna, A. (2004). The Internet and Social Life. *Annual Review Psychology.* 55. 573-590.

Banet-Weiser, S., and Milter, K. (2015). #MasculinitySoFragile: Culture, Structure, and Networked Misogyny. *Feminist Media Studies.* 16(1). 171-174.

Batty, M. (1997). Virtual geography. *Futures.* 29(4).337–352.

Bell, D., and Valentine, G. (1995). Mapping Desire: Geographies of Sexualities. New York: Routledge.

Bell, D., Binnie, J., Cream, J., Valentine, G. (1994). All Hyped up and no Place to go. *Gender, Place and Culture.* 1(1). 31-47.

Benjamin, J. (2017). Beyond Doer and Done to: Recognition Theory, Intersubjectivity and the Third. Routledge: London/New York.

Berg, L., and Longhurst, R. (2003). Placing Masculinities and Geography. *Gender, Place and Culture.*

10(4). 351-360.

Bilge, S. (2013). Intersectionality Undone: Saving Intersectionality from Feminist Intersectionality Studies. *Social Science Research on Race*. 10(2). 405-424.

Binnie, J., & Valentine, G. (1999). Geographies of Sexuality: A Review of Progress. *Progress in Human Geography.* 23(2). 175-187.

Bird, S. (1996). WELCOME TO THE MEN'S CLUB: Homosociality and the Maintenance of Hegemonic Masculinity. *Gender and Society.* 10(2). 120-132.

Bondi, L. (1990). Progress in Geography and Gender: Feminism and Difference. *Progress in Human Geography.* 14(3). 438-445.

Bondi, L., and Davidson, J. (2003). Troubling the Place of Gender. In: Anderson, K., Domosh, M., Pile, S., Thrift, N. (Eds). Handbook of Cultural Geography. Sage, London. 325-344.

Bonner-Thompson, C. (2017). 'The Meat Market': Production and Regulation of Masculinities on the Grindr Grid in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, UK. Gender, Place and Culture. 24(11). 1611-1625.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The Forms of Capital. In: Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education. Eds: Richardson, J. Greenwood, New York. 241-258.

Bordo, S. (1992). Postmodern Subjects, Postmodern Bodies. *Feminist Studies*. 18(1), 159-175.

Brandth, B. (2015). Rural Masculinities and Fathering Practices. *Gender, Place and Culture.* 23(3). 435-450.

Browne, K. (2006). Challenging Queer Geographies. *Antipode*. 38(5). 885-893.

Browne, K. (2007). (Re)making the Other, Hetero-sexualising Everyday Space. *Environment and Planning* A. 39(4). 996-1014.

Brubaker, R., and Cooper, F. (2000). Beyond "Identity". *Theory and Society.* 29(1). 1-47.

Britton, J. (2019). Muslim Men, Radicalised Masculinities and Personal Life. *Sociology*. 53(1). 36-51.

Brown, M & Staeheli, L. (2003). 'Are we there yet?': Feminist Political Geographies. *Gender, Place & Culture*. 10(3). 247-255.

Brown, G., and Kraftl, P. (2019) Theorising Cohortness: (Mis)Fitting into Student Geographies. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*. 44(3). 616-632.

Bryman, A. 2016. *Social Research Methods*. 4th edn. Oxford University Press. Oxford.

Butler, J. (1990). Gender Trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity. Abingdon: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1993). Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex". London: Routledge.
Calhoun, C. (2003). 'Belonging' in the Cosmopolitan Imaginary. Ethnicities. 3(4). 531-568.

Cannella, G., and Koro-Ljungberg,M. (2017). Neoliberalism in Higher Education: Can We Understand? Can We Resist and Survive? Can We Become Without Neoliberalism?. *Cultural Studies – Critical Methodologies*. 17(3). 155-162.

Carrigan, T, Connell, B and Lee, J. (1985). Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity. *Theory and Society.* 14 (5): 551-604.

Chatterton, P. and Hollands, R. (2003). Urban Nightscapes: Youth Cultures, Pleasure Spaces and Corporate Power. London: Routledge.

Chatterton, P. (1999). University Students and City Centres - The Formation of Exclusive Geographies: The Case of Bristol, UK. *Geoforum.* 30. 117–133.

Christensen, A., and Jensen, S. (2014). Combining Hegemonic Masculinity and Intersectionality. *International Journal for Masculinity Studies.* 9(1). 60-75.

Christie, H., Cree, V., Mullins, E., and Tett, L. (2017). 'University Opened up so Many Doors for Me': The Personal and Professional Development of Graduates from Non-Traditional Backgrounds. *Studies in Higher Education.* 1-11.

Clayon, B., Harris, J. (2011). Our Friend Jack: Alcohol, Friendship and Masculinity in University Football. *Annals of Leisure Research.* 3. 311-330.

Cloke, P., Cook, I., Crang, P., Goodwin, M., Painted, J., and Philo, C. (2004). Practicing Human Geography. London: SAGE.

Collins, P. (1998). Intersections of Race, Class, Gender and Nation: Some Implications for Black Family Studies. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies.* 29(1). 27-36.

Collins, P. (2015). Intersectionality's Definitional Dilemmas. Annual Review of Sociology. 4(1). 1-20.

Conradson, D. (2005). Focus Groups. In: Flowerdew, R and Martin D*. Methods in Human Geography: A Guide for Students Doing a Research Project*. Harlow: Pearson Prentice Hall. 128-143.

Connell, R.W. (1987). *Gender and Power.* Stanford University Press. Stanford, California.

Connell, R.W. (1995). Masculinities. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Connell, R. W. & Messerschmidt, J. (2005). Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept. *Gender and Society.* 19(6). 829-859.

Coventry Telegraph, 2019. Students Suing University of Warwick Over Rape Group Chat Scandal. [online] Available at: <https://www.coventrytelegraph.net/news/coventry-news/warwick-university-rape-scandal-16395989> [Accessed 30 September 2020].

Crang, M., Crosbie, T., Graham, S. (2007). Technology, Time-Space, and the Remediation of Neighborhood Life. *Environment and Planning A*. 39(10): 2405– 2422.

Crawley, S. (2012). Autoethnography as Feminist Self-Interview. In: *The SAGE Handbook of Interview Research: The Complexity of the Craft.* 43-160. SAGE: London.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review.* 43. 1241-1299.

Cupples, J., and Thompson, L. (2010). Heterotextuality and Digital Foreplay. *Feminist Media Studies.* 10(1). 1-17.

