

Bouncers, dominance, discrimination and acceptable violence: Collaborative night life security assemblages

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Abstract

Violence has always been an intrinsic part of the night life environment. Through a combination of intoxication, exuberance and masculinity in overdrive, the hordes of people visiting night life districts always give rise to unruly behavior, physical confrontations and injury. To manage this violence, a network of public and private partners works to keep the peace. The bouncers, or doormen, make up a part of this network. In spite of this, however, the commonly shared stereotype is that the stern and intimidating bouncers are just as often a cause of aggression and violence, instead of the people who are there to stop it. In that regard, based on statistics linking the bouncers to violent incidents, much research has been done into the possible effects of regulation and other means to ensure the apparent causal effects diminish. However, less attention has been paid to the bouncers themselves. Through an interdisciplinary approach, this thesis explores the professional reality of the bouncers in Dutch night life districts. The objective of this thesis is to provide a basis for understanding the role of bouncers within the context of collaborative night life security and illustrate the various factors that influence their professional behavior. First, an analysis of the actors, environment and societal and legal notions that shape the collaborative security environment, provides the basis for understanding the bouncers' professional reality. Secondly, through concepts of trust, cohesion and leadership, it becomes apparent how these notions, mainly the legal limitations and the inherent power difference between the bouncers and the police, influence the bouncers' professional relationships and collective work outcomes. Finally, through the lens of performance and concepts as dominance, discrimination and violence, it is illustrated how bouncers define and negotiate their role of gatekeeper within the night life environment. These three ways of analysis serve as a complementary approach, through which it becomes apparent how on the ground practice is influenced by underlying societal concepts and vice versa.

Bouncers within collaborative night life security: The performance of acceptable violence

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26-06-2015

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1. Introduction

The night life has always been associated with violence. Drunkenness, fights and general hooliganism and unrestrained behavior by large groups of young people seem to be intrinsically linked to night time entertainment, such as bars and pubs. Central to this tumultuous environment is the figure of the bouncer. Employed to keep the peace, the bouncer himself has become associated with the violence that characterizes the night life environment. Intimidating, sometimes scary even, the bouncer, recognizable by his typical black outfit, earpiece and large physical size and gruff demeanor, is often vilified and seen as one of the causes for violence to occur. This is not without reason, as physical interventions by bouncers, within the already volatile environment, often do escalate into full blown fights. However, bouncers do not ply their trade in isolation. They are forced to interact with not just the general public, but also the local police presence, owners of the establishments, local community makers and an additional number of background actors. The collaboration of all these parties together, characterized by varying degrees of competition and cooperation, is what decides the outcome of government and private efforts to provide a safe and secure night life environment.

The purpose of this exploratory research is to gain further insight in the specific role of bouncers within the night life economy, with regards to the production of safety and the use of violence, by illustrating the various ways in which the bouncer is positioned within his professional reality and influences the collaboration of all actors involved in the provision of security in the night life environment. In this fashion, this research will expand on the existing body of knowledge concerning the night life environment, by specifically singling out the bouncer, not just as an occupation and actor, but as an intrinsic part of a larger network of actors, which allows an illustration of the various connections, tensions and other influences that characterize both the bouncer and his collaboration with these other actors. Additionally, through a qualitative approach, this research will take into account the implicit, underlying notions, assumptions and prejudices of the bouncers concerning all aspects of their work, which so far has not been done in relation to their part of a larger assemblage. In short, this research is an illustration of the bouncer as part of a security assemblage, not just the bouncer himself. This, in turn, will allow policy makers to better account for the role of bouncers within the larger security setting and to attempt to mitigate certain tensions and hindrances which make the behavior of bouncers more violent than it has to be. Also, this will create more awareness amongst the general public of both the occupation the bouncers and certain

factors that could create or prevent conflict situations. This broader understanding might lead to a safer night life experience for all involved

This quest for insight into the role of doormen in the larger nighttime security network leads to the following main question: *In what manner do bouncers influence the collaborative production of security in the night life environment?* Illustrated by several empirical case studies and data gathered through participant observation, interviews and conversations, I will use an interdisciplinary approach to tackle this question, by employing three distinct theoretical and methodological perspectives of analysis. These three distinct lenses of analysis will be used in a complementary fashion and allow me to arrive at a more comprehensive conclusion than any single methodological approach would allow me to do. Additionally, these complementary lenses will serve to structure and layer this thesis, as this approach allows me to position the bouncer within the larger context of night time security and organizational structure, which in turn enables a better analysis of the interaction and tensions between the bouncer and his surroundings. I have identified three levels on which bouncers operate and interact, namely interaction within the night life security network, the bouncers interacting as a working group and the individual bouncer interacting with his environment and customers. This layered interdisciplinary approach leads to the following three sub questions:

What actors, physical environment and underlying notions form the professional reality of bouncers? Using the work of Bruno Latour, I will illustrate the other parties, physical surroundings and most importantly the societal, cultural and legal constructs that together make up the context within which the bouncers ply their trade.

In what way are the working relations of the bouncers shaped by their professional reality? By framing the bouncers as an ad hoc working group, the concepts of trust, cohesion and leadership will serve to portray the way in which the bouncers work together while negotiating with and positioning themselves within the various aspects that make up their professional reality.

In what manner is the bouncers individual performance influenced by his professional reality?

Through Goffmans vision on performance and image management, I will attempt to explore the various sources of agency driving the motivations and actions of the bouncers within their professional reality, supported by the concepts of dominance, discrimination and violence.

The second chapter of this thesis provides the theoretical basis for this research project. It starts off with an illustration of security networks as assemblages within the night life environment combined with Bruno Latours vision on actors-network arrangements as a reality made up of people, the physical environment, knowledge and social constructs. Following that it introduces the concept of ad hoc working groups and factors influencing the dynamics within ad hoc group formations, such as cohesion, familiarity, trust and performance. Finally it summates Erving Goffman's dramaturgical approach to image management, as it relates to the performance of bouncers within their professional environment. Section three explains the position of bouncers, as part of nodal security, within the Netherlands, by using the concepts provided in section two. Section four respectively details the research area and population, research ethics, the research, registration and analysis strategies and the methodological approach with which this thesis has been developed. Chapters five, six and seven form the empirical chapters of this thesis, covering respectively the bouncers' professional reality, the bouncers' working group dynamics and the bouncers' performance. The conclusion provides the most important findings of this thesis, as well as suggestions for further research.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Security assemblages and the actor-network theory

Bouncers, as private security personnel, form a natural element within the context of collaborative night life security. The private security industry has embedded itself within both commercial and government sectors for a long time, resulting in a multiplication and diversification of security actors and a mutual reliance and codependency between these public and private partners(Van Steden, de Waard, 2013:2-9). The ensuing grey area, within which this competition and cooperation takes place, makes it impossible to draw a clear distinction between these actors(De Waard, 1999:144-160) (Van Steden, Sarre, 2007:222-230).

Research into this evolution has led to the development of several similar concepts with which to better grasp the expanding complexity and multiplicity of the security actors. For example, Shearing (1983:495-502) coins the concept of nodal policing, which attempts to disentangle the various security institutions, along with their differing mentalities, practices and technologies, and enables the illustration of the way these actors and their security practices and styles are positioned within a network, while emphasizing that the specific manner in which the various public and private nodes relate to each other will vary across time, space and context (Shearing, 2005:57-63). Tessa Diphoorn uses the term twilight policing, as it illustrates the ways in which this public-private partnering creates new joint security practices, through structured and unstructured interactions between the public police force and private security guards in South Africa. She also stresses the fact that one has to take into account the fact that forms of collaboration, cooperation and competition simultaneously take place whenever several actors come together to provide security. As such, she recognizes the need for a concept that shifts the focus away from the various actors, towards the joint practices that grow from these partnerships and the way these practices come into being (Diphoorn, 2014:427-440). Van Liempt uses the concept of security assemblages as a lens with which to evaluate security networks in practice in the Netherlands and stressing the varying nature of these assemblages across time and space (van Liempt, 2013: 1-15). Central to all these concepts is the fact that the fluid and sometimes ad-hoc nature of these networks, or assemblages, characterized by shifting tensions between parties and varying degrees of competition and collaboration means that one cannot speak of any particular assemblage as a given, as it is never a static phenomenon (van Buuren, 2010: 1-6). For the purposes of this thesis, the concept of security assemblage will from here on out be used to describe the complex network of security actors in practice. The concept of security assemblages as a lens with which to evaluate security networks in practice, is essential in regards to the bouncers, within the context of collaborative security, as it allows one to map the relations and tensions that influence the collaboration and emerging practices, and not just the actors themselves.

While these assemblages can be made up out of a wide variety of actors, such as the bouncers, police, local city council, nightlife venue owners, the public prosecutor and the local community health service (Pratten, 2007: 85-91 and Monaghan, 2004: 455-470), they are not limited to human actors. Various other technological methods are usually implemented to govern the night time district, such as surveillance cameras, combined with real time

tracking and communication possibilities made possible by remote operators (Loader, 1997:380-390). Furthermore, legal and societal concepts influence the manifestation of the assemblage in their own way as well, for example when it comes to the use of violence and accountability of the various actors (van Liempt, 2013: 1-15). The perspective of Bruno Latour, as formulated through his actor-network theory, provides a conceptual means with which to analyze the manner in which these individual actors and collective constructs meet (Harris, Jan, 2005:163-170).

