

“MEET THE DEVIL... HE’LL
CHILL YOU TO THE BONE”
FEAR, MARGINALIZATION,
AND THE COLOUR OF CRIME:
A THIRTY-YEAR ANALYSIS OF
FOUR CANADIAN NEWSPAPERS

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By

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ABSTRACT

It has been well established that fear of crime is, at least in part, influenced by the media. Past research has shown that escalation of fear in many Western societies has resulted from increased media coverage of crime. Despite the diversity of media outlets, a common discourse emerges—criminal behaviour is a product of bad people, from poor neighbourhoods, preying on innocent and undeserving victims. Critical approaches to the study of media show crime reporting as a political act, involving deepening stereotypes and Othering of marginalized people based on their age, race, and gender. Missing from the literature is a detailed portrait of the nature of media representations of crime and how it may shift over time. The goal of my research is to fill this gap by analyzing how differences between offenders and victims' race, age, and gender as described in newspaper crime reports significantly impact the probability that these articles would contain language promoting a discourse of fear and marginalization. A combination of critical theories—including critical criminology, feminism, postcolonial theory, and critical discourse analysis—are used to develop themes related to media representations of gender, race, and language. Because race, gender, and age in the context of crime cannot be extracted from class, discussions of class also appear throughout the thesis. Four newspapers—the *Vancouver Sun*, *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, *Winnipeg Free Press*, and the *Toronto Star*—were examined over a span of thirty years through a mixed methods approach combining content and critical discourse analyses. A total of 480 newspapers and 1,190 crime articles constituted the empirical sample for this research. Two themes—fear and marginalization—as well as twelve subthemes emerge from the empirical and theoretical literature.

The research results show that differences in language can be observed in Canadian crime reports based on mentions of race, age, and gender of both the offenders and victims. Throughout all thirty years, articles indicated that crimes against white victims used fearful language, while visible minority victims were blamed for their victimization. White offenders were disproportionately criminalized and dehumanized with depictions that frequently undermined their claim to normal membership of their racial group through extraordinary character defect. Visible minority offenders were linked to poverty. Portrayals of female offenders accurately depicted them as generally low risk; both female offenders and female victims were treated in a

largely equal manner. Women offenders were dichotomized into sexualized bad girls or malicious black widows. Female victims were either depicted as bad victims (i.e. racialized victims) who were blamed for their circumstances, or good victims who garnered sympathy through negative portrayals of their offenders. Young offenders and victims were often linked to gang activity, and language regarding them contained a mix of both fear and marginalization. The dissertation concludes by providing support to the critical paradigms with which it engages, demonstrating the need to include an analysis of critical criminology, race, gender, and a deconstruction of language. The study directs our attention to the necessity for further research on the benefits of educational programs for both those disseminating the discourse of crime and those consuming it.

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PREFACE

In 2006, I was riding on a subway car in Toronto, Ontario during the evening rush hour. The subway car was packed—standing room only. I was sitting across from a woman reading a book and who was around fifty years old. Her large purse was sitting at the base of her knees and was pressed up against the seat in front of her. Bored, I remember looking around the car to engage in some people-watching. The train slowed around the next stop, and the woman reading her book never looked up... until two black men got on. I sat and watched as this woman looked directly at the two men dressed in jeans and t-shirts, grabbed her purse, brought it close to her, and never let go. I remember questioning why she grabbed her purse only when these two men got on the subway. They looked like university students to me, and in every respect other than their skin colour, they blended in with the crowd. Yet their presence caused this woman alarm. Why? Where did this behaviour come from? Did she think they were going to take her purse because they were young (in their 20s) or because they were not white? Was she racist?

The topic of my dissertation was in part inspired by the events of that day. In undertaking this study, my initial hope was to increase my understanding of whom we collectively fear as a society and of the potential role played by media in spreading this fear. More important still, this study marks the first step in my (hopefully long and fruitful) quest to understand why society tends to turn a blind eye to the violation of human rights in the name of unsubstantiated concerns over *collective safety*. Ironically, it may well be that such concerns will lead to greater insecurity for us all.

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

Although media outlets such as television, newspapers, magazines, the internet, advertising, and social media are a diverse group of communication venues with multiple (and sometimes conflicting) interests and points of view, mass media can also be thought of a single social institution. This collective force constitutes one of the most important, influential, and controversial institutions of postmodern society (Alexander & Thompson, 2008). It has been estimated that 96% of what people reportedly know about crime and justice originates from the mass media (Muraskin & Domash, 2007). What's more, the media are the most consistent source of information on both crime and criminals (Kappeler & Potter, 2005). In Western society, a majority of knowledge originates from an exceedingly small group of people with legitimated expertise and in positions of power and influence, with many surrounding social institutions structured to reinforce such power relations (Foucault, 1977; Standing & Taylor, 2007). Thus, despite the vast array of media outlets, a common discourse often emerges.

The empirical literature relays that the dominant media discourse often treats criminal behaviour as a binary construct: the product of bad people from poor neighbourhoods preying on innocent and undeserving victims (Brooks & Schissel, 2008; Miller, Like, & Levin, 2006; Schissel, 2006). Moreover, the discourse disproportionately focuses on street crime since sensationalism and violence sell (Brooks, 2008). Media reports and the moral panics they at times create do not just tell us to be afraid, but they often also tell us of whom to be afraid. It follows that an analysis of the language used in media reports based on age, race, and gender of offenders and victims is important for understanding the implications of such a discourse. It has been well established that fear of crime is at least in part influenced by the media. Moreover, past research has shown that the escalation of fear in many Western societies has resulted from increased media coverage of crime (Dowler et al., 2006; Lee, 2007).

Critical approaches to the study of media show crime reporting as a political act, involving deepening stereotypes and Othering of marginalized people based on their age, race, gender, and class. Missing from the literature is a detailed portrait of the nature of media representations of crime and how this portrait may shift overtime. The goal of this research is to fill this gap by analyzing how differences between offenders and victims' race, age, and gender as described in newspaper crime reports significantly impact the

probability that these articles would contain language promoting a discourse of fear and marginalization. This thesis employs a combination of critical theories—including critical criminology, feminism, postcolonial theory, and critical discourse analysis—in order to develop themes related to media representations of gender, race, and language, as well as to gain a critical understanding of media representations of crime and victimization. Two themes—fear and marginalization—as well as twelve subthemes emerge from the empirical and theoretical literature.

The first theme of fear captures the ways in which fear of crime is portrayed as well as how crime, offenders, and victims of crime may be portrayed as part of a discourse designed to promote fear. Drawing largely from critical criminology, it can be stated that the mass media propagate a fear of crime through the use of specific language. Such language includes words that (a) relate to fear itself; (b) reference excessive violence; (c) dehumanize crime; (d) use crime as a metaphor; and (e) imply that crime is everywhere (Altheide, 2009; Amerio & Roccato, 2005; Dowler, 2006; Lee, 2007; Schissel, 2006; Welch, 2006).

The second broad theme of marginalization captures if and how individuals or groups of people might be isolated and identified as different and potential threats to the community. Several studies employing critical theory approaches—including critical criminology, feminism, and postcolonial theory—suggest that marginalization is promoted through the use of language that (a) rationalizes crime; (b) dehumanizes the crime and/or offender; (c) references the offender as crazy/unstable; (d) references the offender's criminal and/or violent history, occupation, or socioeconomic status; and (e) references the rationalization of the offender (see Comack, 2009; Larson, 2006; Miller et al., 2006; Schissel, 2006; Welch, 2004; Wortley, 2008).

A mixed methods approach that combines content and critical discourse analysis is used to understand how offenders and victims are portrayed through language in the above themes across four newspapers—the *Vancouver Sun*, *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, *Winnipeg Free Press*, and the *Toronto Star*—over a span of thirty years. From the ninety-six general interest daily circulation newspapers in Canada, three newspapers among Canada's twenty most widely circulated English-speaking newspapers (Bivings Report, 2006) were chosen (the *Vancouver Sun*, *Winnipeg Free Press*, and the *Toronto Star*). To be included in the

sample, newspapers had to be local papers, as national newspapers disproportionately cover out-of-the-ordinary cases from around the country and so may provide a less reliable sample (Ryan et al., 2006; Taylor, 2009). The *Vancouver Sun*, *Winnipeg Free Press*, and the *Toronto Star* also represent the three local newspapers with the widest circulation in English-speaking Canada. In an effort to develop a cross-sectional sample based on population size, ethnic diversity, and geographical location, only one newspaper was selected for each province. Thus, the *Toronto Sun*, which is among the four largest local papers in the country, was excluded. Since the dissertation was conducted at the University of Saskatchewan, a fourth newspaper, the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, was added to the list to provide a local comparison of the subject. Lastly, since all were retrieved by microfilm, newspapers had to be available on microfilm dating back to the 1980s in order to ensure accuracy in the sample.

Analyzing crime articles over a thirty-year period allows for the identification of substantial change (Reiner et al., 2001) and of the factors that may drive change. For instance, a 400% increase in media coverage of violent crime and racialized offenders has accompanied a proportionate increase in concern about crime in the US beginning in 1994 (Chiricos et al., 2001), and which continues to grow today (Fleras, 2011; Walklate & Mythen, 2008). The situation is similar in Canada (Dowler, 2006; Schissel, 2006). Moreover, the longitudinal analysis of marginalization in the context of fear of crime is important since a targeted group can change from country to country and may change over time (Bjorgo & Witte, 1993). A historical analysis can offer insight both into the social construction of crime and criminals and of the ways in which this construction is historically situated in particular times and contexts (Harding, 2006).

The study is designed around three research questions. The three research questions are: (1) How does the race, age, or gender of the offender and victim described within a newspaper crime report significantly impact the probability that the article will contain language that promotes a discourse of fear of crime and marginalization? (2) How has the prevalence of articles with language promoting a discourse of fear of crime and marginalization change significantly over time from 1982 to 2007? (3) How does the decade in which the publication occurs affect the relationship between language use and characteristics of the offender and victim described in (1) and (2) above? Given that the goal of the research is to develop a detailed

portrait of the nature of media representations of crime and to analyze the differences found in the language between different groups of people, the ability to draw connections between the three research questions is critical to the analysis. Because of the importance of newspapers in Canada, as well as their continued role in shaping social discourse, understanding how offenders and victims are portrayed based on differences in gender, race, and age may provide unique insights into the construction of crime.

1.1 Rationale for Analyzing Newspapers—The Canadian Context

Many people acquire their information from multiple sources; however, newspapers remain a popular source of information for Canadians. Each day, 47% of Canadians over the age of eighteen buys a newspaper, and in 2010, 73% of adults read a newspaper at least once a week (Newspaper Audience Databank, 2011). In Canada, there are ninety-six general interest paid daily circulation newspapers. The *Toronto Star* is the largest newspaper in the country with a daily circulation of approximately 286, 303 and of 477, 683 on Saturdays (Newspapers Canada, 2011). In 2009, 4.1 million newspapers were purchased each day, totalling 26.9 million newspapers per week. The yearly revenue for daily newspapers, not including online subscriptions in 2008 amounted to 3.5 billion dollars (Canadian Newspaper Association, 2012). Six major groups own the vast majority of the print media market in Canada. CanWest is the largest among these media corporations with approximately 31% of the Canadian market and sales of 8.2 million newspapers per day (Canadian Newspaper Association, 2012). CanWest owns two of the newspapers examined in the current study—the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* and the *Vancouver Sun*. The *Vancouver Sun* has a daily paid circulation of 168, 616, while the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* has a circulation of 53, 560. Independent companies own both the *Winnipeg Free Press* and the *Toronto Star*. Free Press Inc. owns the *Winnipeg Free Press*, which has a paid daily circulation of 121, 858 papers, while *Toronto Star Newspapers Ltd.* owns the *Toronto Star* and supplies 286, 303 papers per day (Canada Newspaper Association, 2012).

As they are able to create a dominant discourse that can be shared by a wide audience on an international level, newspapers have major impacts on society (Mascheroni et al., 2010). Although newspapers and television have been a driving force in society since the 1950s, today's media is entirely different. Bagdikian (2004, p. 2) refers to today's media as "media world." Media world is a world in which any information is at your fingertips. From Blackberries to

iPhones, a person can read nearly any newspaper or website in the world. The new mass media transcend global differences in culture, language, and social class. In addition, an increasing number of people spend a large portion of their lives living in this new world (Chomsky, 2009; Gramsci, 2006). Now more than ever, media have a huge potential to create a dominant discourse that goes far beyond one country in a matter of seconds.

The mass media form a key industry in capitalist society and wield immense power to reinforce ideas and values that can legitimate a stratified society. For example, the literature on the political economy of communication views the power of the media as “a social exchange of meaning whose outcome is the measure or mark of a social relationship” (Mosco, 1996, p. 6). From this perspective, communication, or discourse is more than the transmission of data or information; it is the social production of meaning that constitutes a relationship (Mosco, 1996).

However, some scholars (e.g., Murdock, 2006; Murdock & Golding, 2000) have stated that class power and the separation of people based on class is being reinforced throughout the communication industry, and intensifies through mass ownership of technology (Mosco, 1996). As such, newspapers can serve as an ideal source for hegemonic control (van Dijk 1997), as media can reinforce social class divisions and help to build solidarity within a dominant class. This may help to explain why certain segments of the population can be disproportionately blamed for crime. Furthermore, it may add insight into how the alienation of the poor and marginalized are situated throughout the media as a result of systematic bias within social structures. According to Gramsci (1971), social order is in part maintained through a dynamic process of coercion whereby dominant groups are in a position to produce hegemonic beliefs. These ideologies can help secure power for the dominant class by perpetuating crime as a problem of subordinate groups, such as visible minorities, youth, and women. In this sense, media can decontextualize crime, as “crimes are always, by the very nature of newspaper reporting, discussed out of context” (Faith & Jawani 2008, p. 168). The decontextualization of crime often results in inaccurate explanations of why crime occurs, such as blaming crime on poverty or on growing up in single mother households (Harding, 2006; Schissel, 2006). The hegemonic point of view can also offer an explanation as to why certain groups of people (youth, visible minorities, and women) are so often made to be scapegoats in media.

1.2 Significance of the Study and Contributions to Academic Work

Since the late 1960s, researchers have been examining the nature of media involvement in the

production of social problems (Welch, 2006). With increasing media involvement in everyday life, social scientists have introduced numerous terms, concepts, and explanations in order to describe this phenomenon over the past several decades. Key ones include moral panics throughout the media (Cohen, 1972; Hall et al., 1978), the war on drugs (Simon, 2007), and most recently the notion of governing through crime (Lee, 2007; Simon, 2007). As such, research has often linked media, particularly the news media, with panics and the formulation of social phenomena into social problems (Best, 1995; Welch, 2006). While searching for systematic patterns in the portrayal of certain groups and comparing those portrayals with available evidence are critical starting points for any moral panic analysis, they are just that: starting points. Many other factors merit research, including, foremost, the dynamic between groups that control media portrayals and the groups who are portrayed as deviant. Particularly pressing is the need to study the reaction of those being portrayed as criminal. Contestation of moral panics by *folk devils* themselves or the increasing number of special interest groups that speak for them are largely acknowledged but rarely studied systematically as true players in the construction (or prevention) of moral panics. Such research, however, tends to either be so individually focused that it cannot be generalized to statements about the effects of media portrayals on public discourse, or the data are taken at such a macroscopic level (i.e. from national opinion polls) that drawing any causal relation between media consumption and these opinions becomes difficult or impossible (Dowler et al., 2006). While there may be room for combining these two approaches in order to provide complementary information, recent research on the results of moral panics has placed near exclusive emphasis on legal reactions, such as child safety measures like the Amber Alert System and Megan's Law (see Rothe & Muzzatti, 2004; Warr, 2009; Welch, 2006; Zgoba, 2004), while effects on public discourses remain chronically unstudied.

In addressing the above research questions and in employing a mixed methodological approach to understand differences in language in the portrayal of crime and victimization, this thesis is the broadest and most inclusive analysis of its kind in Canada. The data create a detailed portrait of the nature of media representations of crime in Canada. This portrait, in turn, can be used by others to practically examine how and to what extent policy and public opinion are swayed in those areas in which media portrayals deviate from true risk.

1.3 Overview of the Thesis

This research aims to fill a gap in the literature by analyzing how differences between offenders and victims' race, age, and gender as described in newspaper crime reports can significantly impact the probability that these articles will contain language promoting a discourse of fear and marginalization. In the context of discussions about crime, the race, gender, and age of both victim and offender cannot easily be extracted from a person's class. As such, considerations of class will appear from time to time throughout this thesis especially when dealing with the marginalization of offenders and victims. For the purpose of this study, class is defined as the hierarchical distinction between groups of people based on race, gender and power (Reiman, 2012). By power, I am referring foremost to socio-economic, social and educational status. Particularly important for the current study is to note that the cause of crime is rooted in both social and economic forces, however it is social structures that marginalize people. For example, members of both the upper and lower classes may partake in morally questionable behaviour, however it is the social institutions of the law that are used as a tool by the upper class to punish the activities of the poor (Reiman, 2012). Thus, the criminal justice system can operate in large part on behalf of the upper class for the purpose of controlling the poor. Moreover, since class cannot be ignored when dealing with crime literature, it was important to include a combination of critical theories in order to understand why a person's class is important when discussing crime. The combination of critical theories addressed in this study included critical criminology, feminism, postcolonial theory and critical discourse analysis and they were applied to develop themes related to media representations. Critical theories were chosen for this research as they provide a strong basis for understanding how and why the media are able to influence the public's definition of both crime and offenders based on power differences. Critical theories can be seen as both explanatory and practical (Yar, 2012) because they provide unique insight into why media may marginalize certain groups of people based on race, gender, or age. For this reason, they can help to explain why dominant cultures tend to allocate and use authoritative resources to exercise power over others in order to both systematically devalue the attributions and contributions of those deemed inferior and, importantly in this context, emphasize these groups' negative social impacts (Calhoun & Karaganis, 2006).

In Chapter 2, I review the theoretical and empirical literature surrounding fear of crime and marginalization. Critical theories can be distinguished from more traditional theories through

their practical purpose. In other words, a theory is critical if it seeks human emancipation as its goal. Since critical theories aim to explain and transform circumstances that oppress human beings, they tend to emerge in connection with social movements that identify different dimensions of oppression within modern societies (Calhoun & Karaganis, 2006). Specifically, several critical theories are employed here in order to support an analysis of class as well as to further understand and deconstruct how race and gender can affect language utilized in newspaper reporting. These include critical criminology, postcolonial theory, and feminism respectively. This chapter also outlines the pervasive nature of fear and addresses how fears are often fuelled by media portrayals. The creation of fear can lead to dynamics of *us vs. them*, framing problems of crime as having only one solution: get tougher on *them* to protect *us*. This chapter introduces the importance of the crime victim, without which the treatment of the binary crime discourse is incomplete. If the offender is *bad* then the victim, almost by definition, is *good*. Yet previous literature shows us that some victims are clearly portrayed as more tragic than others. As a result, one must ask the next logical question: what attributes make a victim more or less deserving of the public's sympathy?

Chapter 3 outlines the methods utilized for this research. Here I discuss how a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, specifically content and critical discourse analyses, formed the mixed methodological research (MMR) approach deployed in this thesis. Because this combination can be used to obtain data on the same phenomena from unique yet complementary sources, MMR leads to a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic. I address how a MMR approach can provide unique insights into how, in the case of this research, media not only report crime, but also how their reporting builds a discourse that is then disseminated to the public. Next, I examine content analysis as a method, considering its strengths and weakness, and provide a rationale for why it is best suited for analyzing crime articles in newspapers. In addition, I outline the coding procedure for the subthemes and other demographic variables and discuss the sampling design in detail. I then define and evaluate critical discourse analysis and its process, including the five stages of analysis used in developing the subthemes in this study. The chapter concludes with a breakdown of the coding procedure.

Chapter 4 introduces the themes and subthemes emerging from the theoretical and empirical literature. The presentation of themes is organized into two sections. First, I speak to

the theme of fear of crime and its five subthemes. Second, I analyze the different ways in which the media can marginalize certain groups of people. This section is further divided into seven subthemes. The purpose of this chapter is to capture the portrayal of the crime itself, the portrayal of the offenders (e.g. implying an offender's criminal predisposition), as well as the factors that may be used to undermine an individual's claim to *normal* membership within a group. More importantly, here I seek to understand how people can be singled out as potentially dangerous or threatening to the social order based on differences in their race, gender, and age.

Chapter 5 is the results and discussion section. I begin the chapter with the basic characteristics of the sample, followed by a discussion of the ways in which language relates to the twelve subthemes of the research. Given the large study sample and its many variables, I discuss the results for each dimension of the offender and victim—race, gender, and age—separately. This separate treatment provides an analysis that is easier to comprehend and facilitates the integration of the mixed methods approach. Overall, the results show that differences in language can be observed in Canadian crime reports based on the mention of race, age, and gender of both offenders and victims. Moreover, these differences are found to be consistent across all newspapers, and, with few exceptions, these biases are evenly noted over thirty years of crime reporting. Some of the major findings indicate that crimes against white victims use fearful language, while visible minority victims are blamed for their victimization. White offenders are also disproportionately criminalized and dehumanized, with depictions frequently undermining their claim to normal membership within their racial group through extraordinary character defect. In contrast, visible minority offenders are linked to poverty. Portrayals of female offenders accurately depict them as generally low risk; both female offenders and female victims were treated in a largely similar manner. Women offenders are dichotomized into sexualized bad girls or malicious black widows. Similarly, female victims are depicted either as bad victims who are blamed for their circumstances, or good victims who garner sympathy through the negative portrayals of their offenders. Young offenders and victims are often linked to gang activity, and the language regarding them contains a mixture of both fear and marginalization.

Chapter 6 outlines the general discussion, conclusions, and directions for future research. In the first part of the chapter, I return to my original research questions, lending support to the critical paradigms that I engage with in the thesis and demonstrating the need for the inclusion of

several different critical theories. In the second part of the chapter, I discuss a set of conclusions and final thoughts for future research as well as the policy implications that result from this thesis. I conclude the study by calling for further research on the benefits of educational programs for those both disseminating the discourse of crime and those consuming it.

CHAPTER 2:

FEAR OF CRIME, MORAL PANICS, AND MARGINALIZATION—A REVIEW OF THE THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

One hates what one fears.

– Marilyn Manson (2002)

The goal of this research is to analyze differences between offenders and victims' race, age, and gender as described in newspaper crime reports and to determine whether these differences impact the probability that these articles will contain language promoting a discourse of fear and marginalization. The study's theoretical framework incorporates a combination of critical theories, including critical criminology, feminism, postcolonial theory, and critical discourse analysis. As stated in Chapter 1, several different critical theories are called for due to the complex nature inherent to the creation of a discourse of fear and marginalization. For instance, if differences in language are found between offenders and victims, then a multitheoretical approach is necessary for deconstructing and understanding differences based on a person's race (via postcolonial theory), gender (via feminism), as well as for understanding linkages between class and crime (via critical criminology).

Throughout this research, I employed a critical discourse analysis in order to deconstruct language found within crime articles. Once a difference was found, postcolonial theory was applied in order to understand how marginalization in the media could occur based on a person's race. In this thesis, it is particularly important to include postcolonial theory given that, in Canada, Aboriginal groups are at the greatest risk for oppression at the hands of the media (Kubik et al., 2009). The oppression of Aboriginal peoples in Canada is rooted in centuries of colonialist government actions. Additionally, postcolonial theory contributes to our understanding of how dominant cultures allocate and use authoritative resources (such as the media) to exercise power over others and to systematically devalue the attributions and/or contributions of those deemed inferior (Baines, 2011; Brown, 2012; Dominelli, 2002; Tew, 2006). Furthermore, if differences are found based on a person's gender, then feminist work is subsequently applied in order to ascertain how the gender of the offender and victim figure into the media's use of language. Finally, critical criminology also helps to integrate how class, and

especially the importance of belonging to the upper class, is portrayed in crime articles. Since critical theories aim to explain and transform oppressive circumstances, they tend to emerge in connection with social movements that identify different dimensions of oppression within modern societies (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). As a result, the chapter will also speak to the importance of media representations generally as well as their power to shape both social discourse and the social construction of crime (Altheide, 2009).

Few people have had up-close encounters with crime. As a result, many people rely on images and discourse provided by media to construct realistic assessments of crime and of their risk of victimization (Quillian et al., 2006, 2010). However, crime is often portrayed as a function of bad people from poor neighbourhoods, preying on innocent and undeserving people (Brooks & Schissel, 2008; Miller et al., 2006). Additionally, media reports and the moral panics they at times create do not just tell us to be afraid but tell us of whom to be afraid. This tendency for divisiveness is why a study of media portrayals of crime is incomplete without also considering the theme of marginalization.

The following section will give an introduction to critical theory and outline why critical theories are important in the current research.

2.1 The Importance of Applying Critical Theories to the Research

Critical theories were not only inspired by Marx but also by Frankfurt School theorists, who largely synthesized the works of Kant, Hegel, Freud, and Weber (Calhoun & Karaganis, 2006). According to the Frankfurt School, critical theories can be distinguished from more traditional theories through their practical purpose. In other words, a theory is critical if it seeks human emancipation as its goal. Critical theories can be seen as both explanatory and practical (Yar, 2012). As a result, they can help to explain why dominant cultures tend to allocate and use authoritative resources to both exercise power over others in order to systematically devalue the attributions and contributions of those deemed inferior and, importantly in the context of this research, emphasize these groups' negative social impacts (Calhoun & Karaganis, 2006).

Critical theories can provide a strong basis for understanding how and why media are able to influence the public's definition of crime and offenders. For example critical theories, such as postcolonial theory, illuminate how a negative discourse combined with a person's race and class may lead the public to believe that visible minorities commit the vast majority of crimes. Critical media studies (Clawson & Trice, 2000; Hall et al., 1978) have often found that

blacks and other visible minorities are disproportionately criminalized in the media. In a content analysis of television news in Los Angeles and Orange County, Dixon and Linz (2000, p. 548) found that whites are overrepresented in the news as victims, while blacks and Latinos are underrepresented as victims. The opposite trend was observed in portrayals of offenders: whites were underrepresented, while blacks were overrepresented, and Latinos were virtually absent. The authors provided two different theoretical explanations for such patterns. The first derives from the differential power relationship based on race: whites hold a disproportionate influence over what makes the news, simply because whites have mass ownership of media outlets and occupy the vast majority of media jobs (Dixon & Linz, 2000). The second explanation emphasizes news structure and economic interests. In order to remain profitable, media outlets must maintain a substantial share of the competitive media market. As more media markets are competing for viewers, considerable time must be spent finding stories that are dramatic and that feature relatable victims for the audience. Therefore, the vast majority of victims in news are white because the vast majority of news consumers are white (Dixon & Linz, 2000).

In his study of Canadian newspapers, Wortley (2009) found that the tendency to draw connections between immigration, race, and violent crime is particularly strong whenever highly publicized rare murders take place in which the victim is white and the offender is not. For example, he quotes a columnist from the *Toronto Sun* after a white victim was murdered by a black man: “white Canadians are understandably fed up with people they see as outsiders coming into their country and beating and killing them” (Maharaj, 1994; as cited by Wortley, 2009, p. 349).

In addition, critical theorists assert that media are constant producers of hegemonic beliefs that tend to normalize upper-class interests (Reiman, 2012). In effect, people in power are able to construct codes of conduct based on their own set of morals and values and then enforce those codes to sanction the behaviours and cultures of people who are on the social and economic margins (Reiman, 2012). According to critical criminological frameworks, many of the reasons for which crimes occur are embedded in the political, social, and economic structures of capitalism (Reiman, 2012). When both the criminal justice system and the media portray crime as a product of individual responsibility which does not include social factors, they ultimately broadcast the message that the social order itself is reasonable and just, thus justifying moral condemnation for those who break the law (Hall et al., 1978; Reiman, 2012).

A large part of understanding the importance of critical theories for the current study lies in the framework of critical criminology. Critical criminology began to emerge in the UK and US (see Taylor, Walton, & Young, 1975) around the 1970s (Sykes, 1974). Critical criminology as a field arose in part through the application of Marxist frameworks for the analysis of crime and deviance, or perhaps more correctly through the fusion of this framework with the broader critical political movement of the time (Yar, 2012). Critical criminology can provide an understanding of how institutions within the state and institutions such as the media are able to dominate class relations under capitalism (Hall & Winlow, 2012). According to Sykes (1974), critical criminology grew out of the intellectual boom that was taking place in sociology during the 1960s. This boom has been tied to the revitalization of public sociology (Burawoy, 2007). Burawoy (2007) defines public sociology as a sociology that goes beyond the walls of the university and enters an ongoing dialogue with the public about the fundamental values of society. It is marked primarily by the degree to which the scholar is actively, civically, and politically engaged.

During the 1950s and 1960s, a generation of scholars whose academic interests were inspired by political activism (Stam, 2001) filled campuses all over the US. Political protests broke out over civil rights and freedom of speech, and a consensus arose that sociology had uncritically embraced science (Burawoy, 2007). The new critical viewpoint saw the scientist as one that must constantly seek the legitimate representation of what is real—external to and independent of knowledge (Burawoy, 2007; Doyle & Moore, 2011; Stam, 2001).

Many critical criminologists see criminal law, prisons, and the court system as functions of unequal power relations (Quillian & Pager, 2006; Quillian, 2010; Reiman, 2012). For example, according to Schissel, “crime, as it is constructed and framed in public discourse, functions to legitimate and maintain class differences in all sectors of the society” (2006, p. 18). Therefore, crime can be constructed in such a way as to shift the blame away from powerful groups (as in white-collar crime) and focus on street crimes.

Critical criminology can be defined as the “academic study of crime and the social and governmental reactions to it” (Doyle & Moore, 2011, p. 3). The field remains concerned with researching power relations in crime, criminalization, and social justice. However in Canada, US and UK scholarship dominate critical criminology. The problem then becomes deciding where Canadian critical criminology lies in relation to other countries (Doyle & Moore, 2011). In

Canada there is a split in between liberal—sometimes called mainstream/contemporary criminologists—and critical criminologists. According to Hogeveen (2011), the split can be traced back to the 1960s when some contemporary criminologists partnered up with justice institutions and policymakers in the hopes of better controlling crime through effective research, teaching, and policy advice. For Doyle and Moore, “this promise entailed appeals to scientific understandings of truth, knowledge, objectivity, and mathematical certainties, with relevance to government and policy as a driving force” (2011, p. 28). A backlash took place soon after when several other criminologists such as pioneering criminologist Tadeusz Grygier stated that teaming up with policymakers would create the “scientific control of criminal behavior” (1963, p. 42).

The problem continued for contemporary criminologists as the field became more dependent upon policymakers and administrators (Hogeveen, 2011). According to Hogeveen, one of the biggest problems associated with managing the criminal justice system with policymakers was the loss of the Other from society. On this point, Hogeveen states, “ironically, through, the successful realization of the criminological promise would require the death of both the discipline and the Other” (2011, p. 29). Hogeveen takes a very similar stance alongside Stan Cohen (2007). Both state that the goal of criminology can and should evolve toward facilitating true restorative justice. Moreover, both believe that criminology should effectively deal with human rights atrocities at the state and institutional levels, atrocities which are continuously denied in favour of examining the criminal individual. Hogeveen (2011) and Cohen (2007) stress that criminology should remain critical, that researchers should place a greater priority on the violation of human rights and human suffering, and that they should begin with their own countries.

Thus in Canada today, critical criminologists are still set apart from mainstream criminology. The split in Canadian criminology is one of the reasons for Canada’s reliance on US and UK criminology (Doyle & Moore, 2011). The problem associated with not having our own strong, unified criminological paradigm is twofold. The first lies with topics related to critical studies (e.g. the criminal justice system and government relations), which vary from country to country. Even though we live in a globalized world, problems associated with criminology can be unique to that country, and thus critical criminologists should focus on problems directly relevant to their country (Doyle & Moore, 2011).

The second problem lies in the production of knowledge and truth. Knowledge and fact are the social products of a field, or their objectivity. Truth is only regarded as such if it is produced based on the rules defining the production of truth (a field that is more autonomous is likely to have more truth). Knowledge then is based on the collective experience of scholars, and a fact only becomes a fact if it is widely recognized within the limits of a field (Burawoy, 2007; Doyle & Moore, 2011; Hogeveen, 2011). Thus, the more Canada continues to split criminology along liberal lines, the more we run the risk of jeopardizing the knowledge we produce.

Central to the current study, critical theories often view the criminal justice system as designed to exculpate the rich at every step (Reiman, 2012). Reiman (2012) explains how a large portion of white-collar criminals do not face prosecution at the same rate as street criminals, despite the fact that white-collar crime is more financially detrimental to society than street crime. For example, in 2000, the total cost of white-collar crime was 404 billion US dollars (Reiman, 2012). In contrast, property crimes amounted to 16 billion US dollars, yet corporate executives serve less time (if any) than street criminals (Reiman, 2012).

As the study of crime and delinquency in critical criminology has predominantly focused on the social forces influencing criminal behaviour (Calhoun & Karaganis, 2006), it follows that this study focuses largely on the contextual factors of crime, including oppression, moral panics, social control, and the criminalization of poverty. Critical theories will help explain how the distribution of justice (as a resource much like any other) can be rooted in race, gender, age, and class. Therefore, criminalization of the poor and of marginalized groups in society is not the result of random error in the administration of justice; rather, it results from the systematic bias of social structures that favour the upper class (Lee, 2007).

The current study addresses many of the above points and makes it the broadest and most inclusive analysis of its kind in Canada. The strength of combining several different critical theories in the current research is twofold. First, the combination will allow for a stronger explanation of the discourse used by dominant groups, such as normalizing dominant values and priorities. Second, it can illuminate how the discourse of difference is expressed through the definition of what is and is not considered criminal behaviour in the media. Because each of the theories chosen offers a unique approach, this combination of theories will guide a more complete understanding of how the criminal and the victim are socially defined, and how the dissertation's findings can be interpreted in this context.

Before proceeding any further, it is necessary to acknowledge that any dissertation analyzing discourse should be informed by the work of Michel Foucault (Calhoun, & Karaganis, 2006). Foucault's work on discourse will help to explain the importance of using a critical discourse analysis of newspaper crime articles. As such, his work will only be described briefly here in order to set the context for further development of the theoretical framework of the dissertation. The work of Foucault will be discussed in detail in the methods sections (Chapter 3).

Foucault's work (1977) created a framework for understanding knowledge as a currency and discourse as the tool that serves the interests of those in power at specific historical periods. Foucault, however, expanded the notion of discourse to not only include textual or verbal communication but also institutions and their regimented interactions, or what Foucault terms *materialized texts* (Foucault, 1977). This is because "discourse" as used by Foucault creates normalizing messages of what should and should not be—a concept of immediate relevance to the projection and caricature of what it means to be a criminal.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is utilized in the current research because it is crucial to developing an understanding of how social variables (such as a person's race, gender, and age) can impact the media's choice in reporting on the crime, offender, and the victim. In other words, this method that can help us understand how a dominant class can produce social inequality through language (text) by reproducing the point of view of elite attitudes (Proulx, 2011). A CDA can also shed light on the prospects for social change (Proulx, 2011; van Dijk, 1993).

According to Proulx (2011) language is studied because it is the primary instrument through which ideology is transmitted. Moreover, CDA is interdisciplinary and thus allows not only for a sociological analysis but a feminist and critical analysis as well (Fairclough, 2001). Based on the above points, a CDA is best suited for the current study because of its ability to unravel the ideological underpinnings of language found in the media, which, in turn, have become common-sense understandings of criminality (Proulx, 2011).

Such an approach, while critical, is incomplete without also considering how a person's race can impact language. It has long been appreciated that oppressive relations based on race interact with distinctions based on class and gender to divide people into dominant and subordinate groups (Mullaly, 1997; Schissel, 2006). As such, a detailed critical approach focusing on postcolonial theory will help to unravel the complexities behind a person's race and

will shed light on how these factors intersect with gender, class, and power to explain why visible minority offenders and victims are disproportionately blamed for their own criminal behaviour and victimization.

2.2 Fear of Crime as a Social Problem

In Western society, much of our knowledge originates from exceedingly small groups of people with legitimated expertise or influence, with many of our institutions structured to reinforce these power relations (Foucault, 1977). Thus, despite a vast diversity of media outlets, a common discourse often emerges. In the case of crime, this discourse revolves around fear. As sensationalism and violence continue to sell, the majority of crime reporting focuses on street crime. Even though a linear relationship between the consumption of crime reporting and fear remains elusive, recent theories propose more subtle connections, such as the potential for crime reporting to direct fear toward certain social groups and away from others. Thus, understanding fear of crime requires an analysis of the discourse surrounding crime that might marginalize or blame certain groups of people.

Despite international literature on the topic (Altheide, 2009), few studies have quantitatively analyzed Canadian media reports on crime (notable exceptions include Roberts & Doob, 1990; Sprott & Doob, 1997). The current study aims to add to the literature through a content and discourse analysis of twelve subthemes related to fear of crime and marginalization in a cross section of Canadian print media. As such, this research will work to determine if biases exist in the depictions of offenders or victims on the basis of race, gender, and age.

Fear of crime is a concept that is used to explain a range of both psychological and social reactions to perceived threats of crime and/or victimization. Such a fear can have profound impacts on the way that people interact with one another (Furedi, 2006). Data suggest that fear of crime is, at least in part, influenced by the media (Romer et al., 2003). What's more, the modern increase in the rate of crime coverage may also play a large role in the escalation of fear (Sacco, 2005). The fear of crime is an important factor in the current study not only because fear of crime has become a political and cultural theme, but, more importantly, because the level of fear within a society also has consequences for the way people interact with each other in society (Lee, 2007). For instance, as a society's level of fear increases, many people feel that the rules of behaviour are no longer clear-cut. That is, "the fear of crime is a distinctive feature of a society

where the influence of informal relations and taken-for-granted norms has diminished in influence” (Furedi, 2006, p. 5). This is only heightened when the media is involved with the production of fear through moral panics. Several studies indicate that fear of crime affects the lives of a large segment of the population across North America and in the majority of Europe (Critcher, 2008; Lee, 2007; Liska & Baccaglini, 1990; Pain, 2001), and likely in other continents as well. Data also indicate that the scope of this social issue is growing at an alarming rate (Ericson, 2007; Lee, 2007; Leyton, O’Grany, & Overton, 1992; Macek, 2006; Taylor, Eitle, & Russell, 2009). As more people in our society fear crime, more pressure is placed on both the police and the government to take severe measures against crime through tougher laws. As a result, more people are arrested, more are brought in front of judges, and more receive harsher and longer punishments (Christie, 2007). People have likely always feared for public safety (Furedi, 2006), but the magnitude and nature of how we fear crime is different today (Altheide, 2002, 2009). According to Altheide (2009), much of what we fear today is manufactured in the media.