Datta, K., McIlwaine, C., Herbert, J., Evans, Y., May, J., and Wils, J. (2008). Mobile Masculinities: Men, Migration and Low Paid Work In London. Queen Mary University of London.

Dawson (2014). Our anonymous online research participants are not always anonymous: Is this a problem?. *British Journal of Educational Technology.* 45(3). 428-437.

Dempster, S. (2009). Having the Balls, Having It All? Sport and Constructions of Undergraduate Laddishness. *Gender and Education*. 21(5): 481–500.

Dempster, S. (2011). I Drink Therefore I'm Man: Gender Discouses, Alcohol and the Construction of British Undergraduate Masculinities. *Gender and Education*. 23(5): 635–653.

Denscombe, M. (1998). The Good Research Guide. Open University Press: Buckingham.

Diaz- Fernandez, S., and Evans, A. (2019). "Fuck off to the tampon bible": Misrecognition and researcher intimacy in an online mapping of "lad culture". *Qualitative Enquiry.* 25(3). 237-247.

Diaz-Fernandez, S., and Evans, A. (2021). (Mis)recognition within Heterogendered Lad Culture: LGBTQAI+ Students Subjectivities in Higher Education. *Gender and Education.* 34(3). 346-361.

Dignam, P., and Rohlinger, D. (2019). Misogynistic Men Online: How the Red Pill Helped Elect Trump. *Signs: Journal of Women and Culture in Society.* 44(3). 589-609.

Doan, P. (2010). The Tyranny of Gendered Spaces – Reflections from Beyond the Gender Dichotomy. *Gender, Place and Culture*. 17(5). 635-654.

Donaldson, M. (1993). What is Hegemonic Masculinity? *Theory and Society*. 22. 643–657.

Dwyer, C., Shah, B., and Sanghera, G. (2008). 'From Cricket Lover to Terror Suspect' – Challenging Representations of Young British Muslim Men. *Gender, Place and Culture.* 15(2). 117-136.

Dyck, I. (2005). Feminist Geography, the 'Everyday, and Local-Global Relations: Hidden Spaces of Place-Making. *The Canadian Geographer.* 49(3). 233-243.

Elliott, K., (2019). Bringing in Margin and Centre: 'Open' and 'Closed' as Concepts for Considering Men and Masculinities. *Gender, Place and Culture.* 27(12). 1723-1744.

Ellis, S. (2009). Diversity and Inclusivity at University: A Survey of the Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) Students in the UK. *Higher Education*. 57. 723-739.

Ellwood, S., and Leszczynski, A. (2018). Feminist Digital Geographies. *Gender Place and Culture.* 25(5). 629-644.

England, K. (1994). Getting Personal: Reflexivity, Positionality, and Feminist Research. *The Professional Geographer. 46*(1). 241–257.

Fluri, J., and Piedalue, A. (2017). Embodying violence: Critical geographies of gender, race and culture. Gender Place and Culture. 24(4). 534-544.

Fox, F., Morris, M., and Rumsey, N. (2007). Doing Synchronous Online Focus Groups with Young People: Methodological Reflections. *Qualitative Health Research.* 17(4). 539 – 547.

Fraser, N. (2000). Rethinking Recognition. *New Left Review*. 3. 107-120.

Fraser, N. (2013). Fortunes of Feminism: From State-Managed Capitalism to Neoliberal Crisis. Verso: London.

Ging, D., and Siaperam E. (2018). Special Issue on Online Misogyny. *Feminist Media Studies*. 18(4). 515-524.

Gorman-Murray, A. (2008). Masculinity and the Home: A Critical Review and Conceptual Framework. *Australian Geographer.* 39(3). 367-379.

Gorman-Murray, A. (2012). Urban Homebodies: Embodiment, Masculinity and Domesticity in Inner Sydney. *Geographical Research.* 51(2). 137-144.

Gorman-Murray, A., and Hopkins, P. (2018). Andrew Gorman-Murray and Peter Hopkins in Conversation: Reflections on Masculinities and Sexualities Research on Gender, Place and Culture's 25th Anniversary. *Gender, Place and Culture.* 25(3). 317-324.

Graham, S.(1998). The End of Geography or the Explosion of Place? Conceptualizing Space, Place and Information Technology. *Progress in Human Geography*. 22(2). 165-185.

Gregson, N., Rose, G. (2000). Taking Butler Elsewhere: Performativities, Spatialities and Subjectivities. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. 18(4). 433-452.

Gunby, C., Carline, A., Taylor, S., Gosling, H. (2020). Unwanted Sexual Attention in the Night-Time Economy: Behaviours, Safety Strategies, and Conceptualizing "Feisty Femininity". *Feminist Criminology*. 15(1). 24-46.

Hall, D & Hall, I. (2004) Evaluation and Social Research Introducing Small-Scale Practice. Palgrave McMillan: Hampshire.

Halliwell, J. (2021). 'Are you sure you're not gay?': Straight and Bisexual Male Experiences of Eurovision Song Contest Fandom. *Social and Cultural Geography*. 1-18.

Harding, S. (1993). Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What Is Strong Objectivity?. In: *Feminist Epistemologies*. 49-82. Routledge: New York and London.

Hartsock, N. (1983). The Feminist Standpoint: Developing the Ground for Specifically Feminist Historical Materialism. Tuana, N., and Tong, R eds. In: *Feminism and Philosophy.* Routledge: New York.

Haslop, C., and O'Rourke, F. (2020). 'I mean, in my opinion, I have it the worst, because I am white. I am male. I am heterosexual': Questioning the Inclusivity of Reconfigured Hegemonic Masculinities in a UK Student Online Culture. *Information, Communication and Society*. 1-5.

Haslop, C., O'Rourke, F., and Southern, R. (2021). #nosnowflakes: The Toleration of Harassment and an Emergent Gender-Related Digital Divide, in a UK Student Online Culture. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies.* 27(5). 1418-1438.

Holdsworth, C. (2006). 'Don't You Think You're Missing Out, Living at Home?' Student Experiences and Residential Transitions. *The Sociological Review*. 54(3). 495-519.

Holdsworth, C. (2009). Between Two Worlds: Local Students in Higher Education and 'Scouse'／Student Identities. *Population, Space and Place*. 15: 225–237.

Holmegaard, H., Madsen, L., and Ulriksen, L. (2017). Why Should European Higher Education Care about the Retention of Non-Traditional Students? *European Educational Research Journal*. 16(1). 3-11.

Hollingworth, S. and Williams, K. (2009). Constructions of the Working-Class 'Other' Among Urban, White, Middle-class Youth: 'Chavs' Subculture and the Valuing of Education. *Journal of Youth Studies.* 12(5). 467-482.

