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# Violence, emotion and place: The case of five murders involving sex workers

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## Abstract

This article examines a series of murders involving young women linked to sex work, which occurred in the same Northern town between 1998 and 2003. It explores the case on a number of levels. First, it situates violence, and these murders specifically, in the localised spaces of advanced marginality, which follow in the wake of deindustrialisation and economic decline, as well as in terms of enhanced risks for street sex workers relating to their stigmatisation and criminalisation. However, informed by auto-ethnography and the growing recognition that there is potential for academic analysis within criminology to include the criminologist's own emotional engagement, the discussion moves on to explore the author's personal reflection on this series of murders derived from vicarious connection and proximity to victims. In addition, the author draws on the concepts of spectrality and haunting, which have gained currency across the social sciences, to illuminate the irrevocable connections between place, violence and emotion at the level of the local. The concept of spectrality offers a means of envisaging how the past continues to occupy and disrupt the present. Studies of place deploy spectrality and the figure of the ghost to consider how acts of violence and atrocity transform the essence of physical and social space. For the purposes of this article, the concept of haunting is used to explore these young women's lives and deaths, which retain a strong presence in the collective memory due to their powerful connections to place, as well as the cultural work of the media in keeping them alive in the local imagination. Finally, the political potential of haunting – as a means to confront past and ongoing injustices, is also considered, which draws attention to the combined structural conditions in which these young women were murdered. **[AQ: 2]**

## Keywords

Emotion, local news, marginality, place, sex workers, spectrality, violence

The Junction pub, formerly The Shipmate, sits on the junction between Union Street and Borough Road on the outer ring of central Middlesbrough. A typical 1960s flat roofed pub reserved for

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regulars on a circuit of local pubs for hardened drinkers, it has a reputation for violence. The building and the surrounding area typify the physicality of the marginal spaces of deindustrialisation (Ellis, 2016; Wilson and Hall, 2014), sitting as it does among rundown and derelict houses, and partially demolished streets – the legacy of a former mayor's revanchist vision of regeneration before the money ran out. In September 2001, 20-year-old Vicky Glass was last seen getting into a car in the early hours of the morning outside The Shipmate. Forty days later, her mutilated body was discovered 20 miles away in a stream in the North Yorkshire Moors National Park. **[AQ: 3]**

The rate of murder represents the tip of an iceberg of violence. It can be seen as a marker of social harm. For murder rates to rise in a particular place, and for a particular group of people living there, life in general has to be more difficult to live, people have to feel more worthless (Dorling, 2004 cited in Kinnell, 2008: 161).

Between 2000 and 2003 in Middlesbrough – a large town in the north of England, four young women were murdered. Another young woman - 17-year-old Donna Keogh has been missing since 1998; Donna's body has never been discovered and police suspect she too has been murdered. In 2015, Cleveland Police issued an apology to Donna's parents after accepting that aspects of the original investigation had been mismanaged, including evidence and statements being lost (Barley, 2015). Twenty-one year old Vicky Glass was last seen outside a town centre pub in the early hours of the morning of 24 September 2001; in early November 2001, her body was found in a stream near Danby, a North Yorkshire Moors village, approximately 20 miles from Middlesbrough. In August 2003, police inquiries were ongoing, but the coroner then recorded an open verdict. In May 2002, 19-year-old Rachel Wilson also disappeared – last seen on a street in central Middlesbrough; her bones were found on farmland to the south of the town in July 2012. Rachel's and Vicky's killers are yet to be identified.

An additional two victims make up this series. However, in both of these cases, suspects were apprehended and convicted. On 10 September 2000, Kellie Mallinson was picked up and taken to an industrial estate on the outskirts of Middlesbrough town centre where she was asphyxiated. Her body was discovered the following day in nearby bushes. In 2001, 31-year-old Shaun Tuley was sentenced to life imprisonment for her murder. In August 2003, George Leigers picked up Sarah Coughlan, took her back to his house and stabbed her repeatedly. He was found guilty of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment which was later reduced to 21 years on appeal by the Criminal Appeal Court, on the grounds of diminished responsibility. The police, Sarah's parents and victims' groups challenged the appeal, maintaining that the sentence should reflect the seriousness of the offence and that Leigers remains a threat to the public, and should therefore receive a full life sentence (Forbes, 2005). In 1986, Leigers had bludgeoned his wife to death, but was found guilty of manslaughter and detained in a psychiatric unit for 6 years. Following release, Leigers spent time in sheltered accommodation, before being allowed to live independently. In 2006, an independent inquiry concluded that no one was responsible for Sarah's death, despite the fact that 6 months prior to murdering Sarah, Leigers was released from psychiatric supervision by the local health authority (Haworth, 2006).