In the late 1930s, experts (mainly psychologists) first used the term *fear of crime* to explain emotional reactions toward crime committed by juveniles. By the 1950s, the discourse concerning youth and fear of crime emerged as a popular concept among professionals and academics. In turn, the discourse emerged in the media in the 1960s, and, arguably by the end of the decade, fear of crime became a social scientific concept (Lee, 2007). For example, in 1965, an explosion of crime stories occurred in the US, and in 1966 the Washington Post ran a front-page story entitled, “The No. 1 worry in Washington is crime” (Lee, 2007, p. 51). Although the fear of crime in Canada may be lower than in the United States and Britain, it remains a major problem (Faucher, 2009; Leyton et al., 1992; Schissel, 2006). In fact, in the 1980s, fear of crime became such a widespread problem in Canada that the Ministry of Justice conducted a survey to measure its extent (Roberts, 2009). Although fear of crime in Canada is mostly concentrated in urban areas, it can also be high in non-urban provinces like Newfoundland (Roberts, 2009).

Fear of crime is a complex construct, especially given that the vast majority of such fear is, in fact, unrelated to actual rates of victimization (Chockalingam & Srinivasan, 2009; Eve, 1985; Sacco, 2005; Warr, 2000). It is generally accepted that people fear different places at different times, and that, accordingly, these fears are expressed differently (Pain, 2000). Thus, to a large extent, fear of crime is context-dependent. Not surprisingly, reactions to burglary, car

theft, and sexual assault are quite disparate (Low, 2003; Warr, 1984). While many studies have concentrated on violent and/or personal crime, this is not always a valid distinction as many crimes involve both theft and violence (e.g. mugging) and heightened risks of both personal and property crime are often highly correlated (Pain, 2001; Pain et al., 2006).

In particular, gender and age have both been heavily implicated as intervening sociological factors (Chockalingam & Srinivasan, 2009; Crowell & Burgess, 1996; Evans, 1995; Lee, 2007; Low, 2003; Pain, 2000, 2001; Taylor et al., 2009; Wortley, 2003). Women tend to be more fearful of crime despite having a lower risk of victimization than men (Hilinsky et al., 2011; Scott, 2003). According to Hilinsky et al. (2011) much of the fear that women experience relates to sexual aggression, and women are ten times more likely to be sexually assaulted than men (Reid & Konrad, 2004). In terms of age, the elderly are most fearful (Taylor et al., 2009), but fear can also vary from crime to crime. The elderly are most fearful of break and enters and muggings (Low, 2003; Wynne, 2008). However, fear of sexual assault is highest among younger women (Hilinsky et al., 2011; Whitzman, 2007).

2.2.1 Fear and the Media

Consumers of media often construct a more informed representation of the world they live in via the images, discourse, and frameworks used in media stories (Muzzatti & Featherstone, 2007). This social construction becomes problematic, however, when crime coverage develops into an increasingly prominent theme in the media (Dowler et al., 2006). A large part of the current study analyzes how negative and sensationalist coverage can affect how crime and offenders are publically constructed (Dowler et al., 2006) based on race, gender, and age. Since the late 1960s, crime coverage has become a dominant media theme which tends to emphasize the culture of fear by fashioning an all-too-familiar threat story: no one is safe, danger is imminent, and there is no end in sight (Lee, 2007; Muzzatti & Featherstone, 2007).

Increasing crime coverage runs the risk of painting a portrait of lawlessness that is completely at odds with true risk of victimization. For instance, a study conducted in 1990 demonstrated that across twenty-six US cities, homicides constituted 29% of all newspaper crime stories despite the fact that homicides accounted for only 0.02% of all offences (Liska & Baccaglioni, 1990, p. 367). As an unintended consequence of such crime coverage, individuals may be more inclined to debate the penal system, the amount of police on the streets, and the severity of laws (Cohen, 1980; Indemaur et al., 2012; Roberts, 2009).

Evidence also indicates that media coverage in several forms has a profound impact on people's fear of becoming victims of crime (Buck, 2008; Farrall et al., 2007; Indemaur et al., 2012). Moreover, data indicate that the impact of media on the fear of crime has become a growing problem since the late 1960s and has thus captured the attention of many researchers in the social sciences (Cohen, 1972; Dowler, 2006; Greer, 2007; Lee, 2007; Roberts, 2009).

The link between media consumption—particularly the absolute amount of media consumption—and fear of crime has intuitive appeal. As a result, research on this connection has a long history (Chadee & Ditton, 2005; Dowler, 2003; Gerbner & Gross, 1976). Fear of crime and media consumption can be linked in more complex ways than simply positing that the more crime reporting an individual consumes, the more fearful of crime they will become. Often, however, such research results have been inconsistent. Doob and McDonald (1979) found that television consumption does not predict fear of victimization when controlling for other variables such as neighbourhood incident rates. Thus, establishing a link between fear of crime and media consumption requires a more complex explanation than one of a simple linear relationship. Instead, news reports on crime have the potential to direct—rather than create—fear of crime (Greer, 2007). According to Stearns (2008), what we as a society find threatening is culturally specific and is used to establish boundaries between what we find familiar and safe versus what we find different and threatening. If, for instance, we live in a predominantly media-driven culture, these fears can be shaped and fuelled by the mass media.

Given the importance of newspapers in Canada, as well as their unique role in shaping social discourse, understanding how they depict both victims of crime and offenders, and how these depictions have changed over time, may provide new, timely, and important insights. The following discussion will outline a selection of studies conducted over the years on how media consumption can affect fear of crime. More importantly, reviewing the relevant literature will help address the gap in the research and create a detailed portrait of the nature of media representations of crime in Canada and abroad.

A study conducted by Dowler (2003) examined the influence of media consumption on fear of crime, punitive attitudes, and perceptions of police effectiveness. The study sample was derived from the 1995 National Opinion Survey on Crime and Justice (NOSJC), which is a random telephone survey of adults across the United States. The survey looked at a number of issues, such as attitudes toward courts, police, neighbourhood problems, juvenile gangs, drug

laws, death penalty, gun control, prisons, and worries about crime, as well as the amount of television watched in general and crime shows (Law & Order, CSI, COPS, and so forth) watched in particular (Dowler, 2003, p. 112). The study found that those who reported watching crime shows were more fearful of crime than those who did not watch crime shows. Dowler (2003) states that the results, in part, could be a natural reaction to the violence and brutality to which people are exposed. In addition, he explains that many people may not understand the justice process, and that confusion is heightened when numerous shows portray the justice system as largely ineffective. Therefore viewers may see all offenders as monsters committing violent, threatening, and senseless crimes, while victims are helpless against impending danger (Dowler, 2003; Lee, 2007).

Other studies have found a similar relationship between fear of crime and the consumption of print media. Muzzatti and Featherstone (2007) considered fear of crime through a content analysis of local newspapers in Washington, DC concerning the 2002 sniper shootings. The study found that media consumption was related not only to fear of crime but also to people's reaction to crime, its prevention, and safety measures in general. When fear is heightened in the media, people have a tendency to waive their constitutional rights in favour of security. For instance, "...few people complained as law enforcement agents made illegal traffic stops and military personnel patrolled residential areas with OH-58 scout helicopters and RC-7 reconnaissance aircraft" (Muzzatti & Featherstone, 2007, p. 62). The authors state that such practices are becoming all too indicative of an insecure America and that fear is allowing the government to become a large player in the culture of fear.

Liska and Baccaglini (1990) examined the extent to which official crime rates affected how stories on crime were reported and, in turn, how it affected people's views about their personal safety. The study analyzed twenty-six major cities included in the National Crime Survey (NCS) in the United States and chose one newspaper from each of the twenty-six cities. A content analysis was conducted to code for the number of newspaper articles devoted to crime. In order to measure fear of crime, researchers focused on the NCS for each city and conducted a content analysis focusing on two questions (Liska & Baccaglini, 1990). The questions were as follows: (a) how safe do you feel in your neighbourhood alone at night; and, (b) how safe do you feel in your neighbourhood in the day? The authors found that two main factors increased fear of crime. The first was whether or not the crime story was local, particularly with regards to stories

about homicide. In other words, people experienced the greatest amount of fear when newspapers reported on local crime stories. However, people's overall fear decreased when media crime stories were non-local (outside city or State). The authors further explain this result as a type of false sense of security, providing the idea that things are far better locally than in other places, making people feel safe by comparison (Liska & Baccaglini, 1990). In addition, the media's use of randomness—e.g. descriptions of random acts of violence as opposed to the perpetrator knowing the victim—coupled with violence also led to increased fear of crime (Liska & Baccaglini, 1990).

A 1982 study by Gorelick (1989) explored the content, language, and ideology of media reporting of crime. A content analysis of language describing different types of crime and their potential remedies was carried out in ninety-six articles of the New York Daily News Crimefighters Campaign. The author found that the majority of articles used language that was both forceful and misleading; they also suggested crime must be fought with brute force rather than eliminated or prevented. In addition, most of the articles included words and phrases such as “spreading cancer,” “societal cancer,” “mushrooming cloud,” “volcanic,” and “menacing cloud” in order to describe crime (Gorelick, 1989, p. 429). The vast majority (79%) of crimes described using dire language were reserved for burglaries. Gorelick (1989) contended that the language of force not only portrayed crime as requiring a militaristic response but also as fatal, diseased, imminent, and unpreventable.

How might one explain the effects of the above study results? Moreover, how can differences in language impact public opinion and fear of crime? A potential account may be found in the concept of *stereotype amplification* outlined by Quillian and colleagues (Quillian & Pager, 2006; Quillian, 2010). According to this notion, real associations between crime rates and particular social conditions become distorted through many channels, including skewed media coverage. As Quillian (2010) states, this idea applies the general framework of Kasperson et al. (1988) to the perception of risk of victimization. The framework proposes that the amount of risk communicated by the media can be amplified or attenuated by altering the amount of coverage dedicated to a single event or story or by attaching social values and meanings, including associations of risk of victimization to particular locations or groups. Importantly, these associations can also amplify the perception of victimization risk based on the reader's proximity to the *risky* location or group.

Much of the literature on fear of crime and on how crime can be blamed on certain groups of people may be explained through the paradigms of critical criminological theory. Critical criminology attempts to understand crime by determining how crime is influenced by the power differentials between social classes. For the current research, critical criminological theory can be used to examine how the control of social institutions such as mass media by the upper classes can have detrimental effects on different groups within society (Martindale, 2010). Furthermore, critical criminology is crucial for understanding both the importance of class when it comes to crime and why poor people who commit crimes are portrayed as bad, while rich people are not (Reiman, 2012).

In both Canada and the United States, visible minorities are overrepresented as predominantly poor individuals and are commonly portrayed as criminals (Martindale, 2010; Reiman, 2012). This pattern is legitimated by media images of poor and mainly visible minorities as the segment of the population most threatening to the social fabric (Green & Kugler, 2012; Reiman, 2012; Schissel, 2006). Moreover, many street crimes typically committed by the poor, such as robbery or muggings, tend to be more harshly punished than white-collar crimes because this bias permits the oppression of the poor by the rich (Green & Kugler, 2012; Reiman, 2012). Marginalization caused by these depictions can lead to alienation, helping to generate more poverty and crime (Schissel, 2006). Including this theory in the current research is important as it will help to explain why segments of the population come to be targeted and disproportionately blamed for crime. It may also help in understanding how alienation of the poor and marginalized can be seen throughout the media as a result of systematic bias within social structures. Thus, critical criminological frameworks would assert that the media's increasing involvement with social control and the classification of deviant groups into highly stigmatized classes are some of the reasons behind the marginalization of certain groups of people (Reiman, 2012).

2.2.2 Moral Panics and the Media

As previously stated, researchers have been examining the nature of media involvement in the production of social problems, including crime, since the late 1960s (Lee, 2007). Since then, social scientists have introduced many new terms and concepts to account for the preponderance of media in our lives, including the notion of moral panics (Cohen, 1972; Hall et al., 1978). Media's connection to social problems is, at least in part, due to the fact that throughout Western

society, knowledge tends to originate from exceedingly small groups of people, with many of our institutions structured to reinforce these power relations (Best, 1995; Foucault, 1977; Welch, 2006). The problem is magnified when fear takes form in the media because panic can become widespread in very little time (Welch, 2006). When a moral panic enters the equation fear can soar out of control, and many moral panics seek a scapegoat for which to blame (Welch, 2006).

A scapegoat is a person or group of people who are intentionally or unintentionally blamed for a given event. A prime example of scapegoating occurred in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the US. To this day, Muslim communities remain scarred as they were the main targets of blame in the media (Welch, 2006). Several researchers have outlined how one of the biggest dangers within a moral panic is language used by the media, as language can ultimately shape how we see and believe the event to have unfolded (Feeley & Simon, 2007; Lee, 2007; Sacco, 2005; Schissel, 2006).

In 1972, Stanley Cohen popularized a term originally coined by Jock Young (1971) that has since made its way into our common lexicon—moral panic. Feeley and Simon (2007) explain how the term moral panic has become so profound that it is used not only in the social sciences but also in political and media discourse. In describing moral panic, Cohen states:

Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. (1) A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; (2) its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; (3) the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; (4) socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; (5) ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; (6) the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and becomes more visible. Sometimes the panic passes over and is forgotten, except in folk-lore and collective memory; at other times it has more serious and long-lasting repercussions and might produce such changes as those in legal and social policy or even in the way the society conceives itself (Cohen, 1973, p. 9 as cited by Critcher, 2008, p. 1129, numbers added).

Thus, the term moral panic describes a process by which the notion that our way of life is somehow in jeopardy surfaces and becomes ubiquitous in public discourse. The associated fear often gives way to a sense of urgency by carrying with it the threat (either stated or implied) that

this one deviant act holds the potential to unravel the entire social fabric (Feeley & Simon, 2007; Jenkins, 2003; Kappeler, 2005; McCormick, 1995; Muraskin & Domash, 2007; Schissel, 1996). Moral panics have become so common throughout the media that they have been institutionalized at the government level. As such, phrases like “culture of control,” “culture of fear,” and “governing through crime,” are now relatively common (Freeley & Simon, 2007).

For instance, Welch states that “moral panics contribute to the escalating vocabulary of punitive motives used to justify inappropriate strategies of dealing with crime, especially those neglecting the root causes of crime and violence” (2007, p. 95). According to Freeley and Simon, “in this social world, moral panics are part of the infrastructure of contemporary society, so much so that the degree of specific episodes of real or imagined violence is of no real salience” (2007, p. 46). Moral panics can develop through certain societal stakeholders that may have an interest or independent stake in bringing a particular issue to the forefront, such as police departments, politicians, educational groups, and the media (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994). Moral panics are not always about crime, but they do share one common dominator—the media. As the discourse of fear pervades everyday life, more experiences seem to be attached to it (Altheide, 1997). In the past decade alone, there have been several moral panics fuelled by the media on topics as diverse as “terrorists, internet stalking, crystal meth, avian flu, genetically modified organisms, contaminated food, climate change, carcinogens, leaky breast implants, the obesity epidemic, pesticides, West Nile virus, SARS, and flesh eating disease” (Gardner, 2008, p. 6–7).

Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) identify four critical actors in the development of a moral panic: the mass media, moral entrepreneurs, the culture of control, and the public. Of particular importance among these actors are the mass media. The media play a critical role in the early production of the moral panic by constructing and portraying “processed or coded images” of deviance and deviants. According to Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994), three main steps are involved in processing media images: (1) exaggeration and distortion of the problem and of who caused it; (2) prediction, largely of the catastrophic consequences that are sure to follow in the absence of swift intervention; and (3) symbolization, in which labels are progressively transformed such that their mere mention (e.g. mods or rockers in Cohen’s seminal example) signifies a threat to be feared.

The second actor in the generation of moral panics are *moral entrepreneurs*, who campaign to eradicate the threatening behaviour and, by extension, the group(s) responsible. The third group, the *societal control culture*, is made up of those with the power to institute and legitimate new forms of social control as a result of the discourse surrounding the moral panic, such as the police and the courts. These new measures of social control are taken, in large part, to satisfy the fourth actor—*public opinion*—which closes the loop (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994).

While there is no question that a moral panic framework has had a tremendous impact on our understanding of the social construction of meaning by media (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994; Welch, 2006), particularly around crime, this framework has been criticized of late. Within the realm of critiques of moral panics in practice, the most glaring one, as pointed out by Critcher (2008), is that most applications of the model are restricted to contemporary events in a small number of countries, predominantly in the US and UK. Clearly, this undermines the legitimacy of claims that moral panics are endemic to societies containing mass media. This criticism, however, is perhaps the easiest to address. More historical and cross-cultural studies of moral panics would help to place the model laid out by Cohen in the context of the social structures of individual cultures and groups.

Another criticism of the moral panic framework stems from the recent evolution of media technologies. The newly emerging plurality of media could be said to undermine the very idea of a moral majority—a notion that is arguably at the heart of moral panics (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994). Moral panics are traditionally portrayed as resulting from the opposition between a single elite moral majority that exerts social control over minority groups by branding them as deviants.

The very notion of a moral majority, as pointed out by McRobbie and Thornton (1995), may be inherently outdated. New media systems and modern forms of communication may severely hamper the ability of conventional media groups to create folk devils. Admittedly, we currently live in an age of ever-expanding plurality of media and sources of knowledge about the world (Dowler, 2006). In the 1980s and 1990s, desktop publishing caused a surge of new media dedicated to niche counterculture markets, likely providing very different messages to their readership than mass media (McRobbie & Thornton, 1995). The explosion of media-based communication in the form of video and text blogs, web-based news media (e.g. the Huffington Post), and social networking has created an increasingly crowded landscape of voices all vying for dominance (Fleras, 2011). In this landscape, such competition may water down the relative

impact of any one voice to the point where a single moral majority, as envisioned by Cohen, no longer exists. This in turn may undermine consensus, one of the defining features of moral panics (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994). McRobbie and Thornton (1995) argue that any attempt to define a single out-group is potentially so contested that moral panics can no longer be described in terms of “[...] monolithic societal or hegemonic reactions” (1995, p. 560).

On a related line of critique, Ungar (2001) argues that the prototypical modern moral panic is an altogether different phenomenon than that described by Cohen. On the one hand, classic moral panics were local, often dictated from above by a moral majority that came with immediate—not always rational—remedies. New emerging issues, on the other hand, tend to be on an international or global scale (often surrounding environmental and biological issues), driven from a grass-roots level (e.g. social networking), and lack definitive solutions (Fleras, 2011; Ungar, 2001). As a result, new or at least radically updated models may be required to describe risk societies in the future.

Although more research is needed to understand if and how different forms of media are changing the discourse of crime, the current study may be able to provide some indication of the speed of change. As the sample of this dissertation is longitudinal, the data acquired may provide information for future studies that can indicate how language about crime, at least in newspapers, can change over time. Thus future studies can apply the data found in the current study to other sources of media such as Twitter, blogs, or online news in order to understand the changing nature of discourse. By shedding light on both the bias inherent in portrayals of stigmatized groups and the denial of overreactions that accompanies such portrayals, one can no longer ignore the ensuing worldwide human rights violations and their place as fundamental social problems. The overall theme running through this discussion is that uncovering notions of fear and moral panics can provide a fertile arena for fostering new ideas and inspiration.

2.3 Review of the Literature on Marginalization: Creating the Criminal Other

Media reports and the moral panics they sometimes create do not just tell us to be afraid, but they also tell us of whom to be afraid. A substantial body of literature exists on negative media portrayals of marginalized groups such as visible minorities, women, and youth (Altheide, 2002; Harding, 2006; Welch et al., 2004; Welch, 2006). Much of the data has found that these groups are both underrepresented in terms of being depicted in positive roles (e.g. in positions of

government, the corporate sector, or education) and overrepresented in terms of being depicting as threats to social order, including criminal behaviour (Harding, 2006; Larson, 2006; Schissel, 2006; Welch, 2006). These portrayals have potential to create archetypal criminal Others that may transcend fear of crime and instead become fear of certain groups of people (Larson, 2006). In other words, fear of crime becomes more than just the fear of being mugged by a faceless stranger as it shifts focus to fear of being mugged by a specific type of person (Hall et al., 1978; Larson, 2006; Welch, 2006).

The following review will outline the literature that captures how media portray crime, victims, and offenders in ways that may be used to distance or weaken an individual's claim to normal membership within a group. Additionally, this section will address why it is important to look beyond class-based differences. The importance of choosing several different critical theories with which to approach such research topics will also be highlighted. The following review is divided into subsections outlining how people are treated differently in the media based on their race, gender, and age.

2.3.1 Media and the Power to Marginalize

Many people rely on the images and discourse provided by media in order to construct the reality of their social world. Much of our news media—television, internet, or newspapers—relies on consistent reporting and interpretations of events over time and space (Greer, 2007; Tandon, 2007). That is, in a world of media sound bites in which there is pressure to convey as much information in as short a format as possible, media tend to rely on stereotypes for implicit projection of the social meanings being reported in their news items (Tandon, 2007).

Newspapers can serve as an ideal outlet for dominant groups to produce and broadcast hegemonic beliefs to maintain social order (Gramsci, 1971; Greer, 2007). These ideologies can help secure power for the dominant class by perpetuating crime as a problem of the Other through simplistic, fragmented, and contradictory explanations of social phenomena (Gramsci, 1971; Greer, 2007). This discourse can result in decontextualization—blaming the causes of crime on individual flaws rather than on social forces (Greer, 2007).

Welch et al. (2004) examined youth violence and race through media depictions and public opinion of African American and Latino males in the US through the development and use of the term “wilding.” Wilding became a new stylized word used to describe sexual violence committed by a group of urban teens. However, use of the term became caught up in a moral

panic as it quickly came to describe ethnic minority youths who committed many different types of criminal acts. When the media portray crime as predominantly a problem among ethnic minorities, the ensuing fear can produce behaviour that is indistinguishable from racism. On this point, James Q. Wilson notes that, “it is not racism that makes Whites uneasy about Blacks moving into their neighborhoods, it is fear. It is not racism that leads White parents to pull their children out of schools with many Black students, it is fear. Fear of crime, of drugs, of gangs, of violence” (1992, as cited by Chiricos, McEntire, & Gertz, 2001, p. 326). Although fear of crime is a complex construct with many determinants, one of the most telling relationships is that which links fear of crime with ethnic diversity (Covington & Taylor, 1991; Pain, 2000; 2001). In both British and US studies, whites living in mixed-race neighbourhoods have been identified as the most fearful segment of the population (Cheshire, 2007). This fact, however, is incongruent with the actual threat of victimization as studies show significantly higher rates of victimization for ethnic minority groups (Cheshire, 2007; Pain, 2001).

The historical and cultural context of a particular place may play an important role in different racial manifestations of fear of crime (Hurwitz & Peffley, 2005). As Pain (2001) states, associations of race and crime have different cultural instantiations. In the US, the black population is the most strongly imagined as prone to criminal activity. While in Canada, the same is true for Aboriginal groups (Brzozowski et al., 2006; Harding, 2006). However, according to the 2004 General Social Survey (GSS), Aboriginal peoples were three times more likely than non-Aboriginals to experience violent victimization (Brzozowski et al., 2006). What’s more, in 2011 The Native Women’s Association of Canada documented over 580 cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women across Canada. Thus, contrary to media perceptions, in Canada Aboriginal persons are far more likely to be victims of crime rather than offenders of crime (Harding, 2006).

Research has found that the act of labelling certain social groups as criminal by defining *safe* and *dangerous* territories and groups of people increases personal feelings of power and security, thus allowing individuals to control perceived risk factors through avoidance of certain areas (Cheshire, 2007; Pain, 2000). The power of marginalization in the media occurs through normalizing white privilege, which creates categories of deviance in reference to others, mainly visible minorities, youth, and women (Greer, 2007).

Marginalization can be defined as a form of oppression and powerlessness brought on by the division of labour (Young, 2004). Specifically, marginalization is “a matter of concrete power in relation to others—who benefits from whom, and who is dispensable” (Young, 2004, p. 54).

Additionally, the nature of the victim’s identity is racialized in much the same manner than the offender’s identity. Media do not portray all victims of crime equally; rather, they tend to disproportionately portray white, suburban, and middle-class victims (Simon, 2007). As such, media reports have the capacity to ultimately create a hierarchy of deserving and undeserving victims through the amplification of stereotypes (Simon, 2007).

Labels attached to both offenders and victims are, however, not solely assigned by the media, nor do the media create these labels in isolation. Instead, such labels are deeply embedded in public discourse and together with the media encourage the negative ideological constructs of crime. As a result, several different groups within society can be said to have previously been the target of moral panics within the media (Larson, 2006; Miller et al., 2006; Pollock & Davis, 2005; Wortley, 2008). From the Columbine massacre (Miller et al., 2006), to the black rapist (Gardner, 2008; Miller et al., 2006), and Native gangbangers (Proulx & Bobiwash, 2011), to girls gone bad (Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2008; Comack, 2007; Schissel, 2006), each group will be discussed below in terms of current and past research in order to understand how the construction of crime, offenders, and victims are framed within the press. Moreover, the literature will explain how many of these groups may be blamed for crime in a manner that legitimates their social marginalization.

2.3.2 The Deserving Poor: Portrayals of Race and Crime

A substantial body of literature exists on the dominant portrayals of visible minority groups within the media (Altheide, 2002; Larson, 2006; Welch et al., 2004; Wortley, 2008). For instance, certain groups have been labelled terrorists (Welch, 2006), while others have been affiliated with fear terms such as “wilding” (Welch, 2004). At other times, profound racialized stereotypes such as “driving while black” (Meeks, 2000) have proliferated through the media. Negative media portrayals have the potential to create conceptions of the criminal Other in terms of poverty, race, and gender; furthermore, these may transcend fear of crime and extend to fear of certain groups of people (Altheide, 1997; Hall et al., 1978; Larsen, 2006; van Dijk, 1997; Welch, 2006). One negative association between race and crime is when the media, and

subsequently the police and justice system, portray the most serious crimes as being committed by the racialized poor. It is here, where issues of class become intertwined with race and crime. For instance, when crime is seen as a function of poverty it provides an ideological message that blames the poor for their poverty and as a result protects the wealth and privilege of the upper classes (Altheide, 2009). Inequality, especially inequality based on race is said to be at the root of oppression between members of the economic and social classes (Reiman, 2012). In this case, social hierarchies can contribute to delinquency and its punishment (e.g., Abrahamson, 2006; Dahrendorf, 1959; Reiman, 2012). For example, the social institution of the law remains predominantly controlled by the upper class and therefore can disproportionately punish the activities of the poor (Abrahamson, 2006; Reiman, 2012). As a result, many visible minorities and predominantly poor individuals make up the vast majority of prison populations because the law works to define the behaviour of the marginalized as criminal, while at the same time largely excluding the rich from reprimand (Martindale, 2010; Reiman, 2012). Thus, street crimes such as robbery or mugging (that are predominately crimes of the poor) tend to be more harshly punished than white collar crimes (Green & Kugler, 2012; Reiman, 2012). The pattern is legitimated by media portrayals of crime that tend to display an image of poor and predominantly visible minorities as the segment of the population most threatening to the social fabric of society (Green & Kugler, 2012; Reiman, 2012; Schissel, 2006).

As a result, the criminal Other is created in the media because many mainstream media outlets have relied on negative stereotypes to classify different visible minority groups into dichotomies of good and bad. The former is made up of those who “pick themselves up by their bootstraps and go from rags to riches,” while the latter are largely portrayed as poor people who are criminals or are otherwise plagued by their own difficulties (Larson, 2006, p. 84). Other scholars have argued that news media coverage tends to reinforce and encourage stereotypes by what they do *not* report on or omit from the story (Entman & Rojecki, 2000; Larson, 2006). In this case, stereotypes may be formulated by not correcting negative racial patterns seen throughout newspaper articles, particularly surrounding crime. As Larson states, “exclusion, stereotyping and themes that mask racism and celebrate a dominant ideology are found in news as well as entertainment communication” (2006, p. 81).

A study conducted by Miller et al. focused primarily on the “invisible white street thug” (2006, p. 111–112). The authors concluded that when print and television news focus on street

crime, whites are usually absent from their reporting. However, when whites are reported as offenders, considerable time is spent going over life factors that may have contributed to their crime(s), such as psychological abuse and/or traumas, implying that the crime would not have taken place in the absence of these exceptional circumstances. In addition, many images of white criminals are romanticized such that the offender is seen as intelligent and potentially heroic (as in white-collar crime) or seen as fighting against a failing social system (e.g. the Goetz case of a white man who shot four black teens because they accosted him on a New York subway). The authors of the study stress that, “because they [white middle-class] mirror dominant values in our society, their crimes are met with understanding and the criminals receive sympathy or admiration.” The connotation seems to be that whites are presumed to be non-criminal by nature and, as a result their crimes, when reported, require special explanation. Several previous studies have observed that race profoundly impacts the likelihood that both offender and victim are portrayed in television newscasts as well as the amount of sympathy received (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002; Dowler, 2004a, b; Dowler et al., 2006; Greer, 2007). Moreover, many of these studies have shown that descriptions of white offenders, when they occur, are rife with references that undermine the offender’s claim to normal membership within their racial group (Greer, 2007; Miller et al., 2006).

Because the data speak to a population of offenders, not a difference in the language between offenders and non-offenders, the question now becomes, Why the difference in language? In order to go beyond differences in class, postcolonial theory will be used for explaining why certain groups are marginalized based on their race. Postcolonial theory is important as Aboriginal populations are at the greatest risk of marginalization in Canada. Postcolonial theory shares many similar goals with other critical theories as it attempts to offer an inclusive framework for addressing issues of gender, race, class, and other forms of oppression (Brown, 2012). Additionally, all critical theories share an opposition to the universalism of enlightenment-based thinking (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). As such, they hold that there is no essential truth to our experiences (Baines, 2011; Moosa-Mitha, 2005) and that identity is therefore fluid and changing. Furthermore, critical theories also recognize the importance of subjectivity, and the importance of the standpoint of those who are oppressed (Brown, 2012).

Critical theories such as postcolonial theory go beyond class-based differences by looking at how race intersects with gender, class, and power, as well as how these differences

may lead to oppressive relationships (Baines, 2011; Brown, 2012). Postcolonial theory originated in the historical process of European colonization and decolonization and is grounded in the belief that “justice requires a global decolonization at the political, economic and cultural levels” (Prasad, 2003, p. 7). Because they emerged out of intellectual challenges to contexts of racial oppression, postcolonial theory is often paired with anti-racist and anti-oppression theories (Childs & Williams, 1997).

The term postcolonial is used to examine the ways in which colonization continues to impact Aboriginal peoples far after political independence (Kubik et al., 2009; Mishra & Hodge, 1994). Postcolonial theorists contend that oppression and racism are reproduced by social structures such as the media and the cultural meanings often found within discourses that outlast any one historical period (Childs & Williams, 1997; Loomba, 2005). Postcolonialism is not a systematized theory; rather, it is a set of theoretical and political positions that encompasses variations of Marxism, neo-Marxism, feminism, poststructuralism, and deconstruction (Prasad, 2003). However, in order to understand the true importance of postcolonial theory for this research, a brief discussion of the historical background of colonization and the marginalization of Indigenous peoples must first be understood.

Prior to 1867, relationships between British and Aboriginal peoples had been largely based around trade (Kubik et al., 2009). The colonization of Aboriginal peoples in North America did not begin until the emergence of the second wave of the Industrial Revolution (Memmi, 2003). The driving force behind colonization was largely the profitability of the fur trade and the realization that wealth could be better accumulated through natural resources and the accumulation of land (Churchill, 1983; Kubik et al., 2009; Loomba, 2005; Memmi, 2003). As Indigenous groups already occupied large segments of valuable land, the British placed them on reserves as a way to harvest precious land resources (Churchill, 1983; Loomba, 2005). These makeshift camps were called Indian reserves. They grew in numbers during the mid-1800s as Europeans used the camps as a way to *anglicize* Aboriginals through Christian education and to assimilate them into capitalist society (Cannon & Sunseri, 2011).

The treatment of Aboriginal peoples further deteriorated when the Canadian government used this same racist ideology to create the *Indian Act* of 1876 (Cannon & Sunseri, 2011). The *Indian Act* marked the beginning of the residential school system used to enhance the assimilation process of Aboriginal children into a European way of life, complete with European

values (Crichlow, 2002; Kubik et al., 2009). This new European way of life left many children marginalized from their own culture and caused many to feel as though they were outsiders.

Kubik and colleagues sum up the detrimental effects of the residential school system:

For over a hundred years, a Canadian government policy to assimilate Aboriginal peoples by taking kids away from their families to residential schools where they were punished for speaking their language, practicing their own cultural and religious traditions, and often the victims of physical and sexual abuse, left generations of Aboriginal people without parenting skills, without self-esteem, and feeling ashamed of who they were and hopeless about the future (2009, p. 22–23).

The extreme effects of the residential school system continue today and can be seen through family and cultural breakdown across Aboriginal communities (Goforth, 2007). According to Kubik et al. (2009) and Memmi (2003), colonization runs far deeper than issues of family and culture. Rather, the true detrimental effects of colonization can be seen through the suppression, and at times overt annihilation, of Aboriginal peoples' former lives and culture. Memmi (2003) states that colonized people remain colonized people and that certain rights will be forever refused. Colonization marked the beginning of capitalist ideologies where race was used to control and manipulate class interests (Cannon & Sunseri, 2011; Crichlow, 2002; Goforth, 2007; Said, 1993).

Many of these harmful dominant class interests can now be seen in the media, where images generated about Aboriginal peoples at the hands of non-Aboriginals can be very negative, eliciting feelings of hate, anger, and confusion (Cannon & Sunseri, 2011; Crichlow, 2002). According to Said (1993), race is an inherent part of colonization because race is socially constructed for the sole benefit of those in power. For example, according to Proulx (2011), in the Canadian media Aboriginal peoples are often described as “intoxicated mother, hardened hairspray drinkers, derelict uncle, bodies full of intoxicants that would kill most people, shirtless man lying on the pavement splattered in blood, prostitutes, gang leaders, drug dealer, two parents passed out with their baby clothed in only a diaper” (Proulx, 2011, p. 148). The author continues by stating that these stereotypes are “interpretive repertoires”—in other words, a tool that helps people understand discourse and give meaning to different people and cultures (2011, p. 148). Texts are elements of social events that have causal effects in the construction of our social

reality. Therefore, when the media rely on negative stereotypes and untested assumptions, our beliefs and attitudes can change for the worst (Harding, 2006; Proulx, 2011). Although the language surrounding Aboriginal peoples in the media has shifted from the “evil savage” to the “lazy drunk,” the meaning remains the same as it reduces Aboriginal peoples to the category of Other (Proulx, 2011).

Some have argued that a healing process has begun in Canada with, for example, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which began on June 2, 2008 (Saul, 2008). The purpose of the TRC is to further discover and bring to light past wrongdoings toward Aboriginals at the hands of the government in the hope of healing unresolved conflicts (Saul, 2008). The launch of the Commission was followed by a public apology for the Indian residential school system made on June 11, 2008 by Prime Minister Stephen Harper on behalf of all Canadians (Campion-smith, 2008). Despite these steps toward healing, the effects of colonization are still being felt throughout Aboriginal populations as institutional racism and sexism are battles many must face on a daily basis (Crichlow, 2002).

Postcolonial theories have grown out of the severe oppression of Aboriginal peoples as a way to both preserve culture and to share the burden of change. For postcolonial theory the goal is to expose how colonial history influences today’s culture and to attempt to empower Aboriginal cultures (Prasad, 2003).

Moreover, for the current research, the addition of postcolonial theory furthers the goal of Stan Cohen (2007) and Hogeveen (2011) who stress that criminology should remain critical and that researchers should place a greater priority on the violation of human rights and human suffering in their home country. Since the vast majority of research on visible minorities and media originate from the United States and Britain, the current study adds important data to this literature from a Canadian perspective.

2.3.3 Cultural Insurgents: Women and Crime in the Media

Media sensationalism of female violence and aggression is not a novel phenomenon; women and girls who break the law have long captured the attention of mass audiences (Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2008). Over the past two decades, however, negative images portraying hyper-violent bad girls have become pervasive. The images often exaggerate girls’ aggression by implying that women are more likely to engage in criminal activity than ever before (Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2008; Schissel, 2006). Furthermore, the media sensationalize certain acts of violence through

portrayals of female victims. Although media biases in crime reporting in general (Surette, 2011) and in portrayals of women in particular (Barron & Lacombe, 2005; Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2008; Pollock & Davis, 2005) have been the focus of much research, relatively little data exist on the extent to which female offenders and victims are portrayed differently than their male counterparts in Canadian media.

Female offenders are at a distinct disadvantage in terms of media coverage as images of masculinized hyper-violent girls and women are frequently disseminated (Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2008). As a result, female offenders can be stigmatized twice—first as a criminal and then once more for breaking the societal conventions of female submission. This often results in the media labelling female offenders as “nasty girls” (Barron & Lacombe, 2005), as “bad girls” (Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2008), and as “monsters, misfits, and manipulators” (Comack, 2006). The perception that women are increasingly entering the world of male-dominated violence is largely a reaction to the shifting of gendered social boundaries and weakening of the traditional spheres of informal control over women (Kruttschnitt & Gartner, 2008; Steffensmeier et al., 2005). For example, Schissel points to an article in the Alberta Report, entitled *Killer Girls*: “Girls, it use to be said, were made of sugar and spice. Not anymore. The latest crop of teenage girls can be as violent, malicious, and downright evil as the boys... It’s an unexpected by-product of the feminist push for equality” (2006, p. 71).

The media has helped to brand female offenders as double deviants (Copeland, 1997): deemed abnormal once for having broken social norms and engaging in criminal behaviour and again for having done so while belonging to a group that is not supposed to have criminal tendencies. More damaging is evidence showing that portrayals of women in the media influence public opinion and policy. For instance, the growth rate of women in prison in the US has been almost double that of men, despite the fact that the mean offence rate, as calculated from national databases such as Uniform Crime Reports, shows no increase (Pollock & Davis, 2005).

In contrast to increasing trends of incarceration, women continue to commit fewer crimes than their male counterparts and have less violence in both their past and current criminal behaviour (Comack, 2006; Schissel, 2006). Most often women are convicted of crimes which are typically less violent than men, such as property crimes including theft, fraud, and shoplifting, public order offences such as mischief and arson, as well as drug and alcohol-related offences (Comack, 2006). Furthermore, women who do engage in violent crimes are usually one-time

violent offenders such as women who kill an abusive husband or boyfriend (Kong & AuCoin, 2008; Pollock & Davis, 2005). Thus, evidence indicates that women pose a smaller risk to the general public in terms of violent crime. The trend seems at odds with empirical research that has repeatedly observed more lenient sentences for women (Curry et al., 2004; Embry & Lyons, 2012), and the chivalry hypothesis (Grabe et al., 2006) that these data generate. Such a hypothesis asserts that because women are seen as weak and irrational, the criminal justice system is systematically paternalistic and protectionist toward them. As a result, women are more likely to be perceived as victims in need of protection rather than aggressors who require punishment (Grabe et al., 2006).

The discrepancy may be resolved by examining what Crew (1991) calls the pedestal effect. Female offenders who have fallen from grace and are seen as violators of gender norms can be punished more harshly than their male counterparts. The available evidence suggests that gender norms are seen as being more under threat than ever before, which has consequently brought about a shift toward more punitive treatment of female offenders (Collins, 2013a).

