

Article

The Transformative Potential of Awareness Labour

Val Meneau ^{1,2} 

¹ Department of Diversity Research, University of Göttingen, D-37073 Göttingen, Germany; val.flora.heather.meneau@univie.ac.at

² Department of English and American Studies, University of Vienna, 1090 Vienna, Austria

Abstract

Even when designed by and for members of (multiple) oppressed groups, nightlife is generally an unsafe experience. In response to this, awareness teams have emerged internationally in recent years, ensuring that members of these groups can continue to participate in nightlife. Based on semi-structured qualitative interviews with activists in Graz, Austria, contextualised with autoethnography as well as a discourse analysis of policies and recommendations from activists in the broader Austrian and European contexts, I explore in this paper how awareness labour can contribute to transformative justice. I argue that by preventing the most vulnerable members of oppressed groups from being excluded from nightlife and educating everyone who engages with them within nightlife about oppression and privilege, awareness labour sits at the intersection of care and activism. As such, it bears potential to effect social change by teaching a broad segment of society about different practices of coming together that are not based on exploitation, extraction, or oppression. Awareness labour broadens our understanding of activism by intervening in the unjust distribution of care. The paper concludes by proposing areas for further research to determine how to realise the transformative potential of awareness labour.

Keywords: nightlife; awareness teams; care; activism; transformative justice

1. Introduction

Even when designed by and for members of (multiple) oppressed groups, nightlife is generally an unsafe experience. We attend it to feel free, or at least to “feel right”—a hope often frustrated by normative modes of exclusion (Adeyemi 2022). Indeed, “the cruel-but-unsurprising irony is that the people most in need of liberatory experiences are also the most likely to encounter oppression in those same spaces” (Garcia-Mispireta in Hilderbrand et al. 2024, p. 11), which results in us experiencing both the best and worst times in these spaces (Khubchandani in Hilderbrand et al. 2024, p. 13). After all, nightlife does not exist in isolation; it interacts with and is shaped by the same systems of oppression that dictate daytime life (Khubchandani 2020). Overall, nightlife poses many risks to all members of oppressed groups, as it “continues to be a site of violence” (Adeyemi et al. 2021, p. 5). These risks include sexual harassment, which is famously common in the Viennese clubbing scene, often at the hands of organisers or club owners (Rauth 2023); spiking; rape, as recently occurred at the famous sex-positive club Kitkat in Berlin (Kratz 2025; Kaack 2025); racism (Greene in Hilderbrand et al. 2024, p. 13); and queerphobia and transphobia (Wark 2023, p. 5). Although nightclubs are not necessarily safe spaces (Moore 2018, p. 123), they offer hope to members of oppressed groups, which is what draws us in, even if we encounter much disappointment along the way (Mattson in Hilderbrand et al. 2024, p. 11). In other words, we will still be



Academic Editor: Daniel McCarthy

Received: 11 December 2025

Revised: 28 January 2026

Accepted: 31 January 2026

Published: 4 February 2026

Copyright: © 2026 by the author.

Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland.

This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the [Creative Commons Attribution \(CC BY\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) license.

there, even if it takes a special kind of labour to “apprehend the risky medium of the night to explore, know, and stage [our] bodies, genders, and sexualities in the face of systemic and social negation” (Adeyemi et al. 2021, p. 3).

In response to the oppression experienced by LGBTQIA+ and/or BIPOC folks and/or women¹, awareness teams have emerged internationally in recent years to ensure that members of these groups can continue to participate in nightlife. These initiatives aim to support people enjoying nightlife at parties, festivals and raves, and are one facet of the shifting and complex nightlife landscape (Hilderbrand et al. 2024, p. 18). Awareness teams, as I explain in more detail below, consist of several people whose role it is to be present at a party and support members of oppressed groups, should they experience oppression. These teams commonly establish a concept that fits each event, to make sure that they can do their job well enough. Such a concept, for instance, entails a stand where some members of the team can be found at all times. Within, but also beyond the event itself, I argue below that awareness teams contribute to awareness raising at a broader level, by informing all people involved in nightlife about awareness of oppression. In doing so, they contribute to sparking a revolution in subjectivity: the way that we make sense of ourselves and those around us is bound to change when we learn about oppression (Young 2022, p. 124).

In this paper, I explore how awareness labour can contribute to transformative justice. Transformative justice challenges and renegotiates “power relations at all levels, driven not by one universally valid understanding of the world, but rather by a contingent, context-dependent commitment to agency and participation” (Robins 2019, p. 308). Instead of relying on the state, the radical agenda of transformative justice “seeks to empower communities at the local level to develop strategies to respond to and prevent violence and other harms” (Rossner and Taylor 2024, p. 358). Responding to the rampant oppression members of oppressed groups experience in nightlife, awareness teams constitute a strategy to respond and prevent this oppression at a local level, that of the nightclub. They represent a network of care similar to a mutual aid group that aims to support members of oppressed groups (Malatino 2020; Spade 2020). Within its localised setting (most commonly clubbing), I argue that awareness labour is a form of transformative justice at the intersection between care and activism, fulfilling a dual role as a placeholder and a bridge. As a placeholder, awareness labour prevents the most vulnerable members of oppressed groups from falling through the cracks of nightlife. As a bridge, this type of activist labour aims to bring us, as a society, to a place where it will be obsolete. In that sense, I argue that awareness labour is utopian, in that it aims to bring to the present a future we would like to exist in already.

To expand our understanding of activism, academic research needs to consider the intersection between care and activism more carefully. Currently, there are hardly any publications on awareness labour, despite it being a popular topic within activism and nightlife. Fuernkranz’s (2024) paper focuses on the importance of creating safer spaces, while Galavielle’s (2025) dissertation focuses on the implementation of awareness teams to claim the right to the night. While white papers and activist documents are more readily available (Pires and Sexism Free Night Network 2022; AwA* 2024), they tend to focus on the implementation of awareness teams within specific contexts rather than on awareness labour at a meta level. Here, I will explore the potential of awareness labour to educate a large part of society about oppression and privilege, as well as different collaborative practices that do not rely on exploitation, extraction or oppression (Raha and Van der Drift 2024, p. 48). Awareness labour broadens our understanding of activism, which is commonly associated with demonstrations or other direct actions, by addressing the unjust distribution of care responsibilities worldwide (Raha and Van der Drift 2024, pp. 58–59, 70). This paper contributes to an emerging conversation that highlights the significance of care work in relation to activism (Clark 2024; Lampredi 2024; Jupp 2023; Edelman 2020; Krasny et al. 2021).

We have always needed ways to ensure that members of oppressed groups do not fall through the cracks of social life (The Care Collective 2020; Malatino 2020), as well as to create alternative ways of relating to each other that do not stem from patriarchy, imperialism, colonialism, and neoliberal capitalism. Academics can learn from grassroots initiatives and their utopian practices that promote transformative justice. Although these initiatives have barely received any academic attention, they have, in the meantime, become standard practice in more progressive environments. In other words, their importance is unchallenged in leftist circles.

