



Spatialized leisure-pleasures, global flows and masculine distinctions

Jane Kenway & Anna Hickey-Moody

To cite this article: Jane Kenway & Anna Hickey-Moody (2009) Spatialized leisure-pleasures, global flows and masculine distinctions, *Social & Cultural Geography*, 10:8, 837-852, DOI: [10.1080/14649360903311864](https://doi.org/10.1080/14649360903311864)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649360903311864>



Published online: 03 Nov 2009.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 823



View related articles [↗](#)



Citing articles: 1 View citing articles [↗](#)

Spatialized leisure-pleasures, global flows and masculine distinctions

Jane Kenway & Anna Hickey-Moody

Faculty of Education, Monash University, Clayton Campus, Victoria, Australia, 3800,
jane.kenway@education.monash.edu.au

Drawing from our 'place-based global ethnographies' of out-of-the-way places in Australia, this paper explores ways that spatialized leisure-pleasures inform the production of intergenerational masculinities in globalizing remote places. We examine three kinds of amusement and three accompanying shades of masculinity; the sacrosanct, subversive and scorned. Sacrosanct masculinities involve spatially embedded, culturally sanctified leisure-pleasures and intergenerational continuity. Subversive masculinities involve leisure-pleasures that are spatially embedded but are also both culturally endorsed and unendorsed. While they involve the reproduction of sacrosanct masculinities, they usually also entail certain forms of cultural defiance across generations. Scorned masculinities involve leisure pursuits that tend to be spatially and culturally disembedded and unendorsed. Although scorned, they may also invoke the sacrosanct. These diverse masculine hues animate varying combinations of affective gender intensity. We illustrate these hues and explicate the links between masculinities, the social order and territoriality through the concepts of plaisir and jouissance. We seek to add to conceptualizations of masculinity in two ways. The first is by bringing together two lines of inquiry; those on masculinity and spatiality and those on masculinity and leisure. The second is by exploring conceptually and empirically the gendered spatial and temporal politics of masculine leisure-pleasures.

Key words: spatialized masculinities, *plaisir* and *jouissance*, intergenerational relationships.

Introduction

Studies of masculinity and leisure often lack a spatial lens. They thus fail to consider the links between masculine leisure, place and space. On the other hand, studies of spatialized masculinities often do not consider young men's leisure. And neither has much to say

about the gendered politics of the complex pleasures involved. This paper brings both lines of inquiry together by focusing on young men's leisure in out-of-the-way places in Australia. It does so by considering the manner in which young males' leisure articulates with globalizing remote places. It also explores the connections between such leisure pursuits, the

types of pleasures they generate and the implications for 'local' intergenerational masculine relationships. We argue that one way in which young men craft masculine identities is by folding together leisure and pleasure in place, space and intergenerational time. In exploring and explaining these complex links, we take up the concepts of *plaisir* and *jouissance*. These assist us to explain the gendered spatial and temporal politics of masculine leisure-pleasures.

We identify three leisure-pleasures, their links to place and spatiality, and accompanying shades of masculinities: sacrosanct, subversive and scorned masculinities. First, we consider *sacrosanct masculinity* and the spatially embedded, culturally sanctified and historically reproduced leisure-pleasures associated with it. The example we offer is of young men and motor vehicles. *Subversive masculinity* is associated with spatially embedded but both culturally endorsed and unendorsed leisure-pleasures. Such pleasures can involve the reproduction of sacrosanct masculinities, but usually also entail certain forms of cultural defiance across the generations. Our example is of skate boarding. Thirdly, we contemplate the *scorned masculinities* associated with those leisure pursuits that are spatially and culturally disembedded and unendorsed. They may also invoke the sacrosanct. Our examples are of music and computers. Although some leisure-pleasures are more territorial than others, they may nonetheless involve elements of deterritorialization, as local leisure-pleasures and masculine identities become entwined with global flows of brands and imaginings. As we will show, sacrosanct, subversive and scorned masculinities animate various types of affective gender intensity that link in different ways to place-based intergenerational masculine distinctions.

The politics of pleasure

Plaisir and *jouissance* originated in psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan's work on pleasure and subjectivity,¹ in which he developed *jouissance*² as a notion of transgressive pleasure. The concept echoes Freud's earlier work on the death drive as an individual's desire for self-destruction.³ *Jouissance* crosses boundaries of social acceptability. *Plaisir*, on the other hand, is a pleasure that re-enforces boundaries of social acceptability and maintains the homeostatic principles (see below) of subjectivity. It is concerned with order and the pleasures experienced by things being in their 'right place'. Roland Barthes describes *plaisir* in relation to reading classic literature stating:

Mastery. Security: art of living ... the time and place of reading: house, countryside, near mealtime, the lamp, family where it should be, i.e., close but not too close (Proust in the lavatory that smelled of orris root), etc. Extraordinary ego-reinforcement (by fantasy), the unconscious muffled. This pleasure can be spoken. (Barthes 1975: 52)

As this quotation poetically suggests, *plaisir* involves a 'pleasure in comfort and security' (Edgar and Sedgwick 2002: 18).

The opposition between *plaisir* and *jouissance* is based on 'the pleasure principle', which Lacan adopts from Freud and which functions as a limit to enjoyment. 'The pleasure principle' is the threshold or 'homeostatic principle' that bounds the subject's enjoyment (Lacan 1979: 31). In acting as a threshold for enjoyment, the pleasure principle also regulates subjectivity, by maintaining the boundaries of the subject. The subject constantly attempts to transgress the prohibitions imposed on their enjoyment, to go beyond the

limits imposed by the pleasure principle. Lacan explains:

there is a limit to pleasure, and when it is transgressed, it becomes pain. *Jouissance* is the paradoxical satisfaction that the subject derives from his symptom, the suffering he derives from his satisfaction. (1992 [1960])

Beyond the homeostatic limits of the subject, pleasure becomes an ambivalent pain. *Jouissance* is either suffering that is created by a lack of a desired object [the Other], or, the practice of ‘enjoying your symptom’ (Žižek 1992). In his later work, Lacan⁴ develops his position further still, to state that *jouissance* is an expression of the pleasure of the symbolic phallus (Lacan 1982: 84–85). He also suggests that there is a specifically feminine *jouissance*, a ‘supplementary jouissance’ (Lacan 1982: 144), that is beyond the phallus, a *jouissance* of the Other. Women experience feminine *jouissance*.⁵ Barthes further develops the concepts of *plaisir* and *jouissance* in relation to writing, and pleasures associated with reading and writing and we find his reworking of these notions of pleasure useful. Indeed, the concepts of *jouissance* and *plaisir* as they have been developed by Lacan and Barthes⁶ are central to our discussion of the imbrications of pleasure, masculinity and place.