Much of the escalating social anxiety over girls' violence can be understood through the framework of a moral panic over girls and crime that emerged in the 1990s (Barron & Lacombe, 2005). The rhetoric of there being a threat to the moral fabric of society based on an increased prevalence of female offenders has created a binary social definition of women (Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2008). On the one hand, images of feminine, and therefore *good* women must be portrayed as the silent majority in need of protection. While, on the other hand paradoxically, such good women are also being swarmed by a growing underclass of women who are violent, cunning, evil, and methodical. These *bad* girls are often masculinized by implying that girls' violence is somehow a by-product of girls becoming more like boys (Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2008) due to their violation of gender roles.

The masculinized image of female offenders is reminiscent of Freda Adler's (1975) liberation hypothesis according to which women are becoming more like men and are therefore becoming more violent. The literature here also suggests that media portrayals of women are further skewed by blaming the causes of crime in ways that legitimate women's social marginalization (Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2008).

Women who are seen as mad or evil are not phenomena unique to Canadian or US media. Several critical media studies around the world have reported similar findings. For example,

Morrissey (2003) conducted a discourse analysis of media coverage of a female multiple murderer in Australia. The author found many examples of negative and often bizarre headlines throughout the news media. One repeat headline read: “lesbian vampire killings” (2003, p. 96). The author also found that the news media referred to the offender as “evil,” “vamp,” and “lesbian” and contended that she was part of a satanic group (a fact that remains unverified). Morrissey (2003) concludes that the media portrayed her as a mythical creature—as someone who fell outside the human realm.

Another study by Covaglione (2008) analyzed print media discourse in Israel between 1992 and 2002. The study examined differences in language between men and women who killed their children. While the crimes were all similar in nature, the author found striking differences in language. Fathers were almost all deemed rational-minded and/or cold. However, mothers were all seen as either evil or in need of help, with multiple references being made to their mental health problems.

A discourse analysis conducted by Whiteley (2011) looked at news media discourse in Australia surrounding women who kill. The author found that in almost all cases, media used inflammatory language to describe the crimes themselves, while the women were described as evil or bad. The author points to two different examples. In the first example, the newspaper referred to a woman as “a drug dealing prostitute who detested her children” (Whiteley, 2011, p. 100). In the second example, another woman was the “evil murdering grandmother” (Whiteley, 2011, p. 100). Whiteley concludes that the media relies on the discourse of “appropriate femininity” (2011, p. 101). In other words, a good woman does not kill, and if she does, she is deemed evil and no longer a woman within feminine ideals.

Women are often at an increased disadvantage in the media because they are expected to be more socially compliant than men. Therefore, if a woman should commit a crime, she can be stigmatized for committing that crime, as well as for breaking societal norms of how a woman should act (Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2008). Based on the above examples, it is clear there are several important ways in which violence committed by women is viewed as a distinct (and often abnormal) phenomenon relative to men. Not surprisingly, social tolerance for aggression in general is gendered (Gilbert, 2002; Rahman, 2007). The common phrase, “boys will be boys,” reflects our cultural acceptance of a masculinity that includes violence. As a result, men who are either aggressive or violent are seen as exercising their masculinity, whereas women who are

violent are seen as mad, crazy, or masculine, which contradicts social ideals of femininity (Pollock & Davis, 2005).

The definition of criminality and deviance lies primarily within a professional discourse that has historically excluded women (Smith, 1990). Feminist theories can provide insight into how deviance and criminalization among women may at least partially be the product of inequality between men and women (Comack, 2006).

To define feminist theory as a single entity is to risk overgeneralizing what is a large and diverse set of approaches. Feminist theory has had a long history, and it continues to be refined today by an active body of scholars (Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2012). With this caveat in place, however, one can attempt to describe feminist theory as a wide-ranging system of ideas that rework disciplinary knowledge in order to take into account the perspectives of women and develop a deeper understanding of their experiences and roles within society (Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2012; Schissel, 2006). Thus, feminism can alter the balance of power within sociological discourse (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). This balance can be struck by understanding the ways in which women have been systematically subordinated in the past by social structures such as the media (Moosa-Mitha, 2005; Smith, 1990).

Many feminist paradigms have roots in poststructuralist theory, which emerged in France in the 1960s as a critique of structuralism (Calhoun & Karaganis, 2006). Poststructuralists investigate the nature of human freedom in an increasingly systematized world (Calhoun & Karaganis, 2006). They see language and communication as fundamental forms of social construction. As a result, their paradigms are often used to critique the role of ideas and knowledge as political and ideological tools (Calhoun & Karaganis, 2006). Within this framework, organizations such as the media are seen as a powerful source of social control that can create systems of order and discipline (Gill, 2007).

Feminist literature has identified media as a source of hegemonic constructions of gender (Comack, 2006; Gill, 2007; Moosa-Mitha, 2005). Discourse often supports these institutions; therefore, the use of discourse is a practice which reproduces the material basis of the institution (Gill, 2007; Moosa-Mitha, 2005). For example, feminists such as Simone de Beauvoir and Dorothy Smith have shed light on how many aspects of our culture have been created by powerful and wealthy men, who have often pushed women's views aside and created definitions of who women are based on a social reality constructed by men (Smith, 1990). This lived

experience of a social reality imposed by outsiders may, in fact, be most pervasive for women involved in crime (Comack, 2006). Discourse analysis is one of the tools often used in feminist research because the method can critically analyze the various ways in which language is used throughout the media (Smith, 1990). Briefly, discourse is the institutional construction of knowledge “which takes place within a social organization of territories, material objects, people, rules, formats and technologies” (Ericson, 1997, p. 98). Discourses are both historically and culturally bound (Parker, 1992). Organizations such as the media are seen as a powerful force of social control that can create systems of order and discipline. Thus, if the media portrays certain people as more inherently criminal than others, such misinformation has the power to impact what people believe about crime, offenders, and victims. Additionally, the information has the power to define whom a society views as being the predominant perpetrators of criminal behaviour (Proulx, 2011).

The above factors clearly make feminism relevant to understanding the social construction of the criminal, especially that of the female offender. Analyzing negative and sensationalist coverage of female offenders and victims in the Canadian press is necessary in order to understand both how women are portrayed as the criminal Other and how they are differentiated from their male counterparts. More importantly, research shows that media portrayals likely have a profound impact on public opinions regarding crime and punishment, especially opinions regarding female offenders. As a result of their violating gender norms, female offenders are more likely to suffer from marginalization and scapegoating. Because women are treated differently than men in both in the media and the criminal justice system, it is important to incorporate feminist theories within the current study.

2.3.4 Tough on Kids: Media Portrayals of Youth Crime

Waging war against youth culture is not a new phenomenon in the media. Since the 1960s at the least, youth crime and youth culture have been breeding grounds for moral panics. Whether such panics have arisen as a result of shootings, violent video games, drugs, or other *immoral* behaviour, our youth seem to be at the centre of socially constructed fear (Cohen, 2007; Schissel, 2006). In one of the first sociological studies on the nature of media involvement in the production of social problems, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, author Stan Cohen paved the way for both criminologists and sociologists to understand how media can create not only folk devils but also fear among the public (1972). According to Cohen (1972), one of the leading players in

constructing fear around youth is the moral entrepreneur. A moral entrepreneur is a person who campaigns to eradicate threatening behaviour and, by extension, the groups whom they deem responsible for the behaviour. This societal control culture is made up of those with the power to institute and legitimate new forms of social control, such as the courts, the media, school boards, and parents (Brown & Munn, 2008; Schissel, 2006). According to Schissel (2006) moral entrepreneurs along with the media are the main forces guiding the public's common sense understanding of young people. The media sensationalizes at times fictitious accounts of youth trends, behaviours, and issues, which in turn impacts our understanding of the social construction of crime and youth culture.

Canadians are exposed to media rhetoric depicting increased lawlessness among youth and the need to "get tough on" kids. Youth are often portrayed as criminal and violent (Brown & Munn, 2008; Faucher, 2009; Schissel, 2006; Welch et al., 2004) despite evidence indicating that crime in general, and especially among youth, is in decline (Brennan, 2012; Doob & Sprott, 2006; Schissel, 2006). Evidently, in 2007 Canada reported its lowest national crime rate in thirty years, with the youth crime rate dropping by an additional 2% (CCJS, 2007). Despite declining crime rates, the media remain heavily focused on the dangers surrounding youth. Crime has become a political act, and politicians have responded with a "call to arms" attitude (Schissel, 2006, p. 47). We as a society have become so conditioned to fear crime and to want to protect ourselves that in order to gain electoral votes, elected members of government require a very strong crime platform, without which they are seen as being "soft on crime" (Lee, 2007).

Additionally, the rate of incarceration in both Canada and the United States continues to change in recent years with more and more youth being sentenced to adult facilities. Between 1984 and 1994, the arrest rate of juveniles for violent offences increased by 78% in the US (Austin, Johnson, & Gregoriou, 2000). More than 2,500 youth offenders are serving life without parole sentences in United States adult prisons (Lee, 2012). Michigan prisons hold over 350 juveniles who were sentenced to mandatory life sentences before they were old enough to vote, legally buy cigarettes, or have an eBay account. Worse still, about half of those young people did not actually kill anyone (Lee, 2012).

A 2006 National Gallup Poll asked Canadians about their views on suggested changes to the Young Offenders Act. The overwhelming majority (88%) of Canadians support a strict Young Offenders Act, which would allow an offender to be tried as an adult at age fourteen, as

opposed to the previous sixteen years of age threshold. This change would apply to offenders aged fourteen to sixteen who are either charged with murder or aggravated sexual assault, or those who fit the new category of “repeat violent offender.” Additionally, a majority of Canadians (86%) also support changes that would increase the maximum sentence for young offenders convicted of first degree murder from ten years to twenty-five years. According to Statistics Canada (2007), 13% of respondents disapprove of such a change, while 1% is of no opinion.

When asked specifically for the age at which a person charged with a serious crime should be tried in adult court, 41% of respondents mention an age below fifteen years. Of these, 20% suggest fourteen years of age, 10% suggest twelve years of age, and 1% suggests less than ten years of age. Conversely, another 41% suggest an age above sixteen years, with 28% of respondents suggesting sixteen years of age specifically. Only 1% suggests an age above eighteen years (Statistics Canada, 2007). A vast proportion of moral panics impacts children and youth (Adorjan, 2011; Krinsky, 2008; Schissel, 2006). It is thus important to analyze the discourse surrounding youth in Canadian newspapers.

A study conducted by Faucher (2009) analyzed 1, 937 articles on youth crime in Canada over a one hundred year period in order to determine what language was being used that might contribute to the fear surrounding youth. Findings indicated that the Canadian press has an established historical pattern surrounding fear of youth crime. Faucher (2009, p. 452) demonstrates that although the image of youth has changed from that of the *naughty kid* to that of the *evil thug*, Canadian media have been vilifying young offenders for at least one hundred years.

According to Walklate and Mythen (2007, p. 219), the binary construction of deviant offender and normal victim intensifies itself throughout the media and has led to the introduction of authoritarian governance and oppressive legislation, especially for youth. One of the most dramatic increases occurred in Canada between 1991 and 1993 as the Canadian index increased their coverage of youth crime by 453%, despite decreasing youth crime rates over the same period (McDonald, 1995, p. 153). Latimer and Desjardins (2009) have acknowledged that a false belief in increased youth crime has led government officials to increase the length of incarceration for young offenders and to introduce several new laws.

School violence, particularly school shootings, are a popular media topic. The media sensationalizes school violence based on isolated events such as the Columbine shootings. After April 20, 1999 the incident that took place at Columbine High School became associated with almost every act of gun violence on school grounds throughout the United States and the rest of the world. Altheide (2009) explains how claims-makers, especially the government and the media, managed to link the incident at Columbine to an act of terrorism, spreading fear throughout the country that all youth were at risk at the hands of other youth. In fact, the association has become so pervasive that school shootings are often described as an expression of the “Columbine syndrome” (Altheide, 2009).

In a study published in 2009, Kupchik and Bracy examined media attention toward school violence and their subsequent moral panics using a qualitative content analysis. The authors analyzed articles from the New York Times and USA Today from 1990–2006 in order to determine the degree to which media portrayals influence societal fears about school violence. The authors found that almost all articles discussing school violence were framed by promoting fear and relied on emotional responses rather than factual evidence. Additionally, the articles presented school violence as unpredictable, yet they simultaneously placed the blame for the unpredictability on schools (Kupchik & Bracy, 2009, p. 147). The authors also note that after Columbine, media coverage of school shootings went up drastically with 327 stories in two newspapers in 1999 alone, representing an eightfold increase over 1997 (Kupchik & Bracy, 2009, p. 142). Moreover, most of the news stories covered suburban schools, despite evidence indicating increased violence at urban schools (Ferguson, 2003). The authors conclude that conveying school violence as dire and as increasing in magnitude has legitimated the use of “get tough” policies and stricter laws for youths, such as zero tolerance measures.

Youth have often been treated as a distinct social group (Altheide, 2009; Faucher, 2009; Schissel) independent of race and gender, and they have often been the targets of moral panics (Altheide, 2009; Welch et al., 2004). Including age in the current study was a crucial part of the goal of understanding marginalization as all evidence points to the fact that young people are treated differently in the media and the criminal justice system (Altheide, 2009; Doob & Sprott, 2006; Faucher, 2009; Walklate & Mythen, 2007).

2.3.5 *The New Moral Icon: Media Portrayals of Victims*

The typical portrayal of the crime victim often depicts personal stories of suffering at the hands of strangers. According to McShane and Williams (1992), images of victims seen in news media are largely comprised of middle-class symbolism. Adding to this symbolism, Greer (2007) explains how images of victims are located along a continuum between the good victims who deserve a great deal of sympathy and the bad/culpable victims who, for one reason or another, deserve relatively little. The good victims are innocent, naive bystanders swept up by a crime that is both fearsome and unexpected. The bad victims, however, are culpable because they are seen as people who jeopardized their own safety through a series of bad decisions. This narrative depicts people who ultimately pay the price for being poor or for breaking social norms.

Research suggests the innocent/good victim is designed to evoke a passionate response to the crime by creating empathy. The persistent depiction of innocent victims can elicit fear of our own potential victimization by “identification through shared experience” (McShane & Williams, 1992, p. 267). The news media attempt to connect the consumer with the victim through excessive detail of their victimization and by reinforcing that the victims were normal people who did nothing to deserve being victims, stressing that similar events could happen to anyone, anywhere, at any time.

These portrayals are most common in descriptions of what Nils Christie (1986, p. 19) refers to as the ideal victim—a victim that the public can relate to and who is therefore effective at generating fear. According to Christie, the ideal victim is weak, carrying out a respectful chore at the time of victimization, such as caring for a sick relative. As a result, the victim is where *she* cannot be blamed for being. Finally, the victim is violated by an offender who is not known to the victim. The ideal victim generates sympathy because the ideal offender generates fear, and vice versa. The ideal victim thus creates the ideal offender, and together they create a powerful discursive tool.

By contrast, the narrative surrounding the bad victim typically portrays a demonized woman who likely has been accused of sexual promiscuity, of dressing provocatively, and of alcohol or drug abuse (Madriz 1997, p. 88–89). Moreover, the deserving victim is generally uneducated, poor, and, in the case of women, is often made to be a neglectful mother. The portrayal of the bad victim alludes to their character flaws since they have failed to achieve a normal amount of prestige and wealth. Moreover, these victims lack a moral compass, and

therefore victimization is expected as the privileges of good victims do not apply to them (Humphries, 2009). The discourse provides a simplistic and compelling explanation for victimization: bad victims earned their fate because of their lifestyle, while the true crime becomes poverty and fatherless households (Schissel, 2006).

In their 2006 study, Miller and colleagues analyzed the history of media portrayals of white crime victims. According to the authors, the American media has had a long fascination with portraying black men as violent, often of a sexual nature. Cases with the most media attention were those in which a black man had raped a white woman. In addition, in cases where the offender was black and the victim was white, many media stories described the offender as animalistic and savage. Because these were also the cases where harsh treatment within the criminal justice system was more likely, the authors state that the data illustrate a strong racial bias highlighting a hierarchical distinction between deserving and non-deserving victims (Miller et al., 2006; Simon, 2007).

When we examine the media's unrelenting fascination with school shootings, the above points are reinforced. Following the 1999 Columbine High School shooting, the media bombarded the public with endless accounts of school shootings. Miller and colleagues (2006) state that while Columbine was not the first school shooting to occur in America, the extreme overreaction in its wake was a result of its particular circumstances. In other words, the shooting took place in a small, white, middle-class ideal suburb, and the shooters were white middle-class teens. In the aftermath, the media coverage largely implied that if it could happen here, it could happen anywhere (Miller et al., 2006, p. 118). This case thus illustrates the trend according to which the media disproportionately portrays white, suburban, middle-class victims, and where the nature of the victim's identity is, in general, extremely racialized (Simon, 2007).

Dixon and Linz (2000) conducted a content analysis of crime victims seen on television news in Los Angeles and Orange County. They found that whites are overrepresented in the news as victims, while blacks and Latinos were underrepresented as victims. The opposite was seen when the offender was analyzed—whites were underrepresented, while blacks were overrepresented, and Latinos were virtually absent as both offenders and victims. The authors considered two different theoretical implications of why whites are overrepresented as predominantly victims of crime and not as offenders. The first implication is based on power relationships within society. Whites have mass ownership of media outlets and therefore have an

influence over what is seen on the news. Thus media content is shaped by whites to be favourable to whites (Dixon & Linz, 2000 p. 548). The second explanation emphasizes economic interests. Media outlets must remain profitable and must maintain a substantial share of a competitive media market. As competition increases, considerable time must be spent finding stories that are dramatic and that feature relatable victims for the audience. Thus, the vast majority of victims are white because the vast majority of news consumers are white (Dixon & Linz, 2000).

The literature presented here has demonstrated an increase in negative reactions to crime, especially street crime. Additionally, much of the negative focus seems to target visible minorities, women, and youth. While moral panics can emerge around many issues, they typically share two common dominators: (1) the creation of a dominant discourse largely through media portrayals of a looming and novel threat; and (2) the implication that one or more groups are largely responsible for the threat (Greer, 2007; Welch, 2006). Consequently, social anxiety over increasing lawlessness of certain groups of people has created scapegoats, and these groups are ultimately blamed for crime, fear, and anxiety, resulting in their increased marginalization.

It was important for the current study to address issues of marginalization found throughout the literature, especially the introduction of multiple oppressions based on race, gender, and class. As stated throughout the literature review, it is through oppression that scapegoats are created, and certain people are singled out as the creators of immoral and illegal behaviour. The literature review has gone beyond class-based differences by connecting critical theory to issues of race, gender, and age as seen in the media. These connections are essential to the current research as the media has the power to shape our beliefs regarding crime and offenders (Greer, 2007; Proulx, 2011). Power differentials based on race, gender, and class work to shape the language used in newspapers (Greer, 2007; Proulx, 2011), which makes the task of understanding how oppression occurs through media discourse all the more paramount.

The current study examines media portrayals of the social construction of crime, offenders, and victims, with particular attention to race, gender, and age—as well as their intersections—within crime articles. Through a thirty-year analysis of Canadian print media, this research adds critical data to the study of how media can both frame crime as a product of the racialized poor and how these depictions may dictate of whom we should be afraid.

In the following chapter, the multiple methodological approaches employed in this research will be discussed in detail. The combination of content and discourse analysis permits a unique measure of the language pertaining to the research themes. Furthermore, the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods provides context for how the themes are applied. The resulting analysis is therefore able to provide an objective indication of what language is used to describe specific groups through content analysis but while also providing a comprehensive picture of the archetypal portrayal of the Other.

CHAPTER 3: MATERIALS AND METHODS

Since the late 1960s, researchers have been examining media involvement in the production of social problems. Research has often linked media, particularly news media, with the formulation of social phenomena as social problems such as moral panics (Cohen, 1972; Hall et al., 1978), the war on drugs (Simon, 2007), and the notion of governing through crime (Lee, 2007; Simon, 2007). Given the importance of newspapers in Canada, and their continued position in shaping social discourse, understanding how offenders and victims are portrayed based on differences in gender, race, and age may provide unique insights into the construction of crime. As discussed in Chapter 1, this dissertation aims to develop a detailed portrait of the nature of media representations of crime. A content and critical discourse analysis was used to understand how offenders and victims are portrayed throughout four newspapers—the *Vancouver Sun*, *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, *Winnipeg Free Press*, and the *Toronto Star*—over a span of thirty years.

The mixed methods research (MMR) approach, while powerful, remains somewhat controversial in certain applications. As such, I begin the current chapter with a detailed discussion of the strengths of MMR for addressing the topic in question. Following this discussion, the chapter is divided into two sections. The first section addresses the quantitative portion of the analysis, providing an overview of content analysis and why it is particularly well suited for understanding media content. Here I also discuss how the content analysis was implemented with the current data set. Finally, the section will conclude with the strengths and weaknesses of content analysis as an analytic technique.

In the second section of the chapter, I outline the qualitative analysis used in the research. The section begins with a review of critical discourse analysis and of how it was applied throughout the study. In addition, I describe how the discourse analysis incorporated the themes from Chapter 4. The chapter concludes with a full presentation of the statistical procedures used to formulate the results, followed by a discussion of the limitations of MMR.

3.1 Rationale for Mixed Methods Research

Over the past decade, MMR has steadily gained popularity with academics all over the world. According to Charles Teddlie and Abbas Tashakkori (2011), MMR is an approach used to obtain data from unique yet complementary sources on the same topic or phenomena in order to provide

a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Teddlie and Tashakkori refer to the MMR community as follows:

[Having] gone through a relatively rapid growth spurt [...] it has acquired a formal methodology that did not exist before and is subscribed to by an emerging community of practitioners and methodologists across the disciplines. In the process of developing a distinct identity, as compared with other major research communities of researchers in the social and human sciences, mixed methods has been adopted as de facto third alternative, or third methodological movement (2010, p. 803).

An exact definition of MMR remains elusive since, by definition, the term encompasses a diverse and eclectic combination of methods and sampling and data analysis techniques, which are tailored to the study at hand (Cameron, 2011; Sandelowski, 2000). Tashakkori and Teddlie define MMR as “the type of research in which a researcher or a team of researchers combine elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration” (2011, p. 286).

The MMR approach first emerged as a distinct orientation in the late 1970s when researchers applied different qualitative methodologies to quantitative data in order to make greater sense of numerical data. However, it was during the late 1980s that MMR started to gain in popularity (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2011), particularly during the great paradigm debate or so-called paradigm wars (Cameron, 2011). Buchanan and Bryman comment that

The paradigm wars of the 1980s have thus turned to paradigm soup, and organizational research today reflects the paradigm diversity of the social sciences in general. It is not surprising that this epistemological eclecticism has involved the development of novel terminology; innovative research methods; non-traditional forms of evidence; and fresh approaches to conceptualization, analysis, and theory building (2007, p. 486).

As a result, MMR has been referred to as “the third methodological movement” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). As Sandelowski (2000) states, applying multiple methodologies has an intuitive appeal “because techniques are tied neither to paradigms nor to methods, combinations at the technique level permit innovative uses of a range of techniques for a variety of purposes”

(p. 248). Methodological eclecticism explicitly acknowledges that social phenomena are complex and may have several contributing causes. As a result, no one method can be expected to be comprehensive enough to understand these complexities. Despite these advantages, many researchers still object to MMR based on what Tashakkori and Teddlie (2011) call the “incompatibility thesis.” The incompatibility thesis states that it is inappropriate to mix qualitative and quantitative methods due to epistemological differences in the paradigms of each method. In response, many researchers assert that, when these methods converge, the combination of techniques which carry unique assumptions and philosophical traditions works to strengthen their conclusions (Cameron, 2011; Sandelowski, 2000; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2011).

Combining qualitative and quantitative methods can greatly strengthen a study because both methods possess different (and often complementary) strengths and because each can compensate for another’s weaknesses (Krippendorff, 2012; Morgan, 2007). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010) have produced an expansive list of paradigmatic stances taken within MMR, including the (1) a-paradigmatic stance; (2) substantive theory stance; (3) complementary strengths stance; (4) multiple paradigms; (5) dialectic stance; and (6) single paradigm stance (see Table 1). The paradigm chosen for the current research was the substantive theory stance. This stance claims that paradigms are not critically important in the making of inquiry decisions. Neuman (2006, p. 81) refers to a paradigm as “A general organizing framework for theory and research that includes basic assumptions, key issues, models of quality research, and methods for seeking answers”. Thus, the two stances related to the substantive theory paradigm are “pragmatic or context driven and concept driven” (Greene & Caracelli 2003, p. 96). Stated another way, it is the theoretical orientations relevant to the research (critical criminology, feminism, postcolonial theory) being undertaken that are more important than philosophical paradigms to this study (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010). As the themes and the twelve subthemes were emergent from the empirical and theoretical literature, choosing the substantive theory stance provided an excellent starting point for engaging in MMR. Furthermore, it allowed me to place my research approach paradigmatically. Whatever the approach taken, mixed methods researchers need to acknowledge the paradigm debate and rigorously defend their paradigmatic choices/stance (see section 3.6). In developing this point, Cameron (2011, p. 101, adapted from Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2010) presents a useful chart that highlights some of the paradigmatic stances in MMR (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Paradigmatic Stances in MMR

Paradigmatic Stances	Position Taken
a-paradigmatic stance	For many applied studies in real world settings, paradigms are unimportant.
Substantive theory stance	Theoretical orientations relevant to the research being undertaken (e.g. critical race theory, attribution theory) are more important than philosophical paradigms.
Complementary strengths stance	MMR is possible only if the different methods are kept as separate as feasibly possible so that the strength of each paradigm is maintained.
Multiple paradigms	Multiple paradigms may serve as the foundation for MMR. In some MMR designs a single paradigm does not apply.
Dialectic stance	Assumes all paradigms offer something and that multiple paradigms in a single study contributes to a better understanding of the phenomenon being studied.
Single paradigm stance	Initially formulated to provide the philosophical foundation for MMR—sometimes referred to as the “alternate paradigm stance” (Greene, 2007). Examples include pragmatism, critical realism, and transformative paradigm.

There are several strengths in combining methods. One important reason why MMR should be considered not only feasible but also essential is the idea of methodological eclecticism (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2011), which refers to selecting and then integrating the most appropriate techniques from both qualitative and quantitative methods in order to more thoroughly investigate the research at hand. In the case of analyzing texts, quantitative methods allow the researcher to assess the presence and magnitude of the true difference beyond random variation in the prevalence or frequency of certain key terms, words, and themes within a large body of text. Once these differences are isolated, detailed qualitative analysis can be conducted in order to capture the nature of the discourse collectively built by the text. In this way, qualitative methods are useful to fill the gap left by numerical data and provide context to the overall analysis once quantitative differences are found. Thus, MMR provides unique insights into a phenomenon—in this case, both building a profile of how the language contained in crime

reports changes as a result of the age, race, or gender of the actors involved, as well as exploring how these reports build a discourse that is portrayed to the public (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2011).

3.2 Part One: Quantitative Analysis—Content Analysis

The methodology for this research required incorporating not only newspaper demographics and offender/victim demographics, but it also necessitated measuring the language pertaining to the themes and twelve subthemes that emerged from the theoretical and empirical literature. Content analysis is used for measuring, classifying, and evaluating the content of any form of human communication. The specific type of content analysis approach chosen by a researcher can vary depending on the theoretical and substantive interests of the researcher and on the problem being studied (Weber, 1990).

The application of content analysis in the social sciences is generally traced back to the beginning of the twentieth century, although some form of the methodology can be traced to the 1740s (Holsti, 1969). Content analysis is widely used in sociology, anthropology, communications studies, and political science as a way to study communication in texts (Holsti, 1969). Weber describes content analysis as a “methodology that utilizes a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text. These inferences are about the sender(s) of a message, the message itself, or the audience of the message” (1985, p. 9). Another definition originates from Kaplan (1943), who states that “content analysis is the statistical semantics of political discourse” (as cited by Holsti, 1969, p. 2). The technique is founded on the belief that communication affects and is affected by our social environment (Rothe, 1993), and thus its purpose is to analyze “who says what, to whom, how, and with what effect?” (Lasswell, 1952, as cited by Holsti, 1969 p. 24).

The study described here conducted a summative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). According to Hsieh and Shannon “ a summative approach to content analysis starts with identifying and quantifying certain words or content in text with the purpose of understanding the contextual use of the words or content [...] A summative approach to qualitative content analysis goes beyond mere word counts to include latent content analysis” (2005, p. 1283). A latent content analysis involves a process of interpretive reading of the data for meaning (Holsti, 1969) and is an inherent mixture of pure quantitative and qualitative methods. In a summative

approach, the data analysis will search for occurrences of identified words—or in the case of the current study, themes—by hand or by computer. A frequency count of words was not used.

The first step in the summative content analysis was to design a set of research questions. The three research questions are: (1) How does the race, age, or gender of the offender and victim described within a newspaper crime report significantly impact the probability that the article will contain language that promotes a discourse of fear of crime and marginalization? (2) How has the prevalence of articles with language promoting a discourse of fear of crime and marginalization change significantly over time from 1982 to 2007? (3) How does the decade in which the publication occurs affect the relationship between language use and characteristics of the offender and victim described in (1) and (2) above?

In order to answer the research questions, texts (newspaper articles) were coded into manageable content categories. The content categories were fear of crime and marginalization, which were further divided into twelve subthemes. The subthemes were then coded by selective reduction, which consists of reducing the text to categories consisting of a set of words and phrases, rather than counting words.

3.2.1 Sampling Design

Three newspapers—the *Vancouver Sun*, *Winnipeg Free Press*, and the *Toronto Star*—were chosen at random from a list of Canada's twenty most widely circulated newspapers. The *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* was added to the list to provide a local comparison, as the study was conducted at the University of Saskatchewan. To be included in the sample, newspapers had to be local papers, as national newspapers (e.g. *The Globe and Mail*) typically cover unusual and atypical crimes from around the country. In addition, newspapers had to be the dominant local newspaper for the city. In an effort to develop a cross-sectional sample based on population size, ethnic diversity, and geographical location, it was important not to choose all the newspapers from one province. Lastly, newspapers had to be available on microfilm dating back to the 1980s.

Given the large data set, a sampling technique was needed for data reduction. This was accomplished using a retrospective longitudinal design. In each of the past three decades—1980s, 1990s, and 2000s—two numbers between one and ten were randomly selected in order to choose two years within each decade. Within these years, a pseudo-random number generator was used to select twenty dates, which then dictated the issues sampled from each year

of each newspaper. Given the six years and twenty dates per year selected, 120 issues were sampled from each city newspaper. Across all cities and dates, the total sample was 480 newspapers, from which 1,190 crime articles were analyzed. In each paper, the first ten pages of section A were analyzed. The rationale for the sampling strategy was twofold. First, it was a way to control the sample size; secondly, the vast majority of crime reports were found in section A. This was tested by randomly selecting four newspapers from a list of Canada's most widely circulated newspapers. The random sample for this test included the *Winnipeg Free Press*, *Toronto Star*, *Calgary Herald*, and the *Vancouver Sun*. The crime articles were counted for each section of the newspaper. Although crime stories appeared throughout most of the newspapers, the vast majority (75%) occurred in the first section (A). Given the choice between a set number of pages (in this case, ten) and a set percentage (e.g. 40%), the use of a constant number of pages held a distinct advantage. For instance, a set number of pages equalize the sample size between papers, which is important in certain types of quantitative analysis (Wolf, 1986). If comparisons are made between the number of articles of a specific type (e.g. editorials, articles about violent crime, etc.) across newspapers or across years, using a percentage would bias the results (Wolf, 1986). That is, if a comparison is made between two newspapers that are, on average, of different lengths the longer paper will be more likely to have more crime articles merely because the sample will be larger, not because there are more crime articles per se. By contrast, using a set number of pages for all samples inherently provides a comparison of articles per page, eliminating this bias and providing a much closer approximation to a simple random sample (Wolf, 1986).

However, section A of newspapers likely contains only the most high-profile cases, and, not all types of crime may be reported in the first section of the newspaper, such as white-collar crimes. Therefore the results of this study are limited to high-profile and sensationalistic cases, and as a result they may not be easily generalizable to all forms of crime reporting. Additionally, acts of terrorism and war crimes were excluded from this study there is a greater likelihood for overt racial bias. White collar crimes were also under-represented in this study because they are commonly included in the financial section of a newspaper.

In some cases, crime articles were collected past the tenth page if a full-page advertisement occurred. In such instances, the full-page advertisement was not counted within

the ten-page range, and an extra page was added to the sample. This measure ensured that each newspaper had an identical number of pages sampled.

Since all dates were randomly selected, some dates fell on Sundays and/or holidays. As a result, several dates were missing given that the *Vancouver Sun* and the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* do not publish Sunday papers, and neither did the *Winnipeg Free Press* throughout the 1980s. Furthermore, the *Vancouver Sun*, the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, and the *Winnipeg Free Press* do not publish papers on holidays. Only the *Toronto Star* publishes papers on both Sundays and holidays. Missing papers also account for all dates where there was no reported crime within the first ten pages (see Appendix B). A detailed codebook was designed using an Excel spreadsheet.

3.2.2 Variables

The current research required a detailed codebook (see Appendix C). A codebook was designed, and for each newspaper issue included in the analysis, the following variables were recorded: (1) year, (2) month, (3) date, (4) day of week, (5) page location, (6) number of crime articles per date, and (7) type of article. Each type of article was assigned a different number, and the categories for the types of articles were: (1) editorials (an article that reflects the opinion of the editor/editorial board of the newspaper); (2) letters to the editor (letters expressing the personal viewpoint of reader); (3) police reports (a crime report that was either officially released by the police department or a journalist writing for the police); (4) court reports (articles that cover court proceedings); (5) feature stories, which Humphries (1981, p. 192) refers to as routine crime stories; and (6) article briefs (very short news briefs that report crimes in less than a paragraph).

The classification for the type of crime committed/reported in each article was also recorded. The breakdown of crimes recorded for the study was similar to how Liska and Baccaglini (1990) used eighteen different single and multiple crime categories. The current analysis coded for thirty-seven different crimes, including homicide, rape, assault, robbery, drugs, family (family violence or disturbances that do not fall into another category), white collar (fraud, extortion, laundering, and embezzlement), multiple crimes (two or more crimes covered in the same story, but with no mention of what crimes these were), and other.

The analysis recorded any quotes used within the crime articles, and when applicable quotes were categorized as either informative (i.e. detailing for the reader what happened, providing a physical description of the offender, which direction they went, etc.) or fear-based

(i.e. a statement in which people expressed fear of the offender, of the crime, and/or of the neighbourhood).

Many offender and victim attributes were collected in each article when applicable. Among the variables recorded were gender, race, and age of both the offender and victim, if mentioned. The race of both the offender and victim were categorized in a manner consistent with Statistics Canada's classifications: white, black, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Filipino, Arab/west Asian, Latin American, Aboriginal, other, and no mention of race.

Whenever possible, all categories within the codebook were designed to be exhaustive and mutually exclusive. There were instances, however, when this was not always possible. For instance, often an article would describe a crime committed by both a man and a woman. In this situation a 1 (or "yes") was added for both genders of offenders.

3.3 Strengths and Limitations of Content Analysis

Content analysis has many advantages: it is unobtrusive, it is compatible with unstructured material, it is context-sensitive and therefore able to process symbolic forms, and it can deal with very large amounts of data (Krippendorff, 2012). Moreover, unlike many other methods for recording data, content analysis is generally not influenced by the presence of the researcher in the data collection process (Krippendorff, 2012). The materials used for content analysis are also generally public. As such, the researcher does not need to gain ethics approval, and the materials are easy to access, typically free, or inexpensive to obtain. Another advantage is that the analysis can be easily replicated with the original material and codebook (Babbie, 2001; Mehmetoglu & Dann, 2003). The codebook must, among other things, create a list of rules applied to the sample—e.g. inclusion criteria and sampling pattern—to ensure the analysis is systematic and consistent. The rules applied for this research were as follows: (1) all the data in the analysis were sourced only from the four newspapers outlined above; (2) the codebook was designed prior to the analysis of articles; (3) only content that fit into the twelve themes was included; and (4) no new themes were created ad hoc. All articles were read and analyzed by me only; however, multiple readers can be accommodated given appropriate controls to assess inter-rater reliability.

Suggestions made by Jutersonke and Stucki (2007) strengthened the study. The authors suggest that combining content analysis with another method makes up for the disadvantages

inherent to content analysis. The authors outline the limitations of content analysis—mainly its lack of capacity to find meaning in texts—and state that traditional content analysis is far too simplistic because words are simply counted, and no method is provided to decipher what the words mean in the larger social text. Following their suggestion, both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed with the belief that such a combination would provide more valuable information and constructive results on the role played by language in the formation of ideology surrounding our understanding of crime, victims, and offenders.

Despite the many strengths of content analysis, several limitations inherent to this method should be noted. The major disadvantage of content analysis is its limitation to the examination of communication records, which means that it cannot be subject to additional manipulation or experimentation (Krippendorff, 2012). Reliability is another issue. Although steps were taken to increase the reliability of the data, such as using only one coder, coding errors can never be eliminated entirely (Krippendorff, 2012), particularly in such a large data set containing 34 dependent variables for each of the 1,190 crime articles. Another limitation of the data lies in the validity of the categories or list of words/sentences that comprise each subtheme. The coder (myself) decided which words or sentences each subtheme should contain, and thus the process remains vulnerable to weaknesses of interpretation and to how these interpretations may change over time. For example, a word or sentence may not mean the same things in the context of a different article. Moreover, the word or phrase may have a much different meaning in 1982 than it would in 2007. However, the quantitative analysis necessarily ignores these distinctions. As such, distinctions may be lost even over short periods of time. If, for example, an ongoing court case is covered by a series of four or five articles, it is very possible that the treatment of the offender and/or victim will evolve over the course the coverage. Unfortunately, it is also unlikely that all of the articles would be included as part of the sample. There was little to no means of controlling for this problem, as the situation is a general problem for content analyses containing random samples (Babbie, 2001; Krippendorff, 2012; Mehmetoglu & Dann, 2003). A final limitation of the study is a sampling bias. The current study only analyzed the first ten pages of section A in each newspaper. However, section A will likely contain the most high-profile cases and therefore not all types of crime may be reported in the first section of the newspaper (such as white collar crimes). Therefore the results of this study may be limited to high-profile and

sensationalistic cases and as a result may not easily be generalized to all forms of crime reporting.

3.4 Part Two: Qualitative Analysis—Critical Discourse Analysis

I have chosen a critical discourse analysis as the second methodology because it involves the critical examination of language and meaning. More importantly, a critical discourse analysis can help explain which groups of people are at greatest risk of being marginalized in Canadian news reports. By deconstructing the discourse found in the subthemes, I was able to establish connections between the type of language (based on race, age, and gender) used in newspapers and compare it to language used for white, male, and adult offenders and victims. The ability to draw these connections is critical to the analysis because the goal here is to develop a detailed portrait of the nature of media representations of crime and to analyze the differences found in language used for different groups of people.