From the outset, police and local media coverage of these cases connected victims to street sex work and drug addiction, set against a backdrop of crime and illegal markets which were high on local agendas during this period (Argument, 2004; Corrigan, 2011; Evening Gazette, 2002; Pickering, 2002). In the late 1990s and early 2000s, street prostitution, hard drugs markets and addiction to 'poverty drugs' such as heroin and crack cocaine were especially problematic in

Middlesbrough (Evening Gazette, 1997, 2004; MacDonald and Marsh, 2005). Local crime rates during this period far exceeded national averages (Middlesbrough Crime and Disorder Unit, 1999; Safer Middlesbrough, 2005). For example, Middlesbrough Crime and Disorder Unit (2000) recorded a crime rate of 169 per 1000 population compared to the national figure of 101 per 1000 population. More specifically, Middlesbrough accounted for approximately 25% of kerb crawling convictions for the whole of England and Wales (Weaver, 2006). During the late 1990s and early 2000s, the town also became notorious due to the ready availability of cheap heroin within this same period. **[AQ: 4][AQ: 5][AQ: 6][AQ: 7][AQ: 8]**

Crime, disorder and related negative indicators are the hallmarks of the social and economic decline of working-class communities in the wake of mass deindustrialisation. Middlesbrough had been a powerhouse in its industrial heyday, but the Conservative dismantling of British manufacturing in the 1980s hit Middlesbrough and Teesside, especially hard: economic decline in the region was rapid and brutal (Byrne, 1999), with 100,000 manufacturing jobs lost between 1971 and 2008 (MacDonald and Shildrick, 2018). As MacDonald and Shildrick (2018) note, 'the scale of this is staggering and the shock and damage caused can properly be likened to a community undergoing severe trauma (from which it struggles to recover)' (Warkentin, 2010: 321). The region has never fully recovered from the loss of its core industries which were central to the fabric of social and cultural life, as well as regional economies. Consequently, Middlesbrough, and Teesside more widely, has suffered high rates of joblessness, poverty, ill health, crime, disorder and substance abuse (XXXX et al., 2011; MacDonald and Marsh, 2005; MacDonald et al., 2005). Social problems of this nature, despite the best efforts of various regeneration programmes, continue to be synonymous with locales at the sharp end of de-industrialisation. They are also the places where structurally, murder and violence are most prevalent (Currie, 2009; Dorling, 2004; Ellis, 2015; Winlow and Hall, 2009). **[AQ: 9][AQ: 10][AQ: 11]**

This article addresses the 'local' nature of the cases outlined above on a number of levels. It situates violence, and these murders specifically, in the localised spaces of advanced marginality and the concomitant harms which follow in the wake of deindustrialisation and economic decline (Dorling, 2004; Ellis, 2015; Hall et al., 2008; Winlow, 2002; Winlow and Hall, 2009). However, the article then moves on to think through place, marginality and violence in something of a different way. Recognising how personal connections can shape our academic interests via positionality and auto-ethnography (Ellis, 2008; Ferrell, 2012; Wakeman, 2014), I explore my own emotional take on the murders and disappearances, which stem from social and spatial proximity rather than more direct relationships. Informed by recent writing, which turns an emotional gaze onto the criminologist as a means of enriching academic practice (Jewkes, 2011; Wakeman, 2014; Wender, 2015), I reflect on my own response to the lives and deaths of marginalised young women in the town where I lived. In addition, I also deploy the concept of spectrality or haunting to explore how acts of violence retain a powerful presence within physical and social space, eliciting emotional responses and maintaining a place within the local imaginary (Gordon, 2008; Linnemann, 2015; Pilar Blanco and Preen, 2013). **[AQ: 12][AQ: 13]**

The remainder of the article is structured as follows: First, the article will explore literature relating to violence, class, masculinity and marginality, before arguing that the murder of street sex workers requires additional analytical layers which recognise violence as gendered and the marginalisation of street sex workers as instrumental in their victimisation. Next, the article considers the literature on emotion and the criminologist, before exploring the factors which have shaped

my personal and academic interest in these murder cases. The final section of the article explores how this case has been revisited and kept alive within the local media, drawing upon the concepts of haunting and spectrality to highlight lasting presence of these murders in the local imaginary and their political nature.

## Marginality, masculinity and violence in late capitalist societies

As Currie (1997) argues, market societies foster a 'particularly fertile breeding ground for violent crime' (p. 52). The material and cultural conditions characteristic of market society pathologise social life on a number of levels, creating inequality, social and economic insecurity and pitting individuals against each other in a climate of competitive and selfish individualism. British work in this field concentrates upon the impact of social and economic decline on the white, working-class male subject in the face of the loss of community and livelihood in the most deindustrialised regions of the United Kingdom (Ellis, 2015; Ellis et al., 2018; Hall et al., 2008; Winlow, 2002). This body of work also highlights the decline of community and the social and physical deterioration of former industrial regions, which appears especially marked when read against classic studies of working-class industrial life (Dennis et al., 1969; Willis, 1977; Young and Willmott, 2007 (1957)). For instance, Dennis et al.'s (1969) study of a south Yorkshire mining community highlights the local industry as the 'keynote' of the physical landscape, as well as economic, cultural and family life. In spite of this, the authors are not romantic about the risks and physical demands faced by those working in the mines or the limited chance of social mobility for the pre-war industrial working classes. Indeed, in *Learning to Labour*, Willis (1977) questions why working-class schoolboys willingly consign themselves to factory work via their resistance to schooling and academic attainment. Willis argues that in his study, the boys' privileging of an embodied working-class masculinity and performance of bravado/banter, linked to their rejection of school, is the 'cultural apprenticeship' for 'meaningless' work on the shop floor (p. 107), which reproduces their class position. **[AQ: 14][AQ: 15]**