We take up the gendered and socially liminal notion of *jouissance*, and the accompanying, ordering, notion of *plaisir* as a theoretical lens. This perspective assists us to understand how young men’s spatialized leisure-pleasures tie them to a gendered social order or, alternatively, disrupt such an order. We argue that certain leisure practices evoke experiences of masculine *plaisir* amongst young men. These provide the enjoyment of conforming to the symbolic gender order of their locality and/or of their particular

affective communities. Further, experiences of geographically and culturally bounded leisure/pleasures link certain males across time and generations. They thus help to reproduce masculine codes and conventions in place. Masculine *jouissance* is associated with activities and spaces that transgress adult as well as community cultural codes. These pleasures evoke risk and ‘the irresistible aura of power and danger’ (McDonnell 1994: 42). Through *jouissance*, the male body may become ‘a site where the meanings, limits and excesses of contemporary masculinity are tested, defined and redefined’ (Iocco 2003: 1). Our studies suggest that a heterogeneous interiority runs between these two practices of leisure-pleasure. This continuum not only challenges binary constructions of pleasures, but also points to complex fusions of pleasures and masculinity in remote but globalizing places.

Methodology

This paper draws from our ‘place-based global ethnographies’ of out-of-the-way places in Australia. Our methodology links Appadurai’s global cultural scapes (1996) to Burawoy et al.’s (2000) notion of global ethnography. It is concerned with stasis and mobility in place, specifically with the manner in which the histories and habits of place intersect with global flows in and through place (for our elaboration of this methodology see Kenway, Kraack and Hickey-Moody 2006: 35–59). These ethnographies examined youthful masculinities and gender relations with regard to place-identity, social inequality and injustice, work, knowledge, and leisure in four marginalized, stigmatized, romanticized and exoticized places beyond the metropolis in Australia. These places are Eden (a coastal

fishing and logging town), Morwell (a coal mining and power generation town), Coober Pedy (a tourist and opal mining desert town) and Renmark (a country town servicing viticulture and fruit production). Each place has experienced the effects of economic, social and cultural globalization (see Kenway, Kraack and Hickey-Moody 2006).

Our three-month ethnographic fieldwork in each location involved in-depth semi-structured interviews with thirty-six young people of diverse class, ethnic and racial backgrounds. For six weeks, twenty-four males were each interviewed weekly and twelve females were interviewed fortnightly. Loosely structured focus and affinity group discussions were held with mothers, fathers, community members, teachers, and youth and welfare service providers. Informal conversations were held with a range of local people. All participants' names used here are fictional. Field research also involved participant observation at a variety of community and youth-specific locales (e.g. schools, youth clubs, beaches and main streets) and events (e.g. sporting matches, discos, local carnivals). Our ethnographic archive for each place included local government records, commissioned reports on local issues—particularly local economies, the coverage by local newspapers of local events, and statistical analyses of each locality by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Our archive also contained film, television, print and internet media artefacts which represented places beyond the metropolis in 'developed' Western countries. These were selected in relation to the foci noted above. These artefacts articulate aspects of what Appadurai (1996) calls global media and ideo scapes. Our 'local' materials were brought together in analysis with the most pertinent and representative discourses associated with these scapes.

Masculine distinctions in place, space and time

Many of the leisure-pleasures practiced by young men in the out-of-the-way places of this study are deeply embedded and embodied in local scapes—the sea, the bush, the farm, the town streets, country roads and the school oval. They include repetitious renditions of long-standing masculine cultural practices. However, in globalizing circumstances, prospects have arisen for the re-spatialization and re-embodiment of young men's leisure-pleasure and thus for alternative renditions of the masculine. We now consider some examples of the ways that the local and the global are manifest in young men's leisure-pleasures. Due to space limitations we have not been able to include all the examples that emerged in our ethnographies, neither has it been possible to include the full texture of the examples we have selected, or details of the lives of the people we have quoted. Our examples from Renmark and Morwell particularly but also Eden are intended only as illustrative of our more abstract arguments with regard to sacrosanct, subversive and scorned masculinities as articulations of *jouissance* and *plaisir* and their links to place, space and intergenerational time.

Sacrosanct masculinities and embedded and endorsed leisure-pleasures

Investigations of youthful masculinity and cars often focus on the high injury and mortality rates of young men (Hartig and Dunn 1998; Spriggs 2000) or increasing instances of drink driving (Roeper and Voas 1999). These constitute a significant, often tragic backdrop, to youthful car cultures beyond the metropolis. Car accidents and injuries are

especially an issue for young men. We heard dreadful stories about young people being badly hurt, killed or killing others in cars. Our focus here is on the meanings and symbols attached to car/machine cultures, their implications for youthful masculine identities and the different pleasures they can involve.

Cars, trucks, Utes, motorbikes—even push-bikes and go karts—occupy an important place in the lives of young men outside the cities. This is due in part to the distances they need to travel: the practicalities of getting from one place to another when there is no public transport. It is also due to the fact that various vehicles are integral to local worlds of work. Such machines are layered with different meanings and evoke different pleasures depending on the activity, space of use and time of day. For many young men outside the city, cars evoke everyday pleasures and offer positive opportunities for intergenerational contact and learning. Lots of boys spend time ‘mucking about’ in the sheds with their fathers or family friends as they work together to fix up cars, bikes or farm machinery. Michael Ammerlaan, age 16, from Renmark likes that:

We’ve got buggies, motorbikes and an old car that, we are fixing up ... When we go home we either drive the buggies or work on one.