Holt, M., and Griffin, C. (2005). Students Versus Locals: Young Adults' Constructions of the Working-Class Other. *British Journal of Social Psychology*. 44(2). 241-267.

Holton, M. (2015). Adapting Relationships with Place: Investigating the Evolving Place Attachment and 'Sense of Place' of UK Higher Education Students During a Period of Intense Transition. *Geoforum*. 59. 21-29.

Holton, M. (2016a). The Geographies of UK University Halls of Residence: Examining Students' Embodiment of Social Capital. *Children's Geographies.* 14(1). 63-76.

Holton, M. (2016b) Living Together in Student Accommodation: Performances, Boundaries and Homemaking. *Area.* 48(1). 57-63.

Holton, M. (2017). Examining Students' Night-Time Activity Spaces: Identities, Performances, and Transformations. *Geographical Research.* 55(1). 70-79.

Holton, M. (2018). Traditional or Non-traditional Students?: Incorporating UK students' Living Arrangements into Decisions About Going to University. *Journal of Further and Higher Education.* 42(4). 556-569.

Holton, M. and Riley, M. (2013) Student Geographies: Exploring the Diverse Geographies of Students and Higher Education. *Geography Compass.* 7(1). 61–74.

Holton, M., and Riley, M. (2016). Student Geographies and Homemaking: Personal Belonging(s) and Identities. *Social and Cultural Geography.* 17(5). 623-645.

Holton, M., and Finn, K. (2020). Belonging, Pausing, Feeling: A Framework of "Mobile Dwelling" for UK University Students that Live at Home. *Applied Mobilities.* 5(1). 6-20.

hooks, b. (2015). The Will To Change: Men, Masculinity and Love. Routledge: London.

Hopkins, J. (2000). Signs of Masculinism in an Uneasy Place: Advertising for Big Brothers. *Gender, Place and Culture*. 7. 31–55.

Hopkins, P. (2006). Youthful Muslim Masculinities: Gender and Generational Relations. *Transactions.* 31(3). 337-352.

Hopkins, P. (2007). Young People, Masculinities, Religion and Race: New Social Geographies. *Progress in Human Geography.* 31(2). 163-177.

Hopkins, P. (2009). Responding to the 'Crisis of Masculinity': The Perspectives of Young Muslim Men from Glasgow and Edinburgh, Scotland. *Gender, Place and Culture.* 16(3). 299-312.

Hopkins, P., & Noble, G. (2009). Masculinities in Place: Situated Identities, Relations and Intersectionality. *Social and Cultural Geography.* 10(8). 811-819.

Hopkins, P., and Pain, R. (2007). Geographies of Age: Thinking Relationally. *Area.* 39(3). 287-294.

Hubbard, P. (2013). Carnage! Coming to a Town Near You? Nightlife, Uncivilised Behaviour and the Carnivalesque Body. *Leisure Studies.* 32(3). 265-282.

Hutton, F. (2004). Up for it, Mad for it? Women, Drug Use and Participation in Club Scenes. *Health, Risk and Society*. 6(3). 223-237.

Humphreys, C., and Towl, G. (2020). Addressing Student Sexual Violence in Higher Education. Emerald Publishing Limited: Bingley.

Hyams, M. (2004). Hearing Girls' Silences: Thoughts on the Politics and Practices of a Feminist Method of Group Discussion. *Gender Place and Culture.* 11(1). 105-119.

Hyndman, J. (2004). Mind the Gap: Bridging Feminist and Political Geography through Geopolitics. *Political Geography*. 23(3). 307-322.

Jackson, P. (1991). The Cultural Politics of Masculinity: Towards a Social Geography. *Transactions, Institute of British Geographers*. 16. 199-213.

Jackson, P. (1994). Black Male: Advertising and the Cultural Politics of Masculinity. *Gender, Place and Culture*. 1. 49-59.

Jackson, C. (2003). Motives for 'Laddishness' at School: Fear of Failure and Fear of the 'Feminine'. *Educational Research Journal.* 29(4). 583-598.

Jackson, C. (2010). 'I've Been Sort of Laddish With Them … One of the Gang': Teachers' Perceptions of 'Laddish' Boys and How to Deal with Them. *Gender and Education.* 22(5). 505-519.

Jackson, C., Dempster, S. (2009). "I sit back on my computer…. With a bottle of whiskey next to me". Constructing 'Cool' Masculinity Through 'Effortless' Achievement in Secondary and Higher Education. *Journal of Gender Studies.* 4. 341-356.

Jackson, C., Dempster, S., and Pollard, L. (2015). "They just don't seem to really care, they just think it's cool to sit there and talk": Laddism in University Teaching-Learning Contexts*. Educational Review*. 67(3). 300-314.

Jackson, C., and Nystrom, A-S. (2015). 'Smart students get perfect scores in tests without studying much': Why is an Effortless Achiever Identity Attractive, and for Whom is it Possible?. *Research Papers in Education*. 30(4). 393-410.

Jackson, C., Sundaram, S. (2015). Is Lad Culture a Problem in Higher Education? Exploring the

Perspectives of Staff Working in UK Universities. *Society for Research Into Higher Education.* 1-9.

Jackson, C., and Sundaram, V. (2020). Lad culture in Higher Education: Sexism, Sexual Harassment and Violence. Routledge: London.

Jane, E. (2016). Online Misogyny and Feminist Digilantism. *Continuum.* 30(3). 284–297.

Janning, M., and Volk, M.A. (2017). Where the Heart is: Home Space Transitions for Residential College Students. *Children's Geographies.* 15(4). 478-490.

Johnston, L. (2016). Gender and Sexuality I: Genderqueer Geographies?. *Progress in Human Geography*. 40(5). 668-678.

Jordan, A., Anitha, S., Jameson, J., and Davy, Z. (2022). Hierarchies of Masculinity and Lad culture on Campus: Bad Guys, Good Guys and Complicit Men. *Men and Masculinities*. 1-23.

Jowett, M. and O'Toole, G. (2006). Focusing Researchers Minds: Contrasting Experiences of Using Focus Groups in Feminist Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Research*. 6(4). 453-472.

Jozkowski, K., and Wiersma – Mosley, J. (2017). The Greek System: How Gender Inequality and Class Privilege Perpetuate Rape Culture. 66(1). 89-103.

Kehily, M J., and Nayak, A. (2010). Gender, Youth and Culture: Young Masculinities and Femininities. Macmillan: London.