Latour based his perspective on his analysis of research in practice, predominantly Louis Pasteur (Latour, 2005: 27-85). This perspective, also called the sociology of associations, is based on the premises that “the social” is a dynamic collective of heterogeneous parts, and that any stable social arrangement can be seen both a distinct element, as well as a reflection of the arrangement as a whole (Callon, Michael, Law, John, 1997: 167-172). As such it is a means with which to bridge the distinction between the individual and the collective. This perspective is heavily reliant on a relativistic mindset, in order to engage the empirical world ‘as is’, as this is necessary in order to incorporate all elements that play a part within the social arrangement, without loading them with theoretical meaning or context. This in turn would demand the acceptance of a multiplicity of configurations, or ‘realities’, as there exists the possibility of any number of social arrangements (Schinkel, 2007: 707-714). Returning to his work on Louis Pasteur, as an example, this sociology of associations yields an analysis of the working practice, or social arrangement, of Pasteur, that includes not only the man and his colleagues, but also his physical equipment, real estate, cows, scientific texts and legal and societal notions and boundaries that shape and influence this working practice.

In the context of bouncers as part of the collaborative provision of night life security, this perspective allows for the incorporation of all elements that make up the bouncers’ social arrangement, such as the other security actors, physical environment and particularly legal and societal notions, such as violence and discrimination. Coupled with the concept of security assemblages, which provides a useful initial tool with which to discern the various actors and ensuing relations, these two perspectives allow for a thorough illustration of the bouncers’ professional reality. This provides the basis for an analysis of the bouncers work practices in ad hoc group formations and performance. Furthermore, whereas Latour remains staunchly relativistic in his approach (Krarup, Troels M. and Blok, Anders 2011:46-58), this thesis will use this reality as a basis to show how the bouncers will employ elements of their

professional reality in order to negotiate and create new working practices to fit this social arrangement, for example morality in the notion of “acceptable violence”.

2.2. Ad hoc group formations, performance and cohesion

As within the larger security assemblage, the performance of bouncers at a single location can be typified as the product of collaboration, or conflict, within the working group. Within most organizations, collaborative work tasks are accomplished and managed by small working groups, which can be further divided into formal groups and ad hoc groups. The former has a relatively persistent status and constant membership base and is installed to deal with routine and ongoing tasks within an organization and, because of this permanent status, is characterized by a highly established routine of working activities, task division and personal relations, all of which enables more attention to be directed towards the actual work and less towards attempting to work together. The latter, on the other hand, is usually called into life for a specific, sometimes one off, purpose and is made up out of members who aren't used to working together. Advantages of the ad hoc group, or team, is that it allows an organization to rapidly respond to specific and non standard challenges posed by a dynamic environment, by creating a team of specialists suited to the specific task and bypassing the usual structural and hierarchical bureaucratic constraints of the standing organization. The nature of ad hoc teams also inherently come with their own set of problems, mainly communicative in nature. Group members will need to get to know each other and create new methods for efficient communication, a division of labor and social norms, resulting in a degree of trust amongst members. These issues are further compounded by the short term nature of the projects for which ad hoc groups are created. Examples of ad hoc teams are cockpit crews, top management teams and task oriented military units combined of specialists selected for specific missions. (Galegher, Jolene, Kraut, Robert E., Egidio, Carmen, 2012: 291-292) As bouncers are hired by night time establishment owners and assigned as and when needed by the owners of the security companies, bouncers working at any single establishment, or group of establishments, can also be interpreted as forming an ad hoc working group, or team.

In addition to the nature of groups themselves, another essential factor is the fact that any group is embedded in a larger social structure, be it an organization, or an similar working environment. This team-in-organization perspective is complex and it is difficult to discern the impact and cause and effect relations of changes on one level on the other levels and as

such the influence on the collaborative outcome of work. The main question this view attempts to answer is not whether groups themselves are effective, but to what extent the groups contribute to the effectiveness of the system as a whole. Empirical research has shown that the groups implementation of groups in general has a positive effect on collaborative work outcomes, as group organization increases the performance of its individual members. In the case of bouncers, this larger social structure is not made up by an organization, but by the larger security night time assemblage of which they are a part.(Guzzo and Dickson, 1996:307-310)

The main predictor of the productivity, in terms of the collaborative outcome of work within a team, rather than within the larger system, is group cohesion, which determines the way in which groups work together and make optimal use of the information and resources available. Cohesion in itself is a fluid and ambiguous concept. Its conceptualization is mainly typified by horizontal, or peer, bonding and vertical bonding, otherwise known as bonding between leaders and personnel situated lower in the hierarchy. Additionally, there exists a form of organizational bonding, or bonding between groups and the larger organization as a whole. These forms of bonding are further characterized by instrumental and affective aspects. Instrumental aspects relate to a drawing together of group members on the basis of job related activities, in other words “getting the job done”. The emotional, or affective, aspects entail the more personal relations between peers themselves and between peers and leaders. On the level of organizational bonding, instrumental bonding consists of creating an effective working environment, whereas affective bonding describes the way in which group members feel pride in belonging to the organization and identify with the organizational culture and norms. This complex set of bonds is what determines the group cohesion and a form of internal control and, as such, the group outcomes. (Britt, Castro, Adler, 2006:185-192)

Strong cohesion has been shown to correlate positively to good performance amongst working groups, or teams, as cohesion illustrates the nature of intergroup relations and collective performance. (Guzzo, Shea, 1990:269-275).Traditionally, these studies of the impact of cohesion on the performance of working groups were done to find predictors of performance for military units, however, these same mechanisms can be used to evaluate the performance of other working groups, especially those operating in stressful and dangerous environments, such as bouncers.

When it comes to military performance, researchers determined the factors of group familiarity, shared experience of hardships, as related to horizontal and vertical bonding in the form of trust, and leadership, related to vertical bonding, as predictors for cohesion (Ben-Shalom, Uzi, Lehrer, Zeev, Ben-Ari, Eyal, 2005:63-66). Of these, shared experiences have been shown to create a strong drawing together within working groups, with strong and clear leadership being a compounding factor, far more so than familiarity alone (Bartone, Johnsen, Eid, et al 2002:1-22). When it comes to evaluating the effectiveness of bouncers as working groups, the first two aspects will therefore be the most relevant. Additionally, organizational scientists have paid attention to group composition, motivation and goals as predictors of effectiveness, alongside cohesion. (Devine, 1999:679-690) While heterogeneity is seen as a positive indicator of performance outcomes amongst corporate ad hoc teams, this might not be as relevant to bouncers, as they are all required to be competent in the same basic skills, rather than supply individual specialisms. In fact, as bouncers are required to possess the same skillset, the same might be said for the necessity of possessing a similar mindset, which could mean that homogeneity, rather than heterogeneity, might be more desirable. On the other hand, the two related factors of goals and motivation are relevant to groups of bouncers, as deviating personal goals, norms, lacking motivation and free riding by individuals can cripple group effectiveness, or create a group culture with a high degree of internal control, but with norms that go against the expected group outcome.

The security assemblage node of bouncers can therefore be typified as an ad hoc working group. Concepts of familiarity, shared experience, leadership, and group motivation, goals and heterogeneity will serve to analyze the working relations and collaboration, resulting in the group productivity of these bouncers. Based on this framework, the specific work tasks, routines and attitudes of any single bouncer can now be addressed.

2.3. The bouncer and performance

Given the propensity for violence within the night time economy, bouncers have traditionally been the first line of defense in the establishments that make up the night time districts (Pratten, 2007: 85-90). Bouncers are also known as doormen, door supervisors, door staff, or a variation thereof. Within this paper the term bouncer will from now on be used to describe a private security professional, usually licensed, engaged by the proprietor of a night time establishment to verbally and physically enforce safety within the premises. Just as collective

drinking and violence are shown to go hand in hand (Tomsen, 1997:1-5), so do bouncers and violence (Monaghan, 2002:458-475). Reasons are as yet unclear, as they range from occupational culture, masculinity and male honor, to a personal inclination to be violent, to calculated strategies of personal risk prevention, as bouncers on good behavior more easily turn into victims of violence themselves (Roberts, 2009:60-66), but no matter the cause, bouncers and violence go hand in hand (Winslow, 2001:540-546). Because of this intrinsic link of bouncers and violence, much of the research concerning bouncers has been done towards the possibilities and effects of regulation. As already shown, apart from the legal rules that apply to everyone, there is usually no real accountability mechanism in place for bouncers (Lister, 2001:5-20), so any violence on their end can either get covered up, or unofficially allowed by the police, or make the bouncers targets for scrutiny by law enforcement entities. The aim of this body of research is therefore to minimize the occurrence of violence and to maximize the control over violence.

