



## NARCOTIC CITY NEWS

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While 2021 continues to be dominated by the global COVID-19 pandemic, the “Governing the Narcotic City” team has been extremely busy nevertheless, with multiple research and dissemination activities ranging from lectures and workshops to interviews, as well as gathering and analyzing archival material.

In this newsletter, you can read about symposiums in the “Drugs, Genders, Cities” cycle held in Bordeaux, a public lecture by Peter-Paul Bänziger on drug consumption in Zurich, and our new Associated Partner Philine Edbauer from the initiative *#mybrainmychoice*.

Furthermore, with the opening of the Narcotic City Archive fast approaching in late 2021, we are delighted to offer a preview of a few of its items and themes with the story of the Hash Rebels and the fight for alternative spaces in West Berlin in the late 1960s, as well as the story of weed grinders and their ubiquity in Berlin *Spätis*.

More info can be found on our website: [www.narcotic.city](http://www.narcotic.city), and you can also follow our project on Twitter [@Narcotic\\_City](https://twitter.com/Narcotic_City)

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## PUBLIC LECTURE BY PETER-PAUL BÄNZIGER: HANGING OUT AT THE RIVIERA: DRUG CONSUMPTION IN ZURICH, C. 1965–1975

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*Frederieke Westerheide*



Spring in Zurich. Zurich Riviera 1969 at the first warm sunshine. Image: ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, Bildarchiv / Fotograf: Comet Photo AG (Zürich) / Com\_M18-0064-0005 / CC BY-SA 4.0

Our first Narcotic City Workshop of the year took place online on March 8–9, 2021, complemented by Peter-Paul Bänziger’s public lecture on Zurich’s first “open drug scene,” which met at the so-called Riviera on the banks of the Limmat river in the 1960s and 1970s.

Peter-Paul Bänziger immersed us in Zurich’s counterculture, showing us how intoxicants played a crucial role in this scene and how practices of consumption and perceptions of the substances were deeply interwoven in broader political and cultural contexts of this time. He

told the story of a (sub-)culture in which certain substances played an important role, and above all, he drew a picture of a diverse culture that also unfolded in literature, arts, music and politics.

Zurich’s first open drug scene (a term that emerged decades later) appropriated its own places, sites and localities in the city and gathered in certain parks and squares. One of these places was the so-called Riviera (or Rivi) on the banks of the Limmat. Here one could find a vast variety of substances, such as cannabis products, LSD, mushrooms, mescaline,

heroin and solvents. Even though the Riviera was the most commonly known place to gather, the scene was often forced to shift, occupying new spaces as a result. In the 1970s, Hirschenplatz became a crucial site for Zurich's drug scene, but the scene also met in certain pubs and cafés around the city, some of which were fairly close to the Riviera.

The visibility of the scene and the looks of the people alone were seen as provocative by the so-called establishment. The scene members themselves attributed an immanent political meaning to their drug-consumption that further reinforced their appearance of being unkempt. The supply of drugs was at this time largely based on self-supply and solidarity, which resonated with the anti-capitalist attitude of the counterculture of the 1960s and 70s. Many of the intoxicants came to Switzerland via people who brought back small amounts of the substances from their travels to the countries of origin, which were also fascinating places of longing for the counterculture of the time.

Back in Zurich, a highly repressive environment formed against the scene; people had to find their own ways of self-organizing and exchanging knowledge – not only about the workings of

the diverse substances, relying on expert knowledge that was mainly based on the experiences of the consumers themselves, but also about how to deal with the police and military. One example of this shared knowledge was the scene magazine *Hotcha!*, which offered useful tips, counselling and medical and psychological aid.

The lecture approached the scene from different angles, asking about the forms of drug supply and showing the repressive reactions that followed. Bänziger furthermore connected the developments of the 1960s and 70s to the situation that unfolded when the Riviera was later replaced by the Platzspitz peninsula, which became notoriously known as “Needle Park” in the early 1990s. He showed that despite many reforms and the emergence of harm reduction policies in the years to follow, repression has remained the mainstay of drug policy in public space to this day.

# THE GENDERS OF URBAN DRUG POLICIES: SECOND EVENT IN THE “DRUGS, GENDERS, CITIES” CYCLE

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*Sarah Perrin,  
PhD student in sociology, Centre Emile Durkheim, Bordeaux  
(Translated by Zoe McNamee)*

January 21, 2021, marked the second event of the “Drugs, Genders, Cities” conference cycle. Given the public health situation, the event was held via videoconference. From 14:30 to 16:30 there was a conference chaired by Sarah Perrin of the Centre Emile Durkheim featuring contributions from three young researchers. From 19:00 to 20:00 Anne Coppel led a participative conference on those left behind by risk reduction, chaired by Alice Magot of the Université Populaire de Bordeaux.

## The Genders of Urban Drug Policies

Our first guest was **Elsa Koerner**, PhD student in sociology at ESO, the Laboratoire Espaces et Sociétés (Spaces and Societies Lab) in Rennes. Her thesis deals with gender and urban nature, questioning the way in which public action links the greening of cities with gender equality. Her contribution explored the regulation of green urban spaces, specifically with regard to drugs and gender in parks and public gardens. Her findings were based on the results of an exploratory investigation into the relationship between policies promoting urban greening and gender equality. Her interpretation of the study, hinging on feelings of security and insecurity, provoked a discussion of the spaces occupied by dealers and consumers of illicit substances. Parks and public gardens host the sale and use of drugs; dealers and consumers must share these spaces with non-users. The groundskeepers

working in these green spaces may wish them to be open to everyone, but uses of the space are still categorised according to how well they conform to the social order (or not). The issue of drugs and deviant practices is considered masculine, while feminine practices are held up in debates as supporting gentrification. Groundskeepers coordinate adjustments to the space in order to replace the deviant section of the population, and certain security-related alterations are presented as feminist. Elsa highlighted the concept of “green order” as well as that of situational prevention in parks and public gardens. One possible way to improve the sharing of these spaces may be the inclusion of drug dealers and consumers in the planning of improvement projects.