Reading Willis from the other side of deindustrialization, one might take an altogether different view of the assured trajectory of the shop floor which Willis laments. Indeed, writing in the second edition of *Coal is Our Life*, Dennis et al. (1969) note the signs that the mining industry was in decline at the end of the 1960s and they are prescient about what this would mean for industrial communities, stating that 'this community without the mine and mineworkers is in danger of becoming merely an aggregate of socially isolated and culturally condemned human beings' (p. 10). Likewise, Hall et al. (2008) point out that in spite of the economic and physical hardships of industrial work prior to deindustrialisation, working-class life was defined by 'a communal context of interdependency and mutuality', as well as the 'certainty of paid work' (p. 22). Moreover, Winlow (2002) notes the importance of hard physical labour and toughness as integral to the identity of the industrial male subject. With the onset of deindustrialization and the emergence of market economies, livelihoods and economic certainty were stripped away – 'shop floor masculinity is out of reach' (p. 67). For Winlow, this is when violence elevates, mutates and proliferates, becoming 'a valued skill in an increasingly diverse illegal market place' (p. 68).

Later studies elaborate on Winlow's early contribution to this field, accounting for increases in violence in working-class communities as a by-product of a working-class male habitus eroded by

the removal of biographical certainties, neo-liberalism and consumer culture – understood via a complex circuit of psycho-social processes (Hall et al., 2008; Winlow and Hall, 2009). Exploring the subjectivities of a group of particularly violent men in the north east of England, Winlow and Hall (2009) bring together themes which appear across much of their work which highlights the interplay of structural forces: decline of traditional labour, the working-class male body as surplus to requirements, and violence as an identity outlet with functionality in terms of criminal opportunities and status. In doing so, they stress the importance of the psychological alongside the structural, with 'emotion and memory as constitutive and dynamic components in the core of identity' (Winlow and Hall, 2009: 286). Likewise, Treadwell and Garland (2011) deploy a psycho-social approach to understand young men's involvement with far right, anti-Islamic activism and racially motivated hate crime, arguing that it is a response to place-specific marginalisation, alienation and a sense of lost community and way of life, which far right groups exploit. Against the backdrop of marginality, Treadwell and Garland (2011) also consider the psychological and emotional constituents of violent motivation: anger, rage, resentment and so forth, which explains young men's motivation towards a particular mode of violent, masculinity directed at a racialised Other. Developing these themes further, Ellis et al. (2017) explore the biographies of a group of men to which violence is central to their identity and way of life. This extension of psychosocial approaches to violent masculinity identifies how experiences of formative trauma, when combined with apposite cultural conditions of marginality and the validation of violence, shape these men's intractable relationships to violence. **[AQ: 16]**

At their most extreme point, cultures of violence connected to decline and marginality coalesce in place-based homicide risk. This is evidenced in Dorling's (2004) earlier analysis of UK homicide rates, which identifies the highest risk of homicide among men of working age living in the poorest areas of the United Kingdom. Dorling identifies this higher risk as the culmination of the range of social harms brought about by the depreciation of former industrial areas.

## Violence, homicide and street sex work

The work on class, masculinity and violence reveals the consequences of deindustrialisation for the working-class male subject, offering up a compelling picture of the marginalised landscapes where violence thrives. And, it is easy to envisage the murder of street sex workers slotting into the former industrial parafunctional spaces, which have form as a consequence of decline (Hall and Wilson, 2014). However, this body of work concentrates on violence between men with limited attention given over to male violence against women and women's negotiation of violence and other harms within these spaces. Working-class men's relationship to traditional and post-industrial labour markets and their greater risk in regard to public violence and homicide warrants this focus, but women's experiences of living in these same areas cannot be ignored. Dorling's contention that men are the main recipients of geographically concentrated harms, evidenced in their higher rates of homicide alongside a historical decline in women's homicide in the context of domestic violence, ignores shared social and spatial experiences of marginality. Women and girls live alongside men in areas which have suffered as a result of deindustrialisation and thus encounter localised harms – poverty, poor health, stagnant labour markets, poor educational outcomes, physical dereliction and crime.



In light of this, the murder of street sex workers demands additional analytical layers where victimisation is positioned within patriarchal relationships, which recognise the differing social and situational conditions in which men and women are killed (Brookman, 2005; Ingala Smith, 2013; Walby et al., 2016). Moreover, street sex workers are an especially marginalised and stigmatised group of women with limited recourse to protection and justice from the state (Kinnell, 2008; Sanders and Campbell, 2007; XXXX, 2017). A number of studies evidence high rates of physical violence perpetrated against street sex workers—mainly by male clients (Church et al., 2001; Hester and Westmarland, 2004; McKeganey and Barnard, 1996; Ward et al., 1999); however, research also highlights ‘violence’ against sex workers as longitudinal, multi-faceted and perpetrated by varied range of actors (Sanders and Campbell, 2007). **[AQ: 17][AQ: 18][AQ: 19][AQ: 20][AQ: 21][AQ: 22]**