2. Materials and Methods

For this paper, I base my argument on two separate 1 h-long semi-structured qualitative interviews with two white cis female experts who are active in Graz, Austria. Both Sarah Kampitsch and Stephanie Gmeiner are in their early thirties and have been involved in awareness labour for years. Stephanie is one of the leaders of the awareness team at Fag-tory, a queer, sex-positive party held once a month at the largest club in Graz. Sarah is one of the co-founders of AwA Graz, an association offering awareness teams for clubs and other events. With their consent, the experts have not been anonymised or pseudonymised, as is common in this research method (Tilley and Woodthorpe 2011; Meneau 2024; Döringer 2021; Bogner et al. 2009; Finkbeiner 2016). This enables me to honour their contributions and does not render them more vulnerable than they already are as public advocates and activists. Furthermore, they explicitly and knowingly consent to the publication of their names and views. This consent is verified through ongoing relational ethics (Braidotti and Regan 2017; Ellis 2016; Lahman et al. 2011) as well as via two informed consent forms: one before the interview, and one after they have read their full transcript. Third parties discussed are anonymised, except for organisations they work for. The interviews were analysed with a grounded theory (Bryant and Kathy 2019), though due to the preliminary nature of this research, reaching saturation was not possible.

I focus on the city of Graz in Austria. Although it is the second biggest city in the country, with around 280,000 inhabitants, it is still tiny compared to the capital, Vienna, which is located two and a half hours further north. It is big enough to have a queer scene, but not big enough for wider society to be cool about it. This raises the importance of awareness labour in this context. I also focus on Graz because I lived there for ten years. This means that I, a white non-binary trans femme, have a very good overview of the different parties and clubs, and the efforts they have invested in recent years to make nightlife safer for queer people in particular. I know the experts personally, as I have been actively involved in queer feminist activism in Graz for the past years. I have attended the Fagtory many times, collaborated with AwA Graz on parties with my activist collectives and associations—Ravenbogen and QuFO, the Queer Feminist Organisation—and organised an awareness workshop with Sarah for Ravenbogen and QuFO. Being part of the scene has helped me get in touch with Sarah and Stephanie, as well as understand the important work that their teams are doing in a small provincial city, where my hypervisibility as a trans non-binary person consistently attracts animosity. I rely on autoethnography whenever necessary to describe the broader context surrounding the interviews (Lapadat 2017; Jones and Harris 2018).

In this paper, I contextualise their work within the broader Austrian and European landscapes. A quantitative study of over 2000 people from the Vienna Club Commission found that almost 40% of women and people of colour had experienced unsafe situations or discrimination in the nightlife scene (Educult for the Vienna Club Commission 2023). In response, the left-wing, two-million-strong city amended its Event Act to make awareness concepts mandatory at events with more than 300 attendees, effective from 1 January 2025

(Schnürer 2024; Presse-Service 2024). This is a unique situation in Europe. However, the Act does not define what such concepts must entail, prompting AwA*, the Viennese “mother” organisation, to create awareness standards (AwA* 2024). In this paper, I will contextualise Sarah and Stephanie’s work within this broader framework through a discourse analysis of the Event Act and the awareness standards. Finally, I have taught a class on Queer Nightlife twice; once at the University of Salzburg and once at the University of Vienna, both in 2025. On both occasions, I invited the local awareness organisation to discuss the topic with the students. These discussions also inform the orientation of this paper.

First, I describe the goals of awareness labour and the practices they use to achieve these goals in the context of nightlife. I then describe the awareness-raising these initiatives strive for at individual and community levels, involving all those involved in nightlife. Finally, I conclude the paper by reflecting on awareness labour as utopian and highlighting the limitations and avenues for further research.

3. Results

3.1. *The Goals and Context of Awareness Labour*

The aim of awareness teams is to make spaces safer for members of (multiple) oppressed groups. At this point, it is common knowledge that it is impossible to guarantee a safe space. As Sarah said, “you don’t know who is going in the space.” She adds that awareness teams cannot promise that everyone will feel comfortable, nor that violence or discrimination will not occur. It is impossible to prevent oppression entirely. One way in which organisers attempt to ensure the safety of their events is by implementing a door policy to control who enters the venue (Moore 2018, p. 140). But doors are a site of control, which also contributes to a certain flavour of queernormativity (Orne and Stuckey 2017) or racism (Kosnick 2018; May 2018; May and Goldsmith 2018; May 2022; Talbot 2016). When overseeing events, awareness teams aim to create a supportive structure tailored to each event, known as the ‘awareness concept’. This concept must be carefully considered and address the specific context of the event², which will differ depending on whether the team is operating in a nightclub, at a street festival or in a public space. It will also vary depending on the type of event and the vulnerability of the attendees. For example, is there a dark room? Is this a sex-positive event? Is the party centring LGBTQIA+ and/or BIPoC people? Before committing to the event, the awareness team must also ensure that the organiser or location provides the necessities for a functioning awareness concept. Sarah reflects: “Is it even possible for us to be there? Because we don’t want to go there and offer awareness labour, but we can’t do any, de facto, because the concept doesn’t allow it. If we’re there, we want to really be there.” In this respect, AwA Graz is more independent than teams constituted by clubs or festivals because they can choose not to participate if they feel they cannot provide the necessary support to members of oppressed groups.

The concept involves a designated location in the club where guests can always find a member of the awareness team. Sarah explains, “people know that if there’s something they want to talk about, or whatever it is, they can go there and find us.” The location of the stand must be clearly communicated to guests and it must be visible. The stand also features educational material on topics such as discrimination, safer sex and safer drug practices, as well as stickers and condoms. The concept can also entail an isolated cool-down space to pull back and unwind, a “space where we can retreat with those affected when necessary or when someone just needs to sit down for a moment,” as Sarah explains. Members of the awareness team will circulate within the space wearing distinctive outfits or accessories (such as fairy lights or neon T-shirts) to signal their role to guests. The concept also includes a code of conduct that everyone, including organisers, must comply with. This code states the values on which the party operates, namely that oppressive behaviour and violence are

not acceptable, and reiterates the fundamentals of consent. It will be displayed on posters in the club and at the stand. Prior communication, for instance on social media, is necessary to ensure that guests know how to find and contact the team and what the code of conduct entails. Depending on the party, the awareness concept may also include entrance talks to inform guests of the team's presence and remind them of the party's values.