Our second guest was **Maïa Neff**, PhD student in sociology co-supervised by the ENS in Lyon, Triangle Laboratory and Université Laval in Quebec. Maïa is also a professional researcher at the Ecole Nationale d'Administration Publique (National School of Public Administration) in Montreal. Her thesis analyses professional approaches to addiction from a gender perspective, focusing on the assessment, care and support offered to drug users, especially women, within institutions specialised in the science of addiction and harm reduction in France. Her contribution focused on emotional labour within CSAPAs (Addiction Care, Support and Prevention Centres) with analysis of pro-

fessional reactions to maternity. She analysed the discourse and practices of 25 professionals working within CSAPAs, and questioned the creation and communication of the emotional dimension of their work from a gender perspective. Emotions were presented in an analysis grid for operations of classification, categorisation and judgement of feminine and masculine, as well as for dynamics defining social relations. The maternity of female drug users frequenting CSAPAs was the specific focus of these questions. It became clear that emotions may steer professional evaluations and judgements against drug-using mothers. Maïa’s contribution generated many questions from the audience, with some professionals visibly surprised at the impact of emotions and personal judgements on the maternity care of female drug users.

Finally, our third guest was **Florent Schmitt**, PhD student in sociology at the Triangle Laboratory (Université de Lyon 2). He is currently writing a thesis on the regulation of drug users by “low-threshold” medical-social institutions. His contribution focused on the way in which gender mixing creates single-gender spaces, using as a key example hospitality areas in social centres for users of psychoactive substances. His contribution was based on three years of observation and 40 biographical interviews with drug users, carried out in a Parisian addiction support centre/CAARUD (Centre d’accueil et d’accompagnement à la réduction des risques pour usagers de drogues) and a small town on the outskirts of the capital. Spaces that welcome drug users are essentially devoted to specific groups of marginalised people. These spaces encourage gender mixing and equal presence as part of their equality principles. However, some persistent forms of sex separation result in the recreation of single-gender spaces. Within the CAARUDs, many women limit their

visits, linger less than the men, and/or remain on the margins of social events and collective exchanges between users and professionals. This unequal use of the space is the result of gendered social relationships affecting all social groups. Two recurrent processes of partial eviction emerge from these social relationships. The first of these can be linked to the differentiated socialisation of different genders which tends to alienate teenage girls and women whose careers are judged deviant and, in the same way, economically vulnerable drug users and dealer networks. If men dominate hospitality areas, it is because this enables them to prolong the masculine camaraderie of drug use as it exists among the economically vulnerable outside institutions. Secondly, the reduced presence of women is related to another element of gendered social relations: male violence aimed at controlling women’s bodies and sexualities. The reduced presence of women in mixed hospitality settings therefore results from a self-preservation tactic comparable to that employed in public spaces in the face of gender-related violence.

### The Left-Behinds of Risk Reduction

Our guest for the evening’s participative conference, chaired by Alice Magot (Université Populaire de Bordeaux), was **Anne Coppel**, a sociologist, field actor and activist. Her 45-minute contribution exploring “The Left-Behinds of Risk Reduction” was followed by a discussion with the audience.

Over the past forty years, some specific measures have been put in place for women within risk-reduction frameworks, but these remain rare. Anne Coppel chose to explore the historical role of women in risk reduction, the obstacles faced by female drug users, and the ways in which their situations, demands and needs can be better rec-

ognised. Her contribution was split into four parts:

*1. Confronted with AIDS, the Emergence of Female Drug Users and Prostitutes*

In the face of the AIDS epidemic, two categories of women raised special concern: pregnant and postpartum drug users, and prostitutes. The number of specific studies and measures targeting these two groups was relatively large, given the general lack of interest in the health of drug users outside these categories.

The struggle against AIDS profoundly changed perceptions of these two female minority groups. It contributed both to a new notion of public health and new approaches to sexuality in relation to social or gender roles. Pregnant drug users and drug-using mothers were at the root of the medical establishment’s realisation that detoxification should no longer be a prerequisite for the treatment of immediate health needs, as had been the case in specialised addiction services. What we now call risk reduction started in 1984-85, when AIDS tests began to be offered systematically in maternity units. This test flagged young female heroin users who did not necessarily fit into stereotypes – a revelation that disoriented care staff.

All of this contributed to a new perception of drug use not only with respect to women, but also men: the faceless heroin addict became a person. This seismic shift in perceptions led a certain Professor Henrion, at the request of Simone Weil, to recommend the implementation of the experimental Risk Reduction Framework in 1994 (Henrion Report, 1994).

*2. The Pioneers of Risk Reduction*

Women have also played an active role in the history of risk reduction. For example, Michèle Barzach promised the unrestricted sale of syringes in 1987, and in 1994 Simone Weil set up the first experimental framework for risk reduction. Nor can we forget Nicole Maestracci, president of the MILDT (Mission interministérielle de la lutte contre les drogues et la toxicomanie) anti-addiction project from 1998 to 2002, who gave a new definition to the public health services now required to protect the health of users of both legal and illegal drugs. Risk reduction was given official status with the creation of CAARUDs as stipulated in the 2004 public health law.