However, as George Rigakos (2008: 20-85) shows, both violence and the threat of violence is one of the main weapons the bouncers have to regulate their customers. As the bouncers are specifically employed for maintaining safety within the night life establishments, it is their task to discern what customers are allowed to enter and what person bar entrance, or remove from the premises if necessary. Regulating the often drunk and unruly patrons of a night club requires a strong physical presence and a recognizable and dominant appearance (Karpiak, 2010, 7-31). As such, being a bouncer entails to be the embodiment of social control, authority and the threat of violence (Monaghan, 2002:404-426). Therefore, it suffices to say that bouncers are, sometimes deservedly, associated with violence. So much so, in fact, that bouncers are frightening to and sometimes vilified by customers, which creates a reputation that can be either an advantage, or a disadvantage for the bouncer. Consequently it is actual violence, embodied by the bouncer, as well as the embodiment of authority that threatens violence, that conjoin to define that performance of being a bouncer (Lister, 2000: 364-380).

The research so far, therefore, shows that bouncers have to embody the authority, dominance and, if necessary, violence, in order to create and maintain a certain impression amongst their customers. As such, the bouncers can be said to consciously be concerned with their image management. Erving Goffman's dramaturgical approach (1959:20-34) to image management, as explained in the *The presentation of self in everyday life*, provides the basis for an analysis of the bouncers behavior and the role of concepts such as dominance and

violence within their behavior. This approach is a way to view impression management as strategic behavior, in order to influence the image formed by the people one interacts with. This is relevant to bouncers, as they need their dominant and authoritarian image in order to maintain control over their customers.

Goffman explains image management as theatrical performance, or literally acting out a role, in order to convey an image and manipulate the audience in a way that is in line with the goals of the actors interaction. Central to this approach is the definition of the social situation, as this is what gives meaning and coherency to any interaction. Within this social situation he identifies the actor, his audience, props and the stage. Together, these elements shape the setting in which the actor performs. In this regard, the audience can be understood as the people the actor engages in social interaction, the props as the instruments that support his performance, such as a uniform, or certain tools of the trade, for example, and the stage as the physical environment.

It is the motivations behind the performance as a play that drive the actor to fulfill his role in a certain manner. His act is not a static performance. Rather the actor changes his performance in response to changes in his environment. Something could be threatening the image of the performer, such as changes in the audience, and sometimes the audience tries to obtain information about the actor. In order to keep his act coherent, self-monitoring, or awareness of his own position within social reality, is required in order to adapt the performance to specific audiences. Therefore image management is the interactive and dynamic way in which someone uses his setting, appearance and manner to perform a certain image of himself that is beneficial to the goals of his social interaction (Goffman, 1959:132-152)

In conclusion, within their very specific night life social setting, the bouncer has to perform his role of negotiator, gatekeeper and person who discriminates between viable and non-viable customers, within which concepts as dominance and violence play a central part. This dramaturgical approach to performance provides a valuable analytical tool with which to analyze the bouncers behavior and the way in which this behavior is influenced by the bouncers professional reality, as part of the production of collaborative night security.

3. Context

3.1 Private security and nodal security

Nodal security is a widely used concept in national and local governance in the Netherlands, as part of a wider concept of social security, or “sociale veiligheid”. Social security covers a wide range of subjects, from the more traditional policing efforts, to traffic, fire departments, safe housing, childcare, criminality, public nuisances and perceptions of insecurity (van Noije, 2008: 35-54). The national government makes a strong effort to delegate responsibility for these issues to local councils (Cachet, 2010:62-69). This means that the local city council becomes an important node within local security assemblages. Additionally, the Dutch police force is made to forego its more traditional role and starts to enter into more unconventional partnerships with private and citizen initiatives, on a local and ad hoc basis, called “integrale veiligheid”, or integral safety. It is expected that this trend will continue, which opens the road to a more innovative use of its authority and accountability. It seems that the police will play a more varied and perhaps less dominant part in security assemblages in the future, however, as of yet, no permanent partnerships have been formed (Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek- en Documentatiecentrum, 2009: 127-130).

Additionally, while the Netherlands have also experienced a growth in the number of security companies, with approximately 800 active providers of private security at the moment, with 32:000 employees. Three large companies, Triton, Securitas and Group 4 Securicor, occupy over 70 percent of the market. (van Steden, Mahesh 2010: 214-2314) No significant shift has taken place in responsibility from state institutions to private companies. Most companies limit themselves to corporate and object security, whereas the trend towards policing partnerships takes place between the police force and civilian initiatives, mandated and budgeted by the local council. Apparent exceptions, such as the private security firm managing the airport Schiphol, still operates in conjunction with the Dutch military police, or Marechaussee, which means that most of the accountability is still firmly in government hands (Tops, 2010: 5-39).

Large public events, such as soccer matches and music festivals do create security assemblages in which private security personnel forms an important node, if only for the fact that the government is not able to provide such a significant amount of manpower. Within these assemblages the police force still plays an essential role, as to date no Dutch security personnel is allowed to arrest another person, or use violence, except for in cases of self

defense. In short, partnering of police and private initiatives is up, but as long as the police force alone is legally mandated to use violence and effect arrests, no major shifts in power from the public to the private sector are likely to occur (Urlings, 2013:49-56).

3.2 Nightlife security assemblages

In the context of “integrale veiligheid”, many initiatives have been developed to stimulate night life safety. Manuals called a “convenant veilig uitgaan” have been drawn up, in which all actors, or nodes in the security assemblage, specific to the night life of a certain city have laid down their specific responsibilities and intentions. The main result of these manuals is an increase in communication and familiarity. Characteristic of night life assemblages in all major Dutch cities are the presence of police, extensive CCTV networks, bouncers and “horeca eigenaars”, or the proprietors of establishments, and indirectly the local council (van Noije, 2008: 35-54). Additionally, many Dutch cities employ local civilians to assist in the provision of security. An example are the Rotterdam “Stadsmariniers”, locals with a special mandate and budget with which they support safe night life efforts, for example by participating in stop and search programs and supporting government campaigns aimed at reducing public drug and alcohol use. Other specific groups are the more common “Stadswachten” and other measures implemented by local government can come in the form of temporary alcohol bans for an entire district, or barring a single person from all pubs in an area. Other specific Dutch issues concerning night time safety are the widely varying demographics within cities and between cities and small towns. University cities, such as Groningen, require a different approach from cities with a large population of immigrants, such as Rotterdam, which in turn requires a different approach from a small town, such as Nunspeet. For example, a zero tolerance policy, such as routinely employed in Rotterdam, would be completely out of place in a provincial village. This wide variety in night life assemblages is also evidenced in the wide range of different covenants drawn up and it makes it very difficult to understand the specifics of any single assemblage quickly (van Liempt 2013: 1-15).

3.3 Bouncers

In Dutch nightlife districts, bouncers are usually employed by small and medium sized private security companies on a contract basis. These companies are engaged by the proprietors of clubs and pubs, to supply personnel to work as bouncer. Once on the job, the bouncer is tasked with enforcing the door policy of the proprietor. They are recognizable by the typical black dress code, usually a suit, and an earpiece, but all certified security personnel, including bouncers, are also required to wear a silver V-shaped pin, also called a “V-tje”. Bouncers in the Netherlands have no separate legal status, which means that, in contrast to the police force, they have no legal right to use violence, or restrain people, other than in self defense. This is the main specific issue Dutch bouncers face while working, as this raises questions of accountability, trust and reliability, which impacts both the interaction between the bouncers and the general public, as well as the working relations between the bouncers and the police force (Van Liempt, 2013: 1-15)In conclusion, the main obstacle for bouncers working in the Netherlands is the lack of a legal right to use violence, even though violence is what typifies the job of a bouncer

4. Research methodology

4.1. Population, limitations and possibilities

As a population, the bouncers themselves are exclusively male, between 25 and 40 years of age and physically large and fit. A defining factor in their daily routine, apart from the actual work at night, is physical training. Therefore, there were two areas that allowed for qualitative research, namely the actual night life environment, being “at the door”, and the gym. While only one of these allowed for the observation of bouncers at work, both social settings are characterized by the coming together of bouncers, typified by informal conversations about work, violence and the impact of work on their daily lives, I.E. the things that matter to bouncers. Both settings also play a part in the construction of performance as bouncer, as the body itself and physical prowess and the ability to fight is a crucial element of being a bouncer. Therefore, this created a large number of options for the qualitative research of bouncers.

While I had access to a large and varied pool of possible informants, a limiting factor was the fact that most of these bouncers don’t work in the same location and that most of

them also don't work in the police night time district I was allowed to observe. This meant that I was not be able to paint a complete picture of a specific night time assemblage, for example a single street, or square, as building the rapport required amongst complete strangers in the high profile groups, such as bouncers, and government institutes, such as the council and the local police, was be too demanding and time consuming to achieve in the 10 weeks that this research project provided.

However, this did not pose a significant problem. In fact, it lent the research a comparative character, as it forced me to analyze and compare the data acquired at various locations. Therefore, the concept of security assemblages as a tool to investigate collaboration in networks is still very useful, as it's value of illustrating the different relations and tensions between actors remains undiminished. This in turn means that I was able to illustrate a more generalizable picture of the possible relations and tensions within night time security assemblages, which counters the fact that any single assemblage is unique and non-generalizable. Therefore this comparative aspect will be what lends scientific and social significance to the findings of this research.