A shared passion for machines is sometimes a key point of interaction between males within and across the generations. Discussing the extent of the influences that fathers’ cars have on their sons’ lives, Walker (2003: 51) notes that a number of young men in her research claimed that: ‘cars are in my blood’. She expands:

For boys and young men, car culture is a medium for emotional bonding between fathers and sons, as

well as for affective relations with other male relatives ... with brothers, uncles, brothers-in-law and cousins. (Walker 2003: 53).

The embedded, endorsed pleasures associated with a love of machines are often also extended to part-time work and career plans. Thus, tinkering alongside fathers or other adult males takes on other meaning. These activities are transformed into a type of training for the mechanical aspects of the work, and intergenerational training on how to be suitably male. Here we find an example of ‘the “reality” to which conformist psychoanalysis refers as a norm of psychic “sanity” ... not a neutral reality as such, but the historically specified form of *social* reality’ (Žižek 1992: 47).

Many young men in Renmark work on family-owned and -operated fruit blocks. In the course of this work most drive the farm machinery—Utes, motorbikes and tractors. Some families pay their children for working on the block in the form of an old car. Other boys buy one themselves, and with the help of older men, do up these ‘bombs’ and drive them around the block. By owning and operating machines within enclosed spaces and across familiar places, boys connect to other boys and older men, as well as to the broader intergenerational masculine order.

The kinds of pleasure that young men glean from this machining speak to Barthes’ (1975) reworking of *plaisir*. A qualitatively and politically specific kind of pleasure, *plaisir* offers an experience of satisfaction that provides an ‘extraordinary ego-reinforcement’ (Barthes 1975: 52). As a masculine love of the symbolic phallus, *plaisir* is a way of strengthening one’s gendered alignment to the social order and learning how to enjoy being a socially organized body. It is productive, sustainable, organized pleasure. In this case,

gendered social codes are associated with a form of sacrosanct masculinity subscribed to across local generations of males.

With regard to machines more broadly, the more diverse pleasures involved have varying intensities. Boys who work on cars in the shed with their dad enjoy the relaxed pleasures of participating in an established gender and generational order. In contrast, boys drag-racing down the main street of their home-town experience a kind of *jouissance*. The velocity, risk and defiance of adult codes that they draw into such manic machining produces intense danger. Nonetheless, despite such intense defiance of certain adult codes, these pleasures still support and reproduce existent models of masculinity. In other words, while the pleasures of gender and those of generation may not always be in tune, they may nonetheless ultimately confirm sacrosanct masculinities. *Plaisir* and *jouissance* shade into one another, particularly once boys have their driver's license and access to wilder pleasures.

Friday night is 'laps' night in the town of Renmark. Young people, particularly young men, come from all over the Riverland to participate. Their masculinities uniting and dividing them through the *plaisir* of knowing who they belong with. The Greeks gather at what is proudly called Wog Wharf; their pride signifying the high status of the Greek boys. The socially stigmatized Ferals (usually poor Anglo-Saxon boys) gather defiantly at what is called Feral Wharf. They come in cars and drive repeatedly and noisily around town. The cars are usually congested with passengers and the music is up 'full-blast'. Here the kinaesthetic affects of *plaisir* are inflamed as boys' practices of embedding themselves, mechanically, in local landscapes and experimenting with speed are coupled with sonic force and close bodily contact—the noise of cars, the

thump of accompanying music, the rush of the wind in their face. Through sound and speed they inscribe their identities in local space. Sometimes they hold competitions or speed around the back roads outside town, trying to test their skill against the tight bends and dirt roads. Their aim is to show control of the vehicle, to see how far they can push it without rolling the car or having an accident. As Simone Mucovich (age 16) observes about her male friends,

Being cool is overwhelmingly associated with cars here. Boys have to be tough, have a flash car, and have money to be cool. They do the laps around town. Some girls do it as well but not as much as the boys ... The boys get into drag racing and doing burn-outs. It's a P plate⁷ tradition. As soon as you get your Ps you have to get a car and smoke it out. Boys do it to be tough, to be manly.

Driving and doing 'laps' of the town are intricately gendered performances for males and females and it is important to get it right symbolically. Young women are essential machine accessories.⁸ Much cache is attached to a car full of girls. This may speak as much of men's symbolic desire as it does of literal pleasure. Lacan suggests that men's own 'desire for the phallus may throw up its signifier in the form of persistent divergence towards "another woman" who can signify the phallus under various guises, whether as a virgin or a prostitute' (Lacan 1982: 84). Joanna offers a localized reading of this symbolic desire, saying: 'The guys just love to drive around with all girls in their car. They look special. Yeah, like top notch; "Oh look, I've got a load of five girls in my car"'. The boys Joanna refers to feel their masculinity is increased by the presence of young women. But these ordered masculine pleasures do not compare with the *jouissance* of danger.

My boyfriend was recently in a car crash ... happened at 12.35 in the morning ... his tyre blew out and ... then he lost control when they went over that hump in the road and he went up the gutter and all the windows shattered, he hit a 60 km sign. Yeah, and then that made them slide and they slid into the stovvie pole.⁹ With the Ute, like the cab came away from the back of it and the back of the Ute was wrapped around the stovvie pole and the cab, like in front of the Ute, went flying, they got airborne and hit side-on to one tree and went smack bang into another tree and the tree got ripped out by its roots ... My boyfriend has got a broken rib and three stitches in the back of his head and he walked out of it, he was fine; and the driver, he just had a huge swollen collarbone and shoulder.