On the ground, many female pioneers were involved in the first risk reduction projects, for example the actions of the “Limiter la Casse” collective or the Espoir Goutte d’Or community association, the first needle exchange programme in Seine Saint Denis, the creation of street teams and the first trials of drug consumption rooms.

Women, including social workers, doctors, nurses and nonprofessional individuals (users or ex-users) have played a key role in these experimental actions. All were quick to adopt risk-reduction practices including response to immediate needs, support and care, and therapeutic alliances where service users and non-service users were put on an equal footing. Few men were involved in early risk reduction practices, probably because of the stigma attached.

### *3. Obstacles to the Development of Services Offered to Women*

Ever since the first risk reduction initiatives, female pioneers have sought to develop specific actions for women. The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction regularly alerts European countries to the dearth of services available to female drug users. This is supported by data: while women make up around 1/3 of drug users, only 1/5 have been involved with risk reduction or care services, according to European data from the early 2000s. According to recent evaluations, this percentage is 20% in France – an average that masks some significant gaps.

Several factors might explain the deficit in services offered to women. More stigmatised than men, female drug users fear being identified, both because social norms weigh more heavily on them and because they fear losing custody of their children. Within the CAARUDs, they are less numerous than socially excluded men, and find it harder to resist the violence of the street, where prostitution is their primary recourse. The lack of research means that we do not know enough about their situations, nor their needs. Female patients in addiction services are the only female drug users that we know about, yet they represent a minority, only becoming known to these services at the end of a long process of exclusion.

These observations do not permit us to understand why the deficit is more significant in France than in the UK or Northern European countries. It stems primarily from an ideology, claiming to stand for republican equality, which argues that measures targeting specific groups would contribute to stigmatisa-

tion, leading to clannishness or communitarianism. Experience has since proven that minorities must make their voices heard if their rights are to be recognised.

### *4. Towards the Development of Research on Drug Use According to Gender*

Over the past 20 years, several reports have dealt with the subject of female drug users. Findings have been based, on the one hand, on epidemiological studies on licit and illicit drug consumption in the general population (the nature of these studies allowing for the differentiation of men and women); on the other hand, clinical observations from risk reduction and care services have also been used. Research in more natural contexts is so rare that we know little about female users' modes of consumption (as in choice of substances, frequency, quantity, context of use). Nor do we know what their drug consumption might mean to them. Producing knowledge about what drug use means to the women who use can offer a way out of pathologisation. Only with better knowledge of female users' relationships to the substances consumed and the ways in which they try to limit risks, understood within the context of the meaning they ascribe to their drug use, can we open the way to a risk and damage reduction strategy adapted to female drug users' experiences and desires.

This second event allowed us to approach the question of gender in urban drug policies from various angles, by demonstrating how the masculine is almost always considered implicitly universal. The third event in May 2021 allowed us to further question how gender, mobility and space influence drug users in a festive context.



# DRUGS IN PARTY SPACES AND GENDER: THIRD EVENT IN THE “DRUGS, GENDERS, CITIES” CYCLE

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*Mélina Germes*

The third event of the cycle “Drugs, Genders, Cities” gathered four contributors around gendered issues of drug and alcohol use in party spaces. The event, organized by researchers from Governing the Narcotic City and DRUSEC (CNRS PASSAGES) and from the Centre Emile Durkheim (Bordeaux), took place on May 17, 2021.

Roxane Scavo and Emily Nicholls presented their research on women’s partying practices, while Gemma Blok and Jenny Künkel discussed two different takes on “feminist” partying. The construction of femininity and feminism in partying practices in European cities was at the core of the discussion.

Emily Nicholls raised issues of urban spaces and class, showing how young women partying in Newcastle, UK, handle choices regarding clothing, beverages, quantity of alcohol, behavior, and party venues in relationship to the framing of lower-class alcoholized young women referred to as “Geordies.” Roxane Scavo dealt with the gendered emotions around partying practices among 20- to 40-year-old partygoers in Bordeaux, France, showing the amount of pleasure women associate with their bars and clubs, strongly related to the consumption of alcohol and other drugs, but also

their constant vigilance in places dominated by intrusive masculinities; their fellow men endorse the practices of the party animal without any limit or control while reclaiming the role of protector for their female friends. These two contributions showed how party spaces and party time involve identity production and negotiation, simultaneously exposing women to contradictory injunctions.

Gemma Blok recounted the history of women partying in the 1990s in the Netherlands, on the one hand experiencing liberating pleasure by raving and reclaiming this activity as feminist, while on the other hand being criticized by second-wave feminists of the time for commodifying themselves through a sexist practice in a male-dominated environment. Jenny Künkel explored queer and feminist parties in Berlin, which are key sites of developing new cultures of community care such as “awareness structures” or “psy-care teams,” interpreted within a theoretical framework of anti-carceral feminism. This led to a discussion about the linkage of these new practices with neoliberal self-help and harm reduction approaches. The two discussions showed how partying and its (non) regulation can challenge notions of what feminism is or should be.

## NARCOTIC CITY ARCHIVE PREVIEW:

# BUILDING AN ARCHIVE TO PRESERVE THE NARCOTIC HERITAGE OF EUROPE

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Governing the Narcotic City is building the first open-access archive of public drug cultures in Europe. The Narcotic City Archive will collect and preserve the material and immaterial heritage of narcotic use and governance in postwar European cities.