Keller, J., Mendes, K., Ringrose, J. (2018). Speaking 'unspeakable things': Documenting Digital Feminist Responses to Rape Culture. *Journal of Gender Studies.* 25. 22-36.

Kimble, M., Neacsiu, A., Flack, W., and Horner, J. (2008). Risk of Unwanted Sex for College Women: Evidence for a Red Zone. *Journal of American College Health*. 57(3). 331-338.

Kenny, A. (2005). Interaction in Cyberspace: An Online Focus Group. Journal of Advanced Nursing. 49(4). 414-422.

Kettley, N. (2007). The Past, Present and Future of Widening Participation Research. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*. 28(3): 333-347.

Kitchin, R. (1998). Towards Geographies of Cyberspace. *Progress in Human Geography.* 22(3). 385-406.

Kitchin, R and Tate, N. (2000). Conducting Research into Human Geography, Theory, Method and Practice. Pearson Education Limited: Harlow, England.

Kitzinger, J. (1994). The Methodology of Focus Groups: The Importance of Interaction Between Research Participants. *Sociology of Health and Illness.* 16(1). 103-121.

Koulouris, T. (2018). Online Misogyny and the Alternative Right: Debating the Undebatable. *Feminist Media Studies.* 18(4). 750-761.

Koslela, H. (1999). 'Gendered Exclusions': Women's Fear of Violence and Changing Relations to Space. *Geografiska Annaler, Human Geography*. 81(2). 111-124.

Koslela, H. (2010). 'Bold Walk and Breakings': Women's spatial confidence versus fear of violence. *Gender, Place and Culture.* 4(3). 301-320.

Kwan, M-P. (2007). Affecting Geospatial Technologies: Toward a Feminist Politics of Emotion. *The Professional Geographer.* 59(1). 22-34.

Labhardt, D., Holdsworth, E., Brown, S., and Howart, D. (2017). You See But You Don't Observe: A Review of Bystander Intervention and Sexual Assault on University Campuses. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*. 35. 13-25.

Latham, A. (2003). Research, Performance and Doing Human Geography: Some Reflections on the Diary-Photograph, Diary-Interview Method. *Environment and Planning A.* 35(11). 1993-2017.

Lawless, W., and Magrath, R. (2020). Inclusionary and Exclusionary Banter: English Club Cricket, Inclusive Attitudes and Male Camaraderie. *Sport in Society*. 24(8). 1493-1509.

Longhurst, R. (2000). Geography and Gender: Masculinities, male identity and men. *Progress in Human Geography.* 24(3). 439-444.

Longhurst, R. (2013). Using Skype to Mother: Bodies, Emotions, Visuality and Screens. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space.* 31. 664-679.

Luft, R. (2010). Intersectionality and the Risk of Flattening Difference. In: Berger, M., and Guidroz, K (eds). *The Intersectional Approach: Transforming the Academy Through Race, Class and Gender.* 100-117. The University of North Carolina Press.

Macnaughten, P. and Myers, G. (2004). Focus Groups. In: Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J., and Silverman, D. (eds). *Qualitative Research Practice*. 65-79. London: Sage.

Madge, C., Meek, J., Wellens, J., & Hooley, T. (2009). Facebook, Social Integration and Informal Learning at University: It is More for Socialising and Talking to Friends About Work Than for Actually Doing Work?. *Learning, Media and Technology.* 34. 141-155.

Maguire, P. (2001). Uneven Ground: Feminisms and Action Research. In: *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*. 59-60. 1st Ed. Chapter 5. Publisher: SAGE: London.

Mahtani, M. (2002). Tricking the Border Guards: Performing Race*. Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. 20. 425-440.

Marson, S., Jones, J., Woodward, K. (2005). Human Geography without Scale. *Transactions.* 30(4). 416-432.

Marwick, A., and Caplan, R. (2018). Drinking Male Tears: Language, the Manosphere and Networked Harassment. *Feminist Media Studies.* 18(4). 543-559.

Matich, M., Ashman, R., & Parsons, E. (2019). #Freethenipple - Digital Activism and Embodiment in the Contemporary Feminist Movement. *Consumption Markets & Culture*. 22(4). 337-362.

Maynard, M. and Purvis, J. (1995). *Researching Women's Lives from a Feminist Perspective*. Taylor and Francis: London.

McDowell, L. (1992). Doing Gender: Feminism, Feminists and Research Methods in Human

Geography. *Transactions.* 17(4). 399-416.

McDowell, L. (2000). The Trouble with Men? Young People, Gender Transformations and the Crisis of Masculinity. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research.* 24(1). 201-209.

McDowell, L. (2002). Transitions to Work: Masculine Identities, Youth Inequality and Labour Market Change. *Gender, Place and Culture*. 9. 39-59.

McDowell, L., and Court, G. (1994). Performing Work: Bodily Representations in Merchant Banks. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space.* 12. 727-750.

Meth, P., and McClymont, K. (2009). Researching Men: The Politics and Possibilities of a Qualitative Mixed-Methods Approach. *Social and Cultural Geography*. 10(8). 909-925.

Nelson, L. (1999). Bodies (and Spaces) do Matter: The Limits of Performativity. *Gender Place and Culture*. 6(4). 331-353.

MacNaghten, P. and Myers, G. (2004). Focus Groups. In: *Qualitative Research Practice*. SAGE: London. 65-79.

Mazar, L., and Kirkner, A. (2016). Fraternities and Campus Violence: Risk, Protection and Prevention. Violence and Gender. 3(3).

McRobbie, A. (2004). Post-Feminism and Popular Culture. *Feminist Media Studies*. 4(3). 255-264.

Moller, M. (2007) Exploiting Patterns: A Critique of Hegemonic Masculinity. *Journal of Gender Studies*. 16(3). 263-276.

Moore, T., KcKee, K., and McLoughlin, P. (2015). Online Focus Groups and Qualitative Research in the Social Sciences: Their Merits and Limitations in a Study of Housing and Youth. *People, Place and Policy*. 9(1). 17-28.

Morrow, O., Hawkins, R., Kern, L. (2015). Feminist Research in Online Spaces. *Gender, Place and Culture.* 22(4). 526-543.

Nairn, K., Higgins, J., Thompson, B., an Anderson, M. (2006). 'It's just like the teenage stereotype. You go out and drink and stuff': Hearing from Young people who Don't Drink. *Journal of Youth Studies.* 9(3). 287–304.

Nash, C., and Gorman-Murray, A. (2019). The Geographies of Digital Sexuality. Palgrave MacMillan: London.