Joanna Norbert, the narrator, later points out that Rod Halliday and Sam Hamilton now 'have got the biggest skid [in town] ... it was something like twenty metres long when they hit the brakes'. Such wild leisure-pleasures arising from inscribing oneself in place clearly have different rewards from the feeling of symbolically increasing one's masculinity within the bounds of one's own car. This crash story is now a local legend. The two survivors are accorded local hero status in terms of sacrosanct masculinity. Yet these sacrosanct masculinities are not endorsed in the same way that working on a car in the shed can be. Unbounded space, high velocity and corporeal risk can amplify the *plaisir* of subscribing to sacrosanct masculinities by producing a form of defiant *jouissance* in intergenerational terms.

Subversive masculinities and embedded and (un)endorsed leisure-pleasures

Individual and unorganized, as opposed to team and organized, sports are becoming

increasingly attractive to young males around the world (Evers 2004; Wheaton 2000). These sports include skateboarding. Skateboarding is a younger boys' ethnically mixed subculture of some size in Renmark and Morwell. The small numbers of local young aboriginal men tend not to be part of this subculture.¹⁰ The rise in popularity of sports such as skateboarding has provoked speculation about their appeal in comparison with those leisure-pleasures that very obviously invoke sacrosanct masculinities. Drawing from their study of urban skateboarders, Karsten and Pel (2001: 327) argue that it 'can be seen as a way of experimenting with new forms of masculinity'. Beal (1996) claims skateboarding is implicitly a critique of organized sport such as football and cricket. These are associated with adult control, conformity and competition and are very popular in country places in Australia. Skateboarding, she argues, explicitly values the participants' control and self-expression. She suggests that skateboarding counters hegemonic ways of being male. This implies that skateboarding involves a form of cultural defiance with regard to sacrosanct masculinities and their reproduction across the generations. We suggest a more subtle interpretation. While the masculinities involved are to some extent *subversive* of the more normalized sacrosanct, they are nonetheless in sympathy with certain codes of masculine embodiment. The other transgressions involved here are generational and spatial.

Boys skateboard in spaces away from adult surveillance and regulation, in specially provided skateboard parks, but also anywhere with the right surfaces and challenges—footpaths, stairs, malls, driveways, walls and empty swimming pools. These spaces provide a forum to act independently of adults and to 'do' maleness somewhat differently.

Skateboarders ‘colonize public spaces’, according to Karsten and Pel (2001: 327), who say: ‘Groups of skateboarders are continuously putting public spaces in and out of use. In a sense, skateboarders can be considered the nomads of the city’. Skateboarders delight in the impertinent and transgressive use of public space and in the defiance of associated polite adult codes. Zac Field, age 16, describes the pleasures of skateboarding:

about fifteen of us, we’d just skate all day every day, twenty four/seven if we could. After school, weekends, we’re all skating ... just let it loose and just hang in, chill, ... It’s heaps fun, just being together ... and doing things you want to do. Security tells you off for going through malls and stuff—but like not *really* ... You don’t really have anyone telling you off. You do, but only old people, security and people like that, but not much. It’s not your parents ... who only tell you off if you hurt yourself. It’s just like freer and you skate, skate, skate.

Skateboarders do get in the way of the public in Renmark and Morwell and in some instances risk knocking people down in the street, but their behavior is largely unregulated. It is clearly evident in the boys’ demeanors and remarks that this relative freedom from adult control and the transgressive use of public spaces are central components of a form of *jouissance*. So too is the deployment of dexterity and the challenges of the embodied risk of self-destruction. Young men who skate for pleasure relish the thrills and skills of speeding down streets and of weaving precariously through the obstacles of people and posts, of accomplishing complex jumping maneuvers and leaping down hazardous stairwells. These young men’s athletic performances connect to unbounded spaces in creative ways. There is a ‘bodies on the line’

mentality enjoyed and fostered within skateboard culture. Body reflexivity is overshadowed by a disregard for safety and by the importance of taking embodied risks. Status and pleasure are accrued through risk and dexterity. Zac has a blatant disregard for bodily concerns. He talks nonchalantly about skateboarding injuries and has fire in his eyes when he talks about ‘doing ten stairs’.

I’m known to be like heaps reckless on a skateboard. I don’t know how many bones I’ve broken: my arm, twice, broken a disc and a shoulder, dislocating my wrist, done my leg. I was nearly paraplegic, done my left sciatic nerve ... just pulled it a bit but it didn’t snap, so I was in a wheelchair for about a month, just couldn’t walk. That was lucky ... Yeah, we are heaps wicked skaters ... When I first broke my arm it was like ‘Oh no, I broke my arm!’, but now when you break your arm it’s like ‘I just broke my arm’. Yeah, you don’t really worry ... my mum and dad are heaps worried about me because when I break stuff, they go ‘Hey you broke your leg again’ and I really don’t care and like they’re going ‘You should do, it’s your life. If you hurt yourself really bad you’re going to hurt for the rest of your life’. I really don’t care. Yeah, but they just worry too much ... If you saw the way we skate! We do all ten stairs—I can do ten, Fred can’t do ten, he can only do eight—but I’ll leap ten stairs and like it’s heaps high.

Zac’s statement illustrates subversion of normalized and disciplined masculine team sports but without the loss of the *plaisir* of subscribing to the norms of sacrosanct masculine embodiment.

For the young men in our localities, skateboarding means living in the moment, making their own rules and risking their bodies, in order to make the most breathtaking performances possible. The heightened experiences of risk that come with increased

technical prowess are, as Zac explains, a pleasure that lies in feeling 'like you really don't care'; it knows no bounds. Indeed, it might be said that the boys relish the risk of self-destruction. In Lacan's terms, there is even a paradoxical satisfaction (1992 [1960]) derived from injury itself, not just the risks of injury. They savor their injuries for what they signify and this can be likened to a form of 'death drive'; a most transgressive pleasure.

