ESRC End of Award Report

For awards ending on or after 1 November 2009

This End of Award Report should be completed and submitted using the grant reference as the email subject, to reportsofficer@esrc.ac.uk on or before the due date.

The final instalment of the grant will not be paid until an End of Award Report is completed in full and accepted by ESRC.

Grant holders whose End of Award Report is overdue or incomplete will not be eligible for further ESRC funding until the Report is accepted. We reserve the right to recover a sum of the expenditure incurred on the grant if the End of Award Report is overdue. (Please see the ESRC Research Funding Guide for details.)

Please refer to the Guidance notes when completing this End of Award Report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant Reference</th>
<th>ES/J002755/1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant Title</td>
<td>Sexualisation, nuisance and safety: Sexual Entertainment Venues and the management of risk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant Start Date</td>
<td>31/12/2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant End Date</td>
<td>30/12/2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Amount Expended</td>
<td>£105,838.54</td>
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<td>Grant holding Institution</td>
<td>University of Kent</td>
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<td>University of Lincoln</td>
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1. Non-technical summary

Please provide below a project summary written in non-technical language. The summary may be used by us to publicise your work and should explain the aims and findings of the project. [Max 250 words]

In recent years the heightened visibility of dedicated ‘lap-dancing clubs’ in British cities has prompted much debate. While some regard these clubs as offering harmless titillation, others believe they attract the ‘wrong sort’ of clientele, posing threats to community safety.

In the wake of the introduction of new powers to license lap-dancing clubs as Sexual Entertainment Venues, this project identified four case study locations representative of the range of towns and cities with such clubs. Questionnaires and go-along events were used to explore local residents’ perceptions of lap-dancing venues in these locations, and the results considered in the light of the objections to these clubs through the licensing process.

The project found that most have few concerns about lap-dancing clubs and that there is relatively little anxiety about these venues promoting criminality: none of our respondents recounted experiences of assault, robbery or harassment around lap-dancing clubs. However, there remained concern that such clubs promote sexism towards women among younger people; a view significantly more likely to be held by women than men: clubs that overtly advertised sexual entertainment were considered most problematic in this respect.

This unique research was conducted with the cooperation of licensing authorities, with the findings being communicated to licensing officers via mailings and workshops with a view to helping shape licensing policies. Overall, the findings suggest objections to lap-dancing clubs are primarily based on moral anxieties, highlighting a conundrum in licensing law given moral grounds for objection are not admissible when determining licensing applications.

2. Project overview

a) Objectives

Please state the aims and objectives of your project as outlined in your proposal to us. [Max 200 words]

Following numerous examples of opposition to lap-dancing venues, the Policing and Crime Act 2009 contained new adoptive powers allowing for the tighter regulation of such clubs, adding the category of Sexual Entertainment Venue (SEV) to the list of sex establishments controlled by the Local Government (Miscellaneous Powers) Act 1982.

Despite legislative reform, there has been no academic research to date on the impacts of lap-dancing clubs on the communities in which they are located. The research therefore set out to explore how local authorities might best achieve the aims of licensing - i.e. maximizing public safety, minimizing public nuisance, and reducing crime and disorder - in relation to the licensing of SEVs.
The specific aims were:

1. To examine local residents' perceptions of Sexual Entertainment Venues in four case study locations selected to be representative of different styles and settings of clubs.
2. To explore the ways that SEVs change peoples’ experience of the night-time city, paying particular attention to questions of gender.
3. To contribute to emerging academic and popular understandings of the anxieties that surround adult entertainment as it becomes more visible in the night-time economy of British towns and cities.

b) Project Changes
Please describe any changes made to the original aims and objectives, and confirm that these were agreed with us. Please also detail any changes to the grant holder’s institutional affiliation, project staffing or funding. [Max 200 words]