Evidence on homicide risk for street sex workers is mixed, overshadowed as it is by the view that violence against sex workers is inevitable (Sanders, 2016; Sanders and Campbell, 2007; Sibley, 2018), with intrinsic links made between street prostitution, murder, and violence in the cultural imaginary (Caputi, 1987; XXXX, 2018). For instance, Lowman and Fraser (1994) identify women involved in prostitution as being 60 to 20 times more likely to be murdered (cited in Salfati et al., 2008). Other studies focusing on the US assess the murder risk for sex workers as 18 higher times than for women not involved in sex work with similar demographic characteristics (Potterat et al., 2004, cited in Kinnell, 2008). Likewise, drawing on UK evidence, Sanders et al. (2017) conclude that street sex work presents ‘the absolute greatest risk of occupational homicide for women’ (p. 7). Kinnell (2008) is more reticent however, recognising potentially higher risks for working-class men, and women killed in the context of domestic violence. **[AQ: 23][AQ: 24][AQ: 25][AQ: 26]**

Socio-economic and situational factors render sex workers especially vulnerable to serial killers (Quinet, 2011), but contrary to popular assumptions, the majority of sex worker homicides are not committed by serial perpetrators (Kinnell, 2008; Lowman, 2000). As Lowman (2000) contends, the murder of sex workers constitutes ‘a systematic pattern of violence against prostitutes perpetrated by many men, some of whom are serial killers ... murders are merely the extreme end of a continuum of violence’ (Lowman, 2000: 998).

Kinnell (2008) is more definite in identifying poverty as the central factor determining murder risk for street-based sex workers. Indeed, it is clear that structural and cultural factors combined render street sex workers vulnerable to violence (Kinnell, 2008; Sanders, 2016; Sanders and Campbell, 2007). For instance, Othering, stigma and criminalisation validates and enables the victimisation of sex workers, affording them limited protection from the state and no recourse to justice. Moreover, the positioning of sex workers within marginalised and liminal spaces exacerbates their vulnerability (Ellison and Weitzer, 2015; Maher, 1996; Miller, 1993). As Sanders (2016) notes, the hidden and secluded spaces of street sex work are situationally unsafe, frequently overlapping with ‘other criminalised street environments’. For Sanders, ‘[t]he very physicality of the ‘red light district’ suggests vulnerability’ (p. 100). Furthermore, the physical space of the red-light district may be concentrated at the level of the local, but it also transcends the local, forming part of a familiar motif of physical and social dereliction, frequently invoked in commentaries on the lives and deaths of street sex workers (Harrison and Wilson, 2007; Sanders, 2016). **[AQ: 27][AQ: 28]**

## Emotion and the criminologist

The place of emotion in academic theorising and research is mixed (see Jewkes, 2011, for a comprehensive review). Sociology has its sociology of emotions, but the focus is squarely on the emotional lives of research subjects (Clark, 1990; Hochschild, 1975, 1979; Turner, 2009). Second wave feminism's interrogation of research methodology rejected masculinist knowledge production and the privileging of objectivity, instead recognising that personal involvement, reflexivity, and empathy are inevitable in research (Abbott and Wallace, 1997; Holland and Ramazanoglu, 1994; Letherby, 2003; Oakley, 1981; Stanley and Wise, 1993). Likewise, auto-ethnography with its emphasis on how the researcher's biography and subjectivity shapes research, demands the inclusion and visibility of the researcher's voice and emotional self (Ellis, 2008; Ferrell, 2012; Jewkes, 2011; Wakeman, 2014). **IAQ: 29**

In spite of these incursions, on the whole, academics remain reticent about admitting their own biographies and emotions into the research process, for fear of appearing unscientific, self-indulgent and unduly focused on the individual (Jermyn, 2016; Jewkes, 2011; Wakeman, 2014). However, this is not to say studies of emotion are completely absent from criminology. Indeed, there is now an established body of work which deals directly with the affective and emotive nature of populist responses to crime, violence and punishment (Boltanski, 1999; Karstedt, 2002; Valier, 2004; Valier and Lippens, 2004). Criminologists also focus on the expressive, emotional, and non-instrumental elements of offending, as well as using psychosocial approaches to explore the biographies of violent offenders (Ellis, 2015; Jefferson, 1998; Treadwell and Garland, 2011; Winlow and Hall, 2009). Moreover, fear of crime research attends to the emotional complexity of fear and the manner in which fear may tap into and stand as proxy for a wider range of psychological responses to crime and 'unsafety' (Farrall et al., 2006; Sparks, 1992; Walklate, 2006).

What is less evident across the discipline, however, is a frank and reflexive engagement with the criminologist's own emotions (Jewkes, 2011; Wakeman, 2014). The orthodoxies of academic practice encourage abstract expression and discourage a more personal point of view – what Wakeman (2014) terms criminology's 'intolerance of intrusions of the self' (p. 709). However, as Wakeman (2014) asserts, our humanity and biography are fundamental to who we are as academics – as 'a living embodiment of how we research, how we theorise and how we come to know and tell about our subjects' (p. 719). Likewise, in a seminal review of emotion in the social sciences, which focuses on prison ethnography, Jewkes (2011) laments the manner in which the 'researcher as a person' (p. 65) is denied a presence within the research process. For Jewkes, this is especially pertinent to research within the prison – in what is a highly charged and stressful research environment where emotions run high and should be made intelligible. Not only because it represents a more honest way to do research, but crucially, it 'can play a role in the formulation of knowledge which would deepen our understanding of the people and contexts we study' (Jewkes, 2011: 72).