Even so, to the extent that skateboarding depends upon 'desirable' male bodies—fit, muscular and controlled, and on competitive physical performance and reputation—skateboarders still partake of the sacrosanct masculinities associated with the affective fusion of body, skill and speed and the control of space. Skateboarding invokes modalities of masculinity frequently valued beyond the metropolis. It occurs outdoors, involves risk, is highly physical and requires perseverance and endurance. The point, then, is that skating involves rather ambivalent forms of masculinity; it is unendorsed by adults and according to dominant sporting norms but it is also to some extent endorsed by certain codes of sacrosanct masculinity. It is also further endorsed as the world of global branding comes to places and bodies beyond the metropolis and helps to produce a form of globalized *plaisir*.

Streetscapes offer many a blank canvas on which to paint the global signs of corporate brands and images. The youth-scapes of Renmark, for example, are globally marked. Boys' skateboards, bikes and scooters are branded with a plethora of popular labels such as BMX, Fox, Diamond Back, ABC, Zero, Toy Machine, Huffer and Circa. Here the street reconstructs a 'global marketplace' via the young men's performances of sub-cultural leisure-pleasure. Shoes, caps, sunglasses,

T-shirts, trousers, and schoolbags have all become surfaces for branding. Part of these trade-marked garments' identity utility is to brand the wearer, to announce their sub-cultural membership and with this, their brand of masculinity—locally dissident, globally ascendant. The brand can be deployed as a sign of local defiance. It can also be used to stake a claim to alternative masculinities that transcend the local in communities where pleasure can be taken in the comfort and security of a branded belonging. Skateboarders come to belong to disembedded pleasure communities that in this case invoke the mixed pleasures of defiance and compliance with regard to gender, generation and location.

Scorned masculinities and disembedded and unendorsed leisure-pleasures

Cultural and sub-cultural studies of youthful masculinities, such as the work of Connor (2003) and Homan (2003), frequently consider the role of music and computers in identity building. Rarely do they consider what engaging in such leisure pursuits means for males in isolated places where such pursuits may be marginalized or even stigmatized. Enjoying such leisure-pleasures can mean that young males feel locally lonesome. Yet they can offer these young men a means of escape by dis-embedding them from their loneliness. Global 'communities of affect' (Hebdige 1988: 90) that come together through music, film, popular culture, new media, fashion and computer games, offer isolated young men the possibility of imagining themselves in relation to different places and communities that are filled with the possibilities which their embedded lives cannot provide.

In the form of international bands, albums and songs, global consumer culture is ever present in the sound-scapes of most young men who live in remote locations. While most take pleasure in these, only a few in our localities make actually *playing* music a central feature of their lives. For the occasional boys who do, pursuing their enthusiasm for making music as a member of a local band is difficult. Of the small numbers of local people generally, there are very few who play. Take the example of Gem Johnston, 14, from Renmark. Gem has one passion: heavy metal. He belongs to a global community of 'metal heads' that he is plugged into via sonic aesthetics such as screamed, overbearing vocals, power chords and distorted bass. Like many global metal fans, Gem craves the angry sounds of heavy metal blasted full volume from the best speakers he can find. Gem also plays such music on his guitar and has a makeshift band made up of a few friends, though they can rarely get together to jam. He is full of frustration because the drummer in his band has recently gone overseas. The band now has no rhythm keeper and no-one else is available locally to take his place. So, Gem fills his spare time in the local music shop, 'Flipside', poring over CDs, listening to and discussing new bands and songs with whoever is around, mainly the shop owner. Gem seeks the *jouissance* of creating and playing his own music, but is confined to the more tame pleasure of consuming that of others.

There are very few local boys of Gem's age who are as much 'into music' as he is. Dominant constructions of masculinity within his school reject those who actually play music, often describing them as 'poofy' (Seamus Doyle, 16). Gem observes bitterly:

It's pretty hard to, find the people to be a member [of the band]. Nobody is really interested in music

round here. They're more interested in sport, so there's not really a lot of people to choose from ... Some of them tease you because you like music. Some of them call you faggot.

Sporting masculinity provides the pleasure principle that regulates the boundaries of the male subject within this town. *Playing* music transgresses these. This means that Gem is forced to look elsewhere for like-minded others and he has thus made contact with adult musicians further afield. Gem explains that the owner of 'Flipside' has 'done lots for the music scene':

He's had these jam sessions at the footy club where everybody gets together. Usually about a hundred people go there from all over the Riverland, they all bring their instruments.

These jam sessions came to an end when the football club refused the use of its premises due to 'costs'. The club thus effectively closed down live local music. Gem says 'I feel rotten, like they do nothing here for anybody like me and Josh [his friend]. They only care about sport'. His and others' attempts to transgress the limits imposed on their enjoyment have been stalled.

Gem offers an insight into the many complexities of globalization and youthful leisure, for while he is able to consume the deterritorialized sound-scapes of the globalized music industry and to imagine himself somewhere else, fulfilling his yearning to actually play music with others is problematic in this small community. There is no music subculture in the town itself, as the population is too small and, because he is not old enough to drive, Gem cannot easily access his affinity groups in nearby towns. Age and distance are insurmountable barriers. He states 'I met somebody who was from Waikerie' (a small

town over an hours drive away from Renmark). He said, like, 'Come and jam if you want to', and I said 'You're too far away man. I'll *never* get there'. Globalization has not worked to reconfigure time and space here, there is no implosion of space into time for Gem. Quite the opposite; his lack of mobility means that Waikerie 'may as well be on the other side of the world'. Gem, like many young people beyond the metropolis, endures 'enforced localization' (Bauman 1998: 70); they are 'space bound'. Non-city localities offer little room for the development of alternative male subcultures. Those who go beyond the limits imposed by the pleasure principle by pursuing different modes of expression and different interests can experience difficulty fitting into such small communities, to the point of marginalization.