Discourse refers any sort of textual, visual, or audio form of communication (Proulx, 2011). As such, discourse encompasses any form of communication in which individuals derive meaning, and it can become an in-depth tool for analyzing the meaning created by individuals through the use of textual and other forms of communication. Discourse analysis is especially well suited for carrying out critical research that sets out to investigate and analyze power relations in society (such as media portrayals of crime) and to critique such relations with the goal of social change (van Dijk, 1995). While many different types of discourse analysis exist, the present study employs the use of critical discourse analysis (CDA). According to Norman Fairclough (2001), CDA varies from other forms in that it does not begin with the analysis of texts or interactions; rather, it begins with the analysis of key issues in society.

According to van Dijk, “when studying the role of discourse in society, CDA especially focuses on (group) relations of power, dominance, and inequality and the ways these are reproduced or resisted by social group members through text or talk” (1995, p. 18). The aim of a CDA is to uncover the underlying ideologies that play a role in inequality. In other words, “CDA specifically focuses on the strategies of manipulation, legitimation, and the manufacture of consent and other discursive ways to influence the minds (and indirectly the actions) of people in the interest of powerful” (van Dijk, 1995, p. 19). In order to understand how social variables are able to impact the language used in the media (Parker, 2004a), a CDA was best suited for the

current analysis. As stated above, a CDA is a type of method that studies how inequalities are produced through language (text) by reproducing the point of view of elite attitudes (Proulx, 2011). According to Proulx (2011) language is studied because of its status as the primary instrument through which ideology is transmitted.

The question then becomes focused on how a CDA is conducted. One weakness of qualitative analysis is that it can be far less structured than its quantitative counterparts. As a result, there are often no step-by-step instructions (Proulx, 2011), and researchers must create their own steps. For the current study, this was done using a modification of the approach set forth by Norman Fairclough (2001, p. 125). The modified approach for the current study covered his 5 original steps, but slightly modified to fit the current scope of the research. The first step focuses on a social problem with a semiotic aspect: in this case, the portrayal of crime, offenders, and victims based on their race, gender, and age.

The second stage identifies obstacles to the problem being tackled. I have interpreted this step to mean choosing the proper methodology in order to address the phenomenon of interest. Methods used in the study were deployed to analyze how the discourse of the criminal Other can occur throughout four different Canadian newspapers. One of the greatest obstacles in designing the methodology was deciding how to properly create categories of difference in the discourse itself based on the offender or victim's age, race, and gender. In order to analyze the language, I chose two themes from the literature—fear and marginalization—that I thought were best suited to capture differences in language. From these two themes, twelve subthemes emerged from the empirical and theoretical literature in order to capture specifics about the offenders, victims, and crimes themselves. The overall purpose of the themes and subthemes was to gain a critical understanding of media representations of crime and victimization. In other words, who is portrayed as a criminal? And who is portrayed as a victim deserving of media coverage?

A MMR approach was chosen as the best solution to the problem because combining qualitative and quantitative methods can greatly strengthen a study as both methods have different strengths, and each can compensate for the other's weaknesses. Additionally, the combination of methods allows for a detailed analysis of the language found in texts (Morgan, 2007). Specifically, the qualitative method (CDA) helps to fill the gap left by numerical data to provide context to the overall analysis once quantitative differences are found.

Because discourse is based on the power of traditional knowledge, meaning that people in power produce the knowledge that filters down to everyone else (Proulx, 2011), close attention was paid to the “top-down” relations or the downstream point of view, rather than the “bottom-up” relations of resistance (Meyer, 2001). Based on the above points, CDA is able to unravel the ideological underpinnings of differences found within the media.

The third stage is the textual analysis, which is the interpretation of the themes (to be outlined in the results and discussion section of this thesis). The step is both interpretive and explanatory, and, in this way, the unstructured nature of the method becomes advantageous. In other words, it can provide a means to go back through the data set and look for associations both between the themes set out a priori in the content analysis with de novo themes and dominant portrayals. As an example, according to the quantitative analysis, the article containing the most fearful words could be compared with (a) the most articles containing the least fearful language and/or (b) the article containing the most fearful language in a different category (i.e. male versus female offenders). This latter example is particularly powerful, since it may reveal differences in the discourse being portrayed based on context, which are not made apparent from quantitative analysis alone. For instance, research using comparable methods has shown that even when fearful language is used when describing female offenders, the language often takes on a sexualized undertone that portrays the archetype of the “seductress” (Collins, 2013), while for male offenders this language often includes references to graphic violence and the randomness of their actions (Collins, 2014). Both types of articles contain much of the same language—espousing fear over the corruption of society’s moral fabric—and thus content analysis alone would provide comparable quantitative data. The fear being promoted, however, takes on a slightly different connotation in these two cases—a difference that would likely be missed without the inclusion of a qualitative analysis. Additionally, the textual analysis is understood through critical paradigms, demonstrating the need to include an analysis of critical criminology, race (postcolonial theory), gender (feminism), and the deconstruction of language.

The fourth stage was to identify possible ways past obstacles, such as generating suggestions for future research and potential policy changes. Fairclough (2001) states that the researcher should take the analysis one step further in order to formulate possible solutions to the problem. Although a full discussion of potential solutions to the marginalization of certain groups in the media are by and large beyond the scope of this study, I outline potential policy

changes in Chapter 6. The final stage deals with reflexivity and to address whether or not the problem is compromised through its own positioning in academics.

As a large part of the analysis focuses on discourse analysis, it is essential to understand not only how discourses arise, but also how their impact can be felt in general. In simple terms, a discourse analysis can be thought of as the study of communication within socio-cultural contexts, in this case newspapers. According to Taylor, language “is not a neutral information-carrying vehicle, as the transmission model of communication would imply, rather, language is constitutive: it is the site where meanings are created and changed” (2001, p. 6). Therefore knowledge produced at a particular historical moment, within a particular social context, can influence our thoughts and actions as discourse is “applied in the real world, has real effects, and in that sense at least becomes true” (Hall, 2001, p. 76). Stated another way, “news makes sense within a social context: if it acts at all like a mirror, it reflects preoccupations within that society, and when it constructs a picture of the world, that picture is often very close to what members of that society already know” (Matheson, 2005, p. 15).

The above quote illustrates the true power behind a moral panic. A moral panic arises through the media as an affirmation of common knowledge (e.g. that youth can be dangerous) and combines this with a phenomenon that scares the public (e.g. schools are not a safe place for your children), which results in panic (e.g. the Columbine “syndrome”).

According to Parker (1992), researchers should concern themselves with three main aspects of discourse. The first one acknowledges that discourses support institutions, thus deploying a discourse is practice that reproduces the material basis of the institution (Proulx, 2011). Secondly, discourses reproduce power relations (Proulx, 2011). An example of how a discourse can support institutions and reproduce power can be seen through the medical model of aging (Stone, 2003). Aging has been collectively defined as a social problem, rather than as a natural state of progression through the human condition (Stone, 2003). This view thus sees old age as a disease that can (and must) be treated at the individual level—e.g. through public services and medication. The discourse not only reaffirms the need for resources to be aimed at treating the elderly, but it also reinforces old age as something that should be feared. In a sense, old, dependant, and sick are social expressions of each other (Stone, 2003). In the same way, a criminal discourse surrounding visible minorities may reinforce both the social definition of the concept of visible minority and its equivalence with criminality.

Lastly, discourses have ideological effects, but according to Parker (1992) discourse is not ideology in and of itself. Research should not treat ideology as a thing; rather, ideology should be seen as a description of relationships and effects within a particular place and historical period (Proulx, 2011). A discourse is the institutional construction of knowledge “which takes place within a social organization of territories, material objects, people, rules, formats and technologies” (Ericson, 1997, p. 98). In other words, discourses are both historically and culturally bound (Parker, 1992). Thus, if the media portray certain people as inherently criminal over others, the misinformation has the power to impact what people believe about crime and offenders and, more importantly, whom a society sees as the predominant perpetrators of criminal behaviour (Proulx, 2011).

3.5 Analysis

I began the analysis began by printing all newspaper articles from the microfilm reader and by assigning a unique number (1–1, 190) to each article. Each article was first read to record all demographic variables. Once this was completed, I then read the articles for a second time for the purpose of extracting words for the content analysis and placing them into multiple subthemes. I initiated the content analysis by assigning a code to each subtheme.

The codes were as follows: fear (F); excessive violence (E); crime as a metaphor (M); rationalization of the crime (RCR); dehumanization of the crime (DCR); crime is everywhere (CE); dehumanization of the offender (DOF); rationalization of the offender (ROF); reference to the offender or victim as being crazy (C); history of crime (H); mention of poverty (P); and reference to occupation (O). Word(s) or phrases matching these themes within the articles were placed into the codebook to maintain consistency. Each article in the analysis was then coded on a spreadsheet for the presence (1 = yes) or absence (0 = no) of words belonging to each subtheme. When these numbers are averaged across articles, the coding scheme provides a probability of occurrence for these words. Probabilities were then compared across types of articles on the basis of race, gender, and age of the offender and victim.

All quantitative analyses were conducted using analysis of variance (ANOVA). The basic purpose of an ANOVA is to test for significant differences between means. In the results of the current research, each ANOVA tested for differences in the prevalence of language related to each subtheme for one of three different groups: race, gender, and age. Gender and age were both constructed as binomial variables, while the ANOVA analyses of race had three levels.

Further details on the construction of the levels of variables are provided in Chapter 5 for each corresponding section of the results.

Like any other test drawing from the general linear model, ANOVA carries with it certain assumptions, including that all dependent variables have approximately equal variance and that the distribution of each variable is approximately Gaussian (i.e. a distribution that fits a normal bell curve). The data presented here, however, violate these assumptions. In the case of both the gender and age analyses, the number of observations is highly skewed to one category (i.e. most observations are from males and adults), and so variances are certainly not equal. Moreover, the dependent variable for all analyses is binomial (i.e. it can only have two values, 0 or 1), which is not normally distributed. Research has repeatedly shown, however, that ANOVA is a robust technique that can provide valid conclusions even when analyzing data that violate its core assumptions and when enough observations are available (by virtue of the central limit theorem). In using ANOVA to analyze dichotomous data, the procedure is typically robust, even in the face of heteroscedastic data, when there are at least forty degrees of freedom for error (D'Agostino, 1971; Efron, 1978; Lunney, 1970). According to Lunney,

The findings show the analysis of variance to be an appropriate statistical technique for analyzing dichotomous data in fixed effects models where cell frequencies are equal under the following conditions: (a) the proportion of responses in the smaller response category is equal to or greater than .2 and there are at least 20 degrees of freedom for error, or (b) the proportion of responses in the smaller response category is less than .2 and there are at least 40 degrees of freedom for error (1970, p. 265).

In the current analysis, there are over 1, 000 degrees of freedom, resulting in a sufficient number of observations to ensure the robustness of ANOVA. Despite this large number of observations, there was a need to control for familywise error. Put simply, with a critical value of 0.05, it is expected that one in every twenty tests of significance will reject the null hypothesis solely by random chance, even in the absence of any real effects.

Given the number of variables being assessed in this study, there would be a high probability of committing Type I errors (i.e. falsely rejecting the null hypothesis) without some strategy to objectively limit the number of comparisons. The study contains 5 different subthemes related to fear of crime, and 7 subthemes related to marginalization, each in reference

to victims and offenders, yielding 24 dependent variables to be assessed in each of the 4 papers across 6 years, for a total of 576 comparisons. Of course, one can control for familywise error by adjusting the critical value, but with over 500 comparisons the adjusted value would be so low that it would risk committing Type II errors (i.e. failing to reject the null hypothesis when real differences are present). As a compromise between these issues, the number of comparisons was limited by collapsing across newspapers, meaning the newspapers within a given decade were examined together. That is, the *Vancouver Sun* samples for 1982 and 1987 were combined with samples of the three other newspapers for 1982 and 1987, ultimately limiting the possible comparisons and thus making subsequent correction for familywise error more manageable. Moreover, without the collapsing of the data there would not be a sufficient sample size for one newspaper in any given year. Unfortunately, the trade-off for this data scheme is that some comparisons are no longer possible (e.g. geographical comparisons within a decade). Similarly, sample size was not sufficient to analyze interactions between demographic groups.

3.6 Practical Considerations for Mixed Methods Research

It has been well established that fear of crime is at least in part influenced by the media (Greer, 2009; Lee, 2007). Moreover, past research has shown that the escalation of fear in many Western societies has resulted from increased media coverage of crime. Despite the diversity of media outlets, a common discourse often emerges that criminal behaviour is a product of bad people, from poor neighbourhoods, preying on innocent and undeserving victims. The use of mixed methodology can be quite productive for detecting such common threads in discourse, particularly across time and place. In the research described here, a combination of content and critical discourse analysis was undertaken to determine both the prevalence of language provoking fear of crime and marginalization on a cross-section of Canadian print media and whether portrayals of crime have changed over a span of thirty years.

In conducting mixed methods research, I did encounter some issues that are worth addressing. First, the field of sociology and its literature both remain resistant to the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods mainly due to the argument that combining methods is epistemologically incoherent (Symonds & Gorard, 2010). However, others (myself included) assert that certain types of research greatly benefit from the combination of these methods, both in particular and from methodological eclecticism in general (Jutersonke & Stucki, 2001;

Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2011). Eclecticism explicitly acknowledges that social phenomena are complex, that they may have several contributing causes, and that no one method has shown itself to be comprehensive and appropriate enough to fully understand the complexities involved (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2011). The complexities inherent in some types of research are precisely the types of studies that can greatly benefit from mixed methods research.

Once a researcher is convinced of this general rationale for mixed methods, several technical considerations soon emerge, the most important of which is the order of the analyses. In the current study, the quantitative analysis took place first, while the qualitative portion was intended to contextualize and interpret the quantitative results. There are, however, many circumstances in which this order should be reversed. For instance, quantitative analyses require that specific hypotheses be tested. In the case of crime reporting, there is substantial literature, largely from US and UK samples, to draw from and apply to the Canadian context. In less defined research areas, however, it may be more informative to begin with an unstructured exploratory qualitative analysis in order to get a sense of the themes present. Once these themes are identified, they can be converted into a quantitative test to determine how prevalent they are and whether they are equally applied across different groups (e.g. over time or location, in some types of texts and not others).

One should also consider carefully the use of automated content analysis tools. These tools are constantly evolving, and they do have serious drawbacks in terms of there not being a human present to interpret and contextualize the text as it is examined. However, in this case, the coupling of this assessment with a qualitative analysis may compensate for this fact, and it may make the savings in time inherent to a (semi-) automated content analysis all the more appealing.

In order to understand how oppression can occur in the chosen newspapers, two broad themes were chosen and twelve subthemes emerged from the empirical and theoretical literature. In the following chapter, the themes and subthemes will be discussed in detail. The goal behind the themes and subthemes was to gain a critical understanding of media representations of crime and victimization and to determine what groups of people are at risk of falling into multiple subthemes and therefore at greatest risk of suffering from multiple oppressions. By analyzing pre-existing and emerging themes, particularly in reference to specific groups, this study sheds light on which groups are targeted for fear and marginalization in Canadian newspaper media reports on crime.

CHAPTER 4:
THEMES BASED ON FEAR OF CRIME AND MARGINALIZATION
USED IN THE ANALYSIS

The themes and subthemes that emerged from the theoretical and empirical literature can all be seen to work toward gaining a critical understanding of media representations of crime and victimization. Examining how Canadian print media frame crime as an act perpetrated by the Other is of utmost importance. As stated in the introduction, themes used in the analysis were selected for their potential to answer the research questions posed in this study. The overall purpose of the research questions was to create a detailed portrait of the nature of media representations of crime. Incorporating language that speaks to both marginalization and fear within the same crime reports is uniquely suited to assess whether the crimes of some offenders are disproportionately explained away on the basis of race, age, or gender. A great deal of research has examined how the media can project an authoritative discourse in describing an ideology both about crime (Garland, 2002; Gorelick, 1989; Lee, 2007) and about offenders (Greer, 2007; Welch, 2002; Welch et al., 2004). Despite this vast literature, no systematic investigation as to how these archetypal portrayals actually project discourse that encourages marginalization and the fear of specific groups of people has ever been conducted. It is in this respect that the current study makes its unique contribution, as it considers how the discourse of Othering can occur through language that projects fear of crime and marginalization within media portrayals. It is important to note that the vast majority of the theoretical and empirical literature used to develop the themes in the current study was based on American studies. As such, all of the themes chosen for the current research may not be applicable to Canadian media crime reporting.

The first theme captures the ways in which crime, offenders, and victims of crime may be portrayed as part of a discourse designed to promote fear. Drawing largely from critical criminology, it has been well established that mass media propagate a fear of crime through the use of specific language (Altheide, 2002; Amerio & Roccato, 2005; Dowler, 2003; Lee, 2007; Schissel, 2006; Welch, 2003). Based on existing literature, language promoting fear of crime was divided into five subthemes for the purposes of this research. They include words and phrases

that (1) explicitly describe fear; (2) reference excessive violence; (3) dehumanize the crime; (4) describe crime using metaphoric language; and (5) imply that crime is everywhere.

The second area of investigation considers how media portrayals may marginalize groups of people. This theme is separated into seven subthemes, which are intended to capture the stereotypical portrayal of the offender (e.g. implying a criminal predisposition) and of the crime itself, as well as details that may undermine an individual's claim to normal membership in a group. Previous studies in critical criminology and feminist literature (Larson, 2006; Miller et al., 2006; Reiman, 2012; Schissel, 2006; Welch, 2004, 2006; Wortley, 2008) have suggested that the marginalization of certain groups of people can be promoted through the use of language (designed here as subthemes of marginalization).

Additionally, much of the same research has repeatedly shown that, as opposed to objective measures of risk, perceptions are what drive the fear of crime. For instance, the presence of minority groups in a neighbourhood can impact fear levels far more than actual crime statistics. Liska, Lawrence, and Sanchirico (1982) found that both blacks and whites reported significantly higher fear of crime when living in cities with a higher percentage of non-whites. Moreover, both Hogan and Gertz (1997) and Rader et al. (2007) reported similar findings using a measure of perceived (rather than actual) racial composition. In both of these studies, living in all-black or mostly black neighbourhoods elevated fear for both white and non-white residents, but this effect was strongest among white respondents, which was consistent with Liska et al.'s data (1982). Thus, the available evidence generally supports the premise that fear of crime can be driven through factors that affect the perceptions of respondents rather than true risk. It is logical to include the constant exposure to constructions of the criminal Other and finding people who match those depictions within their neighbourhood to the factors that can manipulate this subjective sense of risk. Based on this assertion, it is not surprising to find that substantial literature exists which demonstrates that marginalization—particularly marginalization based on race—and fear of crime are causally linked. As a result, the subthemes for this section include (1) rationalizations for the crime; (2) dehumanization of the crime and/or offender; (3) implying that the offender is crazy/unstable; (4) reference to an offender's criminal and/or violent history; (5) mention of the offender's occupation; and (6) the offender's rationalization (Lee, 2007; Reiman, 2012; Miller et al., 2006; Welch, 2009; Wortley, 2009).

Each article was coded into manageable content categories or themes (i.e. fear of crime and marginalization) and these themes were further divided into twelve content units or subthemes. The subthemes were chosen based on their prevalence in the literature and were coded by a process called selective reduction. In other words, the text was reduced to categories consisting of a set of words and phrases, rather than counting words (Krippendorff, 2012). The presence (1) or absence (0) of words fitting each of the subthemes was then recorded for each article in the analysis. The methodological paradigm chosen for the current study permits a measurement of the language pertaining to the themes while also providing context on how those themes were applied in the newspapers. Although the mere mention of just one subtheme may not have much impact, the goal was to find a pattern among subthemes as it would apply to a person's gender, age, and race.

Before connecting the themes to the current research, however, it is important to first define what a theme is as well as briefly address why including themes in the current research was a critical step. Holsti describes a theme in research as "a single assertion about some subject, it is the most useful unit of content analysis" (1969, p. 116). Holsti (1969) also explains that because the boundaries of themes are not easily identified, subthemes are often necessary. As such, I identified subthemes relating to the general themes of fear and marginalization.

It must be noted, of course, that any assertion that media representations alone create fear of crime or the marginalization of certain groups would be far too simplistic. Media depictions of crime are but one avenue for researching how perceptions of crime are constructed within our culture (Fleras, 2011). In the following sections, I will address each subtheme in detail and provide examples of the words and phrases drawn from the newspaper samples.

4.1 Part One: Subthemes for Fear of Crime

In the first theme, that of fear of crime, I analyzed general words and/or phrases used in the newspapers that may propagate fear of crime. Media outlets have had a long history and fascination with crime (Lee, 2007); as a result of consistent portrayals of crime as being out of control, the fear of crime has become a major problem. Fear of crime is no longer just the domain of academic researchers. It has, in many respects, become a political tool (Furedi, 2006). The fear of crime can shape the way we react both to the crime itself and to those we criminalize. It can thus have a significant impact on criminal justice policy and practice (Lee, 2007). As more

people fear crime, larger segments of society will be more likely to support calls for tougher laws and penalties (Johnson, 2009; Roberts, 2001).

An example of these trends can currently be seen through the Conservative Party's new get tough on crime measures. Although the overall crime rate declined by 15% between 1998 and 2007, the government intends to spend 255.7 million dollars on new crime prevention initiatives (Macleod, 2010). Among the changes are mandatory minimum sentences, which have led to skyrocketing incarceration rates in the US, and the *Truth in Sentencing Act* which passed in February 2010. The new act limits the amount of credit prisoners can obtain for time served. According to Stephen Harper, "there are these arguments that told people somehow if you don't punish criminals, that crime will go away. I never quite understood that philosophy, but I think people understand that that approach has not been effective" (Macleod, 2010). It is therefore important to understand the discourse surrounding fear of crime as it may be directly attached to the societal stigmatization of offenders.

4.1.1 Fear

Fear of crime has both been problematized and pathologized throughout the media to such an extent that Ditton and colleagues (1999) have stated that fear of crime has become bigger than General Motors (as cited by Lee, 2007, p. 1). Several studies have analyzed the appearance of the word "fear" and its synonyms (Altheide, 2009; Amerio & Roccato, 2005; Welch et al., 2004). Consistent with previous literature, the current analysis coded the presence of fear, any of its synonyms (e.g. "panic," "dread," or "terror"), or descriptions of fear of specific people or groups. Any words alluding to randomness in criminal acts, or acts that could happen to anyone, were recorded in this section as well. The implication here, of course, is that no person or action is safe from street crime. For example, "All women at risk"; "died alone and terrorized"; "high profile murders have unsettled the middle class"; "hunted down the elderly"; "stark horror"; "sound the death knell"; "prowling at night"; and "will your child come home alive today?"

4.1.2 Excessive Violence

A common axiom in media reports on crime is described in the phrase "if it bleeds, it leads" (Lee, 2007, p. 187). However, Dowler (2004) claims this common adage is not entirely true—it depends on who is bleeding. Gruesome crime stories make for good news and can be in the headlines for weeks. Generally speaking, the more gruesome and heinous a crime story, the greater appeal it has to both the public and politicians (Dowler, *et al.*, 2006). The repeated

presentation of such news stories may have unintended consequences, such as making people more inclined to debate the penal system, the amount of police on the streets, and the severity of laws (Lee, 2007). Similarly, depictions of crime and violence could possibly lead to less compassion or more anger toward an offender or group of people. Excessive violence has been linked to fear, the creation of moral panics, and sensationalism in general (Lee, 2007). Moreover, violent crime reports usually make up approximately 40% of all news coverage (Trautman, 2004). The subtheme of excessive violence thus accounted for these depictions in order to examine their intersections with age, race, and gender. For example, phrases in this subtheme included “blood was splattered all over”; “burned alive”; “orgy of slayings”; “slashed and stabbed the man 30 times then gutted the body”; “a women whose forearms were hacked off by a rapist”; “total massacre”; “pumped five bullets into a pregnant woman”; “put her body in the bath tub, poured chlorine bleach over it and began cutting it up with a knife”; and “he carried the head and an arm in his backpack.”

4.1.3 Dehumanizing the Crime

To dehumanize a crime is to deprive the event of all human qualities. This subtheme coded the presence of references to crime as an act that is brutal or animalistic—e.g. using words such as “savage” or “wild.” In addition, accounts were tallied as dehumanizing if the crime was described as mechanistic or devoid of emotion—e.g. referencing a calculating killer. Both types of language have a similar connotation of the crime: the act itself becomes extraordinary, and the offender is seen as acting outside the repertoire of human normality. Coyle (2005), who conducted a discourse analysis of newspapers and their use of the word *evil* to describe crime, provides a good example. In the year 1982, the author found thirty headlines that utilized the word *evil* to describe crime; however, by 2003 there were 1, 374 headlines referencing crime as *evil*. The author suggests that over time the meaning of the word “crime” has evolved to mean “sin, the devil, the disobeying of divine or righteous law, and sinful and depraved nature” (Coyle, 2005, p. 11). Additionally, he found that the media often refer to socially inappropriate acts as *evil* acts, thus moving crime from a socially constructed domain to an act “defined by powers beyond social construction” (Coyle, 2005, p. 11). Crimes thusly described then become morally or ethically bankrupt crimes (Coyle, 2005; Welch, 2006, 2007). For example, they are “repugnant,” “barbarism,” “savage crime,” “pure evil,” “heinous,” “wild,” and “horrendous crime.”

4.1.4 Crime as a Metaphor

Comparable to analyses using US newspapers (Gorelick, 1989; Thibodeau et al., 2011), the subtheme of crime as a metaphor analyzed allusions to crime and/or violence which suggest that society is filled with crime that is both catastrophic and terminal. Describing crime as a *cancer* or *war* is provocative. Since failure to resist cancer or war is ultimately fatal, both terms are deeply embedded in discourse that justifies severe retaliation. This type of discourse was originally described in a study of the Daily News Crimefighters Campaign in New York City (Gorelick, 1989). The author conducted a content analysis of ninety-six crime articles to determine the frequency of language describing crime in terms of metaphors of evil or destruction, which Gorelick (1989) termed the “vocabulary of force.” Gorelick concluded that language of force not only describes crime as requiring militaristic response, but it also suggests that crime is fatal, diseased, and unpreventable. For instance, words and phrases in this subtheme included “war,” “firebomb,” “tide of crime,” “cancer,” “explosive crime spree,” and “vortex of crime.”

4.1.5 Crime is Everywhere

Several researchers (Fleras, 2011; Matheson, 2005; Jenkins, 2003; Welch et al., 2004) have analyzed the depiction of crime as rampant and inescapable, particularly in the context of the media’s fascination with youth crime and school shootings. This subtheme coded the use of language that stated or implied that crime was ubiquitous and rampant. For example, words and phrases in this subtheme included “another bloody weekend,” “yet again,” “classic case,” “full time gang presence,” “slew,” “the latest,” and “dozens of incidents.”

4.2 Part Two: Subthemes for Marginalization

The second area of investigation considered how media portrayals may marginalize certain social groups, separated into seven subthemes based on existing literature. These themes were intended to capture the portrayal of the victims, the offenders, and the crime itself. Language used in the articles may provide circumstantial explanations for some offenders but not for others, creating bias in how these offenders are viewed by the reader, particularly if this pattern of explanation (or lack thereof) is based on a person’s race, age, or gender. The section is also important as it deals with multiple oppressions—i.e. poverty, class, and history of crime. It is through these forms of oppression that scapegoats are created and that certain people are singled out as the creators of immoral and illegal behaviour (Fleras, 2011; Welch, 2006).

4.2.1 Rationalizing the Crime

The first subtheme coded descriptions that provided an explanation for the crime, which typically centred on extraordinary circumstances. Comparing these data against descriptions of the crimes, offenders, or victims may help to explain why newspapers choose to rationalize the crimes committed by certain groups. This is particularly relevant given recent data (Miller et al., 2006) suggesting that throughout American media a great deal of energy is spent on examining the motives behind crimes committed by white middle-class people. The authors claim this is because whites are not seen as inherently criminal by nature, and therefore their crimes are in need of special attention. For example, phrases in this subtheme included “seduced by Satan”; “delicate mental state”; “system screwed up”; “inspired by the movie ‘point blank’”; “hooked on heavy metal music”; “deviant sex drive”; “it was the government’s fault for not checking the qualifications or psychological background”; “the legal system proves it pays to be a white collar criminal”; and “seen too many Rambo movies.”

4.2.2 Dehumanizing the Offender

Language that dehumanizes the offender may impact the reader in several ways. Foremost, it portrays the offender as abnormal or extraordinary (Miller et al., 2006). The type of language may mitigate fear by portraying the event as something normal people cannot experience. If the offender is portrayed as particularly savage or evil, then their characteristics dictate whom the reader should fear. It is also important to distinguish between dehumanizing the crime and dehumanizing the offender because many crime reports only engaged in one of these types of descriptions. Phrases in this subtheme included, for instance, “a man so vile he makes you want to gag on your own emotions”; “meet the devil, he’ll chill you to the bone”; “particularly loathsome”; “almost appearing to be a member of a species other than the human race”; “pathetic mother”; and “bombshell blond bandits.”

4.2.3 Words that Describe the Offender as Crazy or Unstable

This subtheme analyzed a special case of dehumanization of the offender: the medicalization of deviance (Conrad & Schneider, 1992; Reith, 2008). These depictions warranted separate analysis because the discourse may be particularly harmful. For instance, the language has the potential to marginalize the offender twice, once for committing the crime and again for being mentally ill, a negative discourse in its own right. Fleming (1983) conducted an analysis of UK newspapers from 1975–1979 in order to analyze how the media furthers the stereotype that those suffering

from mental illness must also be criminal. The author found that newspapers would often focus on bizarre and violent acts committed by individuals released from hospitals. The media used words such as “monster, pervert, mad, [and] sex maniac” (Fleming, 1983, p. 161) to describe the individual and their crimes. Fleming states the media are able to create a false reality surrounding those on the margins because very few of us have direct contact with such individuals.

Ultimately, this leads to the exclusion and exploitation of those who are seen as social threats at the hands of the powerful, such as the media. In addition, the section may be of particular relevance in the context of gendered depictions of crime, since previous research has demonstrated crimes committed by women often allude to women being mad or crazy (Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2012). This section captured the tendency for media reports to include a medical discourse in articles describing offenders of specific groups, which included words and phrases such as “nut job,” “deemed insane,” “mad,” “lunatic,” “sexual psychopath,” “depressive illness,” and “mentally deranged.”

4.2.4 History of Crime or Violence

Reference to an offender’s criminal or violent history paints a picture of the offender’s predispositions and implies the offender is incorrigible, not to be trusted, and untreatable. This category is especially important if it is attached to a specific social group, as the language can further the stereotype that crimes are committed by certain groups of people. For example, phrases in this subtheme included “lengthy criminal record”; “not surprising given his past”; “violent in the past”; “career criminal”; “had a history”; “known to police”; and “was on parole.”

4.2.5 Reference to Occupation

Occasionally, crime reports focus on the high education level or high-profile occupation of those who commit a given crime (Miller et al., 2006). The purpose of this subtheme was to examine the sensationalism attached to crimes committed by the privileged in order to provide contrast to the stereotype that crimes are predominantly committed by the poor and uneducated. This section was also able to compare the rationalizations for why the crime occurred given by newspapers based on a person’s occupation. For example, phrases in this subtheme included “advertising executive,” “bureaucrat,” “deranged police officer,” “former RCMP,” “children’s coach,” “star respirologist,” and “member of council.”

4.2.6 Reference to Poverty

Many scholars contend the media have consistently racialized poverty and its link to crime (Gilens, 2009; Jennings & Kushnick, 1999). For example, Fishman (2006) states media have marginalized poor visible minority groups through the US's war on drugs. As a result, many black communities across the United States have been targeted and blamed for drug problems throughout the country. This section analyzed the stereotype that crime is a phenomenon of the less fortunate and assessed whether this image is disproportionately attached to specific social groups. Since there was no way of actually measuring poverty per se, the section only coded statements that describe or implied that the offender or victim was poor. Words and phrases in this subtheme included "no known address," "slum district," "transient," and "street person."

4.2.7 Rationalizing the Offender

Although this subtheme clearly complements the subtheme of rationalization of the crime, it remains distinct in that it only coded words pertaining to the offender. This subtheme searched for any distinction made between good people who have done a bad thing and bad people in general. The subtheme coded descriptions which provided an explanation as to why the crime was committed. These included phrases such as "in the end, they succumbed to the pressure"; "had pressure because of job cuts"; "battered wife syndrome"; "on drugs"; "he lacked the qualifications to handle large accounts"; "single mother household"; and "he is brilliant and honest, it's not like him."

In sum, these subthemes were derived from the theoretical and empirical literature and were selected in order to gain a critical understanding of media representations of crime and victimization. In the following chapter, the results and discussion of the study will be outlined. Due to the large data set, discussion of the results will be separated into sections based on the race, age, and gender of the offenders and victims. The results show how differences in language can be observed in Canadian crime reports based on the mention of race, age, and gender of both offenders and victims. Moreover, these differences are consistent, with no differences observed between individual newspapers. With few exceptions these biases are consistently present over the thirty-year span of crime reporting sampled here.

CHAPTER 5:

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There was a little girl, who had a little curl, right in the middle of her forehead; when she was good, she was very good indeed, but when she was bad she was horrid.

– Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1882)

Results of the research show that significant differences in language exist in Canadian crime reports based on the gender of the offender and victim. Moreover, these differences were found to be consistent, with no differences noted between individual newspapers, and with biases seen across thirty years of crime reporting. Using twelve subthemes relating to fear and marginalization, the results of the 1,190 sampled crime articles indicate that white offenders are disproportionately criminalized and dehumanized. Depictions also frequently undermine their claim to normal membership within their racial group through extraordinary character defect.

By contrast, the research shows that visible minority offenders are linked to poverty. Articles describing white victims use fearful language, while visible minority victims are blamed for their victimization. Portrayals of female offenders accurately depict them as generally low risk, and both female offenders and female victims are treated equivocally. Women offenders are dichotomized into sexualized bad girls or malicious black widows. Similarly, female victims are depicted either as bad victims who must be blamed for their circumstances, or good victims who garner sympathy through the negative portrayals of their offenders. Young offenders and victims are linked to gang activity, and the language regarding them contains a mixture of both fear and marginalization, with little difference between the two groups. The results uncover a bias in newspaper reporting that favours explanations *for* crime rather reporting *about* crime and offenders.

In the section that follows, I present a detailed description of the results of the quantitative analysis. I begin with the basic characteristics of the sample, such as the number of crime articles per paper and of the offences depicted in the sample. The preliminary analysis provides an important backdrop to how newspaper reporting differs across locations and has evolved over time. In the next section, I discuss the results of the twelve subthemes, and how the language systematically varied across the race, gender, and age of the offender and victim. As

the study was quite large and contained many variables, the results and discussion for each dimension of race, gender, and age will be discussed independently. Such a format provides an analysis that is both easier to comprehend and that facilitates the integration of the quantitative and qualitative analyses. Moreover, in order to increase clarity, no F values or degrees of freedom are presented within the results for individual comparisons; instead, this information has been consolidated into three ANOVA tables presented for the analysis of race, gender, and age in Appendices D, E, and F, respectively. Finally, I provide an analysis of the intersections of these dimensions.

5.1 Sample Characteristics

This research yielded 1,190 total crime articles across all four newspapers and date ranges. Several papers were missing within the sample (see Appendix B) due to dates falling on holidays or Sundays, or because no crime was reported within the first ten pages. In total, 66 dates were missing, and thus the 1,190 articles were retrieved from 414 dates rather than the complete sample of 480. The breakdown of crime articles per paper and year are depicted in *Table 5.1*. Across the sample, there were 1,815 reported crimes, and almost three-quarters (73%) were violent crimes (see *Table 5.2*). These numbers are comparable to data from another recent content analysis conducted on Canadian print media (Wortley, 2008). At 20%, the most common crime in the sample was that of homicide, which represents nearly double the number of articles on assault, the second most frequently reported crime at 11%.

Table 5.1: Crime Articles per Paper per Year

<i>Year</i>	<i>Vancouver Sun</i>	<i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>	<i>Toronto Star</i>	<i>Saskatoon Star Phoenix</i>
1982	30	38	64	63
1987	78	77	75	55
1992	42	40	66	39
1997	43	51	44	49
2002	31	39	36	51
2007	33	28	63	55
Total	257	273	348	312

Table 5.2: Offences Depicted in the Newspaper

<i>Crimes</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Assault	193	11
Attempted murder	57	3
Arson	20	1
Armed robbery	36	2
Assault with weapon	12	1
Break and enter	24	1
Criminal negligence	8	0.4
Child abuse	111	6
Carjacking	5	0.2
Child pornography	12	0.7
Drug/alcohol crime	54	3
Death threats	12	1
Domestic violence	1	0.05
Extortion	4	0.2
Embezzlement	17	0.9
Fraud	189	10
Gang violence	8	0.4
Homicide ¹	361	20
Hit and run	10	0.5
Kidnapping	31	2
Manslaughter	34	2
Molestation	54	3
Multiple crimes	8	0.4
Organized crime	7	0.4
Prostitution	5	0.2
Robbery	101	5
Rape	67	4
Reckless driving	9	0.5
Riot	3	0.2
Shoplifting	3	0.2
Shooting	52	3
Sexual assault	82	5
Stabbing	3	0.2
Theft	82	5
Vandalism	5	0.2
Weapons violations	38	2
Other	97	5
Total	1, 815	100

¹ Includes both first and second degree murder.

Within the articles, 1, 418 (88%) of all offenders were reported to be male, while only 196 (12%) were reported to be female (see *Table 5.3*). In terms of offender's age, 891 (55%) were reported as adult offenders, while only 131 (8%) of all articles stated the offender was a juvenile or that the offender was under age 18. Recording the offender's reported or pictorial race became more difficult as the vast majority of articles (76%) did not identify the race of the offender. Wortley arrived at a similar result when he found that 65% of all articles in the Toronto print media did not mention the race of the offender (2008, p. 111). The current study was only able to gather race data from 24% of crime articles. Although the race of the offender and victim were reported in less than half of all articles, the presence of these descriptions had a profound impact on the language within the remainder of the article. The racial breakdown of the offenders was as follows: 228 (49%) were white, 92 (20%) were Aboriginal, 57 (12%) were East/West Asian, 50 (11%) were black, and only 28 (6%) were identified as Chinese (see *Table 5.3*).

Within the study there were 1, 045 reported victims of crime, with 587 (56%) of them identified as male and 458 (44%) identified as female. The age of the victim was not cited often. Only 512 victims in the articles had their age mentioned, with 175 (34%) youth and 337 (66%) adults. The race of the victims was also rarely cited. In fact, out of the 1, 045 total victims reported, race was only stated in 209 articles. The racial breakdown for victims was as follows: 99 (47%) were white, 32 (15%) were black, 33 (16%) Aboriginal, 25 (12%) were Chinese, and only 20 (10%) were identified as East Asian (see *Table 5.3*).