According to the awareness standards, "awareness [labour] focuses on the well-being of the person affected by discriminatory, abusive or transgressive behaviour" (AwA* 2024, p. 4). This involves providing support and care to anyone who experiences oppression. Sarah explains that "in case something happens, in case someone behaves inappropriately," awareness team members function as "contact persons who can immediately address the situation or give me the opportunity to discuss my emotions and feelings, to exchange ideas and be heard." She adds that providing a space to process emotions also empowers those who have just experienced a violation or oppression, particularly because team members validate the person's understanding of the situation. According to the Awareness Standards, awareness team members must be partisan to the person who has experienced harm (AwA* 2024, p. 5). They are there to either act to shield the person from further escalation by collaborating with security personnel, or to give the affected person space to speak about what happened in a judgement-free zone, where they can reflect on what felt uncomfortable or wrong about the experience, as Sarah describes. Stephanie adds that she finds it particularly important, "in the times and society we live in, that there are people at parties who feel responsible" for the well-being of others in the space, and compares awareness team members to party social workers. The team must leave the power of definition on the side of the person themselves, meaning that only the person experiencing oppression may define what happened to them (AwA* 2024, p. 5). The team must provide the right amount and kind of help to support their processes. As Sarah explains: "we don't go up to the person and tell them how they should feel. And if we witness that something was inappropriate, we don't go up to the person and shoo them away and say to the other person, 'No, that was really bad and it was harassment' [...] We will not try to convince someone who did not perceive something as badly as we did that it is worse," since that could start a process they are not ready for. Lucie Fielding would say that awareness team members contribute to demystifying the experiences of people affected by violence and oppression, by normalising or contextualising it and "perhaps help[ing them] discharge any fear, guilt, or shame that might be constellated" (Fielding 2021, p. 79). Furthermore, the affected person must determine the help they receive alone, with the team supporting them in their decision. Awareness team members must be sensitive to the needs of others and recognise "when enough is enough? We do as much as necessary, but as little as possible," as Sarah puts it, so as not to overwhelm the person and be there for them. Team members must learn to empathise with others to gauge how much support is needed and when to stop. In other words, they try to absorb the shock that might result from harmful situations, ensuring that "the person affected by boundary-crossing behaviour, discrimination, or aggression [is] not left alone with the consequences of discrimination or (sexualized) violence" (AwA* 2025).

Awareness teams help make the club in which they work a safer space by prioritising "the needs of the most at-risk—not as a way of sealing them off from the realities of life, but as a way of resourcing, equipping and supporting people to meet those realities" (Deller 2021, p. 223). They aim to ensure that "those affected [by oppression] do not have to withdraw from spaces/structures, but can regain agency and prevent further risks and unwanted encounters" (AwA* 2025). Their approach is intersectional and centred on empowerment (AwA* 2025). They achieve this by operationalising their own vulnerability. According to their website, AwA* is made up of "women, trans, queer, and inter* people"

(AwA* 2025), i.e., individuals who have likely experienced patriarchal violence first-hand. By working against systemic oppression, the AwA* team utilise their own vulnerability to enact political resistance, positioning themselves as vulnerable agents (Butler et al. 2016, p. 24). Butler et al. explain that vulnerability is a relation to a “field of objects, forces, and passions that impinge on or affect us in some way” (Butler et al. 2016, p. 25), since “The body is less an entity than a relation, and it cannot be fully dissociated from the infrastructural and environmental conditions of its living” (Butler et al. 2016, p. 19). Awareness teams address this very relation by working on the infrastructural and environmental conditions of oppression. They support the safety and access needs of members of oppressed groups through an awareness concept and with their presence.

Awareness labour can only be successful if everyone involved in an event participates. Therefore, the team needs to educate everyone involved in an event in some way. Ideally, the awareness team will organise a meeting with everyone involved in the event before the event takes place. At the very least, the meeting should include “the security, the organiser, and the Awareness team, [...] because they have to work together actively,” as Sarah states. She continues, explaining that it is important that the bar staff, DJs or band members or artists, and the technicians also know about the awareness team, “because it affects them just as much. So, if they’re not well, or if anything happens to them, or—so that they don’t do anything [bad] themselves *laughs*, they should also be informed.” All those involved may potentially experience or perpetrate discrimination and violence³. The meeting enables the awareness team to raise awareness of the concept among everyone involved and ensure their commitment to the code of conduct, even if only performatively. Ideally, collaboration between everyone involved creates an awareness structure at the level of the whole event. Should anyone notice anything unusual, they will know how to act and support those affected. Of course, the awareness structure requires the team to have authority over who stays and who leaves the space, enforced with the help of security staff. Their effort is useless if the team removes someone and the organiser lets them back in, as Sarah recalls from a previous collaboration with an organiser.

The awareness concept responds to the disinvestment by governments and institutions in infrastructures of care, and their acceptance of neoliberal capitalist profit-making goals in all areas of governance, which exacerbate oppression that trickles all the way down to interpersonal interactions (The Care Collective 2020). This is why social movements take on some of these responsibilities, ensuring the survival and participation of their members in society. In this context, awareness labour intervenes in the “affective and practical disinvestment of the people and institutions we’ve needed—or been forced—to rely upon for survival” (Malatino 2020, p. 10). In the face of consistent disinvestment, “we have learned to care for one another in the aftermath of these refusals” (Malatino 2020, p. 10). Awareness labour lies at the intersection of care, place-making, activism, social change, and social justice (Zazanis 2021, p. 37). For members of oppressed groups, it is a form of social reproduction, enabling and maintaining our lives (Raha 2021, p. 105) and providing a network of care at events. When the vulnerability of members of oppressed groups is exacerbated, turning to community as a network of care is crucial for survival (The Care Collective 2020; see also Raha 2021; Malatino 2020, p. 13). Awareness labour steps in by recognising that interdependency is a human condition (Puig de La Bellacasa 2017) and that vulnerability can be structurally exacerbated. By holding space for people who have experienced violence, awareness team members engage in an act of compassion. They share the person’s burden, provide comfort, contextualise their experience, engage in advocacy and solidarity, and develop coping mechanisms (Fielding 2021, p. 106). This is revolutionary in itself, as Reed (2023, p. 220) mentions.

By ensuring that members of oppressed groups receive support if they experience oppression, awareness labour acts as a placeholder. Awareness teams fill the void left by the absence of societal structures or widespread knowledge about oppression, which would prevent oppression and harm in the first place. Through their work, they strive to guarantee that members of oppressed groups can participate in nightlife, providing them with a safety net should anything happen. Awareness labour involves reflecting on the broader context that contributes to harm and addressing it.

3.2. *Creating Awareness at All Levels of Society*

Beyond overseeing individual events, awareness labour initiatives work to spread awareness at all levels of society. Awareness team members primarily deal with reflexivity. Consequently, they must continually educate themselves about privilege and oppression. Awareness labour kickstarts a revolution in subjectivity, to use Iris Young's (2022, p. 124) words. This revolution must start within us first, as it did for my two experts. Stephanie is a social worker and sex educator; Sarah co-founded Catcalls of Graz, an association that fights against catcalling and street harassment, and has worked for years in anti-sexism and anti-queerphobia organisations. Both felt a strong urge to take action, help others, and speak out. For them, awareness labour is a form of political activism and empowerment. Stephanie shares that she finds the work "extremely demanding, but I consider it essential and important," while Sarah describes that it enables her to "actively speak up and dare to stand up for others," making her feel like she really "can make a difference and change things."