To establish this participatory archive, we are collaborating with nine nonprofit organizations across Europe. These associations have been working for decades in the fields of drug activism, policy debate, and living history. Their expertise will form the foundation of the Narcotic City Archive.

In the last year, we have spent a lot of time discussing, building, and experimenting with the archive. During multiple workshops, we collectively developed some of the features of the future archive website, engaging in in-depth

discussions about the themes, stories, topics, and items that the archive will soon encompass.

As a glimpse into the future archive, we are proud to preview two stories on past and present narcotic culture in Berlin: one on the activism of the so-called Hash Rebels in the late 1960s, and one on the now ubiquitous weed grinders in Berlin late-night shops.

We are already eagerly looking forward to sharing more information on the Narcotic City Archive in late 2021. Stay tuned!

## ARCHIVE STORY #1

# NARCOTIC STRUGGLES: HASH REBELS AND THE FIGHT FOR ALTERNATIVE SPACES IN WEST BERLIN

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*Stefan Höhne*

In the mid-1960s, West Berlin saw the first glimpses of an emerging public drug scene, which would become a widespread phenomenon in the decades to come. With the rise of youth protest and an emerging “counterculture,” substances like cannabis, opioids, LSD, and heroin started to spread through the city’s parks and squares, as well as into clubs, bars, and cafés.

In addition to these substances, use of alcohol and an increasing variety of pills such as Captagon and barbiturates was already widespread among the city’s population. By the late 1960s, the public consumption of such illegalized substances, especially cannabis, but also “Berliner Tinke” a mixture of morphine base and acetic acid soon largely replaced by heroin, became impossible to ignore. Among other reasons, this phenomenon took a distinctive shape in Berlin because it was deliberately exercised in public spaces and openly practiced in clubs and bars. For some, the collective consumption of cannabis in particular even became a form of radical political activism.

## The Central Council of Roaming Hash Rebels

Born out of the growing hippie movement of West Berlin, the “Zentralrat der umherschweifenden Haschrebellen“ (Central Council of Roaming Hash

Rebels) was formed in the spring of 1969, ironically taking its name from a text by Mao Zedong, “On The Ideology Of Roving Rebel Bands.” This group was comprised of young dissidents and hippies, and was almost exclusively male. Understanding themselves as radical revolutionaries, the Hash Rebels argued that intoxicating states have a mind-expanding effect and therefore have the potential to make people aware of their disenfranchisement – thus encouraging resistance and constituting the first step to a revolution.

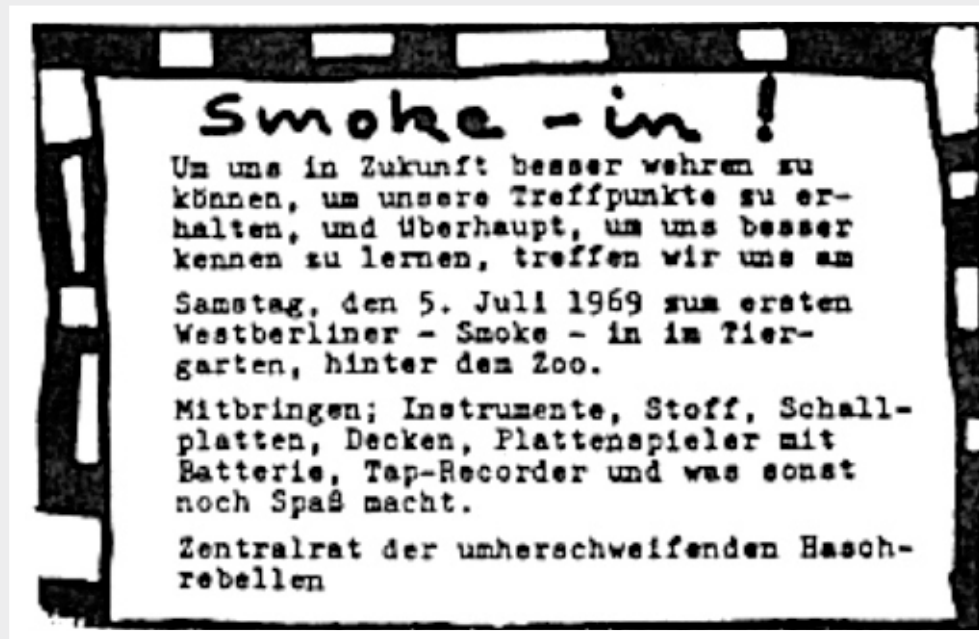
This approach, however, was controversial within the left-wing protest movement. Some saw it as destructive or even counter-revolutionary, since drug consumption also had the potential to paralyze people’s political capacity to act, and the buying and selling of drugs by even the smallest-scale dealers perpetuated the dependency-creating market laws of capitalism. Different views on how often and how much hash smoking was allowed repeatedly erupted into serious conflicts within communes, bars, and shared flats. At times, these conflicts ended with representatives of the “hash faction” being thrown out the door.

Nevertheless, members of this faction were convinced that the interactions brought about by collective consumption of marijuana, especially in public, were linked to the possibility of anchoring

revolutionary thought in a “proletarian” subculture; this would overcome the gap between the academic extra-parliamentary opposition and the actionist-anarchist commune movement. They also advocated for the use of marijuana as well as other illegalized drugs, such as opium and LSD, as a means of overcoming societal constraints and producing liberated – and therefore potentially revolutionary – subjects.