Table 5.3: Descriptive Statistics of the Sample

<i>Category</i>	<i>N</i>
Total articles	1, 190
Total crimes mentioned	1, 815 (100%)
Total violent crimes	1, 325 (73%)
Total male offenders	1, 418 (88%)
Total female offenders	196 (12%)
Total offenders	1, 614 (100%)
Total male victims	587 (56%)
Total female victims	458 (44%)
Total victims	1, 045 (100%)
Total youth offenders	131 (8%)
Total adult offenders	891 (55%)
Articles that mention race of offender	291 (24%)
Total mentions of offender race	464 (100%)
White offender total	228 (49%)
Black offender total	50 (11%)
Aboriginal offender total	92 (20%)
Chinese offender total	28 (6%)
East/West Indian offender total	57(12%)
Other non-white	9 (2%)
Total race of victim mentioned in all articles	366 (100%)
White victim total	209 (57%)
Black victim total	47 (13%)
Aboriginal victim total	42 (11%)
Chinese victim total	44 (12%)
East/West Indian victim total	24 (6%)
Total local crime articles	558 (47%)
Vancouver	90 out of 257 (35%)
Winnipeg	115 out of 273 (42%)
Toronto	213 out of 348 (61%)
Saskatoon	140 out of 312 (45%)
Front page articles	151 (13%)
Articles that included pictures	244 (20%)
Articles that included quotes from victims/witnesses	152 (13%)

Having described the basic characteristics of the sample, analysis can now be conducted on the prevalence of the twelve subthemes, and how they may systematically vary across the race, gender, and age of offenders and victims.

5.2 Differences Between Race of Offenders and Victims

The first variable compared against all twelve subthemes was the race of both offender and victim. Given the characteristics of the sample described above, an analysis of individual racial groups cannot be conducted while still maintaining the robustness of ANOVA in the analysis of binomial proportion data. In order to maintain sufficient sample size within each category, the analysis described below reduces the report of race into three groups: white, non-white, and not specified. This same classification was conducted for both offenders and for victims.

As detailed in Chapter 2, a great deal of research indicates that the race of offenders and victims can greatly impact the way crime stories are reported and subsequently understood by the reader. Below are the results of the changes in language used over time within crime reports, both in general and with the mention of race.

5.2.1 Differences in Language Based on the Race of the Offender

A significant difference was found in the language when the articles mentioned the race of the offender. The race of the offender significantly predicted the probability that the offender's occupational history was mentioned ($p < 0.001$; see *Table 5.4*). Subsequent pairwise comparisons show that articles mentioning white offenders were significantly more likely (24%; see *Table 5.4*) to mention the offender's occupation than either articles in which the offender was described as a visible minority (8%; $p < 0.001$) or articles in which the offender's race was not specified (9%; $p < 0.001$; see *Table 5.4*). All other themes showed no main effect of the race of the offender. Subsequent qualitative analysis of this trend shows an interesting discourse that emerges, in which occupation (and particularly education) is presenting certain offenders as either typical examples "of their kind" or as exceptional cases. Because this discourse was also tightly coupled with other effects, it will be elaborated upon later.

Several significant changes in the language used to describe offenders were observed. These changes depended both upon the race of the offender and the decade in which the article was published (i.e. a decade by race interaction term), indicating that articles describing white versus non-white offenders have changed in different ways over the past thirty years.

The first change in language in the portrayal of offenders occurred in the prevalence of dehumanization of the crime ($p = 0.02$). Crimes committed by white offenders were the most likely to be dehumanized. The trend remained steady throughout the thirty years of the sample. In other words, 10% of articles from the 1980s describing white offenders also used language that dehumanized the crime, and this percentage has changed very little, increasing to 13% in articles from the 2000s. However, within this same period, the likelihood that an article contained language which dehumanized the crime increased in articles describing visible minority offenders—from 3% in 1980s to 10% in 2000s—and in articles that did not mention the offender's race—from 4% to 7% (see *Table 5.4*).

The likelihood of an article containing language implying that crime is everywhere ($p = 0.004$) also showed distinct trends over time in crime reports describing offenders that are white relative to visible minorities. Articles describing white offenders were consistently more likely to imply that crime was everywhere over the entire thirty years (ranging from 10% to 12%). The language decreased over time when the offender was a visible minority—from 8% in 1980s to 3% in 2000s. However, the data show an increase from 3% to 8% when there was no mention of the offender's race (see *Table 5.4*).

The likelihood that an article contained language mentioning an offender's history of crime (although not a significant result) also increased over the years when the offender was a visible minority. The trend increased from 6% in the 1980s to 18% in the 2000s. Thus, articles were more alarmists in tone when the offender was white.

Collectively, these trends point to distinct profiles for the typical description of a white offender relative to a visible minority one. Discourse portraying the white offender is more likely to mention occupation, more likely to dehumanize the crime, and more likely to contain alarmist language implying that crime is everywhere.

When articles use words that describe crime as being everywhere, combined with dehumanizing the crime and a mention of occupation, they tend to set the stage for the portrayal of a white offender as a rare and strange event. That is, the use of language suggesting that crime is everywhere in the depictions of crimes committed by white offenders disproportionately implies that whites should not be criminals. In other words, the underlying suggestion is that if there are *white* offenders, then the social fabric must be disintegrating.

Subsequent qualitative analysis verifies this subtext. Articles describing white offenders often contained lengthy emotionally charged depictions of the crime. Moreover, the qualitative analysis showed that dehumanization of the crime was almost always coupled with individualistic explanations for the crimes committed. This pattern effectively individualizes both white offenders and their crimes, implying that these are not typical crimes committed by normal people. Such trends have also been noted in American media reports (Miller et al., 2006). An example of this language can be seen in a *Toronto Star* article titled, “Accused man is not a sociopath, doctor testifies:”

A man who claims he killed his sister in self defence [sic] had the necessary emotional detachment to dismember her even though he loved her [...] the average person would find what [name of offender] did to his sister “repugnant and gruesome,” but his personality traits allowed him to proceed (Mitchell, 2007, p. A8).

These types of explanations, often implying mental defect, were disproportionately provided for white offenders. In fact, in several cases these rationalizations seemed to distort reality or were ridiculous as plausible explanations for criminal behaviour, such as having “scary monsters unleashed in his mind” (Goldstein, 1982) or being “seduced by Satan” (Murray, 1987). It would seem that providing reasonable insight into the cause of an offender’s behaviour was irrelevant: of importance was demonstrating that white offenders are not representative of their racial group.

The following example portrays white offenders as abnormal through the pairing of rationalizations for the crime with dehumanization. The coupling can be seen in the following *Toronto Star* article, in which a reason was provided—good or bad was beside the point—for a crime committed by a white offender: “[...] posing as a doctor and molesting a 7 year old with leukemia [...] no normal person would imagine committing such a weird and perverted offence [...] he was abused as a child and now he suffers from an anti-social personality disorder” (Oakes, 1987, p. 3A). The excerpt provides a clear example of how language that dehumanizes the crime as something repugnant and unimaginable to any normal person, combined with an explanation for the crime (in this case, mental illness) builds the case that the offender is not normal. When the pattern is applied disproportionately to white offenders, the implication is clear—no white criminal is normal because white people are not supposed to commit crimes.

In the context of these rationalizations, the increased frequency with which white offenders' occupations are discussed also becomes clear. Rationalizations for both the crime and offender were particularly blatant when the offender was an educated white male. In such cases, the language went from one of external blame—something *made* him do it as seen in the above two examples—to outright excusing the behaviour by insinuating the crime was not serious. In 24% of all articles in which the offender was white and educated, their crimes were dismissed by providing all the reasons for which they should not be criminalized or penalized.

The first example originates from a *Toronto Star* article titled, “Guidance counsellor faces sex charges” : “Peel Police Const. [name of officer] described the sexual assault as minor in nature [...] his current position is a guidance counsellor but at the time when these alleged offences occurred he was co-ordinating [sic] the summer school program.” Not until the last line of the article does the journalist state, “he has been charged with sexual assault and sexual exploitation” (Mitchell, 2007, p. A6). Another example from the *Toronto Star* read: “Officers arrived at the upscale apartment complex around midnight [...] she was a very bright, articulate, community minded officer who had served on a number of boards outside the organization including a women’s shelter” (8 June, 2007, p. A2). The final example came from the *Vancouver Sun* about an Ivy League-educated banker who stole millions of dollars from his place of employment:

You would never have suspected someone like him, he was a very quiet man, smart, your typical nerd banker [...] he and his family lived in a quiet, middle-class neighborhood where they kept regular hours, a tidy yard and a tight budget [...] frankly they were pretty boring (17 August, 2002).

Moreover, some articles provided explanations of exceptional circumstances that came from either police officers or judges, which add a sense of legitimacy to the discounting of criminal behaviour. In the following example from the *Vancouver Sun*, a judge (in quotation marks) has excused three white police officers who shot and killed two unarmed black teens. The article begins:

POLICE! FREEZE! STOP OR I’LL SHOOT! Hollywood stuff? Sometimes it’s the opening line in a Canadian tragedy [...] cops buck washed by bad guys [...] fleeing felons cut down by police bullets [...] in recent years, a number of police officers have been put on trial, grilled about the propriety of firing weapons [...]

“I think cops are honest and try to get at the truth [...] if Canadian juries won’t convict police officers, why do we continue to charge them?” (2 January, 1992).

It should be noted that the language cited above was dependent upon race and gender. Educated women, unlike their male counterparts, were often described as the most evil of all offenders. The result points to an important intersection between gender and race, which will be discussed further in section 5.3.

Explaining the above discourse fits well with the framework of critical criminology. According to critical criminology, power shapes all social relationships (Abrahamson, 2006), and while both the upper and lower classes partake in morally questionable behaviour, the social institution of the law remains predominantly controlled by the upper class. As a result, the law can often disproportionately punish the activities of the poor (Abrahamson, 2006; Reiman, 2012). According to Reiman (2012), social hierarchies such as the media and the criminal justice system can contribute to delinquency and its punishment (Abrahamson, 2006; Dahrendorf, 1959; Reiman, 2012). The criminal justice system then becomes a social institution which reflects both the moral and value conflicts of the upper class, and which seeks to exonerate the rich from their wrongdoings at every step (Reiman, 2012).

The results of the current study display a pattern of media portrayal (also found by Green & Kugler, 2012; Reiman, 2012; Schissel, 2006) according to which crime is a function of poverty, and where visible minorities, *not* whites, pose the greatest threat to the social fabric of society. In this context, it becomes obvious why white-collar criminals do not fit the mould of the typical offender as portrayed by the media. Green and Kugler (2012) explain why media depictions of crime tend to display images of the poor and visible minorities as the most dangerous segment of the population. They argue that such images legitimate the disproportionate punishment of certain segments of the population (Reiman, 2012; Schissel, 2006). Segments of the population with the most wealth are able to blame, and ultimately target, certain people for problems in society. Because the wealthy also have more power and control over the media, justification for this outcome depends on public perception that criminals are uneducated, poor, and non-white. Moreover, the marginalization caused by these depictions can lead to alienation, helping to generate more poverty and crime (Schissel, 2006). The media’s use of certain language, such as providing excuses for some criminals and not others may create

classifications for deviant groups. When excuses and/or explanations are not equally given for all offenders, the media may be dictating of whom we should be afraid.

In the same vein, language surrounding visible minority offenders gives the perception that their behaviour is normal and almost expected, unlike crimes committed by whites. When the offender was a visible minority, explanations for their criminal behaviour were virtually absent (psychological, excuses or outright dismissal). The trend in the discourse presupposes that non-white criminals are normal. In other words, it implies that crimes committed by visible minorities require no further explanation, because crimes committed by whites *were* explained. The only explanation found for the criminal behaviour of non-white offenders was poverty due to lack of education. What is most telling in this context is that newspaper reports did not make systemic links between poverty or lack of education and crime per se, but rather they were individualistic in tone and often linked poverty to portrayals of personal defect. These trends fit well with Schissel's findings on how media portrayals insinuate that visible minorities are criminal because of their socioeconomic status: "They are born and raised in the lower socioeconomic strata of the society, their families are feminized, and their lack of morality stems from their socio-economic positions in society" (2006, p. 27).

Examples of portrayals fitting this archetype can be seen throughout the current study. An article in the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* described two Aboriginal offenders as "unemployed, high school dropouts [...] the youngest of four children was on welfare, he has completed some of Grade 12" (1997, p. 1A). Another example from the *Toronto Star* related a crime committed by two Hispanic offenders: "ignorance of the law is not a defense [...] they came armed with 'the tools of their trade'—handcuffs and leg irons [...] they each only have a grade 9 education and take home \$244 a week" (1987, p. 6A).

Because the above language was not crime-dependent, the mention of poverty and/or a lack of education could not be linked to any factor other than the offender's race. The results demonstrate that media can promote a discourse that portrays crime as being caused by self-inflicted poverty. When crime is seen as a function of racial poverty, it provides an ideological message that protects the privilege of the upper classes by suggesting the poor and marginalized deserve to be poor because they lack the determination to overcome their hardships and find success (Reiman, 2012). This simplistic and false belief ignores the powerful stratification in society that creates differences in wealth and thus differences in power.

There are several explanations for why the media may draw connections between poverty, crime, and race. One of these explanations may lie in the principles of urban dynamics rather than race itself. Crime has very often been linked in the media to low socioeconomic status and the residential instability of many neighbourhoods (Browning & Dietz, 2004). In Canada and the US, many visible minority groups are located in neighbourhoods which lack job opportunities, have poorer schools, and experience high levels of poverty (Heisz & McLeod, 2004; Massey, 1990; Walks & Bourne, 2006). This, in turn, segregates people from future opportunities. Research on place stratifications demonstrates that higher unemployment rates for visible minority groups leads to increased probability of moving into lower income neighbourhoods. Moreover, visible minorities are less likely than whites to escape economic distress (McNulty, 1999; Walks & Bourne, 2006). The stronger the residential segregation between visible minorities and whites (i.e. whites moving away from rundown neighbourhoods), the less likely visible minority groups will move into largely white areas (Browning & Dietz, 2004). An increased concentration of disadvantaged opportunities may lead to violent crime (McNulty, 1999), providing a systemic explanation for the relationship between race, class, and crime.

However, in order to gain a full understanding of racial oppression, one must look past differences based solely on class. For instance, postcolonial theory moves beyond class-based differences through the integration of several continuums of difference and addresses how these differences may lead to oppressive relationships (Brown, 2012; Baines, 2011). According to critical paradigms, the media is a powerful macro force that can have a negative effect on micro forces of oppression, including individuals (Brown, 2012). Thus, the integration of discourse—i.e. that poor, uneducated, visible minorities are responsible for crime—in media portrayals both affects and is affected by the subjective experience of the person reading the news report. The negative discourse portrayed in the above examples can have detrimental effects on an entire group of people, not just the offenders. One problem resides in the media's enormous power to portray a certain type of criminal—the poor, uneducated, visible minority. Critical theories such as postcolonial theory help us understand how a negative discourse combined with a person's race and class may lead the public to believe that visible minorities are committing the vast majority of crimes. This constant portrayal has the power to negatively affect the criminal justice system, police, and judges, resulting in offenders being treated

differently based on their race, class, and gender. Further complicating this point is the fact that many visible minorities have little means of correcting this stereotype, given that visible minority groups are underrepresented in the media.

For example, the following article outlines differences in language between offenders based on their race. In a *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* article entitled, “theft offence earns 9-month term,” an Aboriginal offender who was arrested and charged with armed robbery pled down to simple theft for stealing a case of beer. The importance of the article lies in the quote (the only one in the article), where the court judge said to the offender, “you are a nuisance to society [...] we don’t need the likes of you running around the streets [...]” (1987, p. 8A). The offender was subsequently sentenced to a nine-month prison term for stealing a case of beer. The above example displays the language used by a member of the dominant culture to allocate and use authoritative resources to exercise power over others in order to systematically devalue the attributions and contributions of those deemed inferior. More importantly, the discourse was displayed to the public through the media.

A striking contrast is apparent between this quote and similar quotes from legitimated justice experts when commenting on the crimes of white offenders. In the case of white offenders, experts almost exclusively expressed compassion and reticence to punish. *Table 5.4* shows the prevalence of the subthemes related to fear and marginalization based on the race of the offender.

Table 5.4: Prevalence of Themes Related to Fear and Marginalization Based on the Reported Race of the Offender

Theme ¹	Decade											
	1980s			1990s			2000s			Total		
	Whites	Non-whites	NS ³	Whites	Non-whites	NS	Whites	Non-whites	NS	Whites	Non-	NS
Fear	0.45 ± 0.08	0.47 ± 0.08	0.36 ± 0.02	0.47 ± 0.06	0.40 ± 0.07	0.47 ± 0.03	0.54 ± 0.07	0.45 ± 0.08	0.47 ± 0.03	0.49 ± 0.04	0.43 ± 0.04	0.42 ± 0.02
Excessive violence	0.12 ± 0.05	0.17 ± 0.06	0.10 ± 0.02	0.21 ± 0.05	0.28 ± 0.06	0.20 ± 0.03	0.38 ± 0.07	0.20 ± 0.06	0.17 ± 0.02	0.24 ± 0.03	0.22 ± 0.04	0.15 ± 0.01
Crime as a metaphor	0 ⁴	0	0	0	0.02 ± 0.02	0.02 ± 0.01	0.02 ± 0.02	0	0.02 ± 0.01	0.01 ± 0.01	0.01 ± 0.01	0.01 ± 0.00
Rationalization of the crime	0.02 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.04	0.07 ± 0.01	0.06 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.03	0.08 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.03	0.10 ± 0.05	0.07 ± 0.02	0.05 ± 0.02	0.07 ± 0.02	0.07 ± 0.01
Dehumanizing the crime	0.10 ± 0.05	0.03 ± 0.03	0.04 ± 0.01	0.18 ± 0.05	0.09 ± 0.04	0.07 ± 0.02	0.13 ± 0.05	0.10 ± 0.05	0.07 ± 0.02	0.14 ± 0.03	0.08 ± 0.02	0.05 ± 0.01
Crime is everywhere	0.12 ± 0.05	0.08 ± 0.05	0.03 ± 0.01	0.03 ± 0.02	0.04 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.01	0.10 ± 0.04	0.03 ± 0.03	0.08 ± 0.02	0.07 ± 0.02	0.05 ± 0.02	0.05 ± 0.01
Dehumanizing the offender	0.17 ± 0.06	0.06 ± 0.04	0.06 ± 0.01	0.13 ± 0.04	0.17 ± 0.05	0.06 ± 0.02	0.15 ± 0.05	0.10 ± 0.05	0.09 ± 0.02	0.15 ± 0.03	0.12 ± 0.03	0.07 ± 0.01
Crazy/unstable	0.12 ± 0.05	0.06 ± 0.04	0.06 ± 0.01	0.04 ± 0.03	0.13 ± 0.05	0.07 ± 0.02	0.17 ± 0.05	0.13 ± 0.05	0.07 ± 0.02	0.10 ± 0.02	0.11 ± 0.03	0.07 ± 0.01
History of crime	0.07 ± 0.04	0.06 ± 0.04	0.09 ± 0.01	0.06 ± 0.03	0.11 ± 0.04	0.09 ± 0.02	0.12 ± 0.04	0.18 ± 0.06	0.08 ± 0.02	0.08 ± 0.02	0.12 ± 0.03	0.09 ± 0.01
Occupation	0.14 ± 0.05	0.17 ± 0.06	0.07 ± 0.01	0.31 ± 0.06	0.02 ± 0.02	0.13 ± 0.02	0.23 ± 0.06	0.08 ± 0.04	0.09 ± 0.02	0.24 ± 0.03	0.08 ± 0.02	0.09 ± 0.01
Poverty	0.02 ± 0.02	0.08 ± 0.05	0.06 ± 0.01	0	0.19 ± 0.05	0.05 ± 0.01	0.04 ± 0.03	0.05 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.02	0.02 ± 0.01	0.12 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.01
Rationalization of the offender	0.05 ± 0.03	0.03 ± 0.03	0.03 ± 0.01	0.06 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.12	0.06 ± 0.01	0.06 ± 0.03	0.05 ± 0.03	0.02 ± 0.01	0.06 ± 0.02	0.05 ± 0.02	0.04 ± 0.01

¹ All data are presented as the mean proportion of articles within each category that contain language related to the specified theme (± SEM).

² All articles in which the race of the offender is stated within the article and specified as non-white.

³ Not specified.

⁴ No articles fitting this specific category were observed.

5.2.2 Changes in Language Based on the Race of the Victim

The race of the victim significantly impacted the language of crime articles in several respects. Foremost, articles describing white victims were more likely to contain language implying fear ($p < 0.001$), more likely to mention excessive violence ($p < 0.001$), and more likely to mention the offender's occupation ($p = 0.002$), but less likely to mention whether the offender had a history of crime ($p = 0.016$). Moreover, these factors remained consistent over the thirty-year span, except for mention of the offender's occupation ($p = 0.014$). When the victim was white, occurrences of articles mentioning the offender's occupation decreased in the 1980s and 1990s, but this trend reversed in the 2000s (see Table 5.5).

5.2.3 Interactions Between the Race of Offender and Victim

Although not significant, a notable trend was observed in the collective impact of the race of both offender and victim in terms of the prevalence of rationalization of the crime ($p = 0.056$; see Table 5.5). Articles describing non-white offenders were equally likely to contain a rationalization of the crime if the victim was white or a visible minority. When the offender was white, however, rationalization for the crime was far more likely to occur relative to non-white offenders in instances where the victim was also white. Rationalizations were far less likely to occur when the victim was not white. In fact, among the fifteen articles in the sample that described crimes committed by whites against non-whites, rationalization of the crime never occurred. Therefore, crimes were predominantly rationalized when the victim and offender were both white.

Similarly, newspaper reports dehumanized the crime ($p = 0.001$) more often when the victim was white (white victim = 16%; non-white victim = 11%), or when the offender was white (14% white offenders; 8% non-white offenders; see Table 5.5).

Table 5.5: Prevalence of Themes Related to Fear and Marginalization Based on the Reported Race of the Victim

Theme ¹	Decade											
	1980s			1990s			2000s			Total		
	Whites	Non-whites ²	NS ³	Whites	Non-whites	NS	Whites	Non-whites	NS	Whites	Non-whites	NS
<i>Fear</i>	0.68 ± 0.11	0.47 ± 0.09	0.35 ± 0.02	0.71 ± 0.07	0.45 ± 0.08	0.43 ± 0.03	0.82 ± 0.06	0.61 ± 0.09	0.41 ± 0.03	0.75 ± 0.04	0.50 ± 0.05	0.39 ± 0.02
<i>Excessive violence</i>	0.26 ± 0.10	0.18 ± 0.07	0.10 ± 0.01	0.39 ± 0.08	0.33 ± 0.07	0.17 ± 0.02	0.41 ± 0.08	0.30 ± 0.08	0.17 ± 0.02	0.38 ± 0.05	0.28 ± 0.04	0.14 ± 0.01
<i>Crime as a metaphor</i>	0 ⁴	0	0	0	0.02 ± 0.02	0.01 ± 0.01	0	0.03 ± 0.03	0.02 ± 0.01	0	0.02 ± 0.01	0.01 ± 0.00
<i>Rationalization of the crime</i>	0.11 ± 0.07	0.06 ± 0.04	0.06 ± 0.01	0.08 ± 0.04	0.05 ± 0.03	0.07 ± 0.02	0.10 ± 0.05	0.15 ± 0.06	0.06 ± 0.01	0.09 ± 0.03	0.08 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.01
<i>Dehumanizing the crime</i>	0.16 ± 0.09	0.03 ± 0.03	0.04 ± 0.01	0.13 ± 0.06	0.12 ± 0.05	0.08 ± 0.02	0.18 ± 0.06	0.18 ± 0.07	0.05 ± 0.01	0.16 ± 0.04	0.11 ± 0.03	0.05 ± 0.01
<i>Crime is everywhere</i>	0.11 ± 0.07	0.03 ± 0.03	0.04 ± 0.01	0.08 ± 0.04	0.05 ± 0.03	0.04 ± 0.01	0.15 ± 0.06	0.03 ± 0.03	0.07 ± 0.02	0.11 ± 0.03	0.04 ± 0.02	0.05 ± 0.01
<i>Dehumanizing the offender</i>	0.11 ± 0.07	0.06 ± 0.04	0.07 ± 0.01	0.18 ± 0.06	0.17 ± 0.06	0.07 ± 0.01	0.10 ± 0.05	0.12 ± 0.06	0.10 ± 0.02	0.14 ± 0.04	0.12 ± 0.03	0.08 ± 0.01
<i>Crazy/unstable</i>	0.11 ± 0.07	0.06 ± 0.04	0.07 ± 0.01	0.05 ± 0.04	0.07 ± 0.04	0.07 ± 0.02	0.05 ± 0.04	0.18 ± 0.07	0.09 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.02	0.10 ± 0.03	0.08 ± 0.01
<i>History of crime</i>	0	0.03 ± 0.03	0.10 ± 0.01	0.05 ± 0.04	0.05 ± 0.03	0.10 ± 0.02	0	0.09 ± 0.05	0.11 ± 0.02	0.02 ± 0.01	0.06 ± 0.02	0.10 ± 0.01
<i>Occupation</i>	0.16 ± 0.09	0.24 ± 0.07	0.07 ± 0.01	0.08 ± 0.04	0.14 ± 0.05	0.15 ± 0.02	0.21 ± 0.07	0.09 ± 0.05	0.10 ± 0.02	0.15 ± 0.04	0.16 ± 0.03	0.10 ± 0.01
<i>Poverty</i>	0.05 ± 0.05	0	0.06 ± 0.01	0.11 ± 0.05	0.14 ± 0.05	0.04 ± 0.01	0.03 ± 0.03	0.12 ± 0.06	0.05 ± 0.01	0.06 ± 0.02	0.09 ± 0.03	0.05 ± 0.01
<i>Rationalization of the offender</i>	0.11 ± 0.07	0.03 ± 0.03	0.03 ± 0.01	0.08 ± 0.04	0.07 ± 0.04	0.05 ± 0.01	0	0.06 ± 0.04	0.03 ± 0.01	0.05 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.02	0.04 ± 0.01

¹ All data are presented as the mean proportion of articles within each category that contains language related to the specified theme (± SEM).

² All articles in which the race of the offender is stated within the article and specified as non-white.

³ Not specified.

⁴ No articles fitting this specific category were observed.

Another common discourse that was reserved for visible minority offenders was created through how the victim was written about. In essence, offenders were seen as bad because they hurt or created havoc for good, law-abiding people. The language ultimately separates visible minority offenders from white offenders in the sense that visible minority offenders are not only criminal but a burden to society as well. The following example of arson came from the *Toronto Star*: “[name of offender] participated in an enterprise that endangered hundreds of lives, these were the lives of good citizens of our community [...] as well as people who put their lives at risk to protect us—police and firefighters [...] he was motivated by greed [...] out to get something for nothing (Pron, 2007, p. A9). The above example can conjure up feelings of hate and anger, while at the same time strengthening the divide between *us* and *them*. Welch (2009) states the distinction between good people who did a bad thing and bad people in general is often dependant on a person’s race.

Rationalizing the crimes of a few people, mainly white offenders, and not giving the same explanations for others creates a divide between offenders based on their race. In the current study, the results show that the more an offender is connected with the harm of good people, the more he or she is dehumanized. The results also demonstrate that media portrayals promote a discourse of crime as being the result of self-inflicted poverty. Because the media are in a position to govern criminal behaviour and its definition, the real danger behind the language of difference is therefore a discourse that portrays crime as the sole function of the poor. The way in which the visible minority offender was portrayed in the sample has the capacity to, through the amplification of stereotypes, facilitate a distorted fear of crime in a specific location and around specific groups. When crime is seen as a function of racial poverty, this provides an ideological message that protects the privilege of the upper classes by suggesting that the poor and marginalized deserve to be poor because they lack the determination to overcome their hardships and find success.

5.2.4 Longitudinal Interactions Between the Race of Offender and Victim

Although dehumanization of the crime ($p = 0.002$) took place more often when the victim was white, the gap between white and non-white victims is getting smaller over time—i.e. 16% for white victims versus 3% for non-white victims in the 1980s, relative to 18% versus 17% in the 2000s. For white offenders, the dehumanization of the crime has become less stable over time—i.e. 10% for white offenders versus 3% for non-white offenders in the 1980s, relative to

13% versus 10% in the 2000s (see Table 5.5). Additionally, language implying that crime is everywhere ($p = 0.02$) displayed large racial differences throughout the 1980s (12% for white versus 8% non-white), and while the difference became much smaller in the 1990s (3% white versus 4% non-white), the racial disparity became larger again in the 2000s (10% white versus 3% non-whites).

The same trend was also found in language reserved for the race of the victims (see Table 5.5). The results show that a hierarchy exists between victims of crime based on their race. White victims were considered deserving of sympathy as the language portrayed a sense of fear, excessive violence, and a dehumanization of the crime. Visible minority victims were seen as less deserving of sympathy, as the vast majority of articles not only rationalized the crime committed against them but also contained far less mention of fear and excessive violence. However, results show that crime articles seem to be getting less racially biased over the years, at least in terms of dehumanization of the crime.

Throughout the study differences were also observed in portrayals between white and non-white victims. Notably, differences were strongest among the deserving versus non-deserving victims. One of the biggest differences separating the good versus bad victims was found in the media's use of the word *gang* in cases where the victim was not white, particularly when the victim was Aboriginal.

Aboriginal victims were often portrayed as victims due to their own difficulties and chosen lifestyle. In the following example, the *Winnipeg Free Press* described an Aboriginal victim as deeply involved in criminal behaviour, implying that he died due to the nature of his chosen lifestyle: "The Valentine's Day killing of an 18-year old man during a day-long gang war [...] Deep rooted social problems and seemingly easy access to drugs [...] They see the need to be involved [in gangs] as well, for whatever reason" (Owen, 2007, p. 6A). Additionally, descriptions of Aboriginal victims segued into descriptions of the social pathologies surrounding gang life—drugs, alcohol, and poverty. For example, the *Winnipeg Free Press* ran an article titled, "Beaten up, left outside, man dies on reserve":

There was blood on the snow like he had been dragged there...[name of victim] had only recently turned 18 and he wasn't working or going to school...there is nothing for young people to do up here except turn to alcohol or drugs...he was an only child and was raised by his single mother (Rollason, 2007, p. A5).

The discourse surrounding Aboriginal victims in the study is consistent with the observations of Brooks, according to whom “criminal activity among Aboriginal people and Aboriginal youth is seen as linked to the material consequences of racism, yet the youth are defined in the law, media, and many government reports as a racialized Other, obviating the need to deal with the material consequences of racism” (2008, p. 64).

In stark contrast, when the victims were white, articles included far more language of fear, such as “terrorized,” “ultimate fear,” and “all women at risk” (*Winnipeg Free Press*, 2002, p. A8), and excessive violence, such as “a woman whose forearms were hacked off by a rapist” (*Vancouver Sun*, 1982, p. A1). The articles’ heightened use of fearful portrayals of white victims and their uncontested innocence suggests that crime is not meant to occur in predominantly white neighbourhoods. In other words, they sound the alarm by stating that if it could happen *here* to one of *us*, then it could happen anywhere. In addition, the brutal descriptions of the crimes evoke a passionate response to the crime and to our own risk of victimization.

Articles describing white victims were the longest and contained the vast majority of pictures and quotes from family or witnesses. When the victim was described as white the articles would also often amplify how much their death affected the entire town or city. The next example is an excellent representation of this overall finding: “The man walked into an eerie silence instead of the happy chatter that usually greeted him at home [...] It’s devastating. The people are in shock [...] They’re good-living people, church going people [...] A bad thing happened to good people” (Paul, 2007, p. 3–4A). Another example comes from the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* and covers the robbery and murder of two white women:

The randomness and brutality of the attack sent town residents into deep and immediate shock [...] it’s just so senseless [...] these women weren’t doing anything. One was at work and one came to visit [...] it was a violent crime and anything is possible [...] this is the type of community where people don’t have to lock the doors on their houses or cars, last night all the doors were locked (Zakreski, 1997, p. 1).

In a particularly striking example, the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* ran two articles which appeared on the same page. Both articles described shootings in the United States in which the victims died from their gunshot wounds, and in both cases the shootings constituted *stranger crime*. The only significant difference between the two cases was the race of the victim. The article

describing the white victim appeared at the top of the page, while the article with the black victim appeared at the bottom.

The first article titled, “Florida murder recalled in chilling detail,” included language such as “the random futility of his death” and “horrified Canadians and Americans alike.” The article also included seven quotes from witnesses, family, and police, one of which read, “when a young, handsome man with a future gets killed, it’s a big story” (Russo, 1997, p. A9).

The second article titled, “Teen could face death penalty in Cosby slaying,” largely focused on the shooter, who was a white Russian immigrant, rather than the victim. The article only included one quote, which was obtained from a schoolmate of the shooter. The schoolmate is quoted as saying “we just thought he was a little white boy who wanted to be a ‘cholo’ (gang member) [...] he was a wannabe” (*Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, 1997, p. A9). In fact, the only mention of the victim was that he was the son of actor Bill Cosby. The article went on to say that the shooter was “an above-average student, who struggled to fit in” and that he was teased by his peers. This depiction stands in stark contrast to the first article which described the offenders as menacing and cold: “the three teens, armed with a gun [...] headed to Daytona Beach hoping to meet some girls and rob a tourist” (Russo, 1997, p. A9). Through the choice of language, victims who are predominantly non-white seem to be portrayed as less deserving because they get far less media attention than white victims. Notably, this is a conclusion also shared by Greer (2007) and Dowler (2004a, b).

Postcolonial theory can also shed light on some of the reasons why visible minority victims are blamed for their own victimization. Oppressive relations seen throughout media language have been based on race, class, and gender. This language has been used to dichotomize people into dominant and subordinate groups along these social divisions (Brown, 2012; Mullaly, 1997) and have created a notion of difference between victims and offenders based on their race. Thus, negative language and stereotypes attached to race used in the media can have harmful effects that may last generations. For instance, the constant mention of poverty due to self-infliction as the cause for crime among Aboriginal offenders and victims can outlast any one historical period (Childs & Williams, 1997; Loomba, 2005). The danger, of course, is that the discourse becomes a part of our understanding of why crime happens and who is responsible. This particular result displays the power of dominant class interests through negative portrayals of Aboriginal people at the hands of non-Aboriginals. The result can elicit

feelings of hate, anger, and confusion among non-Aboriginals directed toward Aboriginal people (Cannon & Sunseri, 2011; Crichlow, 2002) as texts are elements of social events that have the power to produce causal effects in the construction of our social reality (Childs & Williams, 1997). According to Said (1993), race is an inherent part of colonization because race is socially constructed for the sole benefit of those in power. Neither imperialism nor colonization can be measured through a simple act of accumulation; rather, both are supported through ideological formations that ensure the colonized Aboriginal populations are constantly controlled by an ideology and belief according to which *they* are in fact an inferior and subordinate population (Said, 1993). The results have shown that newspapers have not only created a discourse of crime, but they have also attached cultural meanings within this discourse.

Once again, particularly important is the underrepresentation of visible minorities in the media. If visible minorities continue to have an absent voice throughout the media, dominant cultures are able to emphasize the negative social impacts of many groups of people who are deemed inferior (Dominelli, 2002; Tew, 2006). Interestingly, the results of the current study reflect a bias largely surrounding the provision of explanations *for* the crime and not necessarily in what media describe *about* crime and their offenders. Sadly, negative stereotypes surrounding visible minorities were more pronounced. This result is not an entirely novel conclusion. Dowler and colleagues (Dowler, 2004a, b; Dowler et al., 2006) have previously stated, in reference to television newscasts, that race profoundly impacts the likelihood that both offenders and victims are portrayed as well as the amount of sympathy they receive. The current data are largely consistent with this idea, at least in terms of a racially determined treatment of offenders, and show that they can be found consistently and ubiquitously across local Canadian print media. The current data also add to this idea that descriptions of white offenders, when they occur, are rife with details that undermine the offender's claim to normal membership in their racial group.

Although much of the literature that helped develop the themes were drawn from American-based studies and news reports, the biases observed here are not merely reflections of traits in US news. While it is true that in an age of ever-expanding media conglomerates and dependence on news services, an increasing number of Canadian crime stories are republications of stories from US news outlets, this fact does not account for all of the significant differences in language observed here. If the analyses are conducted by excluding all crimes stories that did not occur within the distribution area of the paper (e.g. only including articles about events occurring

in Saskatoon in the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* sample), all of the reported main effects of the race of both the offender and victim on the language within articles are still observed. Moreover, the racial biases described above have been observed in many countries. In his comparative analysis of press bias, Marsh concluded that biases in newspaper crime coverage were strikingly similar across fifteen countries, including “racial prejudice and/or stereotyping” (1991, p. 75). This observation is important in not only ruling out media bias based on the wholesale reprinting of US crime stories but also because these local crime articles have been shown to be among the representations most effective in engendering fear on the local reading public (Brillon, 1987; Heath, 1984; Liska and Baccaglini, 1990). Of course, this observation does not rule out more subtle ways in which the power of US media and the collective fascination of Canada (and other Western countries) with US culture may dictate the style of reporting.

Most studies on crime reporting outside the US have focused on the disproportionate representation of ethnic minorities as offenders (Maneri & Wal, 2005; Smith, 1984) and victims (Greer, 2007; Mawby & Brown, 1984), rather than on the language used in their description, making direct comparison difficult. Several previous studies have observed that race profoundly impacts the likelihood that both offenders and victims are portrayed in television newscasts as well as the amount of sympathy they receive (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002; Dowler, 2004a, 2004b; Dowler et al., 2006; Greer, 2007). The current data are consistent with this racially determined treatment of offenders, and show that they can be found consistently and ubiquitously across local Canadian print media. These data also show that descriptions of white offenders, when they occur, are rife with details that undermine the offender’s claim to normal membership in their racial group, providing quantitative support to the patterns previously noted in US television broadcasts (Miller et al., 2006). In other words, Canadian media depictions disproportionately present crimes committed by white offenders as aberrant *individual* cases of extenuating circumstances, psychological pathology, or extraordinary character defect. The results also provide quantitative support to the pattern of portrayals demonstrated by Miller and colleagues (2006) in American television broadcasts. Racialized portrayals of both offender and victims create a powerful hierarchy in the treatment of those who *are* and those who *are not* meant to have their lives impacted by crime.

5.3 Differences Between Gender of Offender and Victim

When comparing the prevalence of the twelve subthemes based on gender, only two groups were compared—women and men. While this dichotomy is intuitive, it leaves open the question of how to categorize articles in which the gender of the offender or victim is left ambiguous. For the current analysis, any article in which the gender of the offender was not specified was recorded as male. In this sense, the comparison may be better described as female and non-female. The coding scheme was used to reflect both crime statistics showing that males are more often involved in the criminal justice system and that they are also involved by a larger order of magnitude (Hagan, 1985; LaGrange & Silverman, 1999). Newspapers also have a vested interest in showing exceptional crimes in order to attract attention (Bohm, 1986; Roshier, 1973; Sheley & Ashkins, 1981; Maguire et al., 2002). As such, the results would suggest that there is both economic and social pressure to disclose the gender of any female offender. Furthermore, the fact that the public is aware that crimes are disproportionately committed by male offenders (Rossi et al., 1985) suggests that the reader's perception in the face of an ambiguous description would dictate that the offender was male.