My approach within this article differs somewhat because rather than dealing with the emotional journey of conducting field research (Jewkes, 2011; Wakeman, 2014), it involves my response to violence in a more indirect manner. Jermyn (2016), a cultural scholar, adopts something of this approach, reflecting on the 'emotional labour' involved in engaging with televisual representations of violence against women. Jermyn discusses her 'exhaustion', 'rage' and 'disbelief' at having to confront increasingly graphic images of dead and violated women, which now

'saturate' visual culture (p. 14). For Jermyn (2016), drawing upon academic analysis alone belies the emotional strain inherent to one's engagement with representational violence. Instead, she argues those working within the field of visual culture 'should be able to meaningfully draw on one's felt experiences of representations of violence against women as a part of one's textual interrogation; an approach which acknowledges the potential affective dimensions of this labour, giving lie to the critical ideal of detachment' (p. 14).

## My personal and intellectual interest in violence, gender and marginality

As stated, my affective connection to this case is not about an emotional response elicited by 'being in the field'. I am aware of this case because it happened in the town where I lived and proximity to crime is of course a factor in its resonance (Girling et al., 2000). There are a number of factors however, which explain my continuing personal and academic interest. First, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, I lived in the central area of Middlesbrough and was aware of the range of social problems in the area. Second, in the early 2000s I was a volunteer at an outreach project supporting street sex workers. Third, I had grown up on one of Middlesbrough's many local authority estates and shared the same background as both the victims and many of young women at the project.

I moved to one of the terraced streets around the centre of Middlesbrough when I went to university in the town, living in various houses and flats from the mid-1990s until the early 2000s. Crime, physical disorder, hard drugs, and street prostitution were visible social problems in this part of town during this period (Corrigan, 2004; Evening Gazette, 2002), with crack cocaine emerging as the new problem drug. Indeed, I was aware of several 'crack houses' in the neighbourhood. More recent reports highlight ongoing problems with poverty, drugs and crime, exacerbated by the growth in private landlords (Middlesbrough Borough Council, 2018). Most notably, the area was described as a 'cancer' in 2005 by the former Middlesbrough Mayor as a justification for his ambitious regeneration scheme, which involved the planned demolition of 1500 homes. The scheme was abandoned in 2013 (Teesside Live, 2013), leaving the area partially demolished. **[AQ: 30]**

Sharing social space with marginalised groups and witnessing social problems with regularity and immediacy may not constitute an immersive ethnography in the conventional sense. I was not organising and structuring observations and I did not engage in deliberate interactions and conversations. My experience does not stand up against some of the landmark ethnographies which set out to live alongside communities or subcultures, forming relationships and structuring participation to gain a deeper understanding of the lives of others. For Instance, Ferrell's work on those who subsist by collecting what others have thrown away is exemplary in this sense. Ferrell (2006) spent 2 years living as an 'urban scrounger', collecting unwanted and discarded items as a means of survival, alongside others doing the same in order to 'explore and embrace the rhythms' of this way of life (2). Likewise, Goffman's (2014) 6-years living, observing and recording life in a poor black neighbourhood in Philadelphia, is a compelling ethnography of poverty, race and crime in inner city America. Goffman formed close bonds and friendships with many of the individuals who feature in her study, living alongside them and attempting to overcome outsider status,

social distance and White middle-class privilege by way of a fully immersed 'method' ethnography. Her work reveals the extent of surveillance and criminalisation of young black men by criminal justice agencies, and how this pervades all aspects of public and private life for the men and women in inner city black communities in the US.

McKenzie's (2015) celebrated contemporaneous ethnography of a British council estate is equally immersive and involved. Set against the political and cultural backdrop of austerity and 'broken Britain' and the widespread stigmatisation of the poor across popular culture, McKenzie explores individuals' daily struggles with poverty and the abjection that comes with it. McKenzie spent 9 years with people on the estate, getting to know them and listening to their stories to counter political and cultural narratives of blame and stigmatisation. McKenzie did not need to reflect on her position as an academic outsider, however. As a working-class woman, former resident of the estate and lone parent, she worked from the inside to reveal the hardships of poverty and to represent working-class lives with authenticity, complexity, and humanity. And, in contrast with much work on working-class lives – both the classics chronicling the lives of the industrial working-class and the more recent work on violence and marginality featured earlier in this article, women are central within McKenzie's study.

I cannot lay claim to the time, rigour and immersion which defines ethnography. That said, the visibility of drugs and poverty, and those affected by them loomed large in the foreground of physical and social space where I lived for a considerable time. I was not an insider, I was a bystander. That said, my positioning in the neighbourhood and my regular, albeit distanced encounters, with hardship was affecting, eliciting an 'emotional resonance and 'ethnographic sensibility' (Ferrell et al., 2013: 179).