### Smoking for the Revolution

Collective consumption of illegalized substances such as marijuana as a form of political protest had already been tried out in the US, with the large “Smoke-Ins” in New York’s Washington Square Park as the most prominent model. The first such public happening was the Smoke-In in Tiergarten, the largest park in West Berlin, on the July 5, 1969. The event was widely announced by flyers such as this one:



Archive Item: Invitation to the First Public Smoke-In in Berlin’s Tiergarten (July 5, 1969).  
Image: <https://haschrebelln.de/texte-story>

#### ORIGINAL:

*Um uns in Zukunft besser wehren zu können, um unsere Treffpunkte zu erhalten, und überhaupt, um uns besser kennenzulernen, treffen wir uns am Samstag, dem 5. Juli 1969 zum ersten Westberliner Smoke-In Im Tiergarten, hinter dem Zoo.*

*Mitbringen: Instrumente, Stoff, Schallplatten, Decken, Plattenspieler mit Batterie, Tap-Recorder und was sonst noch Spaß macht.*

*Zentralrat der umherschweifenden Haschrebellen*

#### TRANSLATION:

*In order to be able to defend ourselves better in the future, to maintain our meeting places, and to get to know each other better in general, we will meet on Saturday, July 5, 1969, for the first West Berlin Smoke-In in Tiergarten, behind the zoo.*

*Bring instruments, substances, records, blankets, record players with batteries, tape recorder, and whatever else is fun.*

*Central Council of the Roaming Hash Rebels*

While only gathering a rather small crowd of around 50 young people, predominantly male, the event drew considerable attention from the public and media as well as local authorities and the police, who to everyone's surprise did not intervene. This short film, shot on 8mm film, gives some impressions of the event:

**Archive Item:**  
Smoke-In 1969, Berlin Tiergarten  
(8mm film, 6:55 min.).  
Image: Haschrebelln.de, Hanfmuseum.de  
and psi-tv.de, <https://vimeo.com/24291629>



A participant describes the event as follows:

*“Our Smoke-In looked like this: everyone smoked their joint in public, of course, and everyone felt much safer than alone at home, despite constant police patrols (on horseback, with dogs and radio). Smoking together is simply more fun. You smoke the joint together with many people whom you only meet briefly and individually except at demonstrations. Collective and permanent meeting places are the starting point for the continuation of a hash campaign conducted according to Marxist-Leninist guidelines.”<sup>1</sup>*

Such gatherings soon became frequent events, drawing ever-larger crowds and gaining a widespread reputation beyond Berlin. The political message, however, soon moved into the background.

<sup>1</sup> Interview with Ralf Reinder, in: Ralf Reinders/Ronald Fritsch: Die Bewegung 2. Juni, Gespräche über Haschrebelln, Lorenzentführung, Knast, Berlin: ID-Archiv, 1995, p. 23, translated by Stefan Höhne.

## Hair and Smoke: An Early Protest against Countercultural Appropriation

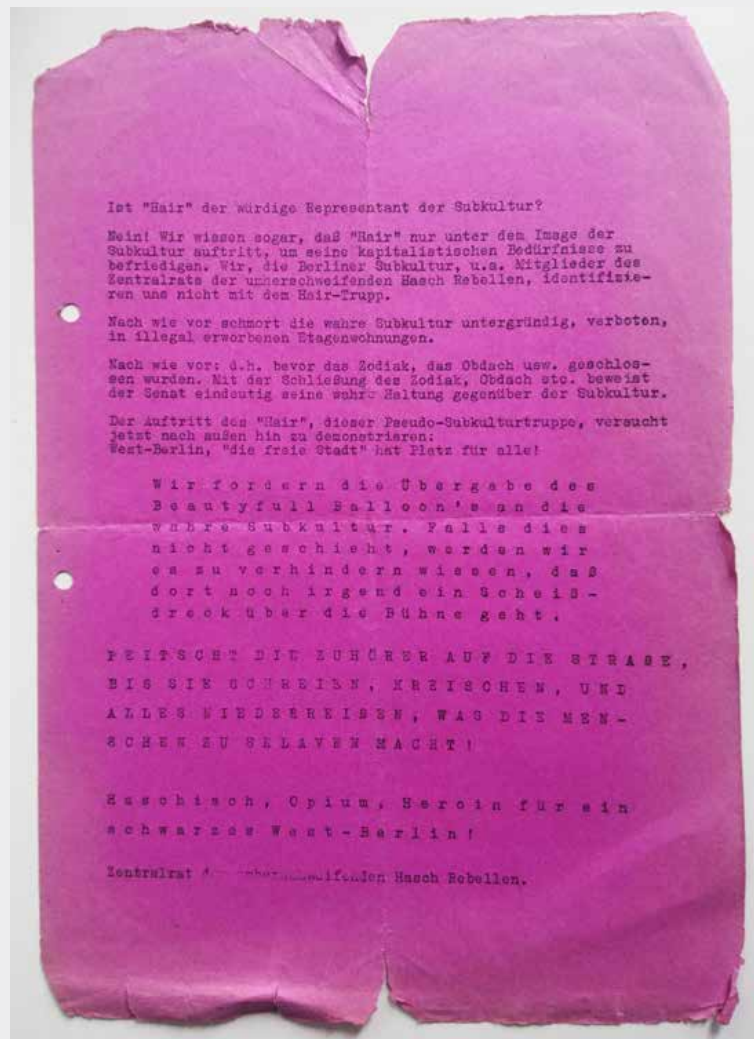
Especially for some of the earliest participants of the public Smoke-Ins, these events soon lost their potentially revolutionary force. While still frequently joining these events, the Hash Rebels now looked for alternative forms of protest that were more radical. Quarrels between group members and police during demonstrations soon became a common occurrence, increasingly accompanied by acts of sabotage.