A no-cost extension to allow the Initial Findings workshop to be held in early 2013 was applied for, and refused by the ESRC. The workshop hence occurred within the lifetime of the project, not withstanding this required holding it in the Christmas run-up and may have affected attendance. The extension was sought because the project began on 31st December 2011 and not the anticipated date of 1st April 2012 (noting the latter would have allowed the workshop to occur in Spring 2013).

c) Methodology
Please describe the methodology that you employed in the project. Please also note any ethical issues that arose during the course of the work, the effects of this and any action taken. [Max 500 words]

This project aimed to contribute to debates on the licensing of SEVs. It was therefore important to ascertain the number, type and location of licensed premises offering sexual entertainment. Accordingly, the project conducted an online email survey of all local authorities to establish (i) whether they had adopted the Policing and Crime Act 2009, allowing them to license SEVs; (ii) whether they had developed a policy to guide applications and (ii) how many licenses for SEVs were granted or refused. This identified the number of premises existing in England and Wales, and highlighted common public objections to SEVs.

Noting the number of formal objections to clubs is relatively small, and not necessarily representative, the next phase of research explored the perception of lap-dancing clubs among residents living in locations with such clubs. Four case study locations were selected, all of which had adopted the new licensing powers. These towns/cities were selected because they had different histories of sexual entertainment. Location one was a small, county town with little history of sexual entertainment containing one SEV. The second was a mid-sized city boasting two SEVs. Location three boasted a more substantial night-time economy (including several venues marketed at LGBT consumers) and three
SEVs. Finally, location four was a provincial city known for ‘stag and hen’ tourism, hosting four SEVs and several premises that offer striptease entertainment on football match-days.

In each location, residents were encouraged to complete an online survey on attitudes to sexual entertainment venues. The survey was publicized through local media (radio, newspapers) and leaflet drops in community venues. Survey responses were slow to be forthcoming, meaning that additional paper-based street surveys were completed in situ. The survey reached its target of 100 residents in each local authority area, with 941 adult respondents surveyed in total. 58% were female; 40% had children under 18 living in their household; 87% identified as white British or white English and 61% claimed no religion. 46% were aged 25-39 but only 13 (1.4%) over 65. Although the survey cannot claim to be representative on the basis of this age profile, it is the largest survey of its type to have ever been completed in the UK.

From the survey, 46 respondents were recruited for eight evening walk-along events that were audio-taped and photographed. Respondents were asked to speak about their feelings about different parts of the town, with routes chosen to ensure some SEVs would be visible. Semantic rating scales were used to explore feelings about different locations. Groups were mixed gender, and included individuals from different age groups. Walks lasted no longer two hours, and typically took place between the hours of 1900-2200.

Overall, this threefold method allowed for successful analysis of (i) the location and number of SEVs in England and Wales (ii) the adjudged suitability of SEVs in particular cities and (iii) the contribution that these clubs make to the ambience and character of the night-time economy.

d) Project Findings

Please summarise the findings of the project, referring where appropriate to outputs recorded on the ESRC website. Any future research plans should also be identified. [Max 500 words]

The project revealed there are 241 premises in England and Wales offering striptease on more than 11 occasions per year. 16 clubs have been refused licenses to date. 43% of SEV applications have received no public objection, although around one in ten applications receives upwards of 30 objections. Objections mainly suggest clubs have a negative impact on their locality, ‘lowering the tone’, attracting ‘unsavoury’ characters, and encouraging anti-sociality.

These general – and possibly unrepresentative – objections contrast with the more representative results of our survey. Only around 3% of our respondents felt that an SEV was a source of particular nuisance, and the majority (54%) claimed that town or city centres were appropriate locations for lap-dancing clubs. However, 83% of people think SEVs are unsuitable near Schools or Nurseries, and 65% near religious facilities. Only 3% think SEVs are suitable in residential areas. Around 1 in 10 claim there are no suitable locations for SEVs. This group is most likely to regard SEVs as sexist, and least likely to regard it as harmless entertainment. This group is most likely to avoid walking past SEVs at night, and to say there are too many SEVs in their town. Women were significantly over-represented in this group, suggesting the presence of SEVs in the night-time city has gendered effects. This was explored in our guided walks, which suggested women were more likely to note, and comment on, the presence of SEVs in their local towns than men.
Here, unease about SEVs appeared more related to questions of class, morality and disgust than fear, with SEV's contribution to antisocial behaviour and criminality deemed marginal, and in some cases insignificant, compared with other venues.