4.2. Ethics

Part of the fact that I was able to do this research was the fact that I already had established a high degree of rapport amongst some of my informants, by training at the same gym as them. While I was initially hesitant to ask them to help me in my research. I thought they might want help me as a favor and attempt to try to establish an image of themselves that might be the most helpful for me. However, this proved not to be the case. While they were all very enthusiastic towards my research project and were more than willing to help, partly because they wanted their side of the story to be heard as a counterpoint to the prevailing negative stereotype, I am positive they were also honest towards me. This is best illustrated through the fact that they explained to me how they pulled the wool over the eyes of a newspaper reporter, by distracting her so that another bouncer could roughly handle a bothersome customer. Additionally, exactly because I have known some of the informants for a longer time, both they and I already know that I am aware of their stories and the 'real' them, so there would be no reason to appear different from who they are.

This also meant that it felt quite natural to join them during their shift at the door. This does not mean that my presence did not influence their behavior, which is evident in both the fact that they did their best to accommodate me and give me drinks, but also by making me the butt of their jokes. Initially, I was concerned that I might distract them from doing their job, but they proved very capable of switching roles, going from amicable person towards me, to stern bouncer towards their customers, and back again while joking about the way they treated the customer, for example. In retrospect, I can say that there have been no negative experiences in regard to my participant observation in the night life environment.

As far as my development as a researcher is concerned, it feels as if I have not really been through the classical stages of bewilderment, despair and finally realizing the point of my being there. This is probably caused partly by the fact that I was not physically separated from my normal life, people and surroundings, but rather that this research project felt like an extension of my normal life. However, the main reason for this is that the enthusiasm of my informants, combined with my own enthusiasm, caused by the fact that I felt that I was doing something fun, interesting and relevant, never caused me to doubt my role as a researcher. My specific research questions and focus did change dramatically during the process, but this was because I got to know my subject matter better, so at no point did I feel lost.

A special mention must be made of the fact that I was doing research in an environment in which I was sure to be confronted by violence. Furthermore, my informants would likely be directly caught up in this violence, or they might be the actual perpetrators. This impacted the way I performed my research, as it required special attention to agreements made with my informants, before joining them at the door, as well as remaining explicit that my role there was foremost as a researcher, so that any expectations of me joining in the violence did not arise. This also went as far as to ensure I didn't attract any unwarranted attention to myself, as this could result in a confrontation with drunken people and necessitate a response by the bouncers, for which they would not be grateful. In that regard, both during my participant observation amongst the bouncers and the police, I ensured to physically keep my distance whenever the chance of a confrontation arose. However, my informants themselves proved to be very capable of deciding for themselves when it was appropriate to engage in conversation, as they actually initiated more communication than I did. In contrast to my expectations, I did not experience as much violence as I had envisioned. While there were definitely incidents, both when I joined the bouncers and the police, but most of these were resolved very quickly, as my informants were used to dealing with these situations.

Especially because of the fact that I would keep my distance, I did not come into any situations that challenged my integrity as a researcher and a human being.

This need for unobtrusiveness in the night life setting also meant that I forewent using an actual notebook. Instead of just taking head notes, an alternative means of making notes was provided by the smart phone, which allowed me to jot down notes as well. Using a phone is a very natural act in that setting and it did not attract any unwanted negative attention. The same went for taking pictures, as the phone did not attract the amount of attention that a camera would. A drawback of this method was that I was not not be able to read and mark, underscore and draw lines and arrows as one would do with written notes, as well as the inconvenience that came with having both a note book and a phone containing separate information. This problem was largely resolved by writing these notes down at the earliest opportunity. The conversations and interviews at the gym social setting posed no additional concerns.

Finally, as far as confidentiality and anonymization is concerned, in consultation with my informants, I have decided not to censure either the places, or the names of my informants. This project is characterized by a high degree of collaboration between my informants and I, throughout the complete process of preliminary research, fieldwork and creating this thesis, and the decision to incorporate their names reflects their wishes to be part of the story. By not mentioning the names of specific establishments, it is not possible to easily figure out who of my informants worked where at what time, and most of my informants have already moved on, or stopped working as an bouncer entirely, so this thesis contains no sensitive information regarding my informants.

4.3. Research strategy, registration and analysis

Hanging around in the social settings of both the gym and the night life was the starting point of the research. This provided me with observations of conscious and unconscious behavior of the bouncers, as well as providing me with a list of interview topics based on observations and overheard conversation. Informal conversations were also held in both social settings. This also provided me with a set of topics I could use to develop further interviews and as focal points during observation. Informal conversations were more brief and more intermittent in the night life social setting, due to the nature of the bouncers' work.

For that same reason, more structured interviews, as well as group conversations, took place in the gym social setting, or if required by the informant in another location. The night life setting did not allow for thorough interviews, due to time restraints and work demands. The gym setting on the other hand, proved to be a location where the bouncers felt much at home, which created an open and comfortable atmosphere. This location also provided a secure physical setting, in which it was possible to use recording devices without being disturbed. I experienced that most bouncers were enthusiastic and very willing to discuss matters in this setting, which meant that I always had to be prepared to take notes and collect data, even when I did not plan on doing so. Also, as there were usually multiple bouncers present at the same time, these conversations had a tendency to develop in group conversations, which provided a wealth of information.

On the other hand, participating observation, sharing experiences, and quite simply “being there”, was only possible in the night life setting. This was also the setting in which I could see evidence of the security assemblages in practice, such as the relations and collaboration with actors like the police force. The actual way in which it was possible to participate had to be determined on the spot, but I managed to join the bouncers at the door, just not as an actual certified security employee, which meant that I couldn’t actually engage in interaction with the general public. Therefore, joining the bouncers at the door was a crucial element of this research project. In short, conversations and interviews in a secure social setting and participating in the night time economy, combined with hanging around and casual conversation in both settings, allowed me to collect data with which to cover both the bouncers, as well as the broader assemblage from multiple angles. More concretely, in the gym, as well as the night life districts of Amersfoort and Ede, I have had substantive interaction with roughly 17 informants, as well as more spontaneous conversations with other persons. My observations and participation at these locations led to a combined 20 odd hours of actual fieldwork a week, distributed equally amongst the gym and the nightlife establishments. The same amount of time was spent registering and analyzing the data gained through this fieldwork.

Finally, this research project has been a collaborative project from start to finish, as, instead of just doing research for 10 weeks and subsequently disappearing from my research area, I have consulted my informants during every step of the project, including writing the thesis. This is partly because of their enthusiasm and wishes to be kept involved and partly

because their reflections upon my work provided an valuable tool for feedback analysis and made sure is did not fail to include anything that is important in the bouncers' reality.

4.4. Methodological approach

The objective of this thesis is to use an interdisciplinary approach with which to analyze the way in which the professional reality of the bouncers is reflected in their practical performance and influences their part of the provision of collaborative night life security. In order to do so, I have formulated three theoretical perspectives which build on each other and serve to layer and structure this thesis. The value of this approach is the complementary nature of the three perspectives, as this comprehensive methodology allows for a higher degree of understanding than any single perspective could provide on its own.

The first perspective is based on the concepts of the security assemblage and the visions of Bruno Latour concerning professional networks. The concept of security assemblage is relevant in this regard as it encompasses the fact that no network of night life security actors is ever the same, because it differs by time and place, and as such explicitly carries the notion that any network is in a state of flux. This is completed by the work of Latour, as his notion of network transcends the linking together of actors and also stresses the need to incorporate physical attributes, relevant bodies of knowledge and grander societal constructs within this network, in order to visualize a complete milieu, or reality, from a certain perspective. Therefore, these two concepts together will be used to illustrate the bouncers professional reality.

The second perspective establishes the bouncers as an ad hoc working group. By framing the bouncers as a working formation within a certain establishment and using the organizational concepts of cohesion, familiarity and trust it is possible to illustrate the way in which elements originating from the professional reality come into their own in the bouncers' working relations. Bouncers are assumed to be an ad hoc organization, because both the make-up of bouncers in a certain area, as well as the actors in the same area, change often, as explained by concept of security assemblage. Therefore, the concepts of trust and familiarity are essential, as these will determine the manner and extent to which the bouncers will operate together, or in other words demonstrate cohesion, and develop the relational ties which in turn form the basis of common habits and procedures. Additionally, leadership, as in a person

formally, or informally, taking charge, is used as an analytical concept, as this might provide an additional, or alternative mechanism by which bouncers exhibit cohesion.

The third perspective uses the dramaturgical approach of Erving Goffman as a basis for understanding elements of the bouncers' interaction with their environment and customers. Goffman acknowledges the importance of image management, or playing a role and adapting this relative to the specific audience, for any social interaction. As bouncers fulfill the role of gatekeeper within the night life environment, certain concepts are of special significance. Dominance, or maintaining a sense of authority over the customers, is essential for bouncers, as his role entails being the stronger party in any negotiations for entrance into an establishment. Discrimination, or differentiating between customers and dividing them into those who are, and those who aren't allowed to enter, is also inherent to the role of bouncer. In the context of this thesis, discrimination is therefore not intrinsically tied into notions such as racism, or other forms of bias. Finally, violence, which I see as any method which necessitates the use of physical force in order to manipulate customers, is also a distinctive way in which bouncers will act out their role. These concepts can be illustrated by using Goffmans analytical approach, but these concepts will be influenced by the encompassing professional reality of the bouncer. Therefore this perspective will use these concept to show the way in which the network approach materializes into common habits and procedures and in which way the bouncers negotiate ways in which they deal with any constraints and dangers posed by their professional reality.