Nayak, A. (2003). Last of the 'Real Geordies'?: White Masculinities and the Subcultural Response to Deindustrialisation. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. 21(1). 7-25.

Nicholls, E. (2017). 'Dulling it down a bit': Managing Visibility, Sexualities and Risk in the Night Time Economy in Newcastle, UK. *Gender, Place and Culture*. 24(2). 260-273.

Nicholls, K. (2016). Moving Beyond Ideas of Laddism: Conceptualising 'Mischievous Masculinities' as a New Way of Understanding Everyday Sexism and Gender Relations. *Journal of Gender Studies.* 27(1). 73-85.

NUS (National Union of Students). 2010. Hidden Marks Report. London: NUS.

NUS (National Union of Students). 2013. That's What She Said: Women Students' Experiences of 'Lad Culture' at Universities. London: NUS.

Oakley, A. (1981). Interviewing women: A Contradiction in Terms. In: Roberts, H. *Doing Feminist*

Research. Taylor and Francis: London. 30 – 48.

Ortner, S. (2014). Too Soon for Post-Feminism: The Ongoing Life of Patriarchy in Neoliberal America. *History and Anthropology*. 25(4). 530–49.

Owen, C. (2020). How do we Defeat the 'Dark Side'? Analysing a Call to Tackle Lad Culture at a UK University. *British Educational Research Journal*. 46(3).653-669.

Pain, R. (2014). Everyday Terrorism: Connecting Domestic Violence and Global Terrorism. *Progress in Human Geograp*hy. 38(4). 531-550.

Pain, R., and Staeheli, L. (2014). Introduction: Intimacy-Geopolitics and Violence. *Area.* 46(4). 344-347.

Peck, J., and Tickell, A. (2002). Neoliberalizing Space. *Antipode*. 34(4). 380-404.

Peters, K. (2017). *Your Human Geography Dissertation: Designing, Doing, Delivering*. SAGE: London.

Peters, K. and Turner, J. (2014) Fixed-term and Temporary: Teaching Fellows, Tactics, and the Negotiation of Contingent Labour in the UK Higher Education System. *Environment and Planning A.* 46(10). 2317-2331

Phipps, A., and Smith, G. (2012). Violence Against Women Students in the UK: Time to Take Action. *Gender and Education*. 24(4). 357-373.

Phipps, A and Young, I. (2014). Neoliberalisation and "Lad Cultures" in Higher Education. *Sociology*, 49(2). 305-322.

Phipps, A, and Young, I. (2015). '"Lad Culture" in Higher Education. Agency in the Sexualization Debates, *Sexualities*. 18(4):459–479.

Phipps, A. (2016). (Re)theorising Laddish Masculinities in Higher Education. *Gender and Education*, 1–16.

Phipps, A. (2017). 'Lad culture' and Sexual Violence Against Students. In: Lombard, N. ed. *The Routledge Handbook of Gender and Violence*. Routledge: London.

Phipps, A. (2020). Reckoning Up: Sexual Harassment and Violence in the Neoliberal University. *Gender and Education*. 32(2). 227-243.

Phoenix, A., Frosh, S., Pattman, R. (2003). Producing Contradictory Masculine Subject Positions: Narratives of Threat, Homophobia and Bullying in 11-14 Year Old Boys. *Journal of Social Issues.* 59(1). 179-195.

Pratt, G., and Rosner, V. (2006). Introduction: The Global and the Intimate. *Women's Studies Quarterly*. 34(1). 13-24.

Rape Crisis England and Wales. (2022). What is Sexual Harassment?. Available at: https://rapecrisis.org.uk/get-informed/types-of-sexual-violence/what-is-sexual-harassment.

Reay, D., Crozier, G., and Clayton, J. (2013). 'Fitting in' or 'Standing Out': Working-Class Students in UK Higher Education. *British Research Journal.* 1-18.

Read, B., Archer, L., and Leathwood, C. (2003). Challenging Cultures? Students' Conceptions of 'Belonging' and 'Isolation' at a Post-1992 University. *Studies in Higher Education*. 28(3). 261–277.

Richardson M. (2014). Intergenerational Relations and Irish Masculinities: Reflections from the Tyneside Irish, in the North-East of England. In: Gorman-Murray, A., and Hopkins, P. Ed. *Masculinities and Place*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Richardson, M. (2015). Embodied Intergenerationality: Family Position, Place and Masculinity. *Gender, Place & Culture*. 22(2). 157-171.

Richardson, L. (2016). Feminist Geographies of Digital Work. *Progress in Human Geography.* 42(2). 244-263.

Rose, G. (1993). Progress in Geography and Gender. Or something else. *Progress in Human Geography.* 17(4). 531-537.

Rutter, N., Hasan, E., Pilson, A., and Yeo, E. (2021). "It's the End of the PhD as We Know it, and We Feel Fine… Because Everything is Fucked Anyway": Utilizing Feminist Collaborative Autoethnography to Navigate Global Crises. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. 20. 1-12.

Sills, S., Pickens, C., Beach, K., Jones, L., Calder-Dawe, O., Benton-Greig, P., and Gavey, N. (2016). Rape Culture and Social Media: Young Critics and a Feminist Counter-public. *Feminist Media Studies.* 16(6). 935-951.

Sharp, J. (2007). Geography and Gender: Finding Feminist Political Geographies. *Progress in Human Geography.* 31(1). 381-387.

Sheard, L. (2011). 'Anything Could Have Happened': Women, the Night-time Economy, Alcohol and Drink Spiking. *Sociology.* 45(4). 619-633.

Smele, S., Siew-Sarju, R., Chou, E., Breton, P., and Bernhardt, N. (2017). Doing Feminist Difference Differently: Intersectional Pedagogical Practices in the Context of the Neoliberal Diversity Regime. *Teaching in Higher Education.* 22(6). 690-704.

Smith, D. (1974). Women's Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology. *Sociological Inquiry*. 44(1). 7–13.

Smith C., and Freyd, J. (2013). Dangerous Safe Havens: Institutional Betrayal Exacerbates Sexual Trauma. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*. 26. 119–124.

Smith, D., and Holt, L. (2007). Studentification and 'Apprentice' Gentrifiers within Britain's Provincial Towns and Cities: Extending the Meaning of Gentrification. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space.* 39. 142-161.

Swim, J. Hyers, L. Cohen, L. and Ferguson, M. (2001). Everyday Sexism: Evidence for its Incidence, Nature and Psychological Impact from Three Daily Diary Studies. *Journal of Social Issues.* 57.