The implication is that SEVs are not regarded a significant source of nuisance by the majority, but that a significant minority feel such clubs are inappropriate principally because they promote sexism. Perceptions of SEVs appear to be strongly shaped by gender: religion and ethnicity make no significant difference.

The gendered dimensions of anxiety about lap-dancing clubs are highlighted in project outputs (e.g. a paper in *Urban Studies* which focuses on women's rights to the city, and a chapter in a forthcoming book, *Suburban Sexscapes*). Further academic outputs evaluate licensing as a means for regulating SEVs in British cities, engaging with debates concerning the role of municipal law (see paper in *Social & Legal Studies*). Policy-oriented outputs include a paper in the *Journal of Licensing* detailing how policies guiding applications for lap dance clubs can reduce the possibility for offence to be caused through the judicious use of licensing conditions controlling the appearance, opening hours and visibilities of clubs. Outputs are accessible at: http://www.esrc.ac.uk/my-esrc/grants/ESJ002755.1/read

Future outputs are anticipated from this project, with two key foci remaining to be developed: (i) the role of club signage and appearance in creating disgust and offence (for audiences in geography and urban studies), and (ii) a consideration of women’s experiences in night-life spaces where SEVs are present (for audiences in sociology, criminology and women’s studies).

e) Contributions to wider ESRC initiatives (eg Research Programmes or Networks)

If your project was part of a wider ESRC initiative, please describe your contributions to the initiative’s objectives and activities and note any effect on your project resulting from participation. [Max. 200 words]

Not applicable.

3. Early and anticipated impacts

a) Summary of Impacts to date

Please summarise any impacts of the project to date, referring where appropriate to associated outputs recorded on the Research Outcomes System (ROS). This should include both scientific impacts (relevant to the academic community) and economic and societal impacts (relevant to broader society). The impact can be relevant to any organisation, community or individual. [Max. 400 words]
The project findings are highly relevant to academic discussions concerning the sexualisation of society, as well as to the needs of licensing officers and local government officers in Britain as they are charged with determining appropriate locations SEVs. The findings have already been disseminated to both audiences thus:

- Through academic papers: those in *Urban Studies* and *Social and Legal Studies* are primarily for academic audiences in sociology, law and geography while a paper in the *Journal of Licensing* is for a policy and practitioner audience.

- Through conference papers addressing substantively different audiences: the Sexual Cultures conference, April 2012 (Brunel University), provided an opportunity to argue for evidence-based policy; the British Sociology Association Annual Conference, April 2012 (University of Leeds), discussed women’s objections to SEVs in the context of feminist campaigning; and the Royal Geographical Society Annual Conference, July 2012 (University of Edinburgh), demonstrated that the administrative procedures adopted in different jurisdictions are resulting in a variegated geography of SEV regulation.

- Through press releases at the beginning and end of the project: publicity for the project included international news media (e.g. *Le Temps*, Switzerland, BBC online news), national press (e.g. *The Times*, *The Sun*, *The Daily Mail*), local media (e.g. *Brighton Argus*, *Kent Messenger*, *Swindon Advertiser*) and radio (e.g. *BBC Radio Kent*; *Radio London*; *BBC Radio Wiltshire*). Though some media coverage was negative in tone, this was nonetheless useful for provoking debate and publicising the research.

- An Initial Findings workshop where the results were disseminated and discussed by an audience of c. 50 academics, lawyers, licensing officers, police and councillors. The workshop allowed for the sharing of best practice in licensing SEVs and a frank discussion of licensing approaches in the light of the evidence collected in the study. A report on the workshop, which also included a presentation relating the findings of ESRC ‘Regulatory Dance’ project (RES-000-22-3163), was produced and sent to all delegates.