Even though this approach appears to be complementary in a top down manner, I.E. that the professional reality manifests itself in the day to day practical behavior, it is important to realize that this is a not exclusively the case. Any change in any of the perspectives will influence the others. A full understanding of the position of the bouncers within their environment and the relationships and tensions ensuing from the way in which they negotiate this position is only possible through the combination of these perspectives, hence the added value of the interdisciplinary approach.

5. Security assemblages: Actors, technology and attitudes

The starting point of this analysis of bouncers as co-producer of collaborative night life security is their position within the broader night time security network. The concept of

security assemblage is central for an illustration of this position, as this allows for an analysis of not just the various actors, but especially the relations between these actors. Furthermore, using the vision of Bruno Latour, I will produce a comprehensive picture of the network and ensuing professional reality the bouncers inhabit, by including not only the physical actors, environment, and technology, but also the legal, cultural and societal constructs of which it is constituted. This illustration of the bouncers' social arrangement serves as the basis for understanding the manner in which tensions between them and the other actors result in specific tensions and relations shaping the collaborative production of security.

5.1. The Actors

Apart from the bouncers, the following actors play a role within the night life security assemblage: the local police force, the local government, the establishment owners, in some cases additional government mandated “toezichthouders” and the customers of the establishments. Of these, the bouncers interact directly with the police, owners and of course the customers, as the “toezichthouders” operate within the same physical area, but are tasked with entirely different objectives, and the local government policy is executed by the members of the police force.

In order to understand the manner in which the relations between the police and the bouncers are shaped, I joined Martijn (Ede, 11-03-2015), the leader of the local police *horeca eenheid*, during his Saturday night shift in Ede. This shift always starts off by doing a round visiting all the bouncers in the area, in order to get the latest news, to check to see how the night is going security wise. As the night progresses, the police will be involved in any, possibly violent, incident that occurs, as they get summoned by the bouncers themselves, or by the customers, depending on what happened and whether it happened inside, the domain of the bouncer, or on the streets. In addition to this physical presence, the local police will host periodical meetings for all the main actors in a night life district, mainly before the start of specific festivities or seasons, during which these parties will air concerns, come up with solutions and procedures and be kept up to speed on the latest local government initiatives. Through this process of interaction and building rapport, a form of trust ensues, which means that bouncers and police are prepared to rely on each other's judgment. Therefore, this is the main way in which police in any night life district will build up a relationship with the bouncers, as this allows for both a professional, and informal way of knowing each other and,

in doing so to build up trust and rapport. Conversely, tensions, resulting in a inferior working relations and collaborative security, might ensue through either some badly handled incidents from either side, or the fact that either the bouncers and policemen are changed, which requires a new process of building trust and rapport. The main issue here is that the police are tasked with keeping the law and have to charge bouncers just as they would charge ordinary citizens in case of an incident. So, even though most of my informants say that there is an unofficial bias in favor of the bouncers, there is still a real power difference between these two actors, which means they do not operate and interact on equal footing. These tensions negatively impact the collaboration between the police and bouncers, through a lack of trust and inferior working relationship, and as such influence the collaborative production of security.

The relationship with the establishment owners likewise carries a professional and personal component, that defines their collaborative working relationship for the provision of a safe night life environment. An owner in need of a bouncer will contact a security company, which in turn delivers a bouncer, which means that, initially, the owner has little say in what sort of person he employs. However, once the bouncer works in the establishment, the owner will evaluate him according to his personal preference and the way in which the bouncer serves his interests. It is up to the owner to decide on his “door policy”, which entails his vision on what sort of customers to allow entrance, but is it up to the bouncer, as gatekeeper, to enforce this policy. If the owner is clear on what he expects of the bouncer and allows him to do his job without interference, this will lead to mutual satisfaction. However, once an owner starts making unreasonable demands, by asking the bouncer to throw people out of the establishment for no apparent reason, or when the owner wants the bouncer to make exceptions on the rules he specifically asked the bouncer to enforce, for example to allow underage friends or girls entrance, this might lead to tensions, as this means that the bouncer loses credibility. As Rick (Amersfoort, 20-02-2015), one of my informants, said, at that point there is no point in doing the work at all, so he would just sit down and let anyone enter.

Finally, the customers are the object of the bouncers work, as it is these people for whom the bouncers have to perform as gatekeepers. Therefore, the customers form an intrinsic part of the security assemblage, from the bouncers point of view. The specific details of the interaction between bouncers and their customers are covered in chapter eight, as this is a more complex relationship that takes place on an interpersonal and interactional basis.

5.2. The physical environment

In addition to the actors, there are some physical components to the network in which the bouncers operate. The most prevalent of these is the proliferation of closed circuit camera's, both inside the establishments and outside, monitored by either the police, or in specific cases the "toezichthouders", such as in Ede (Martijn, Amersfoort, 04-03-2015). The bouncers themselves have no access to these camera's, but they are fully aware of the fact that they perform in front of these instruments, which means that every move they make is not only seen, but recorded. This means that the bouncers will have to play by the rules, however, chapter eight will illustrate that most bouncers have some tricks of their own, to counteract the camera's influence, or even to use this camera supervision to their advantage.

In addition to the camera supervision, the specific physical locale in which the bouncers ply their trade influences their performance. A night life district is usually a relatively small area in the city centre, filled with establishments, such as clubs and pubs, which creates an conglomeration of customers, often rowdy and drunk. This environment brings with it some very specific issues. For example, one of my informants (Merhad, Amersfoort, 21-03-2015) explains how something as simple as peoples jackets can account for unrest and conflict within the nightlife district. As most patrons enter an establishment, hang up their coat, and continue their night moving in and out of the various bars and clubs, the end of a night always results in a significant amount of customers who either can't find their jacket, or wish to enter an establishment during and after closing hours, which is already the most troubled period during a night out. Therefore, the night life locale and the way people act is a distinct environment, limited both physically and in terms of time. The bouncers' specific location and role, as gatekeepers between the streets and the establishments, and the way in which they can and will use this setting while doing their job, as detailed in chapter eight, means this environment makes up an intrinsic part of their network.

5.3. The underlying legal, cultural and societal constructs

Finally, in addition to the more tangible aspects, underlying societal notions and juridical boundaries shape the bouncers professional reality, through which they influence the interaction of bouncers with their environment. The most concrete of these are the legal

aspects that bind the bouncers' hands. By law, they are not allowed to use violence, or physical means to detain another person, other than in self defense, and even then only proportionate to the danger the other person poses. In this regard, the bouncers have no additional rights and are the same as any other citizen. However, in the line of duty, the bouncers are regularly confronted with violence towards themselves and others. Therefore, they have devised ways of dealing with this aspect of their job, specifically with the grey area, where the use of violence is not permitted by law, but is deemed as the best course of action, for example to prevent greater violence, as well as ways in which to use violence while keeping actual harm to a minimum. As such, violence forms a pervasive element in the bouncers' reality and bouncers have developed their own set of norms considering which forms of violence are and are not acceptable. Chapter eight illustrates the specific ways in which this reality is given form by the individual bouncer. Additionally, as the role of gatekeeper inherently consists of discrimination, as it entails the categorizing of people along lines based on professional experience and relevant specific door policy, but also an implicit personal and societal bias along ethnic and racial lines, bouncers are confronted with issues such as racism. While there is a distinction to be made between discrimination based on experience and discrimination based on personal bias, the greater public might not be aware of this distinction, or value it as such. Therefore, this part of the bouncers' reality challenges them to come up with ways to deal with this issue and integrate this issue in their performance, thereby influencing their role in the collaborative security assemblage.

Exactly because the job of a bouncer is fraught with violence and discrimination, they perceive themselves to be seen in a negative light by society at large. As Rick (Amersfoort, 14-02-2015), says: "Everyone knows, or hears about it when the bouncer has to beat somebody up, but no one realizes we are also the people taking care of the girl who has been injured, or the ones calling a taxi for the person who drank way too much. All they see is the bully with the big arms". Whether this is true or not, it is beyond the scope of this paper, but it might even be part of the reason that my informant were all very enthusiastic and cooperative, as they might feel they are never properly understood. The fact that they are very cognizant of this public view is best illustrated in the following anecdote (Michiel, Amersfoort, 23-02-2015): While working, two of my informants were interviewed by a reporter for an article on bouncers in the local newspaper. During this interview, one of the customers became difficult, whereupon one of the bouncers distracted the reporter, so that the other could throw the customer out in a rough manner, without this being noticed. The fact that they did not want to

be seen in this manner by the reporter, as well as the fact that they did tell me the story, is illustrative for the fact that they are aware of the effects of their performance on their public image.

This illustration of the bouncers' professional reality provides the basis for understanding the role of the bouncer within the concept of collaborative night life security. The elements making up their professional reality can create relational tensions impacting the collective provision of security. The following two chapters show the ways in which the bouncers face these issues, both collectively and individually, by negotiating and shaping their own working relations, routines and performance relative to their social arrangement and accordingly shaping to the way they fulfill their part in the collaborative security assemblage.