I was unaware of Donna Keogh's disappearance in 1998. It barely featured in the local press, gaining more coverage when other young women were murdered and it became part of a series. I have a clearer recollection of Kellie Mallinson's murder in 2000 because a friend was working at an outreach project supporting street sex workers and she had known Kellie. I remember we discussed Kellie's murder and we got upset about it. I then recall reading about the discovery of Vicky Glass' body and the disappearance of Rachel Wilson, and beginning to connect the cases on a number of levels. Volunteering at the same outreach project as my friend, working with street sex workers in central Middlesbrough and my own background growing up poor on a council estate also account for my initial and ongoing personal interest in this case.

I began volunteering at the same outreach project as my friend in 2003, which involved making contact with sex workers on the streets of Teesside to offer support, advice and something to eat and drink. I was volunteering at the project when Sarah Coughlan was murdered in 2003 and had met her on several occasions. Sarah's murder had a big impact on those working at the service with the murders and disappearances forming a regular topic of conversation among project workers and women accessing the service. This was alongside women's reports of violence committed against them by clients and others. I recall two incidents specifically. One involved young men in a car driving past a group of women and throwing bottles filled with urine at them. I still remember my shock and anger at the sheer malevolence of this act of random violence, which I now recognise as part of the varied and 'everyday' violence endured by sex workers, 'fostered by a general culture of distaste and disrespect towards women who sell sex' (Sanders and Campbell, 2007: 3).

Shocking as this attack was, the second incident which stays with me involved a woman who I will call Lisa (not real name), who reported an incident involving serious violence perpetrated against her. I will not provide details here, but I recall Lisa's fear and trauma as she told her story on the bus that night. What I also remember is that how initially, I was intimidated by her. Indeed, I thought I recognised Lisa and she may well have gone to my primary school or secondary school as most of the women accessing the service were from one of many council estates to the east of the town where I had also grown up. To be frank, Lisa reminded me of one of the tough girls I was scared of at school. I was shy and quiet as a child which meant that negotiating school and estate life, and the prospect of violence was scary and challenging at times. So I remember feeling intimidated and awkward when Lisa got on the bus that night until her own fear and vulnerability became obvious to me. In essence, the person I was scared of was far more vulnerable and fearful than I was.

I can recall several other encounters, which reinforced the fact that I shared a similar background with many of the women accessing the project. I got to know a funny and spirited young woman going out in the car several times with one of the project workers – it turned out she was from the estate next to the one where I had grown up. Another time while out with the project, I recognised a woman I definitely knew from primary school and she recognised me. She too had been one of the quieter girls at school and I was surprised to see her. I remember her hostility at the time, which was likely a result of her shame and embarrassment at being confronted by someone from her childhood.

All of this happened nearly 20 years ago, and it is likely I am tailoring events in the narrating present (Maruna, 2001) from the point of view of a criminologist whose interest lies in feminism, class, violence against women and the treatment and representation of women as victims of male violence. The literature on narrative and oral history stresses that past stories be treated with caution due to the fallibility of memory and the editing of stories from the present (Baddeley, 1999; Neisser, 1982). Indeed, I cannot know for sure what my exact feelings were at particular points in time some 20 years ago. My reflection is thus a sanitised and abridged account of my personal and intellectual connection to this case and the wider issues it represents. Notwithstanding, as Portelli (1998) points out in regard to oral history research, accessing an exact account of past events is not the point. Rather, one's narrative of past events offers the opportunity to interrogate their significance by looking at the 'speakers' relationship to their history' and the 'creation of meaning' (pp. 67–69). What is more, even if the chronology is not wholly precise, sufficient 'facts' exist (Lummis, 1998), which corroborate the emotional and intellectual journey I outline here.

Writing this article, I have attempted to pinpoint what my emotions were and continue to be in regard to this case and its wider implications. What emerges most explicitly is my anger and indignation. Anger at the structural factors which limit life chances and marginalise certain social groups, rendering them vulnerable to violence (Wilson, 2007, 2012), while denying and misrepresenting them as victims (Greer, 2008; Lowman, 2008; XXXX, 2018). However, as stated, while my formative biography connected me to the young women at the service at the level of place and shared disadvantage, my feelings of being an outsider during my youth and childhood mean this was not a straightforward process of identification (Jefferson and Hollway, 2013). That said, my ambivalence diminished as a more fully formed political and intellectual position began to emerge in combination with more recent lived experiences. This has elicited a passionate and empathetic perspective on these issues. Part of this relates to the formulation of a feminist and

class analysis, which has enabled me to grasp more fully the reasons for social disadvantage and stigma, and how this is shaped by gender (McKenzie, 2015; Skeggs, 1997; Tyler, 2008; XXXX, 2018). As Jefferson and Hollway (2013) note in reflecting on feelings towards research participants: 'To recognise these feelings and gradually become able to reflect on their origins and meaning for us is part of the emotional work required of ethical practice' (p. 165). What is more, academic perspectives are also emotive. As Cameron (2018) notes, we develop attachments to specific theoretical and political positions because of their emotionality. My reaction to these murders coincided with my engagement with radical feminist analyses of male violence against women, which Cameron identifies as especially affecting due to the passion, analytical certainty, and unflinching focus on male violence against women within radical feminist discourse and activism. **[AQ: 31][AQ: 32][AQ: 33][AQ: 34]**