The first people to experience this revolution of subjectivity are the team members themselves. They must learn about oppression, domination, discrimination, intersectionality, privilege, and barriers. For AwA*, "awareness means mindfulness and consciousness in how we interact with each other. It involves preventing discrimination, abuse, and (sexualized) violence. This includes an awareness of societal power dynamics and our own position within them" (AwA* 2025). For that reason, awareness team members must embrace a state of constant learning, both as individuals and as a team. Becoming aware, according to Sarah, is "work [that] must continue actively, by repeatedly addressing the issues and considering how to get people on board, and what might have been forgotten that could also be potentially harmful and so on." As Stephanie emphasises, learning is an ongoing process for teams as well. Members of awareness teams must learn to care for themselves and recognise their own boundaries and capacities in order to work an awareness shift. They must also "learn patience too. A lot of it, and... self-control," hints Sarah. Furthermore, they must undergo basic training and attend regular further training sessions, keep up to date with updates to the awareness concept, and be responsible—meaning, sober (AwA* 2024, p. 15). Reflectivity is a central element of the training, as well as of the supervision/intervision work the team does to ensure quality (AwA* 2024, p. 25).

The emphasis on reflexivity is reminiscent of Iris Young's (2022, p. 133) work, in which she emphasises that the majority of oppressive acts in Western society are unconscious or unintentional. People therefore need to recognise how they contribute to oppression in order to develop different practices (Raha and Van der Drift 2024, p. 167). This means that team members must learn accountability. Sarah recounts an incident in which she delivered awareness talks at the entrance to a club during a particularly stressful event. She was speaking in English as her two interlocutors did not speak German. A person of colour passed by, and Sarah called to them in English, asking them to wait for the awareness talk. This person felt discriminated against as they often had the experience of people assuming they did not speak German based on their ethnicity. Sarah concludes by noting that, as a white person, she may not be aware of how racism "manifests itself. But we have to be

aware that other people have had different experiences.” She concludes that in addition to learning about intersectional oppression, “it’s important to be [...] sensitive when dealing with people in general, because I don’t know what I trigger in others.”

Awareness teams contribute to educating guests participating in nightlife at the events they oversee. Of course, the passive educational offers that awareness initiatives provide at parties primarily reach those who are affected. “We primarily reach those who are already interested in some way, or those who are affected or potentially affected... I don’t know—women and FINTA⁴ people, for example, queer people who are simply more affected by this, who experience more violence and discrimination. They are also subsequently more interested; they are easier to reach.” Awareness initiatives are most likely to reach members of oppressed groups, who are more likely to engage with the educational offer than more privileged others. This work is intended to empower them in the first place. Awareness labour gives members of oppressed groups the chance to “talk about [their] emotions and feelings, to exchange ideas and be heard. And when that happens often, it creates a ‘safe space’ [sic] where people naturally look out for each other and recognise that these are injustices they can fight against: ‘I can stand up for myself and for others.’” Awareness teams positively impact members of oppressed groups through their passive educational offer.

Due to their role, awareness team members encounter and interact with privileged nightlife attendees, which helps educate them. Team members must be open and patient with people who approach them at events, even if these are privileged, drunk, high or annoying. Sarah shares that “when you’re working according to certain standards and then you have some guy asking you, *takes on a tough masc voice* ‘what are you actually doing there?’ you have to stay calm and let them finish talking and then respond calmly and neutrally. And that’s tough, sometimes!” She continues: “whenever someone comes over acting annoying, I say, ‘We make sure no one gets harassed,’ and then they’re like, *drunk dude voice on* ‘That’s so cool, yeah, totally, yeah, that one guy the other day,’ and then they tell some story about harassment.” Sarah explains that being stoic as an awareness team member has led her to have interesting conversations with cis men who, although they may appear annoying at first, still care and recognise the importance of this work. Awareness team members learn to react to everyone without preconceptions and to keep calm and de-escalate challenging situations—they must give everyone a genuine chance to learn.

Alongside the events they oversee, awareness teams must educate everyone involved in nightlife, including artists, staff and security, as well as addressing broader political issues. According to Sarah, “awareness labour hasn’t been around for very long in Graz [...] but that’s slowly coming.” As awareness labour is a relatively new concept in a small city like Graz, awareness teams must also educate funders and festival or event organisers. Stephanie emphasises that “people don’t really understand what it is,” and Sarah adds that “it’s a shame that they are not open to it, that they cannot even imagine why it would be important.” Indeed, the resources, capacities and possibilities of awareness teams depend on overarching structures. Therefore, funders and organisers must also recognise the importance of awareness labour. Funding itself depends on the broader politics of the region and the country. Stephanie highlights that “if you now have the FPÖ [the freedom party Austria, the far right] in the government, what can you do? You won’t get any more funding for [awareness labour],” referencing the rise of the far right at the national level, as well as the cuts to funding for cultural and artistic initiatives in the region since the FPÖ came to power. Funders also restrict opportunities for funding by delimiting areas according to pre-existing ideas. This makes it difficult for newer initiatives to access funding in the first place. AwA Graz struggled to identify a suitable funding body since, as Sarah explains, “we are not cultural associations because [...] we do not organise events, [...] and

I think because we get paid for [awareness shifts]—I don't think it's taken too seriously," even though as an initiative, AwA Graz still requires state support for its overhead activities which are carried out voluntarily. Due to a lack of awareness among jury members of how funding pots are set and of the far-right regional government, AwA Graz was denied funding several times.

Similarly, organisers need to understand the importance of awareness labour. Sarah recalled a big electronic music festival in Graz who stated that "'everyone [at the festival] is so aware anyway' and that they do not require [an awareness team]." Sarah comments: "You can't assume that at a festival lasting several days, where thousands of people come, [there won't be] someone there who will behave badly in some way." She continues, explaining that the decision-makers in that organisation were all cisgender men. This is a common situation in Graz, as are the decision-makers in the organising teams of the other major electronic music festivals and the biggest queer sex-positive party in the city. Sarah contrasts this situation with that of Lendwirbel, a street festival where the team is mixed and far-left. For them, working with AwA Graz was obvious. She concludes: "But very often at festivals, at large events, it's still [. . .] white cis men on the organising team, who have completely different privileges and who can't imagine that it's not so easy for other people at an event, especially a nightlife event." If decision-making processes involving funders or organisers take place primarily between straight, cisgender white men, they are less likely to recognise the importance of awareness labour, since they are not personally affected by its absence.