Part of the difficulty for Gem, and other young men like him, is the scorn their personhood attracts when compared with sacrosanct and subversive place-based masculinities associated with the spatialization of the pleasure principle. In out-of-the-way places the 'great outdoors' is valorized as a masculine space. Life indoors is feminized, with the implication that males who pursue indoor leisure pursuits are less 'manly'. Such views are often held by adults, many of whom are strongly attached to traditional views of the links between gender, space and place. However, increasingly many young males are wishing to engage in indoor leisure especially watching TV and DVDs and playing on computers. They, and the globalized industries involved, thus challenge this indoor-outdoor gender divide. Such challenges to the established gender order can be considered through Lacan's symbolic order, which is alternatively regulated and/or disrupted through pleasure. He explains disruption as part of:

the structure of perversion ... [which is] an inverted effect of the phantasy. It is the subject who determines himself as object, in his encounter with the division of subjectivity ... the subject assuming this role of the object is precisely what sustains the reality of the situation of what is called the sado-masochistic drive, and which is only a single point, in the masochistic situations itself. (Lacan 1979: 185)

Boys who love music or computers do not place their stamp on the surrounding landscape. They are not longing for movement or to feel closer to their surrounds. In becoming a musician, and maybe a rock star, or being an online identity, these boys construct themselves as the object of their own desire. Rather than being at 'one' with nature or being closer to other men in socially sanctioned systems of homo-sociality, these boys embody their pleasure. This is extremely anxiety provoking for the older men in their lives, who are not looked to for guidance or approval, as the older generation are not seen to possess the authoritative knowledge of computer literacy or musicianship that these young men crave. Indeed, computer use as a leisure activity, especially computer games and cyberspace, has become a key point of conflict between parents and sons. Many parents express concern and even anger over the amount of time that their sons spend in front of a computer.

The advent of the computer has had a large influence over the actual interests of young people. So many of them, they'll shut themselves inside their computer room as soon as they get home from school. (Mothers' Focus Group, Renmark)

The sense here is that computers mean that young people are beyond parental supervision and are enticed into a little-known and rather

hazardous world. In addition, as this father's comments indicate, computer use contests two aspects of traditional local masculinity—outdoor activity and mateship.

That's one of the problems, them being inside all the time. And yeah, the other factor is, I guess, television and computer games and all the information technology business that goes on means the kids are more isolated from their mates. They don't need their mates like they used to. (Fathers' Focus Group, Renmark)

However, far from isolating them, computers may provide young males with the *plaisir* of virtual mate-ship. McNamee (1998) suggests computers allow certain stigmatized male youth subcultures to move into the safety of the home. Cyberspace offers many young men from our study a place to conduct non-sacrosanct masculinity safely, away from the scorn of their peers and parents. Beau Knox, age 14 of Eden, does not have many friends and gets bullied at school. He dislikes local beach/surf culture. He says he has two main friends, but that even one of these 'friends' subjects him to teasing. Beau feels he has to hide what he is thinking and doing for fear of being called names. But he does not feel isolated. He has a computer at home and uses it as his main source of social contact and has what he calls 'pen pals' living in the USA, India and even Antarctica. 'Cyberspace offers a new space ... without the fears attached to public space and indeed without undue interference from adults: it is adult-free, unknown and unsupervised', contends Walkerdine (1998: 6). Computers offer the possibility of pleasure away from adult control and surveillance. They offer *plaisir* in the comfort and security of knowing their place in cyberspace.

But also computers and cyberspace provide boys with an opportunity to perform different

facets of masculinity. Some boys who rate poorly in local youthful masculine hierarchies use violent computer games and the internet to perform online the sorts of violent hyper-masculinities that oppress them elsewhere. As Connell (2000: 151) and others argue, video and computer games circulate highly stereotyped images of violent masculinity and require players to enact such forms. Cyberspace also allows people to reconfigure their gendered identities and offers the opportunity for an expression of *jouissance*. This online moonlighting can be found in those who indulge in 'flaming' (Dery 1994)—the practice of generating hyper-aggressive, argumentative text in cyberspace. 'Flaming' has emerged as a kind of live cyber rage which is akin to the well-known phenomenon of road rage (Dery 1994). Young males who are not usually argumentative or aggressive and who might even seem quite shy offline, get great delight in safely displaying angry alter egos online, in order to 'tear down' the opinions of others in chat rooms, on discussion lists, or on bulletin boards. Flaming is pernicious, aggressive and often malicious. Young people who indulge in the *jouissance* of flaming derive pleasure from their power to hurt others and to act outside of established mores. The embedded nature of their offline identity requires a certain amount of congeniality if they are to get along—at school, home and socially. However, the freedom afforded by cyberspace, which allows users to radically reconfigure social behaviors and to refute behavioral norms, is literally taken up by some young men as a license to go wild. Boys who are into flaming are often the most socially radical pleasure seekers, for it is often an embodied, socialized shyness that leads to the appeal of such life online. The *jouissance* of flaming is that of being out of order—socially, morally and behaviorally. These young men are also out of place,

venting their disconnection from the 'real world' through their virtual identities. The spatially and culturally disembedded and unendorsed leisure pursuits associated with scorned masculinities may, thus, ironically, invoke competitive, aggressive and violent aspects of the sacrosanct.

Conclusion

By taking up the notions of *plaisir* and *jouissance*, we have sought to enhance inquiries into youthful masculinity, pleasure, place, space and time. Further, we have provided a spatial perspective on pleasure through an explication of the gender politics of young men's leisure-pleasures in globalizing out-of-the way places in Australia. The leisure-pleasures discussed in this paper include those that neatly re-inscribe existing local masculine distinctions and those that exist in much more ambiguous relationships to them. We have shown that these gendered leisure activities blend *plaisir* and *jouissance* in different combinations, affirming dominant local means of performing masculinity and also etching out new geographies of gender. Some pleasure combinations affirm relationships between the generations. These involve adult men, and offer young males the pleasures of intergenerational contact, conformity and security. Other pleasure combinations involve new inter-generational pleasure and power negotiations and dynamics. Yet others directly overturn adult codes, and foster a boundless self-love that can become masochistic. Some pleasures provide opportunities for young males to form and perform their gendered identities beyond the limits that local adult norms impose. These provoke adult anxieties and, for the young men, this is part of their *jouissance*.