Given that previous research, detailed in Chapter 2, demonstrates that the media present female victims very differently, the same classification was conducted for victims. In this section, I describe the qualitative inquiry alongside the quantitative data in order to give context to the effects and to reveal the narrative that they collectively create.

The current data yielded 145 articles with female offenders and 941 articles with male offenders, as well as 458 articles describing female victims and 587 articles describing male victims (see Table 5.3 above). In this section, I describe in detail the differences in language found within these articles. As with the previous section, in order to improve readability of this section, the F value and degrees of freedom for each comparison are given separately in an ANOVA table (see Appendix E).

5.3.1 Differences in Language Based on the Gender of the Offender

The quantitative analysis demonstrated a significant profile for the female offender relative to her male counterpart. She is described as being less violent, and her occupation is provided less often, while she is more often described as being poor, and her crimes are rationalized less often. The largest and most consistent of these differences, however, was the presence of language in articles describing the crimes of female offenders as being rampant and out-of-control. Articles detailing female offenders were significantly more likely to contain language describing crime as

being everywhere (main effect of offender gender: $p < 0.001$). The same articles also mentioned the offender's history of crime (main effect of offender gender: $p < 0.001$) and occupation (main effect of offender gender: $p < 0.003$) less often than articles describing male offenders. Although not significant, a trend was also observed toward articles describing female offenders that contained more fearful language ($p = 0.10$) and contained fewer references to the offender being crazy or unstable ($p = 0.07$).

5.3.2 Differences in Language Over Time Based on the Gender of the Offender

The only significant difference found over time in reference to female offenders was the mention that crime is everywhere (offender gender x decade interaction: $p < 0.04$; see Table 5.6), suggesting more sensationalistic reporting over time for articles including female offenders. These data demonstrate a quantitative profile for the female offender relative to her male counterpart. She is described as being less violent, and her occupation is mentioned less often, while she is more often described as being poor, with her crimes being rationalized less often. The largest and most consistent of these differences, however, was the presence of language in articles describing the crimes of female offenders as being rampant and out-of-control. Collectively, these differences give rise to a powerful gendered narrative surrounding the female offender that became apparent during subsequent qualitative inquiry. The portrayal of women as less violent and relatively low risk compared to males is an accurate one: women commit fewer violent crimes than men (Comack, 2008; Pollock & Davis, 2008). Moreover, male offenders were more often described as crazy or unstable. The lack of fear surrounding female offenders was often replaced by other, arguably more damaging, discourses which often portrayed them as evil, cunning, and methodical or as sexualized objects. The following excerpt from a *Winnipeg Free Press* article, for example, discusses a female offender in a manner that is highly sexualized and devoid of violence:

A pair of bombshell-blond bandits pulled a daring daylight hold-up [...] sporting baseball caps, mirrored shades and white leather gloves, the women with the fuchsia lips pulled a sawed off shot gun and stuck up Western Water Works [...] The shell-shocked salesman has run into beauty and bullets before, "it didn't feel too good, I'll tell you that" (8 June, 1987).

Table 5.6: Prevalence of Themes Related to Fear and Marginalization for Male and Female Offenders

Theme	Decade							
	1980s		1990s		2000s		Total	
	Females ¹	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males
Fear	0.42 ± 0.07	0.36 ± 0.02	0.49 ± 0.06	0.45 ± 0.03	0.56 ± 0.06	0.45 ± 0.03	0.48 ± 0.05	0.42 ± 0.02
Excessive violence	0.15 ± 0.03	0.10 ± 0.02	0.25 ± 0.06	0.21 ± 0.03	0.23 ± 0.05	0.20 ± 0.03	0.20 ± 0.03	0.16 ± 0.01
Crime as a metaphor	0 ⁵	0	0	0.01 ± 0.01	0.03 ± 0.02	0.02 ± 0.01	0.01 ± 0.01	0.01 ± 0.00
Rationalization of the crime	0.08 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.01	0.11 ± 0.04	0.06 ± 0.01	0.10 ± 0.03	0.07 ± 0.02	0.10 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.01
Dehumanizing the crime	0.06 ± 0.02	0.05 ± 0.01	0.05 ± 0.03	0.10 ± 0.02	0.13 ± 0.04	0.07 ± 0.02	0.08 ± 0.02	0.07 ± 0.01
Crime is everywhere	0.05 ± 0.02	0.04 ± 0.01	0.11 ± 0.04	0.04 ± 0.01	0.15 ± 0.04	0.05 ± 0.01	0.10 ± 0.02	0.04 ± 0.01
Dehumanizing the offender	0.07 ± 0.03	0.07 ± 0.01	0.05 ± 0.03	0.10 ± 0.02	0.13 ± 0.04	0.10 ± 0.02	0.08 ± 0.02	0.09 ± 0.01
Crazy/unstable	0.06 ± 0.02	0.07 ± 0.01	0.05 ± 0.03	0.08 ± 0.02	0.04 ± 0.02	0.11 ± 0.02	0.04 ± 0.02	0.11 ± 0.02
History of crime	0.06 ± 0.02	0.09 ± 0.02	0.02 ± 0.02	0.10 ± 0.02	0.03 ± 0.02	0.12 ± 0.02	0.04 ± 0.01	0.10 ± 0.01
Occupation	0.03 ± 0.02	0.10 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.03	0.16 ± 0.03	0.08 ± 0.03	0.12 ± 0.02	0.05 ± 0.01	0.13 ± 0.01
Poverty	0.03 ± 0.02	0.07 ± 0.02	0.08 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.01	0.08 ± 0.03	0.05 ± 0.01	0.06 ± 0.01	0.06 ± 0.01
Rationalization of the offender	0.05 ± 0.02	0.03 ± 0.01	0.06 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.01	0.04 ± 0.02	0.03 ± 0.01	0.05 ± 0.01	0.04 ± 0.01

¹ For the purpose of this analysis, offenders were classified as female only when stated.

² All data are presented as the mean proportion of articles containing language related to the specified theme (± SEM).

³ No articles fitting this specific category were observed.

Even though the above article reported an incident about a violent armed robbery, it did not include graphic depictions of violence—as was often the case for comparable offences committed by males—but instead used terms like “bombshell bandits” and “beauty and bullets” to portray a fantasy depiction of the sexy bad girl with long white gloves and fuchsia lips. In other words, sexualization of offenders was reserved for women. In 1, 190 crime articles, no single instance of an article could be found that commented on a man’s appearance as its primary focus.

Another significant effect observed in the quantitative analysis was decreased rationalization for crimes committed by female offenders. When examining the explanations provided for the crimes of men and women, the qualitative inquiry found powerful stereotypes surrounding female offenders. The discourse embedded within the explanations framed female offenders as cunning and methodical. Consider the following portrayal of a woman who killed her spouse as reported in the *Winnipeg Free Press*:

she sadistically bludgeoned her husband to death [...] she is a convincing woman who tried to cover it up [...] this was a vicious, sustained attack on a vulnerable, defenseless old man [...] she stood to gain more than 800, 000 dollars [...] the whole scam was orchestrated by her (4 November, 1997).

The article paints a portrait of a woman who is cold, calculating, and manipulative, playing to the stereotype of the black widow. Similarly, a second article in the *Toronto Star* reported:

“Suspecting her husband of having an affair, [the offender] did what wealthy wives can afford to do: hire an investigator [...] then run him over with her silver Mercedes three times” (6 August, 2002). These observations are consistent with those of Menzies and Chunn (2006), who show that mass media often portray women who kill their husbands as the embodiment of intimate danger. The above language stands in stark contrast to language used when describing men who killed their wives. In the following *Toronto Star* court report, the arresting officer states the following about the man who killed his wife:

He was a kind and loving person who did a tragic but very understandable thing [...] what you did was a people crime [...] everyone can experience the feeling of wanting to kill their wife out of anger (13 June, 1987).

The officer went on to testify that the offender’s wife started swearing and thrashing out at him after she found out that he was planning a Jamaican holiday with his mistress. “She called him a

son of a bitch then slumped to the floor [...] and the screaming stopped.” The woman was stabbed by her husband eight times in the heart, liver, and lungs. The article then went on to say that the offender “was dressed impeccably in a charcoal suit.” As such, the language used in the article simultaneously places blame on the victim for confronting her husband about his affair and rationalizes the behaviour of the offender.

The combination of research methods permitted a detailed qualitative analysis through distilled text to show how these significant differences in the portrayal of female offenders are in fact manifested in one of two ways. Female offenders were sometimes subject to a much more lax treatment in the media—for example, the perception that women are non-threatening and sexualized. Alternatively, violent women were also occasionally subject to labels of double deviance (Copeland, 1997). In other words, women often face societal expectations of both purity and goodness. Thus, a woman who commits a crime may be stigmatized both for committing that crime and for breaking the societal norms surrounding how a woman should act. The dichotomy is consistent with the pedestal effect (Crew, 1991)—women are treated as a gender less capable of crime. Therefore, their attempts at criminal behaviour are sexualized and made in some sense playful, up until some ill-defined moral threshold. Female offenders who cross this threshold—by killing their spouse, for instance—are treated more harshly by the media than their male counterparts. They are portrayed as cold and calculating, and their crimes are less likely to be blamed on exceptional circumstances or mental instability. In this context, it is perhaps not surprising that such portrayals are also often accompanied by language that berates the moral decay of Western society and proclaims that crime is everywhere. The definition of criminality and deviance lies primarily within a discourse that has historically excluded women (Smith, 1990).

The language used to describe female offenders in the current study is consistent with claims that deviance and criminalization among women may at least partially be the product of inequality between men and women (Brown, 2012; Comack, 2008; Gill, 2007). The difference in language based on gender found in the current analysis is similar to what other research has found (Collins, 2010; Humphries, 2009; Pollock & Davis, 2005) and to what feminist literature has long identified—that media are a source of hegemonic constructions of gender, and that they are complicit in the subordination of women (Comack, 2006; Gill, 2007; Moosa-Mitha, 2005). Given that the data show how institutionalization of this kind of stigma can have profound

impacts, these observations are troubling. Stigmatized female offenders often experience great difficulty holding a job, having a home, getting access to any needed services, and enjoying mutually supportive relationships with family and friends. In turn, women who are denied legitimate social roles are more likely to engage in repeated criminal activity (Collins, 2010; Pollock & Davis, 2005).

5.3.3 Differences in Language Based on the Gender of the Victim

The current study found no significant differences in the language of articles based on the gender of the victim. However, a trend was noted for articles with female victims to more likely dehumanize the offender ($p = 0.06$; see Table 5.7).

Depictions of excessive violence have become more frequent in articles describing female victims over the past three decades (victim gender x decade interaction: $p < 0.03$). Furthermore, reports became more likely to provide rationalizations for the crime when the victim was female (victim gender x decade interaction: $p < 0.04$). These articles also became more likely to make reference to the poverty of the victim (victim gender x decade interaction: $p < 0.03$; see Table 5.7) and also displayed changes over time. In the 1980s and 1990s, articles that mentioned poverty more frequently occurred when the victim was male. However in the 2000s, language tended to focus more on the poverty of female victims.

5.3.4 Longitudinal Interactions Between the Gender of Offender and Victim

Analysis of differences over time showed that the frequency of depictions of excessive violence could be predicted based on the gender of both the offender and victim (offender gender x victim gender x decade interaction: $p < 0.04$). When the offender was male and the victim was female, the language describing the crime employed very violent language. This result is consistent with Christie's (1986) notion that a bigger and scarier offender creates a more ideal victim. The result indicates that excessive violence has been increasing in newspapers as a way to sensationalize victims.

The current study recorded several changes in language for articles describing female victims within the last thirty years. Over the last three decades, descriptions of excessive violence, the mention of poverty, and the provision of rationalizations for the crime have become progressively more frequent within the discourse surrounding female victims. Subsequent qualitative analysis shows that the language differed greatly for female victims. Similar to the dichotomy observed for female offenders, the difference was greatest between those victims who

were seen as good and deserving, over the victims who were seen as bad or as not deserving of sympathy. In almost all cases, victims who were seen as deserving of sympathy received the most media attention. Female victims given this virtuous status were generally wealthy, well-dressed, churchgoing, law-abiding citizens as well as typically white.

Crimes committed against good victims were described with far more details of graphic violence. For example, the woman “whose forearms were hacked off by a rapist” (*Vancouver Sun*, 17 March, 1982) and offenders who “bought a hacksaw and started to dismember the body [...] [then] boiled the woman’s head and other body parts, and put the skull and other remains in his freezer” (*Toronto Star*, 8 June 2007). In a similar vein, another article related “ex-boyfriend poured a jug of sulphuric acid over her head [...] her son watched as his mother screamed in pain [...] after with scissors he began to cut off her hair” (*Toronto Star*, 22 February, 2002).

The heightened reference to excessive violence within articles, particularly when coupled with the presentation of sympathetic characters, can create a sense of outrage and frustration for the reader, resulting in the perception that crime is not meant to occur in predominantly upper-class, safe neighbourhoods. This fear, in turn, contributes to the politicization of crime and to excessive measures in crime deterrence (Garland, 2001).

5.3.5 Intersections of Race and Gender in Depictions of Victims

Portrayals of undeserving victims were predominant among the poor and members of visible minority groups. Furthermore, newspapers tended to rationalize the crimes committed against undeserving victims. The result is consistent with the findings that media depictions can blame some rape victims for their own victimization due to the perception that “the victim wanted it, deserved it or lied about it” (Humphries, 2009, p. 20). The language provides simplistic and compelling explanations for victimization, creating a discourse that some women are victims due to poor decisions and lifestyle choices.

The following two examples outline how different language was used when two women with different lifestyles were murdered in 2007. The first article from the *Winnipeg Free Press* relayed the murder of a poor Aboriginal woman:

[...] the young mother pregnant with another child, was killed over a handful of crack cocaine [...] neighborhood known for its street prostitution and crack houses. It was her neighborhood, and on its streets she occasionally sold her body for sex (17 March, 2007).

The language of the second article found in the *Toronto Star* describing a white, upper-class victim is markedly different:

[...] brutal beating [...] frenzied assault that occurred during a confrontation in a pathway between their upscale Markham homes [...] at the time of her death she was enjoying the summer of her life because she loved her new job and loved her new boyfriend [...] she was being considered for a promotion (8 May, 2007).

These articles depicted victims using very different language based predominantly on their socioeconomic status and race. Throughout the articles examined, deserving victims were often portrayed as uneducated, neglectful mothers, who more often than not resided in poor neighbourhoods.

Feminist paradigms can shed light on some of the reasons why female offenders and victims are treated differently in the media. Notions of difference found in the media can be seen in many different ways, including through the lenses of race, class, and gender (Brown, 2012; Childs & Williams, 1997). Feminist theories are particularly effective in interpreting language surrounding female offenders and victims in that they provide a framework for understanding how the power of discourse can shape the way we view those who function outside the societal norm, while contesting the hegemonic constructions of gender (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). Gilbert sums up the duality often set forth for women:

We have, then, women as innocent, gentle, caring, nurturing, and incapable of committing violence—the angel, the mother, the virgin, the Madonna, and yet still the “other.” We also see women as evil, sexual, dangerous, the vampire, the black widow, the whore, the vamp, the “other.” The woman who is capable of aggression and violence becomes the masculine woman, the lesbian, the other (2002, p. 1293).

Such a dichotomy can lead to precisely the type of selective chivalry described at the beginning of this chapter, with an emphasis on how good girls who follow traditional feminine ideals become ideal victims (Christie, 1986), while bad girls who violate these gender norms are demonized. Furthermore, deserving victims were often portrayed as uneducated, neglectful mothers, who more often than not reside in a poor neighbourhood. The implication of these depictions is that the bad girl has failed to develop a moral compass and therefore should expect to be either victimized or to become a criminal herself (Humphries, 2009).

The concept of double deviance can further help to illuminate why the discourse is so different for men and women (Copeland, 1997). Copeland was one of the first authors to use the term, which refers to women who both fall outside of their perceived roles as mothers, daughters, and sisters, and who become criminals. Double deviance was originally used to describe the stigmatization that women drug addicts faced. In Copeland's study on female drug addicts, one of the most common reasons for women not getting treatment was that they felt more stigmatized than men: "women are looked down upon anyway and even more so when they have a problem that encompasses lack of moral and social restraint with overtones of sexual promiscuity and poor maternal instincts" (Copeland, 1997, p. 186). The author points out that women face societal expectations of purity and goodness. As a result, if a woman should commit a crime, she is said to be both stigmatized for committing that crime as well for breaking the societal norm of how women should act.

According to feminist paradigms, gender is socially constructed. Consequently, people tend to classify individuals and groups into specific categories in order to understand them (Humphries, 2009). Such broad categorizations become problematic, however, when dealing with women and aggression or violence. Violent behaviour in women tends to fall outside of the normal realm of how women are expected to act. In turn, this violation of the social norms regarding the role of women in society may critically affect the language seen in the media. Moreover, social tolerance of aggression is gendered (Humphries, 2009; Gilbert, 2002). Men who are either aggressive or violent are seen as exercising their masculinity, whereas women who are violent are seen as mad or masculine, contradicting social ideals of femininity (Wesley, 2012). Many people see women as not being capable of violence, so their crimes are either sexualized, or they are constantly seen as the victims, rather than the predators (Wesley, 2012).

This gender difference in society's tolerance for violence leads to very different media outcomes. Additionally, skewed public opinion may in part be based on the fact that media coverage of female offenders generally does not report on the inequalities from which many women suffer or on the potential social causes of crime. For example, the leading cause of criminal behaviour in women is past sexual abuse, usually committed at the hands of a family member or close relative (Bonta et al., 1998; Kong & AuCoin, 2008). According to Comack (2006), approximately 68% of women in the Canadian prison system have been sexually or physically abused, and this percentage rises drastically when considering visible minorities,

especially Aboriginal women. Wesley (2012) outlines that as of April 2010, Aboriginal women make up 4% of the Canadian population but account for 32.6% of the total female offender population in Canada. This means that in Canada, one out of every three women who are federally incarcerated is of Aboriginal descent (Wesley, 2012). The author also states that over the past ten years, the representation of Aboriginal women in prisons has increased by nearly 90%. The following quote is from an Aboriginal woman serving time in prison: “I think when people start recognizing that there are reasons why we end up here, we weren’t born like this. We weren’t born to come to jail. It is everything that took place within our lives, all the struggles we have endured, all the hardships we have traveled. It all comes down to this. This is where we end up” (Auger, 1993).

As can be seen from the examples provided, race and gender are intertwined in these representations. In fact, others have pointed to the intersection between race and gender as a critical factor for determining how women are portrayed in media crime reports (Brennan & Vandenberg, 2009). The effects of these gendered discourses surrounding violence may be profound, affecting many aspects of a violent woman’s experience with the criminal justice system from conviction to sentencing, as well as their prospects for employment, social acceptance, and reintegration upon release (Dodge & Pogrebin, 2001; Turnbull & Hannah-Moffat, 2009).

The results of this study support previous data from other countries which have concluded that offenders and victims are treated in fundamentally different ways based on their gender. In fact, biases comparable to some of the trends reported above have been observed in England (Naylor, 2001; Evans, 2012), Ireland (O’Connell, 1999), Israel (Fishman & Weimann, 1985), Finland (Berrington & Honkatukia, 2002), and the US (Grabe et al., 2006; Brennan & Vandenberg, 2009; Vandenberg et al., 2013). Of course, it must be noted that the labels attached to both female offenders and victims are not simply assigned by the media, nor do the media create these labels in isolation. Rather, these labels are deeply embedded in public discourse and together encourage dual ideological constructions of women and crime.

Table 5.7: Prevalence of Themes Related to Fear and Marginalization for Male and Female Victims

Theme	Decade							
	1980s		1990s		2000s		Total	
	Females ¹	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males
<i>Fear</i>	0.35 ± 0.03	0.42 ± 0.04	0.45 ± 0.03	0.46 ± 0.04	0.44 ± 0.03	0.54 ± 0.05	0.40 ± 0.02	0.47 ± 0.02
<i>Excessive violence</i>	0.08 ± 0.02	0.15 ± 0.03	0.21 ± 0.03	0.22 ± 0.03	0.19 ± 0.03	0.24 ± 0.04	0.15 ± 0.01	0.20 ± 0.02
<i>Crime as a metaphor</i>	0.01 ± 0.01	0 ⁵	0.01 ± 0.01	0.02 ± 0.01	0.01 ± 0.01	0.03 ± 0.02	0.01 ± 0.01	0.02 ± 0.01
<i>Rationalization of the crime</i>	0.06 ± 0.01	0.07 ± 0.02	0.07 ± 0.02	0.08 ± 0.02	0.04 ± 0.01	0.14 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.01	0.09 ± 0.01
<i>Dehumanizing the crime</i>	0.05 ± 0.01	0.03 ± 0.01	0.10 ± 0.02	0.08 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.02	0.11 ± 0.03	0.07 ± 0.01	0.07 ± 0.01
<i>Crime is everywhere</i>	0.05 ± 0.01	0.03 ± 0.01	0.05 ± 0.01	0.05 ± 0.02	0.08 ± 0.02	0.08 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.01	0.05 ± 0.01
<i>Dehumanizing the offender</i>	0.08 ± 0.02	0.05 ± 0.02	0.10 ± 0.02	0.08 ± 0.02	0.11 ± 0.02	0.09 ± 0.03	0.10 ± 0.01	0.07 ± 0.01
<i>Crazy/unstable</i>	0.07 ± 0.01	0.07 ± 0.02	0.08 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.02	0.10 ± 0.02	0.09 ± 0.03	0.08 ± 0.01	0.07 ± 0.01
<i>History of crime</i>	0.08 ± 0.02	0.09 ± 0.02	0.11 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.02	0.10 ± 0.02	0.09 ± 0.03	0.10 ± 0.01	0.08 ± 0.01
<i>Occupation</i>	0.09 ± 0.02	0.07 ± 0.02	0.14 ± 0.02	0.015 ± 0.03	0.12 ± 0.02	0.10 ± 0.03	0.12 ± 0.01	0.10 ± 0.01
<i>Poverty</i>	0.06 ± 0.01	0.05 ± 0.02	0.07 ± 0.02	0.04 ± 0.02	0.04 ± 0.01	0.08 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.01	0.06 ± 0.01
<i>Rationalization of the offender</i>	0.02 ± 0.01	0.04 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.02	0.04 ± 0.01	0.02 ± 0.01	0.04 ± 0.01	0.04 ± 0.01

¹ All data are presented as the mean proportion of articles containing language related to the specified theme (± SEM).

⁴ Not specified.

⁵ No articles fitting this specific category were observed.

5.4 Differences Between Age of Offender and Victim

Analysis of the age of both offender and victim found differences in language between adults and youth. The differences were noteworthy despite the limited number of articles found on youth crime. The current study recorded 131 youth offenders and 891 adult offenders.

Additionally the study recorded 175 youth victims and 337 adult victims (see Table 5.3). The results of the study show that differences in language exist when dealing with young versus adult offenders and victims. The result is not surprising given the amount of sensationalistic media coverage young offenders receive in both Canada and the US (Faucher, 2009; Surette, 2010).

5.4.1 Changes in Language Based on Age of the Offender

Articles that mentioned the offender was a youth were significantly tied to the promotion of excessive violence ($p < 0.04$). The use of language describing excessive violence in articles with youth offenders was more than double that of adult offenders. The mention of crime being everywhere ($p < 0.03$) was also more than double for youth offenders (11%) compared to only 5% of articles for adult offenders. There was also a large difference in the dehumanization of the offender ($p < 0.00$) between ages of offenders. For cases of youth crime articles, 20% dehumanized the offender, compared to only 7% for adult offenders. Changes in language based on the offender's age were also observed for the mention of occupation ($p < 0.01$, see Table 5.8). This last change showed an opposite effect. In other words, when the offender was a youth, articles never mentioned their occupation. The overall language used in articles for cases of youth offenders conveys a sense of moral panic—young offenders are blamed for societal decay and the increased use of language of excessive violence imparts a dire sense of urgency in needing to solve the youth crime problem (see Appendix F).

5.4.2 Changes in Language Based on Age of Offender Over Time

When the offender was a youth, several changes were seen over time in language used by newspaper crime reports. First, a change was observed in language promoting excessive violence ($p < 0.03$). Since the 1980s, rates of language used to describe excessive violence for young offenders has increased from 15% in the 1980s to 20% in the 2000s, but this language reached its highest level, at 48% of all articles, in the 1990s. Second, the dehumanization of the crime ($p < 0.05$) also saw a large increase over three decades—2% in the 1980s to 13% in the 2000s. As with use of language describing excessive violence, there was a spike in language that

dehumanized the crime throughout the 1990s at 21% of all articles when the offender was a juvenile. Finally, the last difference noted over the thirty-year span was the mention of crime being everywhere ($p < 0.02$). Data results show a similar pattern of 4% in the 1980s, 21% in the 1990s, and then a drop to 9% in the 2000s (see Appendix F).

The current study found that language portraying juvenile offenders contained a strong mix of both fear (excessive violence, crime is everywhere) and marginalization (dehumanization of both crime and offender and mention of history of crime). However, language for youth offenders contained contradictory ideologies for both offender and victim. For example, on the one hand, when young people were the victims of crime, newspapers would often turn them into the most deserving of victims—that is, victims who were ultimately robbed of their youth by dangerous social conditions. On the other hand, when offenders were young, the same articles would convey a discourse of corrupt, unprincipled, modern values as the cause behind youth crime. Young offenders became people to be feared; they were cold blooded and calculating predators. Moreover, such depictions of youth offenders were often used as examples that rationalized extreme changes in criminal law and get tough on crime policies.

The most common theme found in the youth variable was the dehumanization of the offender and dehumanization of the crime. News reporting language created a distinct divide between law-abiding adults and out-of-control youth. Narratives surrounding the dehumanization of the offender and crime focused on very rare and bizarre crimes, and they presented the articles as stories rather than newspaper reports. In fact, story reporting was an idiosyncratic trait found only in articles about young offenders.

Language such as “baby bandits” (*Vancouver Sun*, 1987), “baby faced butcher” (*Toronto Star*, 2002), “thieves on wheels,” “teenage thugs” (Gregory, 1997), and “little punks” (*Toronto Star*, 1992) were all commonplace occurrences in crime articles which tended to focus more on the destructive nature of youth culture than on the crimes themselves. The following example contains very typical language surrounding youth crime reporting. It must be noted, however, that although the article reports a female youth offender, the study was unable to record differences in gender when offenders and victims were youths. This result falls in stark contrast to articles reporting on adult women offenders, given that adult women seem to be particularly susceptible to being made the scapegoats for the alleged breakdown of social control within society. One possible reason for the difference in treatment could be because newspapers chose

to focus on the youth factor rather than on gender or race. The results of the study tended to reflect a moral condemnation of being young and criminal or of being young and the victim of a crime.

The example below took up the entire page of the newspaper and included a picture of the offender in court. The *Toronto Star* article was titled, “The baby face butcher: From rich teen to killer”:

It began with skipping school. In the morning, the 15 year old B student shared a six-pack of beer with some boys. By late afternoon, she bought and drank a 32-ounce beer [...] By 9 p.m., she was in the park punching and kicking a man while she wore inline skates. Then she helped her friend as he slashed and stabbed the man 30 times in the head, face, chest and stomach, gutted the body and tried to slip rocks into the abdomen to make it sink into the lake (August 26, 2002, p. 3A).

The article created more fear and alarm by stating, “battles waged by many teenagers, including staying out too late and talking too long on the phone, little things, but little things that led to that night in Central Park.” The article continues, “the State board of Regents is now trying to make school, mental health, substance abuse and police agencies work together to derail such isolated, often minor problems before they turn tragic.”

According to Faucher (2009), framing rare and brutal crimes among young people as though they were commonplace is not a new phenomenon in the media. Youth crime, at least since the 1960s, has been a breeding ground for moral panics, whether the panics arise from shootings, violent video games, drugs, or other *immoral* behaviour. In other words, young people have taken the centre stage as the targets of socially constructed fear (Faucher, 2009; Schissel, 2006).

Newspapers commonly used fear of immoral or questionable behaviour through the dehumanization of the crime. This *Winnipeg Free Press* article about a theft and possession of marijuana quickly turned from being about the crimes to focusing on the latest moral panic—Satan worship. Titled, “Bible belt teens dabble with Satan,” the article read as follows:

So you think you’re Jesus, eh? [...] Stories of animal sacrifices, demonic literature and an underground Satanic church are sprinkled across Manitoba’s Bible Belt [...] The Family—whose members bore the nicknames such as Lucifer

and Psycho [...] a rallying influence for directionless teenagers drifting outside the mainstream (Murray, 1987, p. 4A).

The article contained several quotes from church ministers, with one minister stating, “if my kid is smoking marijuana and breaking the law, he’s into Satanism.” This same minister then added, “if you open your mind to evil, who knows where it will lead.” The above example is just one of many where youth were connected to a discourse of fear.

Another example of the typical language used to spread fear around young people was found in the *Winnipeg Free Press* in an article about a drug bust at a local high school. The first line in the article read:

Mothers, do you know what your children are doing? One Winnipeg woman thought she did, but admitted yesterday in court she was stunned to learn her 15 year old son was more than just a straight “A” student at Kelvin High School. He was also one of the schools biggest drug pushers [...] He was one of seven students nabbed during a highly publicized undercover police operation (McIntyre, 2002, p. 10A).

The rhetorical tactics displayed here can create a sense of fear through language such as “undercover police operation,” which works to highlight a sense of urgency surrounding youth culture that allows for stricter rules and laws to be driven by fear rather than fact (Roberts, 2009). The discourse was especially pronounced when newspapers included large amounts of language expressing excessive violence in their reporting of youth crime. Unlike the language of excessive violence used for adult offenders, language for young offenders was particularly descriptive. For instance, an article in the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* stated:

The last thing the victim of an apparent random act of violence remembers is a guy taking a swing at him [...] his face pouring blood and his eyes almost swollen shut [...] but that didn’t stop them from beating him unconscious and stomping on his head so hard their shoe prints are still embedded in his skin like a scarlet stamp (Coolican, 2007, p. A1).

Results surrounding youth offenders in the current study can be explained and understood through the framework of moral panics over youth crime that emerged in the 1960s (Barron & Lacombe, 2005). Since it was first described by Jock Young (1971) and popularized by Cohen (1972), the concept of moral panic has done much to further our knowledge of the construction

of deviance, especially deviance as it relates to young people (Welch et al., 2004). Briefly, the term moral panic describes a process by which the notion that our way of life is somehow in jeopardy surfaces and becomes ubiquitous in public discourse. The associated fear often gives way to a sense of urgency by carrying with it the threat (either stated or implied) that this one deviant act holds the potential to unravel the entire social fabric. As seen in the result of this study, youth, especially young offenders, tend to be caught in the middle of both these media-induced panics and the discourse that creates the impetus for reactionary measures aimed at combating this threat.

Table 5.8: Prevalence of Themes Related to Fear and Marginalization for Youth and Adult Offenders

Theme ¹	Decade							
	1980s		1990s		2000s		Total	
	Youths	Non-youths ²	Youths	Non-youths ²	Youths	Non-youths ²	Youths	Non-youths ²
Fear	0.36 ± 0.08	0.38 ± 0.02	0.44 ± 0.10	0.46 ± 0.03	0.58 ± 0.09	0.47 ± 0.03	0.46 ± 0.05	0.43 ± 0.01
Excessive violence	0.14 ± 0.06	0.11 ± 0.01	0.37 ± 0.09	0.20 ± 0.02	0.19 ± 0.07	0.21 ± 0.02	0.22 ± 0.04	0.17 ± 0.01
Crime as a metaphor	0 ³	0.00 ± 0.01	0	0.01 ± 0.01	0	0.01 ± 0.12	0	0.01 ± 0.01
Rationalization of the crime	0.06 ± 0.04	0.06 ± 0.01	0.11 ± 0.06	0.07 ± 0.01	0.10 ± 0.05	0.07 ± 0.01	0.09 ± 0.03	0.07 ± 0.01
Dehumanizing the crime	0.03 ± 0.03	0.04 ± 0.01	0.15 ± 0.07	0.09 ± 0.02	0.10 ± 0.05	0.08 ± 0.02	0.09 ± 0.03	0.07 ± 0.01
Crime is everywhere	0.06 ± 0.04	0.04 ± 0.01	0.15 ± 0.07	0.04 ± 0.01	0.13 ± 0.06	0.07 ± 0.01	0.11 ± 0.03	0.05 ± 0.01
Dehumanizing the offender	0.14 ± 0.06	0.07 ± 0.01	0.26 ± 0.09	0.08 ± 0.01	0.16 ± 0.07	0.10 ± 0.02	0.18 ± 0.04	0.08 ± 0.01
Crazy/unstable	0.11 ± 0.05	0.06 ± 0.01	0.07 ± 0.05	0.07 ± 0.01	0.03 ± 0.03	0.10 ± 0.02	0.07 ± 0.03	0.08 ± 0.01
History of crime	0.06 ± 0.04	0.09 ± 0.01	0.07 ± 0.05	0.09 ± 0.02	0.13 ± 0.06	0.10 ± 0.02	0.09 ± 0.03	0.09 ± 0.01
Occupation	0.03 ± 0.03	0.09 ± 0.01	0	0.16 ± 0.02	0.03 ± 0.03	0.12 ± 0.02	0.02 ± 0.01	0.12 ± 0.01
Poverty	0	0.06 ± 0.01	0.15 ± 0.07	0.05 ± 0.01	0.03 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.01	0.05 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.01
Rationalization of the offender	0.03 ± 0.03	0.03 ± 0.01	0.04 ± 0.04	0.06 ± 0.01	0.03 ± 0.03	0.03 ± 0.01	0.03 ± 0.02	0.04 ± 0.01

¹ All data are presented as the mean proportion of articles containing language related to the specified theme (± SEM).

² See the section 5.4 for further details on how young and adult offenders were identified/specified.

³ No articles fitting this specific category were observed.

5.4.3 Changes in Language Based on Age of Victim

Results show differences in the language surrounding youth victims. Language promoting fear ($p < 0.03$) was used more often when the victim was young. In addition, when the victim was a youth, articles dehumanized the crime more often ($p < 0.05$; see Appendix F) than when reporting on adult victims. Therefore when the victim was young the language conveys a sense of tragedy and danger.

5.4.4 Changes in Language Based on Age of Victim Over Time

Longitudinal changes in the language pertaining to crime being everywhere ($p < 0.00$; see Appendix F) were also found based on the age of the victim. Mentions of crime being everywhere increase substantially in the 1990s, with 20% of all articles containing this language. This represents an increase from the previous decade when only 5% of articles included such language. However, this same language decreased drastically by the 2000s, when it was found in only 1% of all articles (see Appendix F). The changing nature of the crime victim and of whom the media considers a deserving victim might explain the result. Young people are increasingly blamed for their own victimization—descriptions of gang violence being a prime example—than they were in 1980s, and the lack of alarmist fear surrounding these victims may account for the change in language. In the above results section on race, I discussed how in articles where visible minority victims were blamed for their own victimization, there was also little to no mention of crime being everywhere. Therefore the decrease in the language surrounding youth victims may be explained similarly. That is, groups who are blamed for their own victimization are not to be feared.

The results of the study show that differences in language can be observed between young and adult victims of crime. When the victim was young, articles included more connotations to fear such as “stop the violence, stop the bloodshed” and “will your child come home alive today?” (*Toronto Star*, 1992); “rampant violence; frenzied attack” (*Toronto Star*, 1992); and, “it’s so scary” (Henry, 2007). The media’s heightened use of fearful and alarmist language for youth victims may be used to draw readers’ attention to the problem that our youth are somehow in moral danger, including behaviour such as drinking, hanging out with friends, and staying out too late.

In almost all articles that used fearful language to describe the victim, he/she died of gunshot wounds that were seemingly tied to gang life. Gang narratives were the most common theme throughout articles for both offenders and victims. The *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* reported on an incident where a teen stabbed another teen in the West Edmonton Mall. The article included statements such as “the assailants slashed and stabbed their victims with what witnesses describe as axes or long knives” and continued with “after the attack, West Edmonton Mall appointed a security officer to track Asian gang crime activity in the giant shopping centre” (1997, p. A2).

The discourse of gang activity was so pronounced around youth victims that even when the victim was not part of a gang, newspapers still managed to tie the two together. An example of this language was found in the *Toronto Star* when a youth was shot and killed by a gun:

Last year, in the biggest gang sweep in Toronto police history, 600 officers carried out 78 GTA-wide raids and took more than 100 people into custody in an attempt to dismantle the “Jamestown Crew” gang. Police believe they were responsible for importing guns from the US (Cherry, 2007, p. A6).

The article later states that “they” (perhaps the police?) believe the teen was shot and killed by gang guns. The article goes on to state that although the victim was not a known gang member, “his friends loved him. They grew up here, some were good, some are not,” and that his “death has highlighted the lack of progress being made in the troubled neighbourhood.” According to Schissel, gang narratives are commonly used throughout the media as a form of crime control where “increased law and order are the only ways to create a safe society” (2006, p. 91).

Another difference between adult and youth victims was noted through the increased use of language that dehumanized the crime. Such language was mainly reserved for good or deserving youth victims. These deserving victims were seen as innocent victims who were not part of gang life or who did not live in poor neighbourhoods. According to the *Toronto Star* deserving victims are “church-going girls with large, supportive families” (Dimanno, 2007, p. A7). Surprisingly however, gang connection or supposed gang connections were still present in such victim cases. An article on the death of two teen girls reported:

[name of victims] weren’t killed by either guns or gangs. They died last weekend when the cab in which they were passengers was struck by a stolen vehicle—a 15 year-old boy at the wheel [...] the driver of that car—reportedly, the third vehicle

he'd boosted in a single day, was also killed [...] violence and recklessness and hooliganism (Dimanno, 2007, p. A7).

In this same article, the pastor at the funeral was quoted as saying:

“you can't have no feelings because you have no feelings!! Let's start a revolution right here, we need to pledge our lives to be mentors to young people, even if they're not yours” [...] Pastor Williams sneered at the guns and gang culture that has tormented so many in this strongly faith-based black community. Gesturing left and right, at the two matching white caskets, his voice strangled with indignation, Williams thundered “it's just that same attitude that caused that car to hit my baby right here and my baby right here” (Dimanno, 2007, p. A7).

The language used here implies that the fifteen-year-old boy driving the car was a gang member, despite the fact that at the bottom of the article it is stated, “it is unclear whether [name of boy] had already been drawn into that vortex,” the vortex being gang life. After almost a full newspaper page devoted to the dangers of guns and gangs—both of which were mentioned at the beginning of the article as not being the cause of death—the rest of the article went on to speak of the lives of the two victims.

The results show that language surrounding young offenders and victims intensifies around certain issues, such as guns, moral dangers (drinking, hanging out), and gangs. The language used by newspapers creates a discourse of risk and danger surrounding young people. According to critical criminological theories, youth have become a prime target for fear in the media, and this fear has often led to moral panics about youth culture (Schissel, 2006; Welch, 2009). As stated above, many of the results found throughout the current study seem to reflect a moral panic surrounding young people, whether they are offenders or victims.

The principles of a moral panic can best be understood through critical criminological theories. Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) have identified four critical actors in the development of a moral panic, all which were seen throughout the results of this study: (1) the mass media, (2) moral entrepreneurs, (3) the control culture, and (4) the public. Of particular importance among these actors is the mass media. In this case, the media can play a critical role in the early production of moral panic by constructing and portraying processed or coded images of deviance and deviants, especially as they relate to youth. According to Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) there are three processes involved in constructing coded images. Interestingly, all three processes

were found throughout the results around youth. First are exaggerations and distortions of the problem and who caused it. This study was able to record several examples of this type of discourse, in particular the constant blaming of gangs, whether or not there was proof of gang connections in the context of the crime.

The second process is prediction, largely of the catastrophic consequences that are sure to follow in the absence of swift intervention. This discourse was very present in the sample articles, especially in the example of the article on the “baby faced butcher,” which tied mundane everyday teen activities, such as talking on the phone, to a brutal murder. The language of fear and brutality was then reinforced by calling for mental health professionals to be available in all schools.

Third, Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) describe symbolization, in which labels are progressively transformed such that their mere mention—i.e. mods or rockers in Cohen’s seminal example, or in the case of this study, the word *gang*—signifies a threat to be feared. As a consequence of this discourse, fear surrounding youth can be attached to a single word.

A moral panic also includes moral entrepreneurs. These are the people who campaign to eradicate the threatening behaviour and, by extension, the group(s) thought to be responsible. The societal control culture is made up of those with the power to institute and legitimate new forms of social control, such as governments, courts, and school boards. Crime has become a political act (Lee, 2007), and we as a society have become so conditioned to fear crime and to protect ourselves that in order to gain electoral votes, elected members of government require very strong crime platforms so as to not appear soft on crime.

These new measures are taken, in large part, to satisfy the fourth actor—public opinion. According to Goode & Ben-Yehuda (1994) and Schissel (2006) the public’s common sense understanding of young people comes from sensationalized coverage and, at times, fictitious accounts of youth crime, both of which have had a major impact on our understanding of the social construction of crime.

More importantly, however, the results of the current study address a pending question. Extending stage three of Fairclough’s CDA (2001, p. 131) is to speak to whether or not the social order needs the problem. In other words, does it help the social order to portray crime as a function of the Other? The results of the study have found that, according to the media sampled here, crime and the causes for crime are a result of self-inflicted poverty. Consequently, the

media create an image which portrays street crime (often crimes of the poor) as being the most threatening and costly to society. This portrayal operates in conjunction with the criminal justice system, which is comprised of elite members of society who operate on behalf of powerful groups of people for the purpose of controlling behaviour. The problem lies in what behaviour to control and whom becomes targeted as a threat in need of control. Critical criminology explains how street crimes such as robbery or muggings—predominantly crimes of the young and poor—are more harshly punished than white-collar crimes—crimes committed by the upper class, typically economic crimes—because this permits the oppression of youth and visible minorities in order to keep dominant groups powerful (Reimer, 2012). People from all backgrounds are capable of committing crimes; however, the results of the current study have shown how the power of language can distort this fact. A clear example was found with white offenders through use of language that dehumanized the crime—i.e. as something repugnant and unimaginable to any normal person—combined with an explanation for the crime—in this case, mental illness. The combination of the two builds the case that white offenders are not normal. More importantly, when the pattern is applied disproportionately to white offenders, the implication is clear—no white criminal is normal because white people are not supposed to commit crimes. Further complicating this matter are institutions such as the media which tend to have ideological control over both crime and offenders (Reiman, 2012).

Therefore, when the criminal justice system and the media focus on individual responsibility for crime and do not include social factors as causes for crime and criminal behaviour, they both broadcast the message that the social order itself is reasonable and just. The system is thus able to focus on moral condemnation rather than law. The information presented here has demonstrated that the language found within crime reports changes based on a person's race, gender, and age. A great deal of evidence based on the results of the current study show that crime is considered to be a problem caused by the poor, who are, more often than not, uneducated visible minorities.

Additionally, the results show that when crime is committed by people outside this narrative, such as women and white men, the language of crime reporting becomes very dehumanizing toward the offender. Such language sends the message that crime among certain people is not normal, and the blame quickly falls on weakening social constraints, women's liberations, and/or factors outside their control, leading media to make excuses for their

behaviour or outright dismissal of the crimes. When dehumanizing language is reserved only for certain people, it has the power to shape our understanding about crime and offenders. Moreover, it sends a powerful message—that crimes committed by visible minorities and youth require no further explanation. Portrayals of offenders and victims as found in the current study show that a powerful hierarchy of treatment exists between those who *are* and those who *are not* meant to have their lives impacted by crime.

5.4.5 Interactions Between Age of Offender and Age of Victim

The results of the study found two interactions in the language between age of offender and age of victim. The first interaction was in language that dehumanized the crime ($p < 0.05$; see Table 5.9). Such language was reserved for articles where both the offender and victim were youths. The second interaction was found in language that portrayed the offender as being crazy or psychologically unstable ($p < 0.03$). Such language was found in articles where the age of offender and age of victim were different. However, the language was more common when the offender was an adult who committed a crime against a youth victim. Furthermore, language portraying the offender as crazy was also found when the offender was a youth who committed a crime against an adult victim (see Appendix F).

5.4.6 Longitudinal Interactions Between Age of Offender and Age of Victim

The study also found longitudinal interactions in the language between offenders and victims. Over the thirty-year span, language that dehumanized the crime ($p > 0.03$; see Table 5.9) was most common in the 1990s. While this has since decreased, it remains higher for youth than for adult offenders.

Language portraying crime as being everywhere ($p < 0.02$; see Table 5.9) has also changed over the decades. In the 1980s, such language was used most often when the offender was an adult and the victim was a youth. In the 1990s, use of the language peaked when the offender and victims were both youths. In the 2000s, language portraying crime as being everywhere was most employed when both offender and victim were adults, not youths. The only linear trend seen in the language over the thirty-year span was reserved for crimes where the offender was a youth and the victim was an adult. The same linear trend was also found in the mention of history of crime ($p < 0.03$; see Table 5.9) in cases where the offender was a youth and the victim was an adult.

Table 5.9: Prevalence of Themes Related to Fear and Marginalization for Youth and Adult Victims

Theme ¹	Decade							
	1980s		1990s		2000s		Total	
	Youths	Non-youths ²	Youths	Non-youths	Youths	Non-youths	Youths	Non-youths
<i>Fear</i>	0.59 ± 0.06	0.33 ± 0.02	0.54 ± 0.06	0.44 ± 0.03	0.49 ± 0.07	0.47 ± 0.03	0.55 ± 0.04	0.41 ± 0.02
<i>Excessive violence</i>	0.22 ± 0.05	0.09 ± 0.01	0.22 ± 0.05	0.21 ± 0.02	0.17 ± 0.06	0.21 ± 0.02	0.21 ± 0.03	0.16 ± 0.01
<i>Crime as a metaphor</i>	0 ³	0.00 ± 0.01	0.01 ± 0.01	0.01 ± 0.01	0.04 ± 0.03	0.01 ± 0.01	0.02 ± 0.01	0.01 ± 0.01
<i>Rationalization of the crime</i>	0.09 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.01	0.06 ± 0.03	0.08 ± 0.02	0.13 ± 0.05	0.07 ± 0.01	0.09 ± 0.02	0.07 ± 0.01
<i>Dehumanizing the crime</i>	0.08 ± 0.03	0.03 ± 0.01	0.08 ± 0.03	0.09 ± 0.02	0.09 ± 0.04	0.08 ± 0.02	0.08 ± 0.02	0.07 ± 0.01
<i>Crime is everywhere</i>	0.08 ± 0.03	0.04 ± 0.01	0.08 ± 0.03	0.04 ± 0.01	0.02 ± 0.02	0.09 ± 0.02	0.07 ± 0.02	0.05 ± 0.01
<i>Dehumanizing the offender</i>	0.04 ± 0.02	0.08 ± 0.01	0.07 ± 0.03	0.10 ± 0.02	0.09 ± 0.04	0.11 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.02	0.09 ± 0.01
<i>Crazy/unstable</i>	0.16 ± 0.04	0.05 ± 0.01	0.13 ± 0.04	0.06 ± 0.01	0.13 ± 0.05	0.09 ± 0.02	0.14 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.01
<i>History of crime</i>	0.11 ± 0.04	0.08 ± 0.01	0.19 ± 0.05	0.06 ± 0.01	0.06 ± 0.04	0.10 ± 0.02	0.13 ± 0.02	0.08 ± 0.01
<i>Occupation</i>	0.07 ± 0.03	0.09 ± 0.01	0.11 ± 0.04	0.15 ± 0.02	0.17 ± 0.06	0.10 ± 0.02	0.11 ± 0.02	0.11 ± 0.01
<i>Poverty</i>	0.07 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.01	0.08 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.01	0.04 ± 0.03	0.06 ± 0.01	0.07 ± 0.02	0.06 ± 0.01
<i>Rationalization of the offender</i>	0.07 ± 0.03	0.02 ± 0.01	0.13 ± 0.04	0.04 ± 0.01	0.02 ± 0.02	0.03 ± 0.01	0.08 ± 0.02	0.03 ± 0.01

¹ All data are presented as the mean proportion of articles containing language related to the specified theme (± SEM).

² See section 5.4 for further details on how young and adult offenders were identified/specified.

³ No articles fitting this specific category were observed.

Results have shown that differences in language can be observed in Canadian crime reports based on the mention of race, gender, and age of both offenders and victims. Moreover, these differences were consistent across individual newspapers, and, with few exceptions, these biases were seen over thirty years of crime reporting.

In the following chapter, I outline the general discussion, conclusions, and directions for future research. The first part of the chapter returns to the original research questions that guided the exploration of this study. Here I provide a detailed description of each of the research questions and its results. In the second part of the chapter, I discuss a set of conclusions and final thoughts for future research and policy implications. Media representations have tremendous potential to influence both public opinion of offenders and the outcomes of the accused. Based on the results of this research, these biases in media representations of crime must be addressed. As such, in the final chapter, I direct our attention to the need for further research on the benefits of educational programs for both those who disseminate the discourse of crime and those who consume it. The chapter concludes by providing support to the critical paradigms engaged with in this thesis, demonstrating the need to include an analysis of race (via postcolonial theory), class (via critical criminology), and gender (via feminism) as well as the importance of deconstructing language in crime articles.

CHAPTER 6:

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As stated in the introduction, it has been well established that fear of crime is, at least in part, influenced by the media and that the escalation of fear in many Western societies has resulted from increased media coverage of crime. Critical approaches to the study of media in the existing literature show crime reporting as a political act, involving deepening stereotypes and Othering of marginalized people based on their age, race, and gender. These ideologies help secure power for the dominant class by perpetuating crime as a problem of the Other through simplistic, fragmented, and contradictory explanations for social phenomena (Proulx, 2011). The discourse found in the current study surrounding both offenders and victims placed blame on individual flaws rather than social forces as the cause of crime and victimization. Articles portrayed some crimes (crimes committed by members of certain social groups) as more or less normal, while some victims were portrayed as more sympathetic than others. Furthermore, throughout the past three decades newspaper articles have increased their references to fear, predominantly through the use of language describing excessive violence. Increases were also seen in language that both portrayed crime as being everywhere and that dehumanized crimes. Results have shown that significant differences in language exist in Canadian crime reports based on the race, age, and gender of the offender and victim. Moreover, these differences were consistent across individual newspapers, and, in many cases, these biases could be seen across the entire thirty-year span of crime reporting examined here.

Contrasting this rather bleak set of conclusions, data also suggest the research findings may be reversed through education of criminal justice issues and through the encouragement of thoughtful deliberation (Doob, 2000; Indemauro et al., 2012; Roberts & Doob, 1990). In this chapter, I discuss the way ahead and possible public policy implications regarding media responsibility. First, however, I begin by outlining a brief overview of the study.

6.1 Review of the Main Research Questions and Findings

From the beginning, the goal of the research was to create a detailed portrait of the nature of media representations of crime. A combination of critical theories including critical criminology, feminism, postcolonial theory, and critical discourse analysis were used to develop themes of media representations related to class, gender, race, and language. Two themes, fear and marginalization, as well as twelve subthemes emerged from the empirical and theoretical literature and were selected in order to gain a critical understanding of media representations of crime and victimization.

A MMR approach was found to be effective in analyzing how the discourse of the criminal and victim occurred throughout four different Canadian newspapers. A quantitative approach was used to conduct the first part of the research, which was a summative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). According to Hsieh and Shannon “a summative approach to content analysis starts with identifying and quantifying certain words or content in text with the purpose of understanding the contextual use of the words or content” (2005, p. 1283). In order to better understand differences in language as portrayed in newspapers, a critical discourse analysis was also employed in the second part of the research. This study used a modified approach set forth by Fairclough (2001). Briefly, the first step focused on a social problem with a semiotic aspect—in this case, the portrayal of crime, offenders, and victims. The second stage identified obstacles to the problem being tackled, which largely meant choosing the proper methodology with which to address the phenomenon—in this case, MMR as discussed in Chapter 3. The third stage consisted of the textual analysis, which was both interpretative and explanatory as outlined throughout the results and discussion in Chapter 5. The unstructured nature of the qualitative methods employed here proved advantageous as it provided a means for going back through the data set to look for associations both between the themes set out a priori in the content analysis with de novo themes and dominant portrayals. For example, articles containing the most “fearful” words according to the quantitative analysis were then compared with (1) articles containing the least fearful language and (2) articles containing the most fearful language in a different category (i.e. male versus female offenders). This latter example was particularly powerful since it revealed differences in the discourse portrayed based on contexts that

were not apparent in the quantitative analysis alone. Thus, the use of MMR in the case of this study overcame obstacles that one method alone could not. Employing MMR also helped to uncover a discourse that disproportionately presented white, male, and adult offenders (as opposed to visible minority, youth, or women offenders) as aberrant individual cases stemming from extenuating circumstances, psychological pathology, or extraordinary character defect. All told, differences seen throughout the language portrayed in newspaper crime reporting created a powerful hierarchy of treatment between those who *are* and those who *are not* meant to have their lives impacted by crime.

Before proceeding any further, however, I return here to the original research questions that guided the exploration of this study. (1) *How does the race, age, or gender of the offender described within a newspaper crime report significantly impact the probability that the article will contain language that promotes a discourse of fear of crime and marginalization?*

The purpose of conducting the study was to find out if offenders were treated differently in the media based on their race, age, and gender. Thus I asked the question, were visible minority offenders, youth offenders, and female offenders portrayed as more criminal than white, adult, male offenders? After reading and analyzing 1,190 crime articles in four different city newspapers over a period of thirty years, the answer is no for both women and visible minorities. The most surprising result, in this regard, was found in language surrounding white offenders. White male offenders were far more criminalized and dehumanized than visible minority offenders and female offenders throughout the study. However, newspaper reporting provided more rationalizations and/or explanations for the crime for white offenders. By contrast, crimes were not rationalized for visible minority offenders. The language used to portray white offenders was embedded in notions of fear, violence, and dehumanization of the offender, which ultimately resulted in the individualization of such offenders. White offenders were described as evil and monstrous, as well as the ruthless and feared predator waiting to pounce. The title of this dissertation, “meet the devil, he’ll chill you to the bone,” was written about a white offender. By all accounts, socially constructed fear in the media surrounded white offenders.

However, white offenders are not the face of crime. As I discussed in Chapter 5, white offenders are not portrayed as normal and therefore are not feared in the same way as visible minority offenders. For instance, language used in media crime reports throughout the study transformed fear by suggesting that white offenders are not typical offenders and that their crimes are out of the ordinary. The power behind such a difference in language would suggest that whites do not typically commit crimes, and in the rare event of a crime being committed, the perpetrator is not normal, nor representative of their race. As a result, white criminals are different from regular, non-criminal whites. The danger behind this discourse is that it was only provided for white offenders, sending the message that crimes committed by visible minorities require no further explanation as to the causes of their criminal behaviour. Moreover, the language presupposes that non-white criminals are not only the norm, but that they are also responsible for their *own* criminal behaviour.

In stark contrast to white offenders, visible minority offenders were portrayed through images of self-inflicted poverty. The real crime conveyed in the four Canadian newspapers examined here was, in fact, poverty—the poor are poor because they lack the moral capacity to pull themselves out of poverty. This narrative ultimately decided what type of people were criminals, and whom we as a society should fear. The results also show that the discourse of crime attached cultural stereotypes to the offenders—e.g. the drunken Aboriginal gang member and the woman who is out for revenge and money. The danger, of course, is that the constant mention of false stereotypes and decontextualization of crime in general becomes a part of our common-sense understanding of why crime happens and who is responsible.

The above results were applied to the paradigms of postcolonial theory, which helped to explain how the media have the power to define differences between good and bad people. The bad people were poor people, and, at least in this study, the poor people were visible minorities, especially Aboriginal people. The theories chosen for this research were well suited to the results of the study. Moreover, because notions of difference can be defined in many ways, including through race, socioeconomic status, in addition to gender, the application of different critical theories helped to shed light on some of the reasons why offenders and victims were treated differently in the media

based on their race, age, gender, and class. These divisions were, in turn, reproduced and legitimated by the media.

For example, although portrayals of female offenders accurately depict them as generally low risk, both female offenders and female victims were treated in an equal manner. Women offenders were dichotomized into sexualized bad girls or malicious black widow archetypes. Similarly, female victims were depicted as either bad victims who were blamed for their circumstances, or good victims who garnered sympathy through the negative portrayals of their offenders. Based on the MMR approach, the study found that the treatment of women in crime articles manifested itself in one of two ways.

First, female offenders were sometimes subject to a much more lax treatment in the media, a result also found in other research—i.e. repeated observations of more lenient sentences for women (Curry et al., 2004; Embry & Lyons, 2012) or the chivalry hypothesis (Grabe et al., 2006). Hypotheses found throughout related empirical literature suggest that because women are seen as weak and irrational, the criminal justice system acts in ways that are systematically paternalistic and protectionist toward them. As a result, women are more likely to be perceived as victims in need of protection than as aggressors requiring punishment (Grabe et al., 2006). In the current study, this hypothesis was found to be accurate given that women were largely perceived as non-threatening and were often sexualized—for example in the case of the blond bandits.

Second, the current study found that violent women were also occasionally subject to labels of double deviance (Copeland, 1997). In short, women face societal expectations of purity and goodness. Thus, a woman who commits a crime may be stigmatized both for committing that crime and for breaking the societal norm of how a woman should act. When a woman is seen to contravene her gendered archetype, one of two reactions was found in the study. Their criminal behaviours were either sexualized and made to be in some sense playful (up to some ill-defined moral threshold), or female offenders who crossed this threshold (by killing their spouse, for instance) were treated more harshly by the media than their male counterparts. These women were portrayed as cold and calculating, and their crimes were less likely to be blamed on exceptional circumstances or mental instability. In this context, it is perhaps not surprising that such

portrayals were often accompanied by language that lamented the moral decay of Western society and proclaimed that crime was everywhere.

The above discourse is troubling, given the data showing that the institutionalization of this kind of stigma can have profound impacts (Pollock & Davis, 2005). For example, stigmatized female offenders often experience great difficulty holding a job, having a home, getting access to any needed services, and enjoying mutually supportive relationships with family and friends. In turn, women who are denied legitimate social roles are more likely to engage in repeated criminal activity (Collins, 2010; Pollock & Davis, 2005). Including feminist literature in the current research was important because of how violence in women was and is viewed as a distinct and abnormal phenomenon relative to violence in men.

According to feminist paradigms the definition of criminality and deviance as found within the media lies primarily in a powerful discourse that has historically excluded women (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). Feminist literature has long identified media as a source of hegemonic constructions of gender (Gill, 2007; Moosa-Mitha, 2005). The current study found this to be true, and feminist literature helped to unravel the complex dichotomy surrounding the treatment of women in crime articles. The discourse emphasized traditional gender roles, with good girls who followed feminine ideals becoming ideal women and ideal victims, while bad girls who violated these norms were demonized. The assertion made by such deceptions is that the bad girl has somehow failed to develop a moral compass and therefore should expect to either become a criminal or be victimized. The discourse results in a view of women (both offender and victim) that is deeply embedded in gender inequality.

That the current study did not find what so many others have found—that women are feared and out of control - is telling and points to the strengths of using a MMR approach in research. In other words, applying mixed methodologies meant that I was able to unravel language found in newspaper crime reports at a deeper level than would have been possible had I used but one method. As Sandelowski states, this is “because techniques are tied neither to paradigms nor to methods, combinations at the technique level permit innovative uses of a range of techniques for a variety of purposes” (2000, p. 248).

Additionally, in the case of this study, the combination of techniques which carry unique assumptions and philosophical traditions contributed to the strengthening of the conclusions made here. The use of MMR allowed for a critical approach to language by providing support to the critical paradigms chosen for this research. Together, the results demonstrated the need to include an analysis of class (via critical criminology), race (via postcolonial theory), gender (via feminism) as well as the importance of deconstructing language in newspaper crime reports.

The age of the offender, particularly young offenders, saw large differences in use of language by newspaper crime reports. All of the subthemes involving youth were fear-based, and in almost all cases both the offender and the crimes were dehumanized. Moreover, for young offenders, these themes remained steady over the thirty-year period.

(2) How does the race, age, or gender of the victim described within a newspaper crime report significantly impact the probability that the article will contain language that promotes a discourse of fear of crime and marginalization?

Although the current study uncovered the importance of understanding the narratives behind the extreme stigmatization of individuals or groups, it also discovered that fear and marginalization can go far beyond classic scapegoating. A new threat can be seen to emerge in the media through the language surrounding the crime victim. In fact, throughout the study, some of the most profound stereotypes were embedded in the discourse surrounding victims of crime. Research results found that white victims caused alarm and fear through language in articles that described excessive violence, while visible minority victims were blamed for their victimization through language that focused on poverty and single mother households. Women were dichotomized, and women who embraced traditional views of femininity were classified as deserving victims. The discourse of the deserving victim was primarily based on language of fear, excessive violence, and references to safety measures. Furthermore, deserving victims had more text devoted to them, which included pictures and quotes from family and friends.

Bad victims or victims seen as less deserving of sympathy were portrayed as culpable because they stepped outside of their gender roles and, as a result, jeopardized their own safety. The narrative found in the study portrayed women who do bad things as

women who will ultimately pay the price for acting independently and without regard for their roles as women and/or mothers. The results of the data demonstrated a clear profile of the female victim: women are deserving victims when they embrace traditional female roles. As stated above, using a critical feminist paradigm was important as it enabled the identification of a powerful gendered narrative surrounding the female victim.

Language surrounding youth victims focused on moral condemnation, mixed with strong portrayals of fear and excessive violence. The differences were noteworthy despite the limited number of articles found on youth crime. Results surrounding both young offenders and victims were understood through critical criminology and the framework of moral panics. Discourse surrounding young people expressed alarm that created the impetus for reactionary measures aimed at combating the threat. The vast majority of articles describing youth victims called for government intervention and legislation to solve the *youth culture crisis*.

However, the current study also found that language surrounding young victims has changed over time. Young people are increasingly being blamed for their own victimization—a prime example being gang violence—than was previously the case, for instance, in the 1980s. This finding is very similar to the results found for the race of victims, where visible minority victims were often blamed for their own victimization. This particular result can be explained by an increasing lack of alarmist fear and little to no mention of crime being everywhere in the articles. However, the finding is similar in that groups who are blamed for their own victimization are not to be feared.

(3) How do articles containing language that promotes a discourse of fear of crime and marginalization change over time between 1982 and 2007? How does the decade in which the publication occurs affect the relationship between language use and characteristics of the offender and victim described in (1) and (2) above?

The data in the study spanned a thirty-year time period, and as a result the changes within articles could be analyzed over time. Over the past three decades, both language describing fear as well as language which dehumanized the crime showed a steady increase, as well as mentions of excessive violence and crime being everywhere (both of which doubled between the 1980s and the 2000s). Increased length of crime

articles can be explained through the newspapers' focus on the crime victim and more rationalizations and/or explanations for white offenders.

Articles describing youth crime became longer over time as the articles began to read more like stories out of a book. The decade of publication only seemed to affect youth. Throughout the 1990s, language surrounding youth crime became far more violent, dehumanizing, alarming, and fearful and then began to decrease in the early 2000s. One reason for the increase in fearful language throughout the 1990s can be tied to an increase in law and order politics surrounding youth. According to Glassner (1999), increased punishment in the US, Canada, and the UK resulted from the changing nature of youth culture coupled with the public's increasing need for accountability (Glassner, 1999). For example, Glassner points to a quote from a police chief who stated, "when you kill somebody when you're fifteen years old and you wipe out an entire family and kill in the manner in which he killed, you're not a child anymore" (1999, p. 73). Sentiments like these made constant headlines throughout the media and eventually led to youth being tried as adults and serving adult sentences for crime (Faucher, 2009; Glassner, 1999).

The results for young offenders can also be explained using literature from critical criminology, in particular the literature surrounding moral panics. Since it was first described by Jock Young (1971) and popularized by Cohen (1972), the concept of moral panic has done much to further our knowledge of the construction of deviance, especially deviance as it relates to young people. The results of the study show that language surrounding young offenders and victims intensifies around certain issues, such as guns, moral dangers (drinking, hanging out), and gangs. The language creates a discourse of the risk and danger of young people. According to critical criminological theories youth have become a prime target for fear in the media, and this fear has often led to moral panics about youth culture (Schissel, 2006; Welch, 2009).

6.2 Future Directions

In the following section, both the fourth and fifth stage of my modified critical discourse analysis will be discussed. The fourth stage is to provide suggestions for future research and potential policy suggestions. The fifth and final stage is to comment on my reflexivity as a researcher and its implications for the research. Based on the current results, several suggestions for future research can be made.

As a fundamental starting point, more studies are needed that examine the discourse and/or treatment of white offenders in the media. The vast majority of studies examined over the course of the literature review focused on the treatment of visible minority offenders only. This is perplexing since research has shown that the majority of crimes committed in North America are at the hands of white offenders (Glassner, 1999; Miller et al., 2006; Reiman, 2012). Yet, there is a substantial lack of data on how whites are treated in the criminal justice system, both individually and as compared to their visible minority counterparts. The current study found that the treatment given to white offenders may greatly impact how visible minority offenders are treated by the media and subsequently in the criminal justice system as well.

Additionally, more studies are needed that combine both quantitative and qualitative research. Mixed methods research should be recognized as valuable, as they can capitalize on the respective strengths of each combined approach. Pairing the methods in a larger study can achieve various aims, including corroborating findings, generating more complete data, and using results from one method to enhance insights attained with the complementary method (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2011). Throughout the current research, both quantitative and qualitative methods were important tools in understanding how race, gender, and age can affect the discourse of crime, particularly across time and place. Quantitative methods allowed for the analysis of a much larger data set (all variables within 1,190 crime articles), while qualitative methods allowed for a smaller in-depth and personal analysis of both offenders and victims. Combining methods leads to important results regarding the treatment of different groups and the factors affecting the discourse of crime.

In addition, more longitudinal data is necessary on the effects of sensationalism and negative stereotyping faced by many offenders, especially women. Based on the results found in the current study, it is clear that there are several important ways in which violence in women is viewed as a distinct and abnormal phenomenon relative to men. This gendered discourse surrounding women may have profound effects on women's experiences in the criminal justice system, from conviction to sentencing, as well as on women's prospects for employment, social acceptance, and reintegration upon release (Dodge & Pogrebin, 2001; Turnbull & Hannah-Moffat, 2009).

The final suggestion is required on the direction of causality. That is, are the biases within media reports skewing public opinion, or are these reports merely reflecting the pre-existing public bias and “giving the audience what they want to see?” As described by Cullen et al. (2000), a great deal of research has shown that across many Western nations, the public is generally uninformed about most facets of crime, including crime rates and their trends over time, recidivism rates, specific criminal laws, legal reforms, and the criminal justice process (Doob et al., 1998; Hough & Roberts, 1999; Roberts & Doob, 1990; Roberts & Stalans, 1997; Warr, 1980, 1982). The lack of knowledge, however, is not isolated to crime as citizens are “awash in ignorance” on most policy issues (Kinder, 1998, p. 784, as cited by Cullen, 2000). Moreover, researchers of public opinion have long argued that public ignorance of crime (and of many other social issues) is, in fact, rational from a cost-benefit standpoint (Kinder, 1998). Being knowledgeable about crime and its control simply does not make sense given the endless array of relevant social issues a person may need to learn about, and how little benefit there is to the average citizen in exchange for the effort required to obtain this knowledge. Thus, because only a small proportion of the public ever has direct experience with the justice system, and because obtaining detailed information is impractical for the vast majority of the public, public knowledge of crime and the legal system are necessarily dependent on media representations (Cullen, 2000).

In a particularly telling study, Roberts and Doob (1990) showed that when subjects read actual Canadian newspaper reports about sentencing, most people subsequently thought that the sentences were too lenient. In contrast, participants assigned to read a summary of actual court documents from the sentencing hearing supported significantly more lenient sentences. The effect is consistent across several experiments on public sentencing preferences, which all show that desire for punishment for many crimes is significantly reduced when given sufficient relevant information and when deliberation is encouraged (Doob, 2000; Doob & Roberts, 1983; Indermaur, 1987; Indermaur et al., 2012). These data collectively suggest that a causal pathway from media reports to public opinion exists. Perhaps more importantly, they suggest the possible disruption of this pathway through the dissemination of accurate information and the promotion of deliberation. These observed effects, however, were short lived. If

participants are retested 9 months later, their opinions revert to their pre-intervention state (Indermaur et al., 2012). This regression is perhaps not surprising, given that a single intervention would be immediately followed by a return to the deluge of simplistic and reactionary rhetoric of mainstream media portrayals. The results hold both positive and negative policy implications. In other words, the punitive shift in public opinion can be countered by public education efforts, but these efforts must be widespread and ongoing in order have any likelihood of producing lasting effects. Moreover, much more research is needed in order to measure the long term effects of public education efforts.

The fifth and final stage deals with reflexivity and to address whether or not the problem is compromised or altered through its own academic scrutiny. Within this realm of consideration, the first question to be addressed is whether my own biases may be reflected in the study and its methodology. While much effort was taken to minimize the effect of bias and to make the research as objective as possible, some degree of bias was almost certainly present. As an adult, who is white, and educated, I have a history that will certainly affect my decisions about what themes are present and what words belong to these themes. Moreover, while I corroborated these themes by examining their previous use in Sociological literature, this is a literature that is also dominated by educated, white, middle-aged academics with similar histories and thus likely similar biases. This certainly undermines the ability to generalize these findings to the general population – any statement about how the repeated exposure to these texts primes an individual to think in terms of certain stereotypes presumes that these individuals perceive and understand these texts the same way that I do. In fact, these differences in interpretation may well be the driving force that leads to an academic community that claims widespread bias among a journalistic community that claims widespread objectivity. However, more complex reflexive relationships between the academics scrutinizing text and the reporters producing it are also possible.

It is likely that many reporters are sensitive to the scrutiny of both academics and the public at large in search of bias. This may predispose crime reporters to avoid negative representations in the descriptions of ‘sensitive’ populations (e.g., visible minorities). The avoidance may result in the very pattern of language observed here – more sensationalistic language in the descriptions of white male offenders.

Throughout this research, I have attempted to uncover evidence of a discourse within Canadian print media that might create a binary perception of crime, offenders, and victims based on race, gender, and age. Critical approaches were used to understand how media reporting can be a political act, involving deepening stereotypes and Othering of marginalized people based on their age, race, and gender. A combination of critical theories including critical criminology, feminism, postcolonial theory, and critical discourse analysis were used to develop themes related to media representations. The results reflect what critical criminologists have previously stated: the crimes of the poor, such as street crimes, and the crimes of those who have less power (such as women and youth) are more scrutinized in the media than white-collar crimes. The results reflected a bias mainly through explanations *for* the crime (in the case of white, upper-class males) or lack thereof (women, youths, and visible minorities) and not necessarily in what the media report *about* crime and offenders. This discourse of difference may help us to understand how alienation can occur throughout the media as a result of systematic bias within social structures that favour the upper class. More importantly, however, the theoretical approach was suitable in aiding our understanding of why certain people are blamed for crime. In this case, the media can be seen as an institution that can govern criminal behaviour, its definition, and its control, while helping to foster negative ideological constructs of crime.

6.3 Implications of the Results

In any research on social issues, the data is expected to not only serve academic purposes but to also help further social equality. To me, these data fit with this idea in that they have provided a description of media bias that could very well be the impetus for evidence-based practice. In other words, the study was designed, in its simplest terms, to address the question of how the media *define* actors in the theatre of crime (Schissel, 2006, p. 39). For instance, what defines a criminal? A great deal of data suggests that what defines a criminal is more than the act of committing a crime. Much of the data presented here has found that a person's race, age, and gender are integral to how both the criminal and victim are represented by the media. Those who disseminate these representations, however, must be held to a higher standard. In the quest to attain equality, justice, and fairness, we must hold social institutions, such as the media,

accountable for how inequalities in race, gender, age, and socioeconomic status are reproduced within society. Because these media representations have enormous capacity to influence both public opinion of offenders and the outcome of those accused (Lee, 2007), once biases in media representations of crime are uncovered, they must be addressed. Up until now, the majority of these data have been generated in other countries (predominantly in the US and in the UK) and thus any media outlet could (justifiably) claim that despite a small number of observations of past biases, skewed representations of crime are not a systemic Canadian problem. The current data, however, was taken from a cross-section of the country over the course of thirty years—the largest sample of its kind collected to date in Canada.

These data show that biases in representations of crime are not isolated incidents. Biases in the representation of both offenders and victims were not only observed, but they were also strikingly consistent over time and location. Moreover, these biases reflected what had already been found in other Western countries. Given the observations, however, the key question is, what can be done about it. The results of the current study can, for instance, be made available for educational purposes. As discrimination in any form has political, economic, and ideological roots, demanding accountability from those in power forms an important positive step in striving for equality. Ideally, an educational program would be aimed at both those disseminating the discourse of crime and those consuming it. Foremost, journalism schools across the country should review their curricula in order to better deal with issues of ethno-racial diversity and crime, as this study has shown journalists are not free of bias. As stated above, data has found that public opinion can change through education about criminal justice issues and through encouragement of thoughtful deliberation. Therefore, educating journalists on issues relating to oppression, marginalization, poverty, and lack of equal opportunities are fundamental in promoting equality across the country. Furthermore, it can better prepare journalists for rapid changes in the racial composition of cities in Canada and around the world. In a similar vein, Canadian print media should strive to be more inclusive in their hiring practices. The more diversity that exists within print media at all levels, the less likely certain biases in reporting will go uncorrected.

These same data, however, suggest that any such intervention will need to be both long-term and widespread in order to create any lasting impact. Such interventions show the greatest promise when it comes to promoting both public opinion and public policies that are proactive, evidence-based, and proportionate. We cannot assume that newsmakers are malicious individuals who, while conscious of the negative social impact of their editorial decisions, are ignoring them in the quest for sensationalism and profit. Instead, it is possible (and arguably likely) that those working in the production of media do not appreciate the impact that seemingly subtle editorial decisions (such as specific wording) can have on our broader understandings of crime, offenders, and victims. In fact, it has been explicitly hypothesized elsewhere in this document that some of the biases observed may emerge from crime reporters' attempts to avoid negative representations. For example, many forms of sensationalistic language (e.g. descriptions of excessive violence) were more prevalent in descriptions attached to white male offenders. One potential reason for this difference in language may well be the avoidance of sensationalism in describing females and visible minorities for fear of appearing racist or sexist.

Despite this hypothesized sensitivity on the part of reporters, it must be said that some degree of sensationalism does help to sell papers. As a result, reporters may be using sensationalist language only when describing *safe* populations—white men. Biases that result from these types of editorial decisions could be easily remedied through educational programs aimed at crime reporters and editors. Of course, there may still be groups who will continue to use maladaptive (that is, stereotype-promoting) practices. Thus in addition to educational campaigns, efforts should be aimed at the continual analysis of editorial bias in all major media sources. Ideally, such analysis would take the form of a systematic and consistent content analysis of all major media outlets, with public reporting of the results showing who among the major media producers are the most (or least) biased. Those who fare poorly in such a scoring system would likely take issue with the way such an analysis was conducted, but at that point, the discussion becomes one that is *based on evidence*, and so this in itself would be a tremendous step toward equality. Incorporating such scorekeeping into editorial decisions may seem like a

burden for newsmakers, but as a powerful social institution media have a great responsibility to the public at large.

Related to the above point, there may be sources for bias within the language of crime reports that precedes the media outlet in which the article appears. The source of information for the majority of crime reports is a press release that typically originates from a law enforcement agency. It is possible that at least some of the biases in the language of crime reports in these newspapers are passed on verbatim from these press releases rather than being manufactured *de novo* by the newspaper editorial staff. Thus, if the sort of oversight described above were applied to newspapers, it should likely be applied to law enforcement press releases as well.

Results of the current study can also carry implications for institutions such as the RCMP. For example, language used by media has the potential to become institutionalized at the governmental level through law enforcement. According to Cohen (1972), one of the largest problems with the institutionalization of a negative discourse is the creation of moral panics and folk devils. Particularly important are the profound social implications given recent observations that visible minorities are often the focus of moral panics in the news (Muraskin & Domash, 2007; Welch, 2007). As stated in Chapter 2, moral panics are developed through four main actors: (1) the mass media, (2) moral entrepreneurs, (2) the control culture (police and courts), and (4) the public. The two groups who have the biggest impact on moral panics are the media and the societal control culture, which is made up of those with the power to institute and legitimate new forms of social control. According to Glassner (1999), when media and law enforcement agencies share the same negative discourse (either based on fear or marginalization) the culture of control and fear emerges—a process of conditioning within a culture that predisposes its citizens to consider horror as the appropriate reaction to any situation that is novel and unpredictable. Moreover, ideologies that are shared by media and law enforcement can help secure power for the dominant class by perpetuating crime as a problem of the Other through simplistic, fragmented, and contradictory explanations for social phenomena (Gramsci, 1971). The discourse can then result in decontextualization that blames crime on individual flaws rather than social forces.

As Foucault (1971) states, it is not important to emancipate truth from every system of power but rather to detach the power of truth from hegemony. Therefore, a system of accountability may open the door and allow people to question commonplace perceptions seen in the media. As Benjamin Franklin once said, “it is the first responsibility of every citizen to question authority.” A public education campaign must be coupled with evidence-based accountability that is aimed at disseminating not only these research results but also the promotion of healthy scepticism among consumers of crime news more generally.

The public must be made aware of the ways in which we all construct the folk devil, aptly described by Steward Hall and colleagues in *Policing the Crisis*:

The Folk Devil—on to whom all our most intense feelings about things going wrong, and all our fears about what might undermine our fragile securities are projected—is, as Jeremy Seabrook suggested [...] a sort of alter ego for Virtue. In one sense, the folk devil comes up at us unexpectedly, out of the darkness, out of nowhere. In another sense, he is all too familiar: we know him already, before he appears. He is the reverse image, the alternative to all we know: *the negation*. He is the fear of failure that is secreted at the heart of success, the danger that lurks inside security, the profligate figure by whom Virtue is constantly tempted, the tiny, seductive voice inside inviting us to feed on sweets and honey cakes when we know we must restrict ourselves to iron rations. When things threaten to disintegrate, the folk devil not only becomes the bearer of all our social anxieties, but we turn against him the full wrath of our indignation (1978, p. 161).