The value of awareness work needs to be reflected in financial terms. Spreading awareness of oppression more broadly will take years, and this labour needs to be "paid for so that it can deliver the appropriate quality, because it is ultimately a service that should be valued,⁵" by organisers, clubs, and funders, as Sarah emphasises. With neoliberal capitalism and gentrification taking their toll on the nightlife scene (Adeyemi et al. 2021; Adeyemi 2022; Hilderbrand et al. 2024; Salem 2021), club owners and organisers may need to give financial priority to the safety and access of members of oppressed groups. Creating awareness at all levels of society will require years of dedicated and demanding labour that relies on specialisation and mastery of specific social knowledge and competencies (see Lynch 2007, p. 564), which challenges the patriarchal view of care work as an essential quality (Federici 2014). This requires dedication and resources, as Sarah points out: "unfortunately, raising awareness is not something that can be done overnight." Therefore, organisers need to recognise this effort, which has yet to happen for the organisers of that large-scale electronic music festival in Graz. Sarah angrily recalls that, "in the end, [the organisers of that festival] contacted us two weeks before the festival. One of them wrote to [one of our team members] to ask if they could meet for a coffee because she had a few questions about how to set up an awareness team." Rightfully, the festival organisers asking AwA Graz, a professional organisation, for unpaid labour caused Sarah much anger, showing that there is still much work to be done to help organisers and funders understand the importance of AwA Graz's work.

Awareness teams operate at several levels of society. First, they initiate a revolution in subjectivity within the team members themselves by focusing on reflexivity through education on intersectional oppression, as well as supervision. They then extend this revolution in subjectivity to everyone they interact with at events, including guests, artists, staff and security. Awareness teams also operate at a broader level, raising awareness among organisers and funders. These groups often struggle to recognise the importance of awareness labour due to privilege being overrepresented in decision-making circles. Awareness labour initiatives work to educate these groups too. Neoliberal capitalism commonly devalues care work as essentialised and low-skilled, a tendency that is reflected

in decisions to implement inefficient awareness teams that do not actually address harm, or in the practice of overfilling clubs to increase profit margins. Awareness labour intervenes in these common nightlife economy practices that negatively impact members of oppressed groups. It works to implement awareness structures at city level to strive for transformative justice.

3.3. *AwA as Utopian Labour*

Until now, I have argued that the aim of awareness labour is to spread awareness of oppression and privilege at all levels of society and among all those who come into contact with nightlife, including partygoers, funders, staff, artists, organisers and club owners. In this section, I will argue that the work of awareness labour is utopian in that it is future-oriented. By “oversee[ing] events, implement[ing] educational work, writ[ing] concepts and advis[ing] spaces, groups, and institutions” (AwA* 2025), awareness labour initiatives aim to have a preventive effect and work towards transformative justice (Robins 2019).

Awareness initiatives, acting on the repetitive and controllable setting of the club and its broader societal context, impact different social groups at different paces. They work to slowly but surely educate everyone who encounters them about values and practices for coming together peacefully. These values and psycho-social competences include self-reflection and self-awareness, “sensing and expressing and honouring our own needs,” in Sarah’s words, but also desires, boundaries, accountability, reciprocity, sensitivity, empathy, care, intentionality, acceptance and respect that is not necessarily tied to understanding. They also include, according to Sarah, awareness of others in our surroundings and of “power imbalances, discrimination, and not just in theory, but also in practice” as well as an awareness “of one’s own privileges and that other people are in a different situation.” Other values include the capacity to put ourselves in other people’s shoes and to stand up for ourselves or others, as well as solidarity, consent and bodily autonomy. Awareness teams aim to teach these values and competences to the broader society in their interactions with guests and in their own training processes. Professional awareness workers systematise learning and teaching about oppression. They provide further education and training, and share knowledge and skills with activists and community-based organisations (AwA* 2025). Awareness workers aim to enlighten others, teaching them to become more aware of their surroundings and their impact on them.

Awareness initiatives seek to promote values that are already somewhat established in leftist circles into the mainstream. By engaging in concerted action with many different parties, they work towards a culture in which sexual harassment is rare, as Sarah explains:

I believe that many associations, organisations and initiatives are already addressing [sexual harassment], as are politicians, and that this is probably the fastest way to achieve more. I mean, if you look at the clubs, it’s still a long way off, of course, but especially when it’s more left-wing groups that organise events, that kind of thing doesn’t usually happen anymore. And if we manage to curb sexual harassment in clubs, for example, then the rest isn’t that far from being solved, I would say. But I think that’s where we need to focus most on education.

These skills are essential for building a society that is not based on exploitation or domination (Young 2022; Raha and Van der Drift 2024; Preciado 2025).

Awareness labour helps create the society we want to live in by teaching us skills that can be applied in other situations. In this way, awareness labour aims to have a trickle-down effect. Sarah describes it like this: “you simply notice, in your surroundings, ‘Hey, somehow they’re all pretty cool with each other *laughs*. Maybe I’m cool with people too,’ and then it kind of spreads.” Guests may experience a space in which everyone cares for

and about each other, and they can take this experience home with them. “Of course, you can’t reach everyone, and you can’t bring about change in everyone immediately. But that’s what we’re doing. And I think that [...] every person you somehow raise awareness in will then count as or act as a multiplier for others.” Any small change matters, as those who become aware transfer the skills they have learned in the clubbing setting to their everyday lives. Sarah explains that “as soon as people have figured that out in the club setting, it carries over into the rest of society or into their normal lives, or they just start thinking about it.” Both experts described the potential for transferability of the skills party-goers learn while clubbing to other areas of their lives. To me, understanding awareness labour as something that starts before the event and resonates beyond its conclusion is part of its potential for transformative justice. After all, “As the aesthetics of the nightclub bleed into and layer onto the everyday, so too do its politics” (Adeyemi et al. 2021, p. 15). The way awareness teams care for members of oppressed groups and educate party-goers creates an echo that lasts well beyond sunrise and long after we have made it home (Florêncio 2023, p. 876; see also Moore 2018).

The newly acquired skills can be used on the dance floor, making abusers easier to spot and making it harder for them to commit transgressions. Sarah explained that oppressors are more likely to either behave appropriately or leave when they are in a crowd that is more aware: “If [the awareness concept and code of conducts are] communicated appropriately and you are present [as awareness team] in the right way, it is more difficult for people to commit violence—that is, to do [something] inappropriate—because they feel they are being watched.” A crowd that is generally aware “makes it easier to filter out potentially violent individuals at a party. Because they then become more noticeable, more visible and easier to pick out from the crowd.” Ideally, for Sarah, partygoers in a more aware crowd will be more likely to support one another, even if they do not know each other. Potentially violent individuals are also more likely to notice that people are very mindful and “somehow don’t play along [with transgression].” She concludes: “That’s the difference between being at a party where nobody cares and being at a party where everyone looks out for each other. Of course, a lot more happens in the former because, as a person who perpetrates violence, I can easily get lost in the crowd. But when I’m in a party where everyone looks out for each other, what I do is much more noticeable. And then I’m more compelled to behave properly. Or to leave.” If nobody cares or is aware of mechanisms of oppression, then acts of discrimination or violence are more likely to go unnoticed and be followed by no consequences. However, in crowds where everyone looks out for each other, people must either adapt or leave, since the awareness of the crowd makes it more difficult for violent acts to unfold unchallenged.

Overall, awareness labour intends to spread awareness to all demographics of society. AwA*’s ultimate goal is to “make ourselves unnecessary. We strive for a society where mindful, supportive interaction among all people is the norm. A society where people have the tools and space to make decisions and handle conflicts in a mindful and non-violent way” (AwA* 2025). For Sarah, ultimately, awareness labour will “no longer [be] needed because people [will be] aware enough at events to look after each other, to look after themselves.” Ideally, everyone will be responsible for their own and others’ well-being, recognising that they can act in situations of discrimination and violence. In a sense, then, awareness teams demonstrate what it means to treat each other with respect in a pluralistic and diverse society. They create environments of care that teach us a different way to be and act with each other. Stephanie’s team emphasises to every guest the importance of collaboration in making the party work: “that’s the only way it can work if we all work together and everyone tries to make it a good party.” By doing so, these initiatives contribute to social change, with the ultimate aim of making themselves obsolete. They

seek to make the world a more habitable place for members of (multiple) oppressed groups, starting with nightlife and working towards broader transformative justice.

4. Discussion

Awareness teams address a gap in nightlife by providing emergency care to those in need in the absence of structural solutions to discrimination- and oppression-related issues. At the same time, they educate all those involved in nightlife on issues such as consent, gender-based and sexual violence, discrimination, marginalisation, and safer sex and drug practices. In doing so, they teach this localised segment of society how to care, acting as agents of social change and developing the necessary skills in all demographic groups that come into contact with nightlife. Awareness labour acts as a placeholder, preventing members of multiple oppressed groups from falling through the cracks of nightlife, by standing in place of the societal structures or widespread knowledge about oppression that would prevent harm and ensure access in the first place. Awareness labour achieves this by reflecting on the broader context that contributes to harm and addressing it. As a bridge, this type of activist labour acts on several levels of society. They initiate a revolution in subjectivity within team members themselves and work to spread this revolution to everyone they interact with at events, such as guests, artists, staff and security. Finally, they act on a broader level by spreading awareness to organisers or funders, who are commonly straight, cis white men in Graz. Ideally, we would not need awareness labour. However, it is necessary to work towards that ideal world and to ensure that members of oppressed groups can participate in this aspect of society until that day arrives. Awareness labour aims to make itself obsolete. In this way, it functions as utopian labour, bringing a desired future into the present. Awareness teams set an example of how to treat each other with respect in a pluralistic and diverse society. They create environments of care that teach us a different way to interact with each other. In doing so, they aim to make the world more habitable for members of (multiple) oppressed groups.

The way in which awareness teams provide care is deeply political. In the face of structural neglect and oppression, care is an absolute necessity for the survival of members of oppressed groups, as it depends on the “survival of the relations and interdependencies that continuously produce and renew us” (Florêncio 2023, p. 872). After all, “We become-with each other or not at all” (Haraway 2016, p. 4), and the relational and collective practices of care enacted by awareness team members are not just about harm reduction or violence prevention. They are also about “investing ourselves in the lives and dignity of others—that is, about investing ourselves in the relationships that constitute us and our personal and collective histories” (Florêncio 2023, p. 877). The fact that awareness labour is a form of care matters because people’s ability to care is limited by the resources available to them (The Care Collective 2020; see also Lynch 2007). While “[a]ll people have the capacity for intimacy, attachment and caring relationships” (Lynch 2007, p. 553), this capacity develops differently depending on our positionality, as care takes place “in a nested set of power, class, gender and global race relations” (Lynch 2007, p. 564). Care labour is commonly distributed in a way that benefits dominant groups (Lynch 2007, p. 564), with members of oppressed groups being primarily taught to prioritise the needs of others. Consequently, they find it challenging to prioritise their own well-being, a sentiment echoed by the Black queer feminist Audre Lorde who stated that “self-care is an act of political warfare” (Lorde and Sanchez 2017). Conversely, members of privileged groups are unaware of how much they benefit from the care labour of others, even though this care labour contributes to raising their (nurturing) capital and thus their capacity to care for themselves (Lynch 2007, p. 565). As our capacity for care develops differently in each of us, it is important to

teach care in a setting where one can learn, such as a club, with someone to teach it, such as an awareness structure or team.

As I noted throughout the paper, however, the potential for transformative justice is not always realised. Due to a lack of training or funds, some initiatives fall short of their transformative potential. Often, these efforts do not recognise the long-term commitment necessary for community accountability. They underestimate the labour required to reduce harm and enhance access for members of multiple oppressed groups. Some of the ways in which the concept of awareness can fall short were evident in the interviews, with conflicts arising between experts based on their engagement with the scene. Sarah also denounced ‘awareness washing’, pointing out that some organisers are quick to claim that they have an awareness team to encourage members of oppressed groups to attend their events and spend money in their clubs, without realising that this requires a different kind of long-term labour that is more serious and expensive. Sarah expressed her wish “that organisers don’t promise a safer space where there isn’t one” or where they do not do anything in that direction. By performatively saying they have a team without ensuring that it in fact addresses the infrastructures and circumstances that cause harm, they render awareness labour meaningless. Furthermore, clubs that are too full, teams that are not sober, teams that do not work in a buddy system (two people per task) and organisers or security staff who do not respect the authority of the team all go against the goals of awareness labour. In addition, as Sarah explained, the term is not legally protected, so anyone can claim to engage in awareness labour, regardless of its effectiveness. “No matter how good a concept is, if it isn’t implemented [or feasible], it’s useless. Because we can be as good as we want *laughs* and place as much value on awareness and try as hard as we want, if the whole concept isn’t right, it doesn’t do us any good to have a good team on site,” she adds. Not even the Event Act amended by the City of Vienna provides a precise definition of awareness labour. The Act does not use definitions that have emerged from grassroots activist practice, meaning that clubs are legally required to comply with an empty definition. To address this issue, AwA* in Vienna collaborated with other collectives to develop the Awareness Standards, which outline the criteria that awareness teams should adhere to in order to promote the safety and accessibility needs of members of oppressed groups ([AwA* 2024](#)).

Future research on awareness labour must focus on the infrastructural requirements needed to help awareness initiatives achieve their goals, as well as the potential pitfalls. This will help outline best ethical practice, address obstacles, and ensure that the consistent labour required to address harmful circumstances is recognised. Due to its preliminary nature, this study could not compare the situation in Graz with that in other cities. Broadening the scope could help understand the interaction between all the parties involved in nightlife, the specificities of Graz, as well as the variety of efforts deployed between different cities. Further research will also need to consider more in detail the ways awareness teams act when witnessing oppression at the club. Conversely, policymakers, funders, organisers, artists, staff and club owners will need to reflect on how they contribute to, or hinder, the deployment of awareness labour on a broader scale. This is necessary to ensure the safety and access of members of oppressed groups in nightlife.