## News coverage of the cases

Unfortunately, many towns and cities witness a similar series of cases involving street sex workers. As Kinnell (2008) notes, without the newsworthy presence of a serial killer, most cases attract limited attention from the press, failing as they do to live up to popular assumptions regarding the prototypical 'prostitute killer'. Content analysis of newspaper coverage of the Teesside cases corroborates Kinnell's observations regarding media interest in homicide cases involving sex workers, revealing minimal coverage in the national press. However, serious and violent crime is the lifeblood of provincial news media where tales of murder, violence and tragedy dominate the front pages (Hess and Waller, 2012; Lipschultz and Hilt, 2002). Nonetheless, local reports of the early cases were also limited with coverage becoming more sustained during the course of the 2000s as victims increased and three cases remained unsolved. The majority of newspaper reports featured in *The Evening Gazette* – the main paper serving the Teesside area. Much of the later coverage focuses on Donna's Keogh – a body has never been recovered and this case is revisited at anniversaries of her disappearance. Local media interest has also been sustained due to Donna's parents' criticism of the police and their campaign to reopen the investigation, which prompted an apology from Cleveland Police acknowledging investigative failings and a case review in 2016.

The discovery of Rachel Wilson's bones on farmland in 2012, 10 years after she disappeared and the subsequent reopening of the case was clearly newsworthy for the local press, but also appeared in lengthier articles in a number of national and regional newspapers (Allen, 2012; Press Association, 2012). The launch of an historic investigation by Cleveland police in 2018 into the three unsolved cases of Donna Keogh, Vicky Glass and Kellie Mallinson, has recently reignited press attention – especially as in late June 2018, police launched a search for Donna Keogh's body on wasteland in Middlesbrough. As part of the current inquiry, Cleveland Police have also launched a website dedicated to finding out what happened to Donna Keogh – #FindDonna ([www.find-donna.co.uk/index.aspx](http://www.find-donna.co.uk/index.aspx)), outlining the details of case and requesting information from the public.

Newspaper coverage of these murders necessitates a critical approach. As with news coverage of murders involving sex workers in general, local reports draw on familiar tropes to frame the lives and deaths of these young women, referring to 'vice', 'vice girls', 'prostitute'. This follows a well-worn pattern of shallow news reporting which fails to afford victims their humanity and holds them responsible for their victimisation (Jiwani et al., 2008; Strega et al., 2014). Later reports

draw on family relationships framing women as daughters and sisters, which reflects a change of tone by the press due to collaboration with victims' families. However, as Strega et al. (2014), point out, returning victims to the heteronormative family and affording them their humanity in death reinforces sex workers' marginality in life via notions of feminine respectability and worthy victimhood. Moreover, as Clark Dillman (2014) argues, in reference to the proliferation of images of dead women across news and visual culture, women 'need to be dead before an exploration of their lives, subjectivities, and experiences is authorised in mainstream representations' (p. 2). 'Respectable' citizenry would likely pay little mind to the disadvantaged and marginalised, but as murder victims, there is currency for local news in covering such stories. **[AQ: 35]**

## Ghosts of violence in the spaces of advanced marginality

Linnemann notes how 'the ghosts attached to people, places and things, linger in the social imaginary' (p. 517), often 'reanimated' by cultural production in the form of true crime. Similarly, Pilar Blanco and Pereen (2013) observe how 'haunting's attachment to place' relates to ... 'specific events – often cataclysmic' which have 'transpired' there (Pilar Blanco and Pereen, 2013: 395). In this way, violence transforms and inscribes itself onto places, which often become sites of commemoration and macabre fascination. This is most notably the case in regard to places of historical significance often linked to violence, murder and atrocity such as battlefields, war graves and the sites of genocide, whose violent histories continue impose themselves within the present.

However, the capacity of violence to haunt can also be felt as a result of lesser known crimes at the level of the local. In this way, connections to place become a central means of envisaging and remembering past crimes: 'an empty lot where a childhood home once stood, a spot along a road where an accident claimed a loved one – we visit, remember and commune with the dead' (Linnemann, 2015: 518). For Linnemann (2015), it is the texts of cultural production in the form of true crime which maintain the ghosts of historical violence in the popular imagination and within space and place, arguing that true crime texts bestow past crimes with spectral power and reanimate their presence in space and place. For Linnemann (2015), these cultural texts are essentially ghost stories, which 'enliven' social and physical space with the 'ghosts' of past violence and commit violence to locations. However, true crime is not the only representational text with this quality. Media reports, and especially the main local newspaper's repeated coverage of the Teesside cases, calls forth the ghosts of these past crimes, maintaining their place in the local imaginary and reinforcing spatial connections via the repetition of stories of final sightings of the women getting into cars, at house parties, on street corners, outside closed pubs in the early hours. Often this is accompanied by photographs and more recently videos on the newspaper's website. For instance, one short video pans the street where Donna Keogh attended a house party on the morning she disappeared or there are pictures of The Shipmate pub where Vicky Glass was last seen before her body was discovered. Most recently, as part of the renewed interest in Donna's disappearance and suspected murder, a report in *The Daily Mail* features a map of Middlesbrough town centre pinpointing Donna's regular haunts and final movements. There is a similar map on the #FindDonna website. This cartographic detail alongside photographs and videos of the victims and locations, bring with them the additional power of the visual image (Carrabine, 2014; Clarke Dillman, 2014; Greer, 2008), which further adds to the haunting power

of violence and place, serving as reminders of what happened to these young women and why. **[AQ: 36]**