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Appendix A: Dates Sampled in Each Newspaper

Vancouver Sun, Saskatoon Star Phoenix, Winnipeg Free Press, Toronto Star

January 2 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
February 20 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
February 22 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
March 3 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
March 6 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
March 17 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
May 8 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
May 18 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
June 6 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
June 8 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
June 12 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
June 13 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
August 6 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
August 17 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
August 26 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
October 2 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
November 4 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
November 14 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
November 18 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007
November 21 – 1982; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2007

Appendix B: Missing Dates in the Sample

Total Missing: 66

***Vancouver Sun* Total: 24**

Did not publish Sunday or holiday papers

January 2, 2007 (no crime)
February 20, 1982 (no crime)
February 20, 2002 (no crime)
February 20, 2007 (no crime)
February 22, 1987 (Sunday)
February 22, 2007 (no crime)
March 3, 2002 (Sunday)
March 17, 2002 (Sunday)
May 18, 1987 (Monday, Victoria Day)
May 18, 1992 (Monday, Victoria Day)
May 18, 1997 (Sunday)
June 6, 1982 (Sunday)
June 13, 1982 (Sunday)
June 8, 1997 (Sunday)
August 6, 1997 (no crime)
August 6, 2007 (Monday, Victoria Day)
August 17, 1997 (Sunday)
August 26, 2007 (Sunday)
October 2, 1997 (no crime)
November 14, 1982 (Sunday)
November 21, 1982 (Sunday)
November 18, 2002 (no crime)
November 4, 2007 (Sunday)
November 18, 2007 (Sunday)

Winnipeg Free Press

Total: 15

Did not publish Sunday papers in the 1980s or holidays

February 20, 2007 (no crime)
February 22, 1987 (no crime)
May 18, 1987 (Victoria Day)
May 18, 1992 (Victoria Day)
June 6, 1982 (Sunday)
June 8, 2007 (no crime)
June 13, 1982 (Sunday)
August 6, 2007 (Provincial holiday)
August 17, 2007 (no crime)
October 2, 1987 (no crime)
October 2, 2007 (no crime)
November 4, 1992 (no crime)
November 14, 1982 (Sunday)

November 18, 2002 (no crime)
November 21, 1982 (Sunday)

Toronto Star Total: 6

February 20, 2007 (no crime)
February 22, 2007 (no crime)
June 8, 2002 (no crime)
October 2, 1997 (no crime)
November 14, 2002 (no crime)

Saskatoon Star Phoenix Total: 21

Did not publish Sunday or holiday papers

February 22, 1987 (Sunday)
March 3, 2002 (Sunday)
March 17, 1992 (Sunday)
March 17, 2002 (Sunday)
May 18, 1987 (Holiday)
May 18, 1992 (Holiday)
May 18, 1997 (Sunday)
June 6, 1982 (Sunday)
June 8, 1997 (Sunday)
June 8, 2007 (no crime)
June 13, 1982 (Sunday)
August 6, 2007 (Holiday)
August 17, 1997 (Sunday)
August 26, 2007 (Sunday)
October 2, 1987 (missing)
November 4, 1997 (no crime)
November 4, 2007 (Sunday)
November 14, 1982 (Sunday)
November 14, 1997 (no crime)
November 18, 2007 (Sunday)
November 21, 1982 (Sunday)

Appendix C: Codebook

The codebook is separated into two different sections. The first section (questions 1–23) dealt with the demographics of the newspaper. Sections two of the codebook (questions 1–2) were designed for the discourse analysis.

Section One: Demographic Variables

Numbers represent how the variables were coded

1) Newspaper:

- Vancouver sun **1**
- Winnipeg free press **2**
- Toronto star **3**
- Saskatoon Star Phoenix **4**

2) Year: actual year

3) Month: 01, 02, 03

4) Date: 1, 2, 3

5) Day of week:

- Monday **1**
- Tuesday **2**
- Wednesday **3**
- Thursday **4**
- Friday **5**
- Saturday **6**
- Sunday **7**

6) Location of article in paper

All articles in section “A” page number 1 (Front page), 2, 3...

7) Type of article:

- **Editorial 1** (this is an article that reflects the opinion of the editor or the editorial board of the newspaper)
- **Letter to the editor 2** (where a person becomes passionate about a topic in the news and writes a letter from their personal viewpoint)
- **Feature stories 3** what Humphries (1981, p. 192) refers to as routine crime stories. These are articles that describe a criminal offence and place the victim and offender in a relationship marked by crime)
- **Police report 4** (this was where either the report was released by the police department or a journalist writing for the police)
- **Court report 5** (articles that cover court proceedings)

- **Article brief 6** (a very short news brief, reports the crime that happened in less than a paragraph)
- **Other 99**

8) Total number of crime articles per date—actual number: 1, 2...

9) Local crime (crime in same city as newspaper)

- Yes **1**
- No **0**
- Not stated **88**

10) Crime per province:

- British Columbia **1**
- Alberta **2**
- Saskatchewan **3**
- Manitoba **4**
- Ontario **5**
- Québec **6**
- New Brunswick **7**
- Nova Scotia **8**
- Newfoundland and Labrador **9**
- PEI **10**
- Northern provinces **11**
- Not stated **88**

11) Crime outside of Canada:

- United States **1**
- Europe **2**
- Other **99**

12) Does the article include quotes from victim(s), family or witnesses?

- Yes **1**
- No **0**

13) If 'yes' from question 12, how many quotes: actual number: 1, 2....
If 'no quote' = 88

14) What was the purpose of the quotes?

- **Informative 1** (describes for the reader what happened, descriptions of the offender, which direction they went)

- **Fear-based 2** (a statement where people expressed fear of the offender, crime, neighbourhood)
- **No quote 3**
- **Other 99**

15) Length of article:

- Less than a paragraph **1**
- One paragraph **2**
- Half a page **3**
- One page **4**
- More than a page **5**

16) Gender of offender(s):

- Male **1**
- Female **2**
- Not stated **88**

17) Race of offender(s):

- White **1**
- Black **2**
- Aboriginal **3**
- Asian **4**
- Japanese **5**
- Indian **6**
- Other **99**
- Not stated **88**

18) Gender of victim(s):

- Male **1**
- Female **2**
- Not stated **88**

19) Race of the crime victim(s):

- White **1**
- Black **2**
- Aboriginal **3**
- Asian **4**
- Japanese **5**
- Indian **6**
- Other **99**
- Not stated **88**

20) Crimes (this list covers all crimes mentioned in the newspapers):

- Assault **1**
- Attempted murder **2**
- Arson **3**
- Armed robbery **4**
- Assault with weapon **5**
- Break and enter **6**
- Criminal negligence **7**
- Child abuse **8**
- Carjacking **9**
- Child pornography **10**
- Drug/alcohol related crime **11**
- Death threats **12**
- Domestic violence **13**
- Extortion **14**
- Embezzlement **15**
- Fraud **16**
- Gang violence **17**
- Homicide/murder **18**
- Hit and run **19**
- Kidnapping/abduction **20**
- Manslaughter **21**
- Molestation **22**
- Multiple crimes **23** (when the report stated there were other related offences but did not give mention to them)
- Organized crime **24**
- Prostitution **25**
- Robbery **26**
- Rape **27**
- Reckless driving **28**
- Riot **29**
- Shoplifting **30**
- Shooting **31**
- Sexual assault **32**
- Stabbing **33**
- Theft **34**
- Vandalism **35**
- Weapons offence **36**
- Other **99**

21) Age of offender:

- Actual age:
- No mention of age: **88**

22) Age of victim:

- Actual age:
- No mention of age: **88**
- No victims: **0**

23) Number of crimes reported in the article (some articles mentioned several crimes):

- Actual number:
- No mention: **88**

Part Two: Themes/Subthemes

Discourse Analysis

The following two sections deal with the discourse analysis and how the crime, offenders, and victims are portrayed within newspapers. The first section has five subthemes and deals with words that propagate fear. The second section has seven subthemes and deals with words or sentences that may marginalize offender(s).

Section One: Words Used to Propagate Fear

A frequency count was not used, if the words and/or sentences were present within an article a **1** was used for YES and a **0** was used for NO. All words/sentences were copied out of the paper identically. Many of the words/sentences repeated themselves in many of the papers; the following is a list of all the original words/sentences found throughout the analysis in all four newspapers.

1a) Words that encompass fear:

Fear was defined as a random act (random implies that it could happen to anyone, anywhere, and that it is irrational. In addition, it could be a person or place that was undeserving of crime (i.e. lonely country road, good area, low crime area, good person, religious person, mother, father, well liked). It also means crime could happen at any time (daylight drive-by). Fear is also expressed in the word itself (i.e. I was so scared; I don't walk at night).

List of words/sentences that appeared:

- Ambushed
- Amber alert
- A woman was dragged into a van in the middle of the afternoon on a weekday

- As the movie reached climax someone opened fire
- A bad thing happened to good people
- Attack cast a dark shadow
- All residents were told to go inside
- Another tragic waste
- Abducted from home
- Baby bandits
- Begging for help
- Bullet riddled car
- Chloroforming youngsters
- Chop wounds to the head left teens hysterical
- Contract killing
- Criminal playground
- Dial-a-dope
- Dumped on a lonely stretch of highway
- Domestic terrorism
- Devastating
- Died alone and terrorized
- Day light drive-by
- Didn't seem to be aware of a killer in their mist
- Devoured
- Daring home invasion
- Death crawled up the dumbwaiter
- Eerie silence
- Everything seemed so normal
- Feasting on our children
- Frantic
- Five masked youths
- Fresh violence fared
- Frozen in shock
- Gang
- Gangs produce a lot of this violence
- Gun wielding man
- Hand gun in school hallways, 6 live rounds of ammunition in his locker
- Hysterical
- Hostage
- Horrific tragedy, lives are totally destroyed
- Happened in seconds
- High profile murders have unsettled the middle class
- Had a very dark secret
- Hit list
- Hunted down the elderly
- Hell hole
- Had a reputation of being one of the safest cities in the world
- It was like something out of a horror film
- Innocent victims of unprovoked criminal like conduct
- It's something you usually see on TV
- It sometimes borders on military alert and martial law
- Isolated in their trauma
- It was an isolated community where he died, only the mournful wail of a train whistle echoed in the distance
- Jumped by unknown persons
- Just in case he's still lurking
- Knife wielding man
- Letters dipped in the HIV virus
- Left a community badly shaken
- Last night all the doors were locked
- Left for dead
- Lured
- Methodologically killed
- Masked gunman
- Mothers, do you know what your children are doing?
- Mow Hock haircuts and tattoos
- Neighbours feared opening the door
- Night of terror
- No hint of danger prior to attack
- Nightmarishly real
- No motive is the worst possible offender
- Needs constant police presence
- Out of the blue
- Professional hit
- Public warnings
- Poses a very high risk to society
- Prostitution in the area
- People became more scared after police said he was a dangerous and cunning military buff involved in bizarre war games

- Prowling at night
- Preyed on women
- Prey
- Quit end of the city
- Raped in a church
- Rapist has HIV
- Rampage
- Raid
- Random murder
- Random futility of his death
- Risk to public safety
- Random
- Ransacked
- Ransacked a purse
- Rampant violence
- Round-up
- Shock waves rumbled through the community
- Shake a community to its core
- Shot without warning
- Shoppers scattered
- Sleepy prairie town
- Slaughter clinics
- Stark horror
- Screaming
- Senseless death
- Stabbed for no reason
- Stalked from the phone booth
- Significant risk to reoffend
- Shooting to kill not wound
- Shooting rampage
- Sound the death knell
- Shocking
- State of terror
- Stubborn gang problems that grip first nation's communities
- Terrified
- Terror
- Terror tactics
- Traumatized community
- Terrified shoppers scrambled for cover
- Terrifying details
- Terrified he will hunt her down
- Terrorize people
- Things like this don't happen here, this isn't Toronto
- Terror grew
- They'd been visited by a daring nocturnal thief
- Upscale neighbourhood
- Vanished
- Whisked away
- We kill until death
- When a young handsome man with a future gets killed, it's a big story
- Will your child come home alive today?
- We don't go out after dark

1b) *Excessive violence*—this part of the analysis analyzed descriptions of crime/violence that could lead to less compassion/more anger toward the offender. This section is also very sensationalistic.

List of words/sentences that appeared:

- A woman whose forearms were hacked off by a rapist
- Admitted to having sex with the corpse up to eight times over the next week, including once when it was partially dismembered
- Bloodiest attack in six years
- Beaten and raped for six hours
- Blood was splattered all over
- Burned alive
- Bought a hacksaw and started to dismember the body soon after his sister died
- Chop wounds
- Dramatic standoff
- Drug orgy

- Hail of gunfire
- Harrowing high-speed chase
- He carried the head and an arm in his backpack
- He boiled the woman's head and other body parts
- Killing and beheading his wife
- Kicked a woman so brutally he left a sneaker imprint on her face
- Lawless society
- Massive drug bust
- Mummified and decomposing bodies in apartment
- Mowing down sixty-one tourists
- Meat cleaver attack
- Never seen anything like this
- Orgy of slayings
- Opened fire on hundreds of people
- Pure action
- Pool of blood
- Pumped five bullets into a pregnant woman
- Put her body in the bathtub, poured chlorine bleach over it and began cutting it up with a knife.
- Slashed and stabbed the man thirty times, then gutted the body
- Sadistically bludgeoned her husband
- Stabbed twenty times
- Spree of hit and runs, it was a total gong show
- Sprayed a costal patrol craft with machine gun fire
- Truck load of drugs
- Torrent of blows
- The slaughter
- Total massacre
- Utterly raven acts of brutality
- Vicious violence
- Went on a stabbing and hatchet swinging spree

1c) *Dehumanizing*—the crime or the crime was animal-like. To dehumanize something is to deprive of human qualities or render mechanical. This part of the analysis looked at how the newspapers refer to crime as something that is not human (i.e. an act that is brutal and animalistic). Crime that can be referred to as stunning, out of the ordinary, or planned is also considered here. It also uses words that socially denounce behaviour or refer to behaviour as despicable (i.e. no other judge in the history of Canada has ever been charged with laundering drug money).

List of words/sentences that appeared:

- Acts of brutality
- Bizarre
- Barbarism
- Brazen
- Bandits
- Cold blooded murder
- Crime that the death penalty was designed for
- Dumped
- Destructive nature
- Failure to control
- Gangland execution
- Heinous
- Hunted
- Horrendous crime
- Mafia style gang
- Methodologically raked them with automatic gun fire
- Notorious sex scandal
- No other judge in the history of Canada has ever been charged with laundering drug money

- One of the most revolting and disgusting crimes I have ever sat and listened to
- Pure evil
- Public loathing
- Prey
- Rocked the province
- Repugnant
- Smashing mob
- Slain
- Society must denounce this kind of behaviour
- Sex ring
- Shadowy world of pedophilia, the word comes from Greek meaning “child lover”
- Stopped in his tracks as soon as possible
- Savage crime
- Serious crime
- Shooting of an unarmed black man
- Thriving criminal underworld
- Throwback to southern justice
- Throw the book at him
- Unabomber style
- Wild

1d) Crime as a *metaphor*—Crime that is described using apocalyptic language; crime is seen as unstoppable, terminal, or cancerous.

List of words/sentences that appeared:

- Explosive crime spree
- Firebomb of crime
- Tide of crime
- Tantamount to genocide
- Vortex of crime
- War

1e) Crime is *everywhere*—that crime is rampant, common, and everywhere

List of words/sentences that appeared:

- All women at risk
- Another
- Another bloody weekend
- Attack on all of us
- Classic case
- Dozens of incidents
- Escalation of violence
- Full time gang presence
- Hooker war
- Latest
- Rash
- Spree
- Slew
- String
- Series
- Thriving drug underworld
- Yet again

Section Two: Marginalization

2a) **Words to describe the *rationalization of the crime***—this section deals with the reason that were given in the media as to why the *crime* occurred.

List of words/sentences that appeared:

- Attributes his homosexuality to repeat assaults, it's a chronic habit and sending him to jail would isolate him
- A man who claimed to have discovered a bacteria that would rid the world of PCBs
- Aspired to be a gang member-wanted to be a cholo
- Battered wife syndrome
- Buckled under pressure
- Career criminal
- Delicate mental state
- Depressive illness
- Deviant sex drive
- Drunk
- Drug filled week of partying
- Deep rooted social problems
- Diagnosed kleptomaniac
- Did what any wealth woman would do: hire an investigator then run him over with her silver Mercedes three times
- Euthanasia
- Explosive rage
- Fell through the cracks
- Fear of being attacked
- Fit of jealousy
- Homosexuals seeking homosexual sex
- Hooked on heavy metal music
- Here there are two societies: the white one with money and the black one with no money.
- He was in the throes of a methamphetamine-induced psychosis
- In a pathetic way he acted out against the CBC
- Ingrained racism
- Inspired by the movie "Point Blank"
- It was the government's fault for not checking the qualifications or psychological background.
- Involved in the same sad lifestyle of drinking lacquer thinner
- Jolly good time
- Killed for critical reporting
- Killed him because they thought he was a loser
- Looking to get lucky that night
- Love affair with a handyman
- Mother increasingly frustrated with autistic daughter
- Nothing for young people to do except drugs and alcohol
- Night terrors
- Outpatient at the hospital at the time of the killings
- Political retribution
- Post-traumatic stress
- Possible brain damage
- People were too drugged or drunk for murder charges
- Persistent disorder of the mind that results in sexually irresponsible behaviour
- Rage
- Raped her to see if she was really a hermaphrodite
- Reported unfit for duty
- Recently divorced
- She was reacting to having just been molested
- System screwed up

- Slipped through the sleeve of social agencies
- She was hitchhiking
- Stood to gain more than \$800, 000
- Scary monsters unleashed in his mind
- Seduced by Satan
- Seen too many Rambo movies
- She accepted a ride from a stranger
- Suddenly snapped
- The young can get away with murder
- The plan went awry
- The legal system proves in pays to be a white-collar criminal
- \$400 to \$700 a week heroin habit
- Unruly and fouled mouthed prisoner
- Uncontrolled diabetes, severe depression and brain damage
- Womanizer

2b) Words that *dehumanize* the offender or the offender was animal-like

List of words/sentences that appeared:

- Awful man
- A man so vile he makes you want to gag on your own emotions
- A man was arrested to ensure the evil said to have infiltrated its walls has been purged
- Almost appearing to be a member of a species other than the human race
- Beast
- Bandit
- Baby bandits
- Bombshell blond bandits
- Creature
- Charles Manson type
- Devil in a blue suit
- Deliberate killer
- Despicable
- Evil
- Gang bangers
- Girl gangsters
- He made a deal with the devil
- He laughed and smiled
- Walking bomb
- Wild
- Lucifer
- Mafia style gang
- Mob
- Meet the devil; he'll chill you to the bone
- Methodological killer
- Nuisance to society
- Opportunistic predator
- Pathetic mother
- Particularly loathsome
- Rambo guy
- Revolting
- Savage
- Teen thugs
- Thug
- Terrorizing
- Unsavoury
- Unrepentant
- Venomous
- Vile
- Violent

2c) Words that made the offender sound *crazy or unstable*

List of words/sentences that appeared:

- Crack head
- Chronic alcoholic
- Deemed insane
- Had organic brain damage as a child
- Known schizophrenic
- Mad
- Madmen
- Mental problems
- Needs help
- Nut job
- Psychopath
- Psycho
- Paranoid schizophrenic
- Sick serial killer
- Sexual psychopath

2d) *History of crime or violence* – this may imply incorrigible, not to be trusted, untreatable, removed from society.

List of words/sentences that appeared:

- All repeat offenders
- Career criminal
- Has a past record
- Has a history
- Known to police
- Known for his outbursts
- Lengthy criminal record
- Not surprising given his past
- Violent in the past
- Was on parole at the time of the offence

2e) Reference to offender's *occupation*

List of words/sentences that appeared:

- Advertising executive
- Bureaucrat
- Black freelance photographer
- Body guard
- Cornel
- Children's coach
- Canadian soldier
- Crown attorney
- Congressman
- Doctor
- Deranged police officer
- Former RCMP
- Former firefighter
- Former prison employee
- Head of Pacific airlines
- Judge
- Janitor
- Member of council
- Priest
- Psychologist
- Police officer
- Psychiatric nurse
- Parcel sorter
- Parole officer
- Probation officer
- Radio disk jockey
- Star respirologist
- School principal
- Social worker
- Sunday school teacher
- Straight A student
- Teacher

2f) Reference to *poverty*

List of words/sentences that appeared:

- Area is known for violence
- Area known for its prostitution
- Dumping ground for alcoholics and mental patients
- No known address
- Offender had no fixed address
- Offender had several addresses
- Street person
- Slum district
- Transient

2g) Rationalization for the Offender

(WC = white collar / SC = street crime)

List of words/sentences that appeared:

- Brilliant and honest, it's not like him (WC)
- Caught in a bind of hard economic times (WC)
- Father did not live with them (SC)
- Fair minded people will not judge the father of six (WC)
- Good law abiding person (WC)
- Had pressure because of job cuts (WC)
- He was not solely responsible (WC)
- "It doesn't really matter, she's retarded anyway" quote from a mother who killed her child.
- In the end, they succumbed to the pressure (WC)
- Loving person who did a tragic thing, but a very understandable thing
- Lacked qualifications to handle large accounts (WC)
- On drugs (SC)
- Out of her character (WC)
- Politics are far from perfect (WC)
- Stoned on cocaine
- Single mother household (SC)

Appendix D: ANOVA Table of Reported Effects for Race of Offender/Victim

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Factor</i>	<i>df</i> ¹	<i>SS</i> ²	<i>MS</i> ³	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Fear	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.72	0.36	1.53	0.22
	<i>Offender Race (B)</i>	2	0.45	0.22	0.95	0.39
	<i>Victim Race (C)</i>	2	3.39	1.70	7.21	< 0.001
	<i>A x B</i>	4	0.95	0.24	1.01	0.40
	<i>A x C</i>	4	0.94	0.23	0.99	0.41
	<i>B x C</i>	4	1.17	0.29	1.24	0.29
	<i>A x B x C</i>	7	1.74	0.25	1.05	0.39
	<i>Error</i>	1164	274.07	0.24		
Excessive	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	1.39	0.69	5.15	0.01
Violence	<i>Offender Race (B)</i>	2	0.03	0.02	0.11	0.90
	<i>Victim Race (C)</i>	2	2.13	1.07	7.93	< 0.001
	<i>A x B</i>	4	0.81	0.20	1.51	0.20
	<i>A x C</i>	4	0.36	0.09	0.67	0.61
	<i>B x C</i>	4	0.53	0.13	0.99	0.41
	<i>A x B x C</i>	7	1.51	0.22	1.61	0.13
	<i>Error</i>	1164	156.51	0.24		
	Crime as a	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.01	0.01	0.36
Metaphor	<i>Offender Race (B)</i>	2	0.01	0.01	0.62	0.54
	<i>Victim Race (C)</i>	2	0.01	0.00	0.35	0.70
	<i>A x B</i>	4	0.01	0.00	0.27	0.90
	<i>A x C</i>	4	0.18	0.04	0.87	0.48
	<i>B x C</i>	4	0.03	0.01	0.64	0.64
	<i>A x B x C</i>	7	0.03	0.01	0.36	0.93
	<i>Error</i>	1164	12.69	0.01		
	Rationalization	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.04	0.02	0.28
of the Crime	<i>Offender Race (B)</i>	2	0.04	0.02	0.29	0.75
	<i>Victim Race (C)</i>	2	0.13	0.07	1.01	0.36
	<i>A x B</i>	4	0.17	0.04	0.68	0.61
	<i>A x C</i>	4	0.05	0.01	0.20	0.94
	<i>B x C</i>	4	0.60	0.15	2.31	0.05
	<i>A x B x C</i>	7	0.15	0.02	0.34	0.94
	<i>Error</i>	1164	75.03	0.06		
	Dehumanizing	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.08	0.04	0.68
the Crime	<i>Offender Race (B)</i>	2	0.25	0.12	2.02	0.13

	Victim Race (C)	2	0.90	0.45	7.43	0.001
	<i>A x B</i>	4	0.37	0.09	1.54	0.19
	<i>A x C</i>	4	0.19	0.05	0.79	0.53
	B x C	4	1.10	0.28	4.55	0.001
	A x B x C	7	0.99	0.14	2.33	0.02
	<i>Error</i>	1164	70.43	0.06		
Crime is	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.08	0.42	7.17	0.44
Everywhere	<i>Offender Race (B)</i>	2	0.12	0.06	1.18	0.30
	<i>Victim Race (C)</i>	2	0.22	0.11	2.13	0.12
	A x B	4	0.68	0.17	3.36	0.01
	<i>A x C</i>	4	0.18	0.04	0.87	0.48
	<i>B x C</i>	4	0.26	0.07	1.30	0.27
	A x B x C	7	0.96	0.14	2.69	0.01
	<i>Error</i>	1164	59.19	0.05		
Dehumanizing	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.34	0.17	2.14	0.12
the Offender	<i>Offender Race (B)</i>	2	0.31	0.16	2.00	0.14
	<i>Victim Race (C)</i>	2	0.31	0.16	1.97	0.14
	<i>A x B</i>	4	0.46	0.12	1.47	0.21
	<i>A x C</i>	4	0.71	0.18	2.26	0.06
	<i>B x C</i>	4	0.37	0.09	1.18	0.32
	A x B x C	7	1.23	0.18	2.23	0.03
	<i>Error</i>	1164	91.58	0.08		
Crazy/Unstable	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.12	0.06	0.83	0.44
	<i>Offender Race (B)</i>	2	0.10	0.05	0.74	0.48
	<i>Victim Race (C)</i>	2	0.01	0.00	0.04	0.96
	<i>A x B</i>	4	0.13	0.03	0.45	0.77
	<i>A x C</i>	4	0.07	0.02	0.25	0.91
	<i>B x C</i>	4	0.30	0.08	1.08	0.36
	<i>A x B x C</i>	7	0.63	0.09	1.28	0.26
	<i>Error</i>	1164	81.75	0.07		
History of	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.05	0.02	0.28	0.76
Crime	<i>Offender Race (B)</i>	2	0.02	0.01	0.13	0.87
	Victim Race (C)	2	0.69	0.34	4.12	0.02
	<i>A x B</i>	4	0.13	0.03	0.39	0.82
	<i>A x C</i>	4	0.08	0.02	0.24	0.91
	<i>B x C</i>	4	0.03	0.01	0.10	0.98

	<i>A x B x C</i>	7	0.07	0.01	0.12	0.99
	<i>Error</i>	1164	96.72	0.08		
Reference to	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.20	.10	1.06	0.35
Occupation	<i>Offender Race (B)</i>	2	2.60	1.30	13.70	< 0.001
	<i>Victim Race (C)</i>	2	1.16	0.58	6.14	0.002
	<i>A x B</i>	4	0.08	0.02	0.20	0.94
	<i>A x C</i>	4	1.19	0.30	3.14	0.01
	<i>B x C</i>	4	0.77	0.19	2.03	0.09
	<i>A x B x C</i>	7	0.93	0.13	1.40	0.20
	<i>Error</i>	1164	110.25	0.10		
Poverty	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.10	0.05	0.92	0.40
	<i>Offender Race (B)</i>	2	0.23	0.12	2.10	0.12
	<i>Victim Race (C)</i>	2	0.04	0.02	0.36	0.70
	<i>A x B</i>	4	0.17	0.04	0.79	0.53
	<i>A x C</i>	4	0.26	0.07	1.18	0.32
	<i>B x C</i>	4	0.30	0.07	1.35	0.25
	<i>A x B x C</i>	7	0.19	0.03	0.50	0.84
	<i>Error</i>	1164	63.70	0.06		
Rationalization of the Offender	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.09	0.04	1.13	0.32
	<i>Offender Race (B)</i>	2	0.02	0.01	0.25	0.78
	<i>Victim Race (C)</i>	2	0.01	0.01	0.12	0.89
	<i>A x B</i>	4	0.08	0.02	0.55	0.70
	<i>A x C</i>	4	0.17	0.04	1.12	0.35
	<i>B x C</i>	4	0.77	0.19	2.034	0.09
	<i>A x B x C</i>	7	0.39	0.06	0.97	0.46
	<i>Error</i>	1164	44.20	0.04		

¹ Degrees of freedom

² Sum of squares

³ Mean square

Appendix E: ANOVA Table of Reported Effects for Gender of Offender/Victim

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Factor</i>	<i>df</i> ¹	<i>SS</i> ²	<i>MS</i> ³	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Fear	Decade (A)	2	2.01	1.01	4.13	0.02
	<i>Offender Gender (B)</i>	1	0.64	0.64	2.64	0.10
	<i>Victim Gender (C)</i>	1	0.27	0.27	1.01	0.30
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.14	0.10	0.29	0.75
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.52	0.23	1.01	0.35
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.21	0.21	0.88	0.35
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.18	0.09	0.37	0.70
	<i>Error</i>	1178	286.4	.243		
Excessive Violence	Decade (A)	2	1.70	0.85	6.13	0.02
	<i>Offender Gender (B)</i>	1	0.22	0.22	1.59	0.21
	<i>Victim Gender (C)</i>	1	0.04	0.04	0.26	0.61
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.02	0.01	0.08	0.92
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.96	0.48	3.46	0.03
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.29	0.29	2.07	0.15
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.92	0.46	3.33	0.04
	<i>Error</i>	1178	16.30	0.14		
Crime as a Metaphor	Decade (A)	2	0.06	0.03	2.91	0.05
	<i>Offender Gender (B)</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.86
	<i>Victim Gender (C)</i>	1	0.02	0.02	1.70	0.20
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.86
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.02	0.01	0.99	0.37
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.88
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.02	0.01	1.14	0.32
	<i>Error</i>	1178	12.73	0.01		
Rationalization of the Crime	Decade (A)	2	0.09	0.04	0.69	0.50
	<i>Offender Gender (B)</i>	1	0.14	0.14	2.13	0.14
	<i>Victim Gender (C)</i>	1	0.06	0.06	0.90	0.34
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.03	0.01	0.22	0.80
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.41	0.21	3.26	0.04
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.21	0.21	3.27	0.07
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.05	0.02	0.36	0.70
	<i>Error</i>	1178	75.02	0.06		

<i>Dehumanizing</i>	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.44	0.22	3.47	0.03
<i>the Crime</i>	<i>Offender Gender (B)</i>	1	0.01	0.01	0.18	0.67
	<i>Victim Gender (C)</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.88
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.35	0.17	2.77	0.06
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.24	0.12	1.90	0.15
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.01	0.01	0.14	0.71
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.16	0.08	1.28	0.28
	<i>Error</i>	1178	29.37	0.24		
<i>Crime is</i>	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.50	0.25	4.85	0.01
<i>Everywhere</i>	<i>Offender Gender (B)</i>	1	0.70	0.70	13.74	0.00
	<i>Victim Gender (C)</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.09	0.77
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.32	0.16	3.99	0.04
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.99
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.01	0.01	0.17	0.68
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.06	0.03	0.62	0.54
	<i>Error</i>	1178	60.18	0.05		
<i>Dehumanizing</i>	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.27	0.14	1.71	0.20
<i>the Offender</i>	<i>Offender Gender (B)</i>	1	0.01	0.01	0.08	0.80
	<i>Victim Gender (C)</i>	1	0.28	0.28	3.56	0.06
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.19	0.09	1.19	0.30
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.02	0.01	0.13	0.87
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.11	0.11	1.37	0.24
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.06	0.03	0.40	0.67
	<i>Error</i>	1178	94.12	0.08		
<i>Crazy/Unstable</i>	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.02	0.01	0.12	0.89
	<i>Offender Gender (B)</i>	1	0.24	0.23	3.33	0.07
	<i>Victim Gender (C)</i>	1	0.02	0.02	0.24	0.66
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.12	0.06	0.88	0.41
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.12	0.06	0.82	0.44
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.96
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.36	0.18	2.60	0.07
	<i>Error</i>	1178	83.07	0.07		
<i>History of</i>	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.07	0.03	0.42	0.66
<i>Crime</i>	<i>Offender Gender (B)</i>	1	0.94	0.94	11.43	0.01

	<i>Victim Gender (C)</i>	1	0.03	0.03	0.41	0.52
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.11	0.06	0.70	0.50
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.08	0.00	0.49	0.61
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.75
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.34	0.17	2.05	0.13
	<i>Error</i>	1178	96.65	0.08		
Reference to	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.34	0.17	1.75	0.17
Occupation	<i>Offender Gender (B)</i>	1	0.88	0.88	8.99	0.03
	<i>Victim Gender (C)</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.99
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.09	0.04	0.44	0.65
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.08	0.00	0.41	0.66
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.05	0.05	0.53	0.47
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.00	0.00	0.20	0.82
	<i>Error</i>	1178	11.42	0.10		
Poverty	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.08	0.04	0.70	0.52
	<i>Offender Gender (B)</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.97
	<i>Victim Gender (C)</i>	1	0.01	0.01	1.44	0.23
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.18	0.09	1.61	0.21
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.39	0.20	3.57	0.03
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.12	0.16	2.92	0.09
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.19	0.10	1.73	0.18
	<i>Error</i>	1178	65.14	0.055		
Rationalization	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.10	0.05	1.30	0.27
of the Offender	<i>Offender Gender (B)</i>	1	0.03	0.03	0.71	0.40
	<i>Victim Gender (C)</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.89
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.98
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.14	0.07	1.82	0.16
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.80
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.20	0.10	2.57	0.08
	<i>Error</i>	1178	44.61	0.04		

¹ Degrees of freedom

² Sum of squares

³ Mean square

Appendix F: ANOVA Table of Reported Effects for Age of Offender/Victim

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Factor</i>	<i>df</i> ¹	<i>SS</i> ²	<i>MS</i> ³	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Fear	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.63	0.31	1.30	0.27
	<i>Offender Age (B)</i>	1	0.03	0.03	0.11	0.74
	<i>Victim Age (C)</i>	1	1.20	1.20	4.60	0.03
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.89	0.44	1.85	0.16
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.22	0.12	0.45	0.64
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.93
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.84	0.42	1.75	0.17
	<i>Error</i>	1178	28.81	0.24		
Excessive	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	1.43	0.71	5.16	0.01
Violence	<i>Offender Age (B)</i>	1	0.60	0.60	4.36	0.04
	<i>Victim Age (C)</i>	1	0.49	0.49	3.55	0.06
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.99	0.50	3.59	0.03
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.34	0.17	1.23	0.29
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.34	0.34	2.43	0.12
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.60	0.30	2.18	0.11
	<i>Error</i>	1178	16.87	0.14		
Crime as a	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.01	0.02	0.54	0.58
Metaphor	<i>Offender Age (B)</i>	1	0.02	0.02	1.69	0.19
	<i>Victim Age (C)</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.18	0.67
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.01	0.01	0.54	0.58
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.01	0.00	0.28	0.76
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.18	0.67
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.01	0.00	0.28	0.76
	<i>Error</i>	1178	12.75	0.01		
Rationalization of the Crime	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.04	0.02	0.35	0.70
	<i>Offender Age (B)</i>	1	0.03	0.03	0.44	0.51
	<i>Victim Age (C)</i>	1	0.08	0.08	1.29	0.26
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.07	0.04	0.58	0.56
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.01	0.00	0.05	0.95
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.01	0.01	0.12	0.72
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.05	0.03	0.41	0.66
	<i>Error</i>	1178	75.93	0.06		
Dehumanizing	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.44	0.23	3.68	0.03

<i>the Crime</i>	<i>Offender Age (B)</i>	1	0.18	0.18	2.85	0.09
	<i>Victim Age (C)</i>	1	0.24	0.24	3.89	0.05
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.37	0.19	2.96	0.05
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.01	0.05	0.79	0.45
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.25	0.25	3.97	0.05
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.46	0.23	3.64	0.03
	<i>Error</i>	1178	74.03	0.06		
<i>Crime is</i>	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.27	0.13	2.62	0.07
<i>Everywhere</i>	<i>Offender Age (B)</i>	1	0.23	0.23	4.49	0.03
	<i>Victim Age (C)</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.96
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.38	0.19	3.78	0.02
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.59	0.29	5.77	0.00
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.01	0.01	0.11	0.74
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.39	0.19	3.82	0.02
	<i>Error</i>	1178	59.97	0.05		
<i>Dehumanizing</i>	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.31	0.16	1.99	0.14
<i>the Offender</i>	<i>Offender Age (B)</i>	1	1.09	1.09	13.79	0.00
	<i>Victim Age (C)</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.91
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.24	0.12	1.52	0.22
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.09	0.05	0.60	0.55
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.11	0.11	1.35	0.24
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.11	0.05	0.68	0.51
	<i>Error</i>	1178	93.20	0.08		
<i>Crazy/Unstable</i>	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.07	0.04	0.54	0.58
	<i>Offender Age (B)</i>	1	0.17	0.17	2.43	0.12
	<i>Victim Age (C)</i>	1	0.02	0.02	0.26	0.61
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.12	0.06	0.83	0.43
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.04	0.02	0.30	0.74
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.34	0.34	4.90	0.03
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.01	0.01	0.08	0.92
	<i>Error</i>	1178	82.22	0.07		
<i>History of</i>	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.11
<i>Crime</i>	<i>Offender Age (B)</i>	1	0.05	0.05	0.63	0.43
	<i>Victim Age (C)</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.85
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.01	0.05	0.60	0.55

	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.45	0.23	2.77	0.06
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.09	0.09	1.15	0.28
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.57	0.28	3.49	0.03
	<i>Error</i>	1178	96.39	0.08		
Reference to	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.04	0.02	0.19	0.83
Occupation	<i>Offender Age (B)</i>	1	0.70	0.70	7.18	0.01
	<i>Victim Age (C)</i>	1	0.01	0.01	0.16	0.70
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.18	0.09	0.93	0.39
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.02	0.01	0.12	0.89
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.14	0.14	0.00	0.99
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.22	0.11	1.14	0.32
	<i>Error</i>	1178	11.15	0.01		
Poverty	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.27	0.13	2.34	0.01
	<i>Offender Age (B)</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.90
	<i>Victim Age (C)</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.93
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.29	0.14	2.58	0.08
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.03	0.01	0.24	0.78
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.01	0.01	0.11	0.74
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.97
	<i>Error</i>	1178	65.44	0.06		
Rationalization	<i>Decade (A)</i>	2	0.14	0.07	1.89	0.15
of the Offender	<i>Offender Age (B)</i>	1	0.01	0.01	0.25	0.62
	<i>Victim Age (C)</i>	1	0.07	0.07	1.99	0.16
	<i>A x B</i>	2	0.01	0.01	0.18	0.84
	<i>A x C</i>	2	0.21	0.11	2.85	0.06
	<i>B x C</i>	1	0.00	0.00	0.09	0.76
	<i>A x B x C</i>	2	0.09	0.05	1.27	0.28
	<i>Error</i>	1178	44.31	0.04		

¹ Degrees of freedom

² Sum of squares

³ Mean square