5. Conclusions

I argue that the efforts of awareness labour to address and prevent violence, discrimination and oppression at clubs, raves and sex-positive events constitute a form of transformative justice. As a social justice approach, transformative justice requires direct community involvement. After all, it was, “created by and for marginalized communities, including Indigenous, Black, queer, trans, low-income, undocumented, disabled,

and sex worker communities” (Rossner and Taylor 2024, p. 358), who “built networks of mutual support as a way to survive and transform state and interpersonal violence” (Keenan and Zinsstag 2022, p. 226). Transformative justice involves processes of community accountability in “response to an incidence of harm or violence. Here, community members work to support victims and to help perpetrators practice accountability and commit to behaviour change” (Rossner and Taylor 2024, p. 363). Awareness labour is a form of transformative justice: These communities formed networks of mutual support to navigate these potentially violent spaces, address the violence, show partisan support, hold perpetrators accountable, and raise awareness.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, though ethical review and approval were waived for this preliminary study due to the small sample size.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained twice from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: Data on which this paper is based is unavailable due to privacy and ethical restrictions.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflicts of interest.

Notes

- ¹ I follow Iris Young’s definition of oppression. She defines oppression as consisting of the structural and systematic institutional and social processes that prevent some people from participating fully in society. Oppression plays out in ‘unquestioned norms, habits, and symbols, in the assumptions underlying institutional rules and the collective consequences of following those rules’ (Young 2022, p. 38). While oppressed groups may have a correlating oppressing group, and structural oppression involves relations between groups, ‘these relations do not always fit the paradigm of conscious and intentional oppression of one group by another.’ Oppression is not the result of the influence of a few people, and it cannot simply be eliminated by abolishing rules or making new laws because it is systematically embedded in major economic, political and cultural institutions. To address it effectively, we need to consider the impact of the oppressive system on practices of education, administration, production and distribution of goods and media representations and so on in order to consider the many ways in which ‘individuals daily contribute to maintaining and reproducing oppression’ as part of ‘doing their jobs or living their lives’ (Young 2022, p. 38).
- ² Delimitating the scope of operation is central to measure the efficiency of the teams, however it also brings particular problems, for instance in the case of the Fagtory party, a queer sex-positive event in Graz that takes place at the Postgarage, a club situated behind a park commonly used by a rather straight cis crowd. The awareness concept cannot extend to the park itself, though this is where most of the queuing happens, which brings many opportunities for queerphobic violence.
- ³ Stephanie recalled a security who compared a guest to a whore due to her outfit for the Fagtory.
- ⁴ FINTA is an acronym popular in German-speaking languages for Female, Intersex, Non-binary, Trans, Agender. Earlier uses of the acronym included an ‘L’ for lesbians (FLINTA), but this is now being omitted since lesbians are included in the term ‘females’.
- ⁵ The awareness standards are more open in their formulation, suggesting that awareness labour is as important as other nightlife areas, such as artists, DJs and bar staff. If these areas are paid for, so should awareness labour.

References

- Adeyemi, Kemi. 2022. *Feels Right: Black Queer Women and the Politics of Partying in Chicago*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Adeyemi, Kemi, Kareem Khubchandani, and Ramón H. Rivera-Servera, eds. 2021. *Queer Nightlife*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- AwA*. 2024. ‘Awareness Standards’. AwA*. November 28. Available online: <https://awareness-standards.info/en/standards-infos/> (accessed on 2 March 2025).
- AwA*. 2025. ‘Über uns’. AwA*. Available online: <https://awa-stern.info/about-us/> (accessed on 2 March 2025).
- Bogner, Alexander, Beate Littig, and Wolfgang Menz. 2009. *Interviewing Experts*. Berlin/Heidelberg: Springer.
- Braidotti, Rosi, and Lisa Regan. 2017. Our Times Are Always out of Joint: Feminist Relational Ethics in and of the World Today: An Interview with Rosi Braidotti. *Women: A Cultural Review* 28: 171–92. [CrossRef]

- Bryant, Antony, and Charmaz Kathy. 2019. *The SAGE Handbook of Current Developments in Grounded Theory*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Butler, Judith, Zeynep Gambetti, and Leticia Sabsay. 2016. *Vulnerability in Resistance*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Clark, Ames. 2024. 'We Can Make Other Ways': The Temporalities of Care in Feminist and Abolitionist Activism. Doctoral dissertation, University of Kent, Lexington, KY, USA. [CrossRef]
- Deller, Ruth. 2021. Safer Spaces. In *Routledge Handbook of Radical Politics*, First issued in paperback. Edited by Ruth Kinna and Uri Gordon. London: Routledge. Boca Raton: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Döringer, Stefanie. 2021. "The Problem-Centred Expert Interview". Combining Qualitative Interviewing Approaches for Investigating Implicit Expert Knowledge. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 24: 265–78. [CrossRef]
- Edelman, Elijah Adiv. 2020. Beyond Resilience. *Social Text* 38: 109–30. [CrossRef]
- Educult for the Vienna Club Commission. 2023. *Umfrage Zur Sicherheit Im Wiener Nachtleben*. Hermannsgasse: Vienna Club Commission.
- Ellis, Carolyn. 2016. Compassionate Research: Interviewing and Storytelling from a Relational Ethics of Care. In *The Routledge International Handbook on Narrative and Life History*. Edited by Ivor Goodson, Ari Antikainen, Pat Sikes and Molly Andrews. London: Taylor & Francis.
- Federici, Silvia. 2014. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*, 2nd, Revised ed. New York: Autonomedia.
- Fielding, Lucie. 2021. *Trans Sex: Clinical Approaches to Trans Sexualities and Erotic Embodiments*. London: Routledge.
- Finkbeiner, Patric. 2016. Qualitative Research: Semi-Structured Expert Interview. In *Social Media for Knowledge Sharing in Automotive Repair*. Berlin/Heidelberg: Springer.
- Florêncio, João. 2023. Drugs, Techno and the Ecstasy of Queer Bodies. *The Sociological Review* 71: 861–80. [CrossRef]
- Fuernkranz, Magdalena. 2024. "Being a DJ Is My Form of Resistance": The Dance Floor as a Safer Space for Queer-Feminist Communities in Vienna. *Dancecult* 16: 31–50. [CrossRef]
- Galavielle, Juliette. 2025. *An Ethnography of Women's Working Spaces in the Night Time: Gender Violence and the Right to the Night*. Lisbon: Universidade de Lisboa.
- Haraway, Donna. 2016. *Staying with the Trouble. Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Hilderbrand, Lucas, Kemi Adeyemi, Marie Cartier, Luis Manuel Garcia-Mispirota, Amin Ghaziani, Jack Jen Gieseking, Theodore Greene, Kareem Khubchandani, Greggor Mattson, and Ramón H. Rivera-Servera. 2024. The Night Is Still Young: A Cross-Disciplinary Forum on Queer Nightlife Studies. *The Sociological Quarterly* 66: 887–909. [CrossRef]
- Jones, Stacy Holman, and Anne M. Harris. 2018. *Queering Autoethnography*. London: Routledge.
- Jupp, Eleanor. 2023. *Care, Crisis and Activism: The Politics of Everyday Life*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Kaack, Leon. 2025. Mutmaßliche Vergewaltigung im Berliner KitKat Club. *Bonedo*. Available online: <https://www.bonedo.de/artikel/mutmassliche-vergewaltigung-im-berliner-kitkat-club/> (accessed on 2 March 2025).
- Keenan, Marie, and Estelle Zinsstag. 2022. *Sexual Violence and Restorative Justice*, 1st ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Khubchandani, Kareem. 2020. Ishtyle: Accenting Gay Indian Nightlife. In *Triangulations: Lesbian/Gay/Queer Theater/Drama/Performance*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Kosnick, Kira. 2018. Racialized Youth Mobilities in European Nightlife Cultures: Negotiating Belonging, Distinction and Exclusion in Urban Leisure. *Transnational Social Review* 8: 286–98. [CrossRef]
- Krasny, Elke, Sophie Lingg, Lena Fritsch, Birgit Bosold, and Vera Hofmann, eds. 2021. *Radicalizing Care: Feminist and Queer Activism in Curating*. Publication Series of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. London: Sternberg Press, Wien: Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, vol. 26.
- Kratz, Leonie. 2025. KitKat Berlin: Club bestätigt erstmals mutmaßliche Vergewaltigung. *tipBerlin*. August 21. Available online: <https://www.tip-berlin.de/konzerte-party/clubs/kitkat-berlin-der-club-bestaetigt-erstmal-mutmassliche-vergewaltigung/> (accessed on 2 March 2025).
- Lahman, Maria K. E., Monica R. Geist, Katrina L. Rodriguez, Pamela Graglia, and Kathryn K. DeRoche. 2011. Culturally Responsive Relational Reflexive Ethics in Research: The Three Rs. *Quality & Quantity* 45: 1397–414.
- Lampredi, Giacomo. 2024. Activist Care: Acts of Care as Acts of Citizenship. *International Journal of Care and Caring* 8: 677–90. [CrossRef]
- Lapadat, Judith C. 2017. Ethics in Autoethnography and Collaborative Autoethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry* 23: 589–603. [CrossRef]
- Lorde, Audre, and Sonia Sanchez. 2017. *A Burst of Light: And Other Essays*, Ixia Press ed. Long Island: Ixia Press.
- Lynch, Kathleen. 2007. Love Labour as a Distinct and Non-Commodifiable Form of Care Labour. *The Sociological Review* 55: 550–70. [CrossRef]
- Malatino, Hil. 2020. Trans Care. In *Forerunners: Ideas First*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- May, Reuben A. Buford. 2018. Velvet Rope Racism, Racial Paranoia, and Cultural Scripts: Alleged Dress Code Discrimination in Urban Nightlife, 2000–2014. *City & Community* 17: 44–64. [CrossRef]
- May, Reuben A. Buford. 2022. Exploring the Use of Exclusionary Practices Against African American Participation in Urban Nightlife. *Sociological Forum* 37: 91–110. [CrossRef]
- May, Reuben A. Buford, and Pat Rubio Goldsmith. 2018. Dress Codes and Racial Discrimination in Urban Nightclubs. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 4: 555–66. [CrossRef]