Tett, L., Cree, V., Christie, H. (2016). From Further to Higher Education: Transition as an On-Going Process. *Higher Education*. 73. 389-406.

The 1752 Group. (2018). Power in the Academy Report.

The 1752 Group and McAllister Olivarius. (2020). Sector Guidance to Address Staff Sexual Misconduct in UK Higher Education

The Independent, 2019. Warwick University apologises to victims of rape chat scandal. [online] Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/warwick-university-rape-chat-scandal-apology-vice-chancellor-a8999911.html> [Accessed 30 September 2020].

The Tab, 2019. 'Let's do it all again': Second Warwick boys group chat exposed. [online] Available at: <https://thetab.com/uk/warwick/2019/01/28/lets-do-it-all-again-second-warwick-boys-group-chat-exposed-33599> [Accessed 30 September 2020].

Townsend, L., and Wallace, C. (2016). Social Media Research: A Guide to Ethics.

Truong, J. (2018). Collapsing Contexts: Social Networking Technologies in Young People's Nightlife. *Children's Geographies*. 16(3). 266-278.

Tzanakou, C., and Pearce, R. (2019). Moderate Feminism Within or Against the Neoliberal University? The Example of Athena SWAN. *Gender Work and Organisation*. 1-21.

The Guardian, 2019. Warwick University not safe, says woman targeted by 'rape chat'. [online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/jul/14/warwick-university-not-safe-says-woman-targeted-by-chat> [Accessed 30 September 2020].

Universities UK. (2016). Changing the Culture. London: UUK.

Valentine, G. (1989). The Geography of Women's Fear. *Area*. 21(4). 385-390.

Valentine, G. (1995). Out and About: Geographies of Lesbian Landscapes. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research.* 19(1).

Valentine, G., Skelton, T., and Butler, R. (2003) Coming Out and Outcomes: Negotiating Lesbian and Gay Identities With, and in, the Family. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. 21. 479-499.

Valentine, G. (2005). Tell me about...: Using Interviews as Research Methodology. In: Flowerdew, R and Martin D. *Methods in Human Geography: A Guide for Students Doing a Research Project.* Pearson Prentice Hall: Harlow. 110-127.

Valentine, G. (2007). Theorizing and Researching Intersectionality: A Challenge for Feminist Geography. *The Professional Geographer*. 59(1): 10-21.

Valentine, G. and Skelton, T. (2003) Finding Oneself, Losing Oneself: the Lesbian and Gay 'Scene' as a Paradoxical Space. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*. 27. 849-866

Valkenburgh, S. (2018). Digesting the Red Pill: Masculinity and Neoliberalism in the Manosphere. *Men and Masculinities*. 1-20.

Von Benzon, N. (2018). Informed Consent and Secondary Data: Reflections on the Use of Mother's Blogs in Social Media Research. *Ethics in/Of Geogaphical Research*. 51. 182 – 189.

Waitt, G., and Gorman Murray, A. (2007). Homemaking and Mature Age Gay Men 'Down-Under': Paradox, Intimacy, Subjectivities, Spatialities and Scale. *Gender, Place and Culture.* 14(5). 569-584.

Walling, A. (2019). Problematising 'Toxic' and 'Healthy' Masculinity for Addressing Gender Inequalities. *Australian Feminist Studies*. 34(101). 362-375.

Walsh, K. (2011). Migrant Masculinities and Domestic Space: British Home-Making Practices in Dubai. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*. 36(4). 516-529.

Warwick, L and Aggleton, P. (2014). Bullying, 'cussing' and 'mucking about': Complexities in Tackling Homophobia in Three Secondary Schools in South London, UK. *Sex Education.* 14(2). 159 – 173.

Wattis, L. (2013). Class, Students and Place: Encountering Locality in a Post-industrial Landscape. *Urban Studies*. 50(12). 2425-2240.

Weier, J. (2020). (Re)producing the Sexuality Binary: On Bisexual Experiences in U.S. Gay and Heterosexual Spaces. *Gender, Place and Culture*. 27(9). 1308-1325.

Welsh, E. (2002). Dealing with Data: Using NVivo in the Qualitative Data Analysis Process. *FQS*. 3(2).

Wilkinson, S. (1998). Focus Groups in Feminist Research: Power, Interaction, and the Co-construction of Meaning. *Women's Studies International Forum*. 21(1): 111-26.

Wilkinson, S. (2016) Hold the Phone! Culturally Credible Research 'with' Young People. *Children's Geographies.* 14(2). 232-238.

Wilkinson, S. (2018). Young People's Drinking Spaces and Im/mobilities: A Case of 'Hyper-Diversity'?. *Journal of Youth Studies.* 21(6). 799-815.

Willis, P. (1977). *Learning to Labour*. Gower Publishing: Hampshire.

Wilson, E., and Little, D. (2011). The Solo Female Travel Experience: Exploring the 'Geography of Women's Fear'. *Current Issues in Tourism.* 11(2). 167-186.

Winkler, I. (2018). Doing Autoethnography: Facing Challenges, Taking Choices, Accepting Responsibilities. *Qualitative Inquiry*. 24(4). 236-247.

Wheatcroft, J., Wagstaff, G., and Moran, A. (2009). Revictimizing the Victim? How Rape Victims Experience the UK Legal System. *Victims and Offenders.* 4(3). 265-284.

Young, I.M. (1980). Throwing Like a Girl: A Phenomenology of Feminine Body Comportment Motility and Spatiality. *Human Studies.* 3. 137-156.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Student Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Firstly, can I confirm what university you're at, what year group you're in and the course that you do?

I just want to ask you a few things about fresher's week last week to begin with: How did you find this? What did you do during the week?

Did you use social media during this week? Did this aid your engagement with fresher's week? In what way?

Do you think there are aspects of your own identity that mean you experience freshers week, or maybe even university life more broadly in different ways to others? Do you want to talk a bit about this?

Do you think social media can help you overcome this? In what ways?

What social media sites do you use and in what ways?

I'm wondering if you've heard of the term 'lad culture'? What does this mean? Not in terms of official definition but more to you personally?

Is this something you have experienced so far during your time at university? Would you be able to tell me a bit about this?

Are there any online or offline spaces, or places, or like groups at university that you would associate with this?

Do you think social media influences this in any way? (Either things have taken place on social media or have influenced things offline)

Are you aware of any university policy against this?

Do you think this is something that is experienced differently by different students on campus?

Appendix 2: Staff Semi-Structured Interview Guide

First of all thank you for agreeing to this interview, and can I ask you to explain a bit about what you do in your role at the university?