We have also argued that these geographically out-of-the-way places are immersed in the global flow of commodities and images. Many pleasures are now associated with deterritorialized forms of leisure—with images and sounds, bits and bytes, brands and logos. These are not constrained by space and time. Global marketplaces and media scapes are part of localized leisure-pleasure scapes and imaginings. However, they may be re-articulated in the local male vernacular or may provide opportunities for local boys to perform youthful masculinities that are literally and figuratively *out of place*. Deterritorializing pleasures may thus alter the relationships between people and places beyond the metropolis in globalizing times. Through our examples in different locations of sacrosanct, subversive and scorned masculinities and their associated leisure-pleasures, we have pointed to intersecting and intergenerational textures and tensions, showing that the people one pleases and places in which one pleases them constitute a core part of pleasure itself.

Acknowledgements

We thank the Australian Research Council for funding this three-year study, Anna Kraack for her contributions to this paper and Palgrave for permission to reprint selections from Kenway, Kraack and Hickey-Moody (2006). We also thank the two anonymous reviewers for their astute and helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.

Notes

- 1 The way that pleasure is a critical aspect of subjectivation, or the ways our pleasures make us 'who we are', has been the focus of many scholars since Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* in the 1920s (1961 [1920]). Here Freud posits 'Eros' (desire,

- love, creativity) and a death drive, known subsequently as 'Thanatos'. This scholarship forms an important backdrop to our paper, yet direct discussion of it is outside its scope.
- 2 In different forms, and not in chronological order, this concept has been taken up by feminist scholars Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray, Helene Cixous (who have been especially interested in feminine *jouissance*), Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek, French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, and French semiotician Roland Barthes. Each adapts the concept differently. While our concern is largely with Barthes' interpretation, we gesture towards the many theories of *jouissance* that constitute this scholarly context.
 - 3 Although *jouissance* is different from Freud's death drive, there are parallels between the concepts, such as the enjoyment of self-destruction, which was referred to by both men as a perversion.
 - 4 In *The Other Side of Psychoanalysis* (1969–70) Lacan introduced the concept of 'surplus-jouissance' ('plus-de-jour'). Inspired by Marx's concept of 'surplus-value' (Žižek 1992: 171), Lacan employs this idea to describe an object with surplus value that embodies the excess of *jouissance*.
 - 5 Lacan states: 'There is a *jouissance* proper to her and of which she herself may know nothing, except that she experiences it—that much she does know. She knows of course when it happens. It does not happen to all of them [women]' (Lacan 1982: 145, authors' parentheses).
 - 6 The following passages are taken from Barthes' classic 1975 texts (published in French in 1973), *The Pleasure of the Text*. Here, Barthes outlines characteristic features of these two pleasures: 'Jouissance is almost everything that plaisir is not: it is destructive, unsustainable, wild, and risky'. Barthes describes *jouissance* as follows: 'Texts of pleasure. Pleasure in pieces; language in pieces; culture in pieces. Such texts are perverse in that they are outside any imaginable finality—even that of pleasure (bliss does not constrain to pleasure; it can even apparently inflict boredom). No alibi stands up, nothing is reconstituted, nothing recuperated. The text of bliss is absolutely intransitive. However, perversion does not suffice to decline bliss; it is the extreme of perversion which defines it: an extreme continually shifted, an empty, mobile, unpredictable extreme. This extreme guarantees bliss: an average perversion quickly loads itself up with a play of subordinate finalities: prestige, ostentation, rivalry, lecturing, self-serving, etc.' (Barthes 1975: 52). Barthes' thinking led us to consider the connections between both forms of pleasure (*plaisir* and *jouissance*) as they relate to leisure and the masculine identities and distinctions that we identified through our ethnographic inquiries. There is an interesting relationship here between the work of Barthes and Lacan, as Barthes' *jouissance* can be read as a pleasurable mode of becoming feminine and *plaisir* as a pleasurable mode of becoming masculine. This echoes Lacan's suggestion that there is a *feminine jouissance* and his assertion that outside *feminine jouissance*, pleasure is concerned with masculine symbols of pleasure, such as the phallus.
 - 7 P plates are signs that probationary drivers are required to show for the duration of their probationary period.
 - 8 The girls' pleasures cannot be analysed here and deserve a paper in their own right informed by the feminist perspectives outlined above and challenging Lacan's (1982: 144) notion of feminine *jouissance*.
 - 9 A stovvie pole is a metal and concrete pole used to hold up power lines along the sides of Australian roads.
 - 10 In part, this is due to a broader cultural climate of racism in our research sites.

References

- Appadurai, A. (1996) *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Barthes, R. (1975) *The Pleasure of the Text*. trans. Miller, R. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Bauman, Z. (1998) *Globalization: The Human Consequences*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Beal, B. (1996) Alternative masculinity and its effects on gender relations in the subculture of skateboarding, *Journal of Sport Behavior* 19: 204–220.
- Burawoy, M., Blum, J.A., George, S., Gille, Z., Gowan, T., Haney, L., Klawiter, M., Lopez, S.T., Riain, S. and Thayer, M. (eds) (2000) *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections, & Imaginations in a Postmodern World*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Connell, R.W. (2000) *The Men and the Boys*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- Connor, B. (2003) Good Buddha & Tzu: middle-class wiggers from the underside, *Youth Studies Australia* 22(2): 48–54.
- Dery, M. (ed.) (1994) *FlameWars: The Discourse by Cyberculture*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