One first climax of such militant actions was the protest of the Hash Rebels against the Berlin premiere of the musical *Hair* at the Beautiful Balloon theater (later: Schaubühne) on October 3, 1969. For them, the musical was nothing less

than a cynical and sinister form of appropriating and high-jacking hippie counterculture for capitalist gain, while at the same time, many alternative spaces in the city were frequently raided or shut down by the police.

The rebels, who saw themselves as the only authentic representatives of this counterculture, distributed leaflets all around the city, calling not only for a boycott of the show but also for militant resistance. The leaflet ended with the Rebels slogan “Hashish, Opium, Heroin – for a black West Berlin!”; with “black” referring not so much to black culture, but to the color of anarchism.

**Archive Item:**  
Leaflet from the “Zentralrat der umherschweifenden Haschrebellen” (Central Council of Roaming Hash Rebels) protesting the Berlin premiere of the musical *Hair* in late 1969. Image: Stefan Höhne.



**ORIGINAL:**

*Ist 'Hair' der würdige Repräsentant der Subkultur?*

*Nein! Wir wissen sogar, daß 'Hair' nur unter dem Image der Subkultur auftritt, um seine kapitalistischen Bedürfnisse zu befriedigen. Wir, die Berliner Subkultur, u.a. Mitglieder des Zentralrats der umherschweifenden Hasch-Rebellen, identifizieren uns nicht mit dem Hair-Trupp.*

*Nach wie vor schmort die wahre Subkultur untergründig, verboten, in illegal erworbenen Etagenwohnungen.*

*Nach wie vor: d.h. bevor das Zodiak, das Obdach usw. geschlossen wurden. Mit der Schließung des Zodiak, Obdach etc. beweist der Senat eindeutig seine wahre Haltung gegenüber der Subkultur.*

*Der Auftritt des 'Hair', dieser Pseudo-Subkulturtruppe, versucht jetzt nach außen hin zu demonstrieren:*

*West-Berlin, 'die freie Stadt' hat Platz für alle!*

*Wir fordern die Übergabe des Beautyfull Balloon's [sic!] an die wahre Subkultur. Falls dies nicht geschieht, werden wir es zu verhindern wissen, daß dort noch irgend ein Scheißdreck über die Bühne geht.*

*PEITSCHT DIE ZUHÖRER AUF DIE STRASSE, BIS SIE SCHREIEN, KREISCHEN UND ALLES NIEDERREISSEN, WAS DIE MENSCHEN ZU SKLAVEN MACHT!*

*Haschisch, Opium, Heroin für ein schwarzes West-Berlin!*

*Zentralrat der umherschweifenden Haschrebelln*

**TRANSLATION:**

*Is 'Hair' the worthy representative of the subculture?*

*No! We even know that 'Hair' only appears under the image of the subculture to satisfy its capitalist needs. We, the Berlin subculture, members of the Central Council of Roaming Hash Rebels, among others, do not identify with the Hair squad.*

*As before, the true subculture stews underground, forbidden, in illegally acquired flats.*

*Now as before: that is, before the Zodiak, the shelter, etc. were closed. By closing the Zodiak, shelter, etc. the senate clearly proves its true attitude towards the subculture.*

*The appearance of 'Hair', this pseudo-subculture troupe, is now trying to demonstrate to the outside world:*

*West Berlin, 'the free city' has room for everyone!*

*We demand the handover of Beautyfull Balloon [sic!] to the true subculture. If this doesn't happen, we will know how to prevent any more shit from going onstage there.*

*WHIP THE AUDIENCE INTO THE STREETS UNTIL THEY SCREAM, SHRIEK AND TEAR DOWN EVERYTHING THAT MAKES PEOPLE SLAVES!*

*Hashish, opium, heroin for a black West Berlin!*

*Central Council of the Roaming Hash Rebels*

This announcement of militant action was not an empty promise. During the evening of the premiere, the activists detonated a smoke bomb in the theater, resulting in massive police action and injury to an 80-year-old actress. The rebels, however, escaped unharmed.

This was not the only effective militant action by the activists. From December 31, 1967, to February 6, 1971, alone, there were about 70 attacks with

arson, explosives, and firecrackers on US facilities in West Berlin to protest the Vietnam war, which was seen as an imperialist action against anti-capitalist resistance. In addition to the Hash Rebels, these attacks were carried out by a wide variety of small militant groups, such as the *Tupamaros West-Berlin*. Judicial institutions, banks, city halls, district offices and consulates as well as the press were also targets.

On May 1, 1971, during another Smoke-In organized by the Hash Rebels at the large park Hasenheide, the *Yippies Westberlin* were founded, inspired by a political offshoot of the hippie movement in the US. In 1972, some of its members as well many Hash Rebels joined the “Bewegung 2. Juni” (June 2 Movement, named after the date of the murder of the student Benno Ohnesorg by Berlin police officer Karl-Heinz Kurras during a demonstration in West Berlin on 2

June 1967). This marked the unofficial end of the rebels. After a series of militant actions and bombings, this radical “urban guerrilla” group came to be considered a terrorist organization by the state. Eventually going underground, the ideologies of its members ended up being very different from the politics of claiming public spaces through collective narcotic enjoyment.