How do you think the work you do impacts the everyday lives of students? In what ways?

You are probably aware that the term 'lad culture' has been around for several years now – the NUS ran a report on this in 2013 – is this something you are aware of? Is this something you deem to be a problem in your role? How do you think this manifests on campus?

What do you think are the key issues relating to 'lad culture' on campus?

Do you think this is problematic, and if so, how?

Is there any policy or practice in place to work towards tacking this?

How are these policies implemented?

Do you think this has been successful in its implementation? Do you think there are any more areas that need working on and how do you plan to do this?

I've spoken to students a lot – but I'm also wondering how you think staff may contribute to this culture? Is there training in place for staff on these issues?

Something I'm really interested in – and something that my participants have been drawing a lot on is the way in which these forms of behaviour manifest on social media. Is this something you are aware of? Is there policy in place to address this?

Some work I have also been reading links 'lad cultures' to the wider marketization of the university – do you think there's any link between the current situation with student fees and how the university handles complaints around sexual assault or lad cultures?

Do you think more needs to be done to tackle lad cultures in HE and if so, how?

Appendix 3: Poster Advertisements for Research, Diary-Interview Process Example

Would You Like to Take Part in a Study?

I am looking for participants to discuss their experiences of student life and social media

Respondents will be invited to keep a diary of notes on their phone over the course of a week, and then attend an interview taking place at [] to discuss their experiences of student life and freshers week, particularly how different parts of their identity may influence these experiences (gender, sexuality, race, disability etc...).

You will be invited to an initial debrief which will instruct you further on what to look for and make a note of. During the interview, you will be asked questions by the researcher to answer based on the notes you have collected. Expansion questions may be asked by the researcher, and you will be expected to share your notes with the researcher if you feel comfortable doing so.

What is the objective of my study?

This study is part of an ESRC funded PhD project looking into what student lad culture is, how it is experienced by students at university, and how it manifests in both online and offline student spaces.

Who can take part?

I invite participants from all year groups who are students at [].

Your participation in the study is **voluntary**, and you are able to withdraw to any time

If you would like to take part, or would like any more information on the study, please contact the researcher:

Alex Kendrick
Email: psakendr@liverpool.ac.uk
Twitter: @alexjkendrick

Appendix 4: Participant Information Sheets, Student Interview Example

Title of the research project: Exploring Lad Culture in Online and Offline UK Higher Education Spaces

Researcher: Alex Kendrick

Version number & date: Version 3, 23/8/18

Research ethics approval number: 3829

1. Invitation Paragraph

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and feel free to ask me if you would like more information or if there is anything that you do not understand. I would like to stress that you do not have to accept this invitation and should only agree to take part if you want to. Thank you for reading this.

2. What is the purpose of the study?

The aim of this research is to explore what 'Lad Culture' means in the context of UK campus cultures, with a specific focus on two universities in the North West of England. This research will look into how lad culture is (re)produced by students of all genders. As well as looking into physical campus spaces, this project will explore the role that social media plays in influencing interactions in these spaces, or facilitating incidences of 'lad culture' in online student spaces. I am also interested in how student lad culture intersects with other categories of identity, for example race, class, and sexuality.

3. Why have I been chosen to take part?

You have been chosen because you are an undergraduate or postgraduate student at one of the two institutions being studied.

4. Do I have to take part?

You do not have to take part. Participation in this research study is voluntary.

5. What will happen if I take part?

If you decide to take part, you will be asked to take part in an audio-recorded interview. The interview should take approximately 45 minutes – 1.5 hours to complete and will be conducted in English. The interview will take place in a suitable place of your choice, for example a café or the student union building. I will ask you to sign a consent form to indicate that you are happy to undertake the interview. During the interview, you will be asked to discuss your experiences related to a series of questions about lad culture in university spaces that will be asked by the researcher. There are no incorrect answers and you are free to answer each question in as much detail as you like, or simply not at all. I would like to audio record the interview. Your agreement for this will be recorded on the consent form.

6. Will my information be kept confidential?

The confidentiality of the information you provide will be safeguarded and won't be released without your consent unless required by law. If you disclose information that raises considerations over the safety of yourself or the public, the researcher may be legally required to disclose your confidential information to the relevant authorities.

7. How will my data be used?

The University processes personal data as part of its research and teaching activities in accordance with the lawful basis of 'public task', and in accordance with the University's purpose of "advancing education, learning and research for the public benefit.

Under UK data protection legislation, the University acts as the Data Controller for personal data collected as part of the University's research. Dr Bethan Evans (my supervisor) acts as the Data Processor for this study, and any queries relating to the handling of your personal data can be sent to me or my supervisor.

Further information on how your data will be used can be found in the table below.

How will my data be collected?	I will audio record the interviews and later transcribe this recording. I will also ask you to complete a short form before we begin discussion. This will not include your real name but will ask you to answer, where you are comfortable, questions about yourself such as gender, sexuality, race, religion. These will be open-ended questions for you to answer in your own words, but if you do

	not want to answer these questions, that is fine.
How will my data be stored?	The recordings of the interviews will be transcribed into a word document whereupon all identifying information will be removed and the recording deleted. All data will be stored securely on the university secure servers and the university M: drive which is password protected. I will immediately transfer the recording to secure storage and delete the original file as soon as the transcription is complete. Your consent form will be stored securely.
How long will my data be stored for?	All transcribed data will be stored electronically for up to 10 years. This is in accordance with the University's data archiving procedures. If you consent to your data being uploaded to the UK Data Archive, it may be stored for longer.
What measures are in place to protect the security and confidentiality of my data?	We will not ask you to provide data during recorded discussions or in forms that will make you identifiable. For example, we do not need to know your name, address or date of birth. Any mention of names of people or institutions will be anonymised during transcription. We will store data securely and provide access only to members of the research team.
Will my data be anonymised?	Yes. Pseudonyms will be used to report all data.
How will my data be used?	The results of this study will be used to write a PhD and may lead to academic publication, blogs, conference presentations and other forms of dissemination. If you consent to your data being uploaded to the UK Data Archive, then other researchers would have access to the anonymised transcripts.
Who will have access to my data?	Access to the data will be limited to myself and my supervisors unless you consent to this data being uploaded to the UK Data Archive.
Will my data be archived for use in other research projects in the future?	Only if you consent to your data being uploaded to the UK Data Archive. If you don't want this to happen, that is fine. You can still take part in this research and we will not share the data any further than the research team.
How will my data be destroyed?	Electronic data will be permanently deleted from institutional servers after 10 years. Any paper documents will be scanned and shredded immediately.