- Meneau, Val. 2024. Queering the Relationship Between Research, Researcher and Research Participant: Procedural Ethics, Relational Ethics, and Inverted Hierarchies. *The Qualitative Report* 29: 2564–81. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Moore, Madison. 2018. *Fabulous: The Rise of the Beautiful Eccentric*. London: Yale University Press.
- Orne, Jason, and Dylan Stuckey. 2017. *Boystown: Sex and Community in Chicago*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Pires, Cristiana, and Sexism Free Night Network. 2022. *Sexism Free Night Standards—Gender-Responsive Criteria to Prevent, Detect and Respond to Sexism and Sexualized Violence in Nightlife Environments*. European Commission. Available online: <http://hdl.handle.net/10400.14/39643> (accessed on 2 March 2025).
- Preciado, Paul B. 2025. *Dysphoria Mundi: A Diary of Planetary Transition*. Minneapolis: Graywolf Press.
- Presse-Service. 2024. Wien novelliert sein Veranstaltungsgesetz. *Presseservice der Stadt Wien*. August 28. Available online: <https://presse.wien.gv.at/presse/2024/08/28/wien-novelliert-sein-veranstaltungsgesetz> (accessed on 2 March 2025).
- Puig de La Bellacasa, María. 2017. *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More than Human Worlds*. Posthumanities 41. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Raha, Nat. 2021. A Queer Marxist Transfeminism: Queer and Trans Social Reproduction. In *Transgender Marxism*. Edited by Jules Joanne Gleeson, Elle O'Rourke and Jordy Rosenberg. London: Pluto Press.
- Raha, Nat, and Mijke Van der Drift. 2024. *Trans Femme Futures: Abolitionist Ethics for Transfeminist Worlds*. London: Pluto Press.
- Rauth, Beate Hausbichler Antonia. 2023. Gewalt in der Clubszene: Wenn der Spaß aufhört. *DER STANDARD*. August 18. Available online: <https://www.derstandard.at/story/3000000183290/gewalt-in-der-clubszene-wenn-der-spaess-aufhoert> (accessed on 2 March 2025).
- Reed, Allison S. 2023. Repertoires of Care and Activist Sustainability in U.S. Social Justice Organizing. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 28: 209–28. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Robins, Simon. 2019. Conclusion: Toward Transformative Justice. In *From Transitional to Transformative Justice*, 1st ed. Edited by Paul Gready and Simon Robins. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Rossner, Meredith, and Helen Taylor. 2024. The Transformative Potential of Restorative Justice: What the Mainstream Can Learn from the Margins. *Annual Review of Criminology* 7: 357–81. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Salem, Alexander. 2021. LGBTQ+ Venues in London: An Investigation into the Socio-Economic, Technological, and Cultural Drivers of Nightlife Decline. *Sojourners Undergraduate Journal of Sociology* 12: 110–55.
- Schnürer, Max. 2024. Novelle des Wiener Veranstaltungsgesetzes. *Vienna Club Commission*. August 28. Available online: <https://www.viennaclubcommission.at/novelle-des-wiener-veranstaltungsgesetzes> (accessed on 2 March 2025).
- Spade, Dean. 2020. *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*. London: Verso.
- Talbot, Deborah. 2016. *Regulating the Night: Race, Culture and Exclusion in the Making of the Night-Time Economy*, 1st ed. London: Routledge. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- The Care Collective, ed. 2020. *The Care Manifesto: The Politics of Interdependence*. London: Verso Books.
- Tilley, Liz, and Kate Woodthorpe. 2011. Is It the End for Anonymity as We Know It? A Critical Examination of the Ethical Principle of Anonymity in the Context of 21st Century Demands on the Qualitative Researcher. *Qualitative Research* 11: 197–212. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Wark, McKenzie. 2023. Raving. In *Practices*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Young, Iris Marion. 2022. Justice and the Politics of Difference. In *Princeton Classics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Zazanis, Noah. 2021. Social Reproduction and Social Cognition: Theorizing (Trans) Gender Identity Development in Community Context. In *Transgender Marxism*. Edited by Jules Joanne Gleeson, Elle O'Rourke and Jordy Rosenberg. London: Pluto Press.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.