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## ARCHIVE STORY #2

# THE GRINDER AND ITS UBIQUITY IN BERLIN SPÄTIS

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Thomas Bürk

Grinding is the process of milling cannabis to make the dried flowers and leaf stalks into fine powder and break off the sticky flowers to roll a joint or blunt. Grinding weed is also essential for other ways of consuming cannabis like making edibles, as well as other forms of cooking, drinking, smoking, and snorting. Grinding may seem like a long-established, basic cultural technique in the world of intoxication by cannabis. In fact, grinders only became a more or less necessary stoner item in the early 1980s, when consumption shifted from hashish to cannabis flowers, or, better, “Nederwiet.” Around that time, new crossbreeds of the basic cannabis varieties *sativa*, *ruderalis*, and *indica* were successfully implemented in the Netherlands by early cannabis breeders such as Wernard Bruining, based on US varieties. These newly bred, often

seedless varieties (*sensimilla*) such as Northern Lights and later Skunk made “Nederwiet (...) the symbol of cannabis innovation.”<sup>1</sup> This cannabis contained significantly higher levels of THC compared to earlier homegrown plants, and it also gave off a strong, penetrating aroma. The new supply of THC-rich, potent *Nederwiet* as a Dutch agro-industrial breeder product transformed and expanded the supply of bred hybrid cannabis varieties almost beyond measure, forming the botanical and economic basis of a worldwide triumph of cannabis and all its forms of production and consumption. Hashish, which was often stronger and not as differentiated in its effects, was increasingly replaced by weed from the 1990s onwards.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.zamnesia.com/de/blog-nederwiet-weed-niederlanden-n1558>



At least in Berlin and other German metropolitan areas, grinders can traditionally be purchased nearly everywhere where you can buy paraphernalia for weed consumption. This may mean “head shops,” but more recently it also includes “Spätverkäufe,” or “late-night shops,” generally referred to as *Spätis*. These shops offer beverages, booze, cigarettes, chocolate, food, everyday needs, and newspapers, for almost 24/7.<sup>2</sup> However, grinders are now also offered in many shapes, sizes, and colors via general mail order as “herb grinders,” and from cannabis specialty retailers and their online stores.<sup>3</sup>

The fact that grinders and other cannabis-smoking paraphernalia can now be purchased in many *Spätis* – not only in the specialized stores for cannabis growers and cannabis consumption – points to an interesting phenomenon in the social treatment of the substances of the cannabis plant.

2 Spätis also sell the long rolling papers that you need for joints, available these days in organic, unbleached varieties made of hemp, rice, and bamboo, and often sold with rolling tips.

3 See for example:

<https://www.amazon.de/4-teiliger-Grinder-getrocknete-Kr%C3%A4uter-Gew%C3%BCrze/dp/B01N0XIAQY>; <https://www.online-headshop.de/pfeifen-zubehoer/grinder/789/grinder-blingbling-hemp-leaf-4-teilig-50mm-mit-schaber?c=7>

Selection of grinders available at a typical Berlin *Späti*. Image: Thomas Bürk



Example of a grinder. Image: Thomas Bürk

While the presence and visibility of the artifacts of cannabis consumption manifest its widespread use, at the same time the consumption practices of many cannabis users are stigmatized and criminalized. This situation is symptomatic of German drug policy as a whole, a petrification of the conditions from the past 30 years. Even the repeatedly advanced initiative for modest, medically advisable, and absolutely uncontroversial *drug checking* will be rejected again in 2021.

The drug commissioner of the German Ministry of Health, Daniela Ludwig, never tires of emphasizing her *zero-tolerance* policy towards cannabis as well as other intoxicating drugs – except alcohol, of course. In a now-famous 2020 interview, she insisted: “just because alcohol is dangerous doesn’t mean cannabis is broccoli.”<sup>4</sup> Unsurprisingly, it only took a short time for this phrase to end up on a grinder.<sup>5</sup>

4 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L27ffK-WOBBE>

5 <https://www.donaulife.com/online-headshop/grinder-cruncher/metall-grinder/nv-grinder-cannabis-ist-kein-brokkoli-4-teilig-o-64-mm/>

CALL FOR PROPOSALS:

## DRUGS (COUNTER) MAPPING

### A COLLECTIVE BOOK PROJECT ON ALTERNATIVE MAPS ABOUT DRUGS

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This collective book project will share alternative knowledge about drugs in gathering (counter) mappings from all over the world. From production to consumption, from local to global, from 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, from pleasure to pain, from prohibition to prescription, drug practices and discourses are spatialized and contribute to shape our worlds. Maps are powerful representations of the social, political, historical, and economic constructions around psychoactive substances. Counter mapping opens up new ways to see and make sense of this often contentious phenomenon. Experimenting with new visualizations and new graphic languages, critically reflecting on existing drug maps, it will challenge common imaginations and understandings of drug practices and cultures.

The book project aims at reaching a wide range of topics, disciplines, approaches, spaces and epochs, and also a

broad diversity of visualizations. It will offer critical perspectives on the spatializations of drug-related economics, politics, and cultures. You can find further information and an extended call (in English, Spanish, and French) here: [drugscounermapping.wordpress.com](https://drugscounermapping.wordpress.com)

We welcome all kinds of proposals, visual sketches, and texts (max. 500 words), in English, French, or Spanish by September 30, 2021. Co-working processes between text writers and cartographers/ graphic designers are encouraged and can be organized or supported by the editors. Since the book project has some funding, we can collaborate with freelance workers or associations who have a tax number – in the limit of the budget.