8. Will I be offered any financial incentives to take part in the research?

I am not able to offer any payment or expenses for taking part in this research.

9. Are there any risks in taking part?

There are no anticipated risks to you taking part in this task. You are free to decline to answer of any questions or to stop at any time during the interview without giving a reason. If you do feel that a question or experience has resulted in you feeling distress or discomfort in any way but you wish to continue to participate, please do let me know and we can postpone the research and/or meet to discuss the research further.

10. Are there any benefits in taking part?

There are no direct benefits to you taking part in the research, although you will be helping me to find out information that is important to my research aims. I am also happy to feedback findings from the study to you, and maintain continued dialogue about my findings throughout the research process if you wish.

11. What will happen to the results of the study?

The results will be used in my PhD thesis. They may also be used in other academic publications, reports, blogs, and other outputs. I will also create a results summary sheet and if you would like a copy of this, let me know and I will send one to you.

12. What will happen if I want to stop taking part?

If you begin the research and do not wish to continue, you are free to stop at any time during the interview without giving a reason and without your rights being affected. If you wish to remove your data from the research after you have undertaken the interview, you may do so within two weeks of the date of the interview. After this time, all identifying information will have been removed from your audio data and diary and therefore removal will no longer be possible.

13. What if I am unhappy or if there is a problem?

If you are unhappy, or if there is a problem, please feel free to let us know by contacting myself or my supervisor (our contact details are at the end of this document) and we will try to help. If you remain unhappy or have a complaint which you feel you cannot come to us with then you should contact the Research Ethics and Integrity Office at ethics@liv.ac.uk. When contacting the Research Ethics and Integrity Office, please provide details of the name or description of the study (so that it can be identified), the researcher(s) involved, and the details of the complaint you wish to make.

The University strives to maintain the highest standards of rigour in the processing of your data. However, if you have any concerns about the way in which the University processes your personal data, it is important that you are aware of your right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office by calling 0303 123 1113.

14. Who can I contact if I have further questions?

If you have any further questions, please contact me or my supervisor:

Researcher: Alexandra Kendrick
Email: psakendr@liverpool.ac.uk

Lead Supervisor: Dr Bethan Evans
Email: bevans@liverpool.ac.uk

Appendix 5: Consent Form, Student Interview Example

Participant consent form: Student Interview

Exploring Lad Culture in Online and Offline UK Higher Education Spaces

Version number & date: Version 4, 02/10/18

Research ethics approval number: 3829

Name of researcher: Alex Kendrick

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and have understood the information sheet dated 23/8/18 for the above study, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. ☐
2. I understand that taking part in the study involves participation in an audio-recorded interview for the purpose of producing an anonymised interview transcript. ☐
3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I free to decline to answer any particular question or questions, and free to stop taking part at any time during this interview, and up to two weeks after without giving any reason and without my rights being affected. ☐
4. I understand that I can ask for access to the information I provide and I can request the destruction of that information if I wish at any time prior to the anonymisation of the data, which will be two weeks after the interview. I understand that following two weeks after the interview I will no longer be able to request access to or withdrawal of the information I provide. ☐
5. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my fully anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in any outputs that result from the research. ☐
6. I understand that the information I provide will be held securely and in line with data protection requirements at the University of Liverpool. I understand that signed consent forms and interview transcripts will be retained by the researcher and stored securely for up to 10 years, when they will be deleted. ☐
7. I understand that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded and won't be released without my consent unless required by law. I understand that if I disclose information that raises considerations over the safety of myself or the public, the researcher may be legally required to disclose my confidential information to the relevant authorities. ☐

8. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

UK Data Archive

As this study has received Economic and Social Research Council funding, according to their guidelines it is expected that this data will be deposited in the UK Data Archive (UKDA). This would be in the form of anonymised focus group transcripts in their original form. This would mean that the data would be publicly accessible, and available for re-use by other researchers.

If you do not consent to this, that is fine. You can still take part in the research project but your data will NOT be made publicly accessible or deposited in the UKDA.

9. I consent to this data being deposited in the UK Data archive and available for public access. ☐

_____	_____	_____
Participant name	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of person taking consent	Date	Signature

Lead Investigator

Alex Kendrick

psakendr@liverpool.ac.uk

Supervisor

Dr Bethan Evans

Bethan.evans@liverpool.ac.uk

Appendix 6: Participant Demographics

Name	Year of Study	Institution
Adam	1st	Case Study Institution 1
Tom	1st	Case Study Institution 1
Sarah	3rd	Case Study Institution 1
Eve	3rd	Case Study Institution 2
Joe	1st	Case Study Institution 2
Sasha	2nd	Case Study Institution 2
Simon	2nd	Case Study Institution 1
Jodie	Postgraduate	Case Study Institution 1
Jenny	3rd	Case Study Institution 2
Kate	2nd	Case Study Institution 2
John	1st	Case Study Institution 1
Beth	1st	Case Study Institution 1
James	2nd	Case Study Institution 1
Zara	3rd	Case Study Institution 2
Julia	2nd	Case Study Institution 2
Jamie	1st	Case Study Institution 1
Jane	1st	Case Study Institution 2
Jessica	1st	Case Study Institution 1
Ellie	2nd	Case Study Institution 2
Mark	1st	Case Study Institution 1
Poppy	2nd	Case Study Institution 1
Hannah	2nd	Case Study Institution 1
Sophie	2nd	Case Study Institution 1
Jill	1st	Case Study Institution 1
Sara	3rd	Case Study Institution 2
Sophie	1st	Case Study Institution 1
Olivia	3rd	Case Study Institution 1
Jessica	1st	Case Study Institution 1
Phoebe	1st	Case Study Institution 2
Sam	1st	Case Study Institution 2
Samira	1st	Case Study Institution 1
Jonny	1st	Case Study Institution 2
Daniel	3rd	Case Study Institution 1
Annie	1st	Case Study Institution 1
Nina	2nd	Case Study Institution 2
Grant	1st	Case Study Institution 1
William	1st	Case Study Institution 1
Sofia	3rd	Case Study Institution 2
Grace	3rd	Case Study Institution 2
Faiza	3rd	Case Study Institution 1
Richard	1st	Case Study Institution 2
Lauren	2nd	Case Study Institution 1
Chloe	3rd	Case Study Institution 1
Micaela	3rd	Case Study Institution 1
Theresa	2nd	Case Study Institution 1
Charlotte	2nd	Case Study Institution 2