6. Ad hoc working groups: Trust, cohesion and leadership

Following the analysis of their manifestation within the broader security network, it is possible to investigate the bouncers as a community and working group on its own. Bouncers are never employed as a single individual, but do not always have the luxury of knowing their working group colleagues on any given night, which could create situational dynamics that on their own can influence their interaction and working behavior, which in turn impacts security as the final collaborative outcome. Therefore, central to the analysis in this chapter are concepts as group cohesion, trust, internal control and leadership as factors which serve to illustrate internal group dynamics and outcomes.

6.1. Trust

Working groups of bouncers are usually comprised of individuals who do not necessarily know each other beforehand, as bouncers are often replaced and placements are appointed on very short notice, which can lead to problematic trust-related working dynamics. As they are appointed by their company to a specific night life establishment proprietor, they have very limited control or influence over who his specific colleagues will be on a given night. Additionally, their environment and relevant actors, such as the police and establishment owners, differ by time and place. Therefore, the group of bouncers working at any specific location can be seen as a ad hoc working group. This ad hoc nature generates dynamics that

are very particular to the bouncers, as they are, as a working group, routinely confronted by violence. This is best illustrated by the following case study: During my research period one of my informants, Jalal (14-02-2015), was caught on camera kicking a patron, who got kicked out of the establishment, but was already out on the streets at that moment. As this does not legally construe self defense, he was subsequently questioned by the police and lost his privilege for working at the door of that establishment. Most of his fellow bouncers had tried to cover for him, by saying that they did not see what happened, or that they felt he did what was necessary, except for one. Dave, who told the police that what Jalal did was out of line. This in turn resulted in the fact that all the other bouncers in the district refused to cooperate with Dave, ensuing in his eventual removal from his position at one of the establishments. The long term effect of this situation is that the vacancy Dave left had to be filled by several unknown short term replacements, which in turn changed the dynamics and working relationships amongst the bouncers who were already employed there.

This case shows how the makeup of bouncers working at a certain place can change often and suddenly. It also shows how both familiarity and trust, and implicit rules of acceptable behavior amongst bouncers affect their working relationships and collaboration. First off, in the case of Dave, the fact that he confessed the truth concerning Jalal to the police was seen as him ratting Jalal out, as he broke one of the more or less sacred rules, which is to never talk to the police about each other (Barry, Amersfoort, 16-02-2015). This is because of the inherent power difference between the police, as sole enforcer of the law, and the bouncers, who by the very nature of their job, operate in a legally shady area. This is where part of the bouncers' professional reality meets practice, as these legal boundaries concerning violence influence their interaction, specifically when it comes to trust. After it became apparent that Dave had spoken to the police, the other informants discussed both amongst themselves and with me, that they did not feel comfortable working with him anymore. Several of them had filed complaints to their company's management, which is what resulted in Dave's eventual release from his position.

6.2. Cohesion

However, Dave's dismissal did not alleviate the problematic working relationships that had evolved from the incident. In place of Dave came a succession of unknown replacements, none of which stayed long, as the management had trouble finding a suitable candidate. The

unfamiliarity of these newcomers created additional issues for the ensuing working groups. As several of my informants mentioned, when it comes to working together, the best bouncer is the one who will always have your back, no matter what happens. This implies that, during any confrontation, one bouncer is expected to cover the other. This might mean that they can form a unified front during discussions with customers, but also that they will help each other whenever violence occurs. It is this knowledge that one bouncer is able to rely on another that enables them to act, without fear of being blindsided in a physical confrontation, or losing authority in an argument. However, the fact that bouncer can rely on each other is not a given, so this too is a form of trust that needs to be build up over time and which can only be tested during the situations where it is required. Therefore, a high turnover rate and especially newcomers to a particular scene result in a very limited amount of familiarity and trust, which result in working dynamics in which bouncers will not be inclined to act and figuratively stick out their neck, but rather will try to keep themselves out of harm's way and avoid difficult situations. In this manner, the lack of cooperation, resulting from this unfamiliarity and limited trust, can be seen as a lack of cohesion amongst the working group, resulting in a inferior work outcome, because the bouncers will avoid confrontation, rather than risk standing alone. In the case of Dave's absence, this resulting regression of cohesion has resulted in concrete issues, such as bouncers bad mouthing each other, not wanting to work in the same place and admitting that they did not feel like intervening in time in the case of violent encounters.

On the other hand, my fieldwork alongside the *horeca eenheid* in Ede, shows that a high amount of familiarity will lead to a higher degree of trust, cohesion and superior work standards. Martijn (Amersfoort, 04-03-2015), the leader of the police unit in Ede, explained how he was very satisfied with the fact that most bouncers working in the various establishments surrounding the single square that comprises the night life district of Ede, had been working there for a significant amount of time and were employed by the same security firm. In his experience, this familiarity resulted in a very high degree of internal control and working standards. A bouncer who stepped out of line when it came to the use of violence was quickly removed from his working position by his employer, as the other bouncers made it apparent that they did not want to work with him anymore. By removing this bad element from their working group they thus maintained the high standards of working and cohesion that they had built up over time.

Both of these cases not only show that working dynamics and cohesion, resulting in good or bad productivity and standards, are dependent on trust and familiarity, but also that most bouncers are very cognizant of behavior that they consider as acceptable. This is also apparent in the way my informants referred to another bouncer who trained at the same gym, but who did not work in my research area. This bouncer, named Patrick, had received a court verdict for the excessive use of violence, as he had broken a patrons jaw by punching him without any proper cause, just prior to the start of my research period. Consequentially, my informants continued to jokingly refer to him, by saying I should interview him as well if I wanted to interview a “real” bouncer, as well as joking about him amongst themselves (Michiel, Vincent, Amersfoort, 23-02-2015). This illustrates the way in which internal control based on familiarity and acceptable codes of behavior transcends the working group relations, but also impacts the bouncers as a social group. In the case of Patrick, my informants agreed that he had it coming, but also stressed the effects this situation had on his career, as he wouldn’t be allowed to do his job anymore. This again illustrates the main issue concerning the use of violence, namely the fact that the legal rules are not in their favor and that it is essential to ensure that these cases are resolved without involving the authorities.

6.3. Leadership

Besides this brand of unofficial internal control, another factor that influences the working relationships and cohesion amongst a group of bouncers is leadership. The presence of an official, or unofficial “head” bouncer, can alleviate issues resulting from a lack of trust, or familiarity. This person can allocate bouncers to positions best suited towards their specific attitudes and skills and communicate concrete guidelines and contingency plans, in order to create transparency and clear expectations, in lieu of, or in addition to, the more intangible trust based working relations.

According to Vincent (Amersfoort, 04-03-2015), one of my informants, this person does not have to officially carry the title of head bouncer, even though some establishments specifically employ a person in that capacity. Rather, it is usually the person with the most experience, both in general and in working at the concerned establishment, who informally takes control of the situation and comes up with a way to divide the tasks for the rest of the bouncers. Vincent stresses the fact that not every bouncer is equally suited for every type of work, as experience, age and general demeanor influences the way in which a bouncer might

approach the patrons, and vice versa. As an example, he mentions Michiel, another one of my informants, as someone who would never fit in an upper class establishment, as he not only tends to be pretty direct, if not a little volatile, towards customers, but also because he likes the ladies a little too much. As head bouncer, Vincent does like to employ him at the entrance of an establishment catering towards young people, as his direct demeanor serves to keep this type of crowd in check.

This illustration shows that, in addition to a type of self-regulation and cohesion based on trust and familiarity, the bouncers are usually able to organize themselves along lines of experience and making use of each other's strengths and weaknesses, which lends a vertical dimension to their working relationships. Even in this regard, however, the decision to employ which bouncer in which position is based on an estimation of his abilities relative to his potential customers and working environment, which yet again is demonstrative of the way in which bouncers are aware of their professional image and way in which they play a part in other peoples' lives.

In short, trust and familiarity are aspects that shape and influence the dynamics and cohesion amongst a working group of bouncers, but these notions also extend into the social relations of bouncers. The underlying notions of these aspects are not just the need for being able to rely on one another in case of violence, but also the pervasive fact that bouncers inherently occupy a legally grey area, in which mistakes can have severe consequences, once the authorities are forced to deal with them. Therefore, bouncers have developed a mechanism of internal control, which leads to a high standard of work and morale if familiarity and trust are in place, but which can also lead to inferior working conditions and productivity once this trust is diminished and newcomers take the place of familiar faces. Leadership can make up for substandard working relationships to an extent, the knowledge of being able to rely upon one another, both in dealing with customers and other actors, such as the authorities, is key. As such, the internal working relations influence the bouncers' productivity within the larger collaborative security network, but are also shaped by the interaction with the network, as the legal and societal notions of violence and uneven relationship with the police are the basis of the bouncers' trust and confidence in one another.

7. Performance: Dominance, discrimination and violence

Any person who decides to become a professional bouncer also consciously, or subconsciously, chooses to assume the role of bouncers once he, or she, takes up position by the door of an establishment. As this role has an extremely expressive performative component, by assuming this role, bouncers will have to modify their daily behavior, assume postures and attitudes that create the desired impression amongst the customers and which will aid them in their work. This performance, or playing the part, of the bouncer is constituted mainly by three concepts, which are dominance, discrimination, and violence. On their own, these concepts all play an important role in the physical and conceptual reality of the bouncers, in both their professional and personal lives, and together they shape the interactions between the bouncer and the work place or environment. Furthermore, it is through these concepts that the professional reality of the bouncer is reflected in their individual performance. This performance, of dominance, discrimination, and violence play an important role in the physical and conceptual reality of the bouncers and together they shape the manner in which the bouncers produce safety through interaction with their customers.