- A YouTube video discussing the project outcomes was posted and publicised in January 2013: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q3c6ztXWVL0.

- A summary of the Initial Findings was sent to all (c. 340) licensing authorities in England and Wales in December 2012. This, and all other indicated outputs, is accessible on the ROS.

In sum the project has been widely-publicised and disseminated. As such, we feel able to claim that we have already shaped attitudes to, and increased understanding of, the regulation of sexual entertainment among academic, public and policy-making audiences.
b) Anticipated/Potential Future Impacts

Please outline any anticipated or potential impacts (scientific or economic and societal) that you believe your project might have in future. [Max. 200 words]

In the coming 12 months, further efforts will be made to disseminate the research findings through:

- Academic research seminars (e.g. Universities of Lancaster, February, and Leeds, May).

- A keynote presentation at the third Emotional Geographies conference (Groningen, Netherlands, July).

- A project summary in a Wellcome Trust booklet on Sexual Education (edited Feona Attwood).

- Two additional papers submitted to peer-reviewed journals, aiming at audiences in geography and sociology respectively.

- Updates to a website - [http://sevlicensing.wordpress.com](http://sevlicensing.wordpress.com) - to highlight on-going controversies in this policy area and to publicise project outputs and findings.

It is hence anticipated the findings will continue to challenge established ideas about the regulation of SEVs by showing their licensing is shaped by moral considerations as much as by environmental concerns. Though no reform of licensing law is likely in the coming year, licensing policies and SEV applications will be informed by the project findings: throughout 2013, project findings and appropriate documentation will be sent to all local authorities consulting on SEV policy and club applications/renewals.

We anticipate the research will be widely-cited in public debate and policy discussions over the next 12 months, and that there will be evidence that the work is having impact on licensing practitioners.

You will be asked to complete an ESRC Impact Report 12 months after the end date of your award. The Impact Report will ask for details of any impacts that have arisen since the completion of the End of Award Report.

4. Declarations

Please ensure that sections A, B and C below are completed and signed by the appropriate individuals. The End of Award Report will not be accepted unless all sections are signed. Please note hard copies are not required; electronic signatures are accepted and should be used.

A: To be completed by Grant Holder
You will be asked to complete an ESRC Impact Report 12 months after the end date of your award. The Impact Report will ask for details of any impacts that have arisen since the completion of the End of Award Report.

4. Declarations

Please ensure that sections A, B and C below are completed and signed by the appropriate individuals. The End of Award Report will not be accepted unless all sections are signed. Please note hard copies are not required; electronic signatures are accepted and should be used.

A: To be completed by Grant Holder

Please read the following statements. Tick one statement under ii) and iii), then sign with an electronic signature at the end of the section (this should be an image of your actual signature).

i) The Project

This Report is an accurate overview of the project, its findings and impacts. All co-investigators named in the proposal to ESRC or appointed subsequently have seen and approved the Report.

ii) Submissions to the Research Outcomes System (ROS)

Output and impact information has been submitted to the Research Outcomes System. Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted as soon as they become available.

or

This grant has not yet produced any outputs or impacts. Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted to the Research Outcomes System as soon as they become available.

iii) Submission of Data

Data arising from this grant have been offered for deposit with the UK Data Service.

or
Data that were anticipated in the grant proposal have not been produced and the
UK Data Service has been notified.
or
No datasets were proposed or produced from this grant.

B: To be completed by Head of Department, School or Faculty
Please read the statement below then sign with an electronic signature to confirm your
agreement.

This Report is an accurate overview of the project, its findings and impacts.

C: To be completed by Finance Officer of Grant-Holding Research Organisation
Please read the statement below then sign with an electronic signature to confirm your
agreement.

ESRC funds have been used in accordance with the ESRC Research Funding Guide. All co-
investigators named in the proposal to ESRC or appointed subsequently have seen and
approved the Report.

To cite this output:
ESRC End of Award Report, ES/J002755/1. Swindon: ESRC.