You can contact the editorial team via email: [dcm@services.cnrs.fr](mailto:dcm@services.cnrs.fr)

## NEW ASSOCIATED PARTNER: PHILINE EDBAUER, *#mybrainmychoice* INITIATIVE

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We are happy to welcome our new Associated Partner Philine Edbauer from the initiative *#mybrainmychoice*, which advocates for a substantially different drug policy in Germany and on a global level. *#mybrainmychoice* is an initiative that aims to decriminalize drug consumption, bring visibility to issues of autonomy and drug use, and end global drug wars.

We are looking forward to many more interesting discussions with Philine and collaborations with the initiative.

For more Information on Philine Edbauer and the *#mybrainmychoice*, find them on Twitter and Instagram or subscribe to their Newsletter.

- Twitter:  
[@mybrainmychoice](https://twitter.com/mybrainmychoice)  
[@philineedbauer](https://twitter.com/philineedbauer)
- Instagram:  
[@mybrainmychoice\\_mbmc](https://www.instagram.com/mybrainmychoice_mbmc)
- Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/mybrainmychoice/>
- Newsletter:  
[mybrainmychoice.de/newsletter](https://mybrainmychoice.de/newsletter)



Members of *#mybrainmychoice* along with the initiative Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP) Berlin during a street art action at Tempelhofer Feld in Berlin on the Global Day of Action of the “Support. Don’t Punish” campaign, June 26, 2021. Image: <https://mybrainmychoice.de/weltdrogentag-2021/>

## RECENT NARCOTIC CITY EVENTS:

### JANUARY

Conference: “*The Genders of Urban Drug Policies*,” second event in the series “*Drugs, Genders, Cities*,” organized by Mélina Germes, Jenny Künkel, Emmanuel Langlois, Sarah Perrin, and Roxane Scavo (CNRS Passages and the Centre Emile Durkheim, Université Populaire de Bordeaux, DRUSEC, Governing the Narcotic City), online January 21, 2021

Lecture: “*Modi der Drogenversorgung in der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts*,” Peter-Paul Bänziger (University of Basel), annual conference of the Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte, online January 29, 2021

### MARCH

Narcotic City internal workshop, organized by Boris Michel and Frederieke Westerheide (MLU Halle-Wittenberg), online March 8–9, 2021

Public lecture: “*Hanging Out at the Riviera: Drug Consumption in Zurich, c. 1965–1975*,” Peter-Paul Bänziger, online March 9, 2021

Lecture and discussion: “*Intersektionalität in der Sexarbeitsbewegung*,” with Jenny Künkel (CNRS) and Ruby & Velvet from Whoroscope Initiative Frauenkampftag Bochum, online March 12, 2021

### APRIL

Session at American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting: “*Governing Urban Drug Cultures*,” organized by Stefan Höhne and Boris Michel, featuring presentations by Soumya Dasgupta and Debayudh Chatterjee (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), Magaly Ordoñez (University of Minnesota), Stefan Hodges (Concordia University, Montreal), and Frederieke Westerheide (MLU Halle-Wittenberg), online, April 10, 2021

Conference presentation: “*‘Have a Nice Trip’: Urban Spaces of Drug Use and Tourism in Berlin, Germany*,” Frederieke Westerheide (MLU Halle-Wittenberg), AAG Annual Meeting, online April 10, 2021

Input: *“From the End of Policing to Feminist Alternatives: The Example of Sex and Drugs,”*

Jenny Künkel (CNRS), roundtable with Prof. Alex Vitale, Institut für Protest. und Bewegungsforschung, TU Berlin, online  
April 16, 2021

## MAY

Narcotic City Archive internal training workshop, led by Boris Michel and Frederieke Westerheide (MLA Halle-Wittenberg), online  
May 7, 2021

Narcotic City internal workshop, organized by Mélina Germes and Jenny Künkel (CNRS Passages, Bordeaux), online  
May 17–19, 2021

*“Drugs in Party Spaces & Gender,”* panel presentations and keynote lecture, third event in the series *“Drugs, Genders, Cities”* (CNRS Passages and the Centre Emile Durkheim, Université Populaire de Bordeaux, DRUSEC, Governing the Narcotic City), online

## JUNE

Guest lecture: *“Städtische Regulierung von Sexarbeit – Verdrängung, Vermarktung & Verwaltung,”*  
Jenny Künkel (CNRS), Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences & University of Duisburg-Essen  
June 1, 2021

Colloquium lecture: *“Linke Emotionspolitik – Sexualitäts- und Drogendiskurse in feministischen Partyräumen,”*  
Jenny Künkel (CNRS), Geographisches Institut of the TU Dresden  
June 16, 2021

Narcotic City Archive internal training workshop, led by Boris Michel and Frederieke Westerheide (MLU Halle-Wittenberg), online  
June 18, 2021

Presentation: *“Urban Spaces of Drug Use and Tourism in Berlin Kreuzberg,”*  
Frederieke Westerheide (MLU Halle-Wittenberg), internal colloquium of the Fachgruppe Anthropogeographie/Human Geography, Institut für Geowissenschaften und Geographie, MLU Halle-Wittenberg  
June 29, 2021

*All lectures and forthcoming events will be announced via [the newsletter mailing list](#).*

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## IMPRINT

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Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut Essen  
Goethestr. 31 · 45128 Essen · Germany

Editing:  
Sage Anderson

Design and layout:  
Christian Bauer

## CONNECT

 [www.narcotic.city](http://www.narcotic.city)  
 [info@narcotic.city](mailto:info@narcotic.city)  
 [@Narcotic\\_City](https://twitter.com/Narcotic_City)

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