7.1. Dominance

Image management is crucial to all bouncers, as they take up the position of gate keeper to anyone who wants to enter the bar or club and as such occupy a dominant position. As performers, the bouncers will dress the part, act the part and also use and shape their physical environment, as a sort of stage, to ensure they retain their dominant appearance, therefore acquiring this dominance is in itself a physical form of negotiation

The struggle for dominance, as a process of ongoing negotiation, is a given for the profession of bouncers. Most bouncers new to a location will often be tested by the local customers. Customers will try to see how far they can go and try to figure out and renegotiate the limits of any bouncer, for example by way of discussion and physical touching. Simply touching a bouncers arm to see how he responds to this encroachment on his dominant and authoritarian position is a prime example, but this process of contesting boundaries can quickly turn from good natured interaction to violent physical affairs. Ricky (Amersfoort, 22-03-2015), a bouncer relatively new to my research area, admits that he had a very difficult

time the first weekends he started working there, as he was physically assaulted by clients by whom he was not yet known. Only once he had established his presence and became a familiar face to the local clients was he able to do his job without becoming the target for violence that would seemingly not take place otherwise.

The bouncers have developed various methods for negotiating this dominance. In vision of acting out the role of bouncer, the first and most obvious aspect is their physical appearance. However, while it might seem self evident that the choice for black and austere clothing is made in order to support their dominant appearance, my informants almost unanimously say that this is not the case (Michiel, Amersfoort, 16-02-2015). Clothing guidelines are usually provided by the establishment they work for and the actual clothing is often provided by the security companies which employ the bouncers. Within these parameters, most informants select outfits which they find comfortable, without paying that much attention to the way it looks. Physically too, bouncers are often, but not always, large and muscular. However, most say that they actually started bouncing because they felt that their physique would help them, instead of creating such a physique in support of their role as bouncer. Even though the bouncers themselves don't admit to it, this physical appearance does still adhere to a larger societal view on what constitutes authority and dominance, specially the choice for dark clothing and large physique.

Intransigent verbal communication is another medium through which bouncers can convey their dominance. According to most informants, it is crucial to engage customers in such a way that there remains very little room for discussion within any conversation, as this both ensures customers are not able to challenge the bouncers authority and that customers don't linger around the bouncers' working area. According to Jurgen (Amersfoort, 08-04-2015), for example, the best and most common solution to this is to give verbal commands and acknowledgements which are as short as possible and, more importantly, never to say or ask anything that can be answered by more than just a yes or no answer. However, this does not mean that there is a universal way in which bouncers talk to customers. Rather, most bouncers engage different types of customers in different ways. By tailoring their performance to a specific audience, they show their awareness of playing a role and adopting the image that will serve them best. The most striking example is the difference in which they engage 'allochtonen' compared to regular Dutch customers. All informants agree that they expect more trouble from 'allochtonen', such as Moroccans and black people, yet most bouncers explicitly try to engage these groups in a more respectful manner, as in their

experience these groups are more likely to a denigrating and confrontational tone. The following vignette provides a more comprehensive example:

At the entrance of his establishment, doorman Ricky is in conversation with a small number of dark skinned guys wearing coats with large fur collars: "Listen here guys, this place is filled with rude and boorish farmers, they are throwing beer and listening to après ski music. I really don't think you want to enter. You'll get beer on your jackets and the guys inside are bound to react to your presence". "Ok, yea man, you are right man. It's a shame it's always like that here, but all right, it's cool". After these words the guys move on and the next group of loud adolescents arrives. "Back up! First I want to see your identification!". "But sir, I just lost mine!". "Well, go and look for it, as you are not getting in!". As he walks of, the youth yells: "You're an asshole!"

Finally, in addition to physical appearance and verbal communication, the actual physical space in which the bouncer works can be interpreted as the stage for his performance and allows for nonverbal communication. The interaction between customer and bouncer is a process of negotiating entrance into the establishment. The bouncer will invariably assume a position within, or directly in front of the entranceway, to assert his position as dominant gatekeeper. This can be made even more obvious by leaning across and placing a hand on the doorjamb, to signal that it's not possible to enter, or taking up a more relaxed leaning position and taking up less space, to signal customers are able to enter. This stage too, will be adapted by bouncers if they find it is in their favour. For example, Ricky (Amersfoort, 22-03-2015), expresses his discontent that the establishment he works at does not possess some sort of portable fence, with which to cordon off his working area, as he feels swamped by customers and unable to keep control and assert his dominance.

The use of violence itself can be an instrument with which to communicate dominance. Rick (20-02-2015) tells that, while working at a certain place that draws a lot of "boeren", he tends to use the first time where he has to forcefully remove one of the customers as a show of force. By hitting this customer, or otherwise being violent, in view of the others, he deters others from doing the same. In his case, he also admits that it is by experience that he knows he can do this, without getting in legal trouble. Apparently, most customers treated this way tend to come back next weekend and apologize for their behavior. As is the case with verbal communication, this is where a bouncer shows his own awareness of the role he assumes and the manner in which he adapts himself to a specific audience.

This dominant status can also be lost in the same manner as it is gained. A very telling example can be found in one of the most well known bouncers in my research area. This man was a famous strongman in his youth and had also gone to jail for assisting his mother in her suicide. Therefore he had quite a reputation, not so much as someone who can be violent and dangerous, but still as someone with whom it might be very unwise to start trouble. Until, one day, this bouncer decided to partake in a local kickboxing tournament, where he wasn't able to win and eventually got beaten by an opponent who appeared to be his inferior. After this contest the bouncer got in to a lot of trouble, by customers who again started to test him and see if they could take him on. While telling this story, one of my informants, Nico (12-04-2015), remarked "Nou, dan weet je het wel", as if to say that it was a given that the bouncer would be tested again, after losing his fight in the ring.

In short, the dominant position of bouncers is always in a state of negotiation. Through the complex interaction of becoming a familiar face, adapting their performance to their audience and, when necessary, making a show their capacity for violence, bouncers can try to maintain this position. Dominance is performed by bouncers through a combination of verbal and nonverbal communication, including violence, and is the result of a constant process of negotiation between the bouncer and his environment.

7.2. Discrimination

The profession of bouncer is by very definition one of discrimination. It is up to the bouncer to decide which client to admit to and which client to bar from any establishment, supported by experience, but also influenced by the wishes of the owner of the establishment, personal bias and psychological wellbeing and time constraints and even environmental discomfort. Therefore, this process of differentiation is intrinsic to working the doors and can be further divided into what I call professional and personal discrimination.

Professional discrimination is mainly a conscious process of judgment and selection based on the bouncers' own and colleagues' working experience and the guidelines set by the owner of the establishment. Firstly, they will evaluate a potential customers physical and mental state, to see if the customer might create problems. For this, the bouncers will screen most customers long before they reach their door. This is visible in the manner in which bouncers usually seem to be scanning their surroundings and seem less occupied with the

people directly in front of them. The main points for attention, according to both my informants and the police, are the hands, for example kept in pockets, or balled, and the face, for example angry or disoriented. Once this creates reason for doubt amongst the bouncers, they will usually follow up by questioning the customer at the door, to check if the person is under the influence of alcohol, or drugs, or aggressive. Through experience, most bouncers will acquire a finely attuned sense of peoples intentions and even know when to expect trouble from certain customers who present no explicit reason to be barred. For example, Jurgen (08-04-2015) explains that he would sometimes even lay a bet with fellow bouncers on who would cause problems, based on the fact that these customers typically greet the bouncers in an excessively friendly manner.

Secondly, the bouncers will evaluate customers according to the present crowd and intentions of the proprietor. A person can be judged as a bad fit for the establishment, for example because of age, or apparent socio-economic and ethnic background and be barred because of this. Along with this need for discrimination comes stereotyping. My informants uniformly agree (Mike, Michiel, Vincent, Amersfoort, 23-02-2015), for example, that customers of Moroccan descent, or black customers, account for most of the problems they experience, and accordingly try to deny these customers in most places, although usually not explicitly for this reason. Again, see the vignette in chapter 7.1. for an example of how a bouncer can come up with a plausible, but false reason for denying a certain stereotype entrance. This form of discrimination is consciously performed, on the basis of professional experience, of which most bouncers are acutely aware. Michiel (Amersfoort, 19-02-2015), for example, admits that he makes an effort to keep black customers out of the establishment where he usually works, but that he also enjoys working at all black parties, as amongst themselves they cause very little issues in his experience

However, the line between professional discrimination and personal discrimination is very much blurred. Personal discrimination can be seen as the manner in which a personal bias against certain people influences the manner in which bouncers interact with their customers. When asked, most informants admit that in general they do not have a positive view of ‘foreigners’, or people of Moroccan, Surinam and the Antilles’ descent, and that this is at least also in part caused by their work experience, but the influence of this form of discrimination is more readily apparent in the way bouncers regale their experiences to one another. For example, Michiel (Amersfoort, 21-05-2015) once said: “You see! This is the last time I ever let Moroccans in. It’s true that you can’t ever trust any of them!”, when recounting

an experience wherein some customers of Moroccan descent caused trouble, after they convinced him to let them enter.