- Edgar, A. and Sedgwick, P. (2002) *Cultural Theory: The Key Thinkers*. London: Routledge.
- Evers, C. (2004) Men who surf, *Cultural Studies Review* 10(1): 27–41.
- Freud, S. (1961 [1920]) *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. ed. and trans. Strachey, J. New York: Norton.
- Hartig, L. and Dunn, K. (1998) Roadside memorials: interpreting new deathscapes in Newcastle, New South Wales, *Australian Geographical Studies* 36: 5–20.
- Hebdige, D. (1988) *Hiding in the Light: On Images and Things*. London: Routledge-Comedia.
- Homan, S. (2003) Geographies of noise: youth, live music and urban leisure, *Youth Studies Australia* 22(2): 12–18.
- Iocco, M. (2003) Whom do you fight? The limits and excesses of masculinity in *Fight Club*, *M/C: A Journal of Media and Culture* 6(1), <<http://www.media-culture.org.au/0302/08-whodoyou.html>> (accessed 8 July 2004).
- Karsten, L. and Pel, E. (2001) Skateboarders exploring urban public space: ollies, obstacles and conflicts, *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 15: 327–340.
- Kenway, J., Kraack, A. and Hickey-Moody, A.C. (2006) *Masculinity Beyond the Metropolis*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Lacan, J. (1969–70) *The Other Side of Psychoanalysis*, <<http://www.lacan.com/seminars1b.htm>> (accessed 29 April 2008).
- Lacan, J. (1979) *Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*. trans. Sheridan, A. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Lacan, J. (1982) *Feminine Sexuality*. trans. Rose, J. London: Macmillan Press.
- Lacan, J. (1992 [1960]) *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, ed. Miller, J.A. New York: Norton, <<http://www.lacan.com/seminars1b.htm>> (accessed 29 April 2008).
- McDonnell, K. (1994) *Kid Culture: Children and Adults and Popular Culture*. Toronto: Second Storey Press.
- McNamee, S. (1998) The home: youth, gender and video games, in Skelton, T. and Valentine, G. (eds) *Cool Places: Geographies of Youth Cultures*. London: Routledge, pp. 195–206.
- Roeper, P.J. and Voas, R.B. (1999) Underage drivers are separating drinking from driving, *American Journal of Public Health* 89: 755–757.
- Spriggs, K. (2000) Road trip to manhood: understanding young rural men, risk driving and the community, Honours dissertation, University of South Australia.
- Walker, L. (2003) Car culture, technological dominance and young men of the working class, in Donaldson, M.

and Tomsen, S. (eds) *Male Trouble: Looking at Australian Masculinities*. North Melbourne: Pluto Press, pp. 40–68.

Walkerdine, V. (1998) Children in cyberspace: a new frontier, in Lesnik Oberstein, K. (ed.) *Children in Culture*. London: Macmillan, pp. 231–247.

Wheaton, B. (2000) ‘Just do it’: consumption, commitment, and identity in the windsurfing subculture, *Sociology of Sport* 17: 254–275.

Žižek, S. (1992) *Enjoy your symptom! Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and Out*. London: Routledge.

Abstract translations

Loisirs-plaisirs spatialisés, flots globaux et distinctions masculines

En utilisant nos ‘ethnographies des approches territoriales et globales’ des endroits isolés en Australie, cet article explore des façons que les loisirs-plaisirs spatialisés influencent la production des masculinités intergénérationnelles dans les endroits isolés aussi que globalisés. Nous examinons trois sortes des amusements et trois dégradés accompagnés de la masculinité; sacro-sainte, subversive et méprisée. Des masculinités sacro-saintes impliquent des loisirs-plaisirs implantés spatialement et sanctifiés culturellement et la continuité intergénérationnelle. Des masculinités subversives impliquent les loisirs-plaisirs qui sont implantés spatialement mais qui sont approuvés aussi que pas approuvés culturellement. Pendant qu’elles supposent la reproduction des masculinités sacro-saintes, normalement elles aussi nécessitent certaines formes de défiance culturelle au travers des générations. Des masculinités méprisées impliquent des poursuites de loisirs qui ont tendance d’être non implantés et non approuvés spatialement et culturellement. Bien qu’elles soient méprisées, elles aussi invoquent le sacro-saint. Ces teintes masculines diverses animent des combinaisons variées d’intensité du genre affectif. Nous illustrons ces teintes et élaborons les liens entre la masculinité affective, l’ordre social et la territorialité au travers de ces concepts du plaisir et de la jouissance. En faisant cela, nous cherchons à contribuer des littératures au sujet de la masculinité et la spatialité et aussi au sujet de la masculinité et le loisir.

Mots-clefs: Loisirs-plaisirs spatialisés, flots globaux et distinctions masculines.

Placeres-ociosos espaciales, flujos globales y distinciones masculinos

Haciendo uso de nuestros 'etnografías globales lugar-basado' de lugares poco conocidos de Australia, este papel se explora las formas en que los placeres-ociosos espaciales se informan la producción de masculinidades intergeneracionales en lugares aislados que están globalizando. Examinamos tres formas de diversión y sus tres matices de masculinidad; el sacrosanto, subversivo y desdeñado. Las masculinidades sacrosantos se implican placeres-ociosos y continuidad intergeneracional que están incrustados espacialmente y santificado culturalmente. Las masculinidades subversivos se implican placeres-ociosos que están incrustados espacialmente pero también están

ambos aprobado y no aprobado culturalmente. Mientras se implican la reproducción de masculinidades sacrosantos, normalmente se suponen ciertas formas de desafío cultural a través generaciones también. Las masculinidades desdeñados se implican una búsqueda ociosa que se tiende ser de-incrustado y no-aprobado ambos espacialmente y culturalmente. Aunque desdeñados, también se puede invocar el sacrosanto. Estos matices diversos de la masculinidad se animan combinaciones variados de intensidad efectiva de género. Ilustramos estos matices y extendemos los lazos entre la masculinidad efectiva, el orden social y territorialidad a través los conceptos de plaisir y jouissance. Al hacer esto buscamos contribuir a las literaturas de la masculinidad y la espacialidad y la de masculinidad y ocio.

Palabras claves: masculinidades espaciales, plaisir y jouissance, relaciones intergeneracionales.