Furthermore, spectrality also illuminates the relationship between the industrial and post-industrial. Deindustrialisation may lead to urban reinvention as consumption and culture replace production in former industrial centres (Auge, 1995; Edensor, 2008; Featherstone, 1991). However, other places fail to recover from the decimation of their traditional industries, which dominated physical landscapes, as well as economic and social life (Apel, 2015; Hall et al., 2008; Winlow, 2002). In these locales, past and present combine in physical and social space where the 'ghosts' of former industries retain a strong presence (Edensor, 2008; Nayak, 2006; XXXX el al., 2011). Edensor's (2008) exploration of the spatialisation of memory and former industrial landscapes highlights how the redundant and discarded liminal spaces of industrial sites resist erasure to become an alternative 'site of memory'. In this way, the present is overlaid by the past in the constitution of place identity. As Nayak (2006) notes, 'the post-industrial city is configured as a palimpsest – a cultural text upon which previous inscriptions of past cultures continue to be etched into the present' (p. 828). Post-industrial spaces are thus haunted by both their industrial heritage, as well as the ghosts of violence which are themselves a product of economic decline – all of which manifest in post-industrial landscapes as social and physical deterioration. Fiddler's (2018) example of the Handworth riots invokes the multi-layered nature of haunting in his reference to the 'here' that contains not simply 'ghosts', but the ghosts of other events (in this example, the social violence leading up to the riots)' (p. 12). **[AQ: 37][AQ: 38]**

Indeed, haunting or the figure of the ghost is more than a means to make sense of immediate sensory experiences of place in the phenomenological sense; the figure of the ghost is also political. Avery Gordon's (2008) pioneering meditation on spectral power identifies how haunting alerts us to historical and ongoing injustices such as slavery and genocide. As Cameron (2008) notes, 'in recent writings ghosts allude to the presence of that which has been excluded, marginalised and expelled' (p. 14). For instance, several writers deploy spectrality to interrogate the competing histories and legacies of colonialism. Gelder and Jacobs (2007) identify the 'settler anxiety' of the colonisers, while Cameron (2008) has explored the lack of recognition afforded to indigenous peoples in the post-colonial present. Spectrality is thus more than a fanciful and esoteric concept. On the contrary, it also demands a confrontation with the consequences of inequality and injustice. However, to revisit a point made earlier, Clark Dillman (2014) notes how a focus on images of dead women (as she does in her interrogation of dead women in film, TV and news coverage) may merely reinforce women's disposability and the denial of their subjectivity and humanity in life. That said, Clark Dillman agrees that ghosts can be political, possessing the power 'to haunt in the name of justice' (p. 10), but does not see this in the texts she analyses. **[AQ: 39]**

## Conclusion: emotion, haunting and the ethical obligations of the criminologist

The emotional and creative turn in criminology offers new ways of seeing and telling crime, and engaging with criminological subjects (Jacobsen, 2015; Jermyn, 2016; Jewkes, 2011; Wakeman, 2014; Wender, 2015). As I have argued here, there is also scope for criminology to make space for discussions of academics' more visceral and emotional responses to vicarious and representational



violence (Jermyn, 2016). To this end, the discussion in this article has in part focused on my own feelings about the murder and disappearance of five young women in my local town. As I stated earlier on in the article, personal connection and academic interest have caused me to dwell upon and reflect on this case, with recent interest in the criminologists' emotional self, offering a resource and an outlet for me to explore and validate the interplay between personal and academic positioning.

The focus on a 'local' case also prompted me to explore how place triggers emotional responses to violence. In doing so, I have drawn upon the concepts of spectrality and the figure of the ghost to illuminate the connections between haunting, place and violence (Bell, 1997; Gordon, 2008; Linnemann, 2015; Pilar Blanco and Preen, 2013). For the purposes of this article, I use haunting to explore these young women's lives and deaths, which I argue retain a strong presence due to their powerful connections to place, as well as the cultural work of the media in keeping them alive in the local imagination. The politics of haunting also resonates here because it functions to illuminate the 'necessary' and linked conditions in which these murders took place. First, the murders need to be understood in the context of unequal neo-liberal societies where disadvantage and violence are socially and geographically concentrated, and the state fails to protect vulnerable victims (Dorling, 2004; Kinnell, 2008; Wilson, 2007, 2012). Second, despite the fact that three cases remain unsolved, the dynamics of homicide and violence against sex worker indicates the likelihood that unidentified perpetrators are male. As such, the case should also be considered as femicide constitutive of systemic male violence against women where men murder women in the context of patriarchy (Ingