

Going the distance: Exploring concepts of journey, liminality  
and rites of passage in dance music experiences

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**Abstract**

'Dance culture' is the term now used to describe a large number of connected, inter-related and overlapping music scenes which have emerged from the warehouse, acid house and rave scenes, and are characterised by electronic music, dancing and the consumption of illicit drugs. This paper examines the construction and consumption of these dance music spaces and experiences. The study adopted a reflexive anthropological methodological package, including participant observation, field trips, interviews and focus groups. It argues that discourses of liminality and rites of passage frame the spatial construction of contemporary large dance music festivals and that travelling to these peculiar configurations of open, closed and negotiable abstracted spaces is both an act of journey and pilgrimage.

Key words: dance music; raves; festivals; events; liminality; pilgrimage