Concluding, these examples show that, exactly because the need for discrimination is intrinsic in the bouncers' work, it is impossible to view discrimination solely through the societal lens that relates it to notions like racism and ethnic discrimination and that the job in fact warrants the creation of certain stereotypes to facilitate the process. However, the bouncers' professional judgment is nevertheless also influenced by their personal, and societal, bias against certain types of people, be they ethnically based, such as a dislike for Moroccans, or social-economically, such as a negative attitude towards "stupid farmers" or smart and annoying students. Rather, these forms of discrimination are not distinct in practice, but together make up the process of differentiation, within they are both consciously and subconsciously layered, depending on the specific time, place and bouncer. This is where the notions underlying the professional reality of the bouncer come to the surface, as they demonstrate an awareness and way of dealing with the image they present through the way they perform this discrimination, as well as implicitly show the ways in which their personal bias permeates their performance and daily discourse. In fact, their professional experience shapes their personal bias as much as it is the other way around, as is apparent in the way they have learnt to understand certain, mainly ethnic, groups and have developed a dislike for more traditional Dutch people, like the farmers and students.

7.3. Violence

Just as they are aware of their own position of the dominant actor within ongoing processes of negotiation and transaction, the bouncers are very aware of legal and societal limits to the use of violence and the concrete actions that would constitute a transgression of these written and unwritten rules. There is an entire spectrum of ways in which the bouncers can use physical force in the line of his job, comprising prevention, self-defense and criminal assault. For example, Jurgen (Amersfoort, 01-04-2015) states that, once verbal and nonverbal communication is no longer sufficient to deescalate a potentially violent situation, his go to move is to slap someone in the face with an open hand. This does not serve to incapacitate an assailant, but just to disorient someone and make him snap out of the violent mood that was building up inside him, without causing any bodily harm. Even though this serves as an preemptive solution, legally this is not allowed, as it constitutes assault, and means that the

bouncer has already committed an offense, even though it is meant as the least harmful solution for all people involved. This is where the underlying legal boundaries as well as notions of violence and public image come to the fore in the bouncers' performance.

The bouncers have devised various ways in which they are able to negotiate this tricky legal and moral area and even to turn the rules to their advantage. The above mentioned slap, just as the way in which Rick (Amersfoort, 20-02-2015) mentions the roughing up of one customers can keep the others in check, are a way in which the bouncer consciously decides to break the rules, which would usually only happen after a thorough assessment of the surroundings and the type of customer with which they are dealing. The most common way to deal with and use violence is to ensure it can be construed as self-defense. In some cases this is very clear cut, such as when a bouncer is attacked directly by a patron, or when a customer tries to strike a bouncer when they attempt to remove him by non-violent measures. However, most informants admit that they can also force the 'necessity' for self-defense, for example by taunting an already aggressive customer, or by allowing him to act out in such a way that their reaction can easily be explained as self-defense. This way, the bouncers both exhibit an awareness of the limits posed by their professional reality, and a way in which they can legally and, at least for themselves, morally act in the way they want to.

Another way to deal with the legal issues surrounding the use of violence is learning how to be violent, without causing bodily harm. Most bouncers have a whole bag of tricks up their sleeve with which they can hurt, or incapacitate a customer, without leaving a mark. At one point during my research, Michiel (Amersfoort, 15-03-2015) organized a *krav maga* session, in which all participating bouncers learned things such as chokeholds and limb locks, but also ways to attack someone without damaging them, such as grabbing people by their face, or throat and learning where to hit them so that it doesn't show. Apart from simply being effective, the advantage of these techniques is twofold. First of all, the definition of violent used by the police is any form of manipulation that happens with more than a slight amount of force. So by using these techniques the bouncers can be said to have used little to no violence and therefore not crossed the line into the grey area where this has to be construed as either self-defense, or assault. Secondly, if a patron decides to press charges against a bouncer, these techniques leave very little evidence. Therefore, learning how to be violent without causing damage prevents grounds for a lawsuit against the bouncer.

Finally, there are ways in which the bouncers know how to harm a customer, without getting into trouble. The bouncers are aware of the fact that they perform under the eye of the camera and patrons, both inside and outside the establishment, but most of my informants know at least one blind spot, be it an alley, or a small alcove inside, where they can take a customer and rough him up without threat of being caught. Merhad (Amersfoort, 22-03-2015), for example mentions that he knows exactly which cameras aren't operational and Erjad (Amersfoort, 29-03-2015) explains how they dragged a violent customer back inside and just closed the main entrance, so they could beat this person up without anyone actually seeing it happen.

Consequently, the use of violence is one of the main structuring elements in the bouncers' professional reality. It is closely tied into underlying notions of acceptable behavior and the public image of bouncers and limited by potential legal ramifications. Because of this it is the basis for the trust and cooperation shaping the working relations of bouncers and requires them to negotiate the grey area which exists somewhere in between the notions of self-defense, preventative violence and actually doing people harm. The cases illustrating the occurrence of violence, such as Dave losing support for ratting out Jalal's illegitimate use violence, Patrick breaking someone's jaw and Rick roughing up his first customer of his shift, are all just as significant for understanding the ways in which violence is and is not deemed acceptable and shapes the interaction of bouncers with their colleagues and their environment.

8. Conclusion

Concluding, throughout this interdisciplinary analysis of bouncers within the collaborative night life security network, the common thread is violence. The legal constraints and societal acceptance concerning the use of violence in public spaces and daily life, as well as the unequal relationship with the police, conjoin the inescapability of violent confrontations and the eye of the public and the camera, in order to form a legally, morally and physically grey area within which the bouncer is forced to negotiate a professional way of conduct. This grey area is made manifest in the way issues of trust, based on familiarity, and leadership impact the working relationship, cohesion and subsequent performance of bouncers amongst themselves. In regard to the collaborative performance of security, a high degree of internal control, leading to a high standard of performance and positive relations, with the police,

proprietors of the establishment and adequate and fair treatment of customers, is the basis for a strong and positive presence of bouncers within the night life environment.

Furthermore, this grey area is made tangible in the bouncers performance. Image management in order to maintain dominance is entwined with violence, as bouncers are challenged, sometimes physically, in their role of gatekeeper, or might judge for themselves the limited use of violence is appropriate to establish bouncers. Additionally, the various ways in which violence can be enacted, such as preventative or in self defense, relatively harmless or damaging and retributory, covertly or in the open, are all manners in which the bouncers negotiate their own collective and individual acceptable position in this grey area, resulting in alternative notions violence manifesting themselves conceptually to form part of the broader context of violence within the grey area. The way in which the bouncer approaches this dominance and violence based performance therefore defines the manner in which he is able to do his job with a minimal amount of conflict and fit into the bouncers working group, both of which resulting in a positive impact on the collaborative production of security.

As such, the bouncers are not just subjects to this apparently restrictive professional reality, rather these negotiations show that the bouncers are cognizant of their position. This is also apparent in the way bouncers approach the subject of discrimination. Even though personal bias plays a part, the process of assessing and selecting customers is also highly dependent on the professional experience of the bouncer. These two ways of discrimination combine in a professional vision that not only defines the way in which bouncers approach their customers, but also their own reality, as negative working experiences lead to a form of stereotyping and assessing people that extends beyond their working environment. Again, this is where the bouncers create ways of performance that themselves become part of the grey area that dominates their professional reality.

As this thesis is an analysis of night time security as an product of collaboration, a most glaring omission seems to be the lack of an analysis of the concept of night time security itself. This question can be approached in two ways. Superficially, but very telling nonetheless, all actors will agree that a “quiet night”, or a night with very little incidents, is a good night when it comes to security. However, a deeper analysis would require a very detailed illustration of the various tasks and physical, conceptual and psychological worlds, or realities, of the various actors concerned, much in the way of Latours body of thought. For example, in addition to general tasks, the police force might also be concerned with fulfilling

certain quota, or cracking down on a specific type of offenders, as part of local council policy. Night club proprietors might wish to bar all “allochtone”, or lower class customers, regardless of the disorder and conflict this might create outside of the establishment and the bouncers themselves might view some conflict as a positive way to show their dominance. In short, there is no single answer way to view security in the night life environment and an illustration of all these different realities is way beyond the scope of this thesis. This is only approached from the perspective of the bouncer. Therefore, the focus of this paper are the relations and ensuing tensions that shape the collaborations leading to the “production” of security, rather than the outcomes themselves.

On a similar note, the purpose of this thesis is not to offer solutions to specific problems, or to offer up policy recommendations. As shown, the makeup of the assemblage of security actors is unique in any situation, as it differs by location and time. This in turn means that any situation requires its own unique, made to measure, solution to any problem that might arise. Therefore, it is not up to the scientist to come up with these solutions, but to the person wearing the boots on the ground. This thesis will aid in that respect, as it does provide a tool with which to better understand the practical and conceptual realities that shape the world of the bouncer and provides an illustration of the various forces that influence the interactions of the bouncer within the larger security network. In that regard, notions of dominance, violence, discrimination and trust are the central notions defining the bouncers’ professional reality and the manner in which they provide their part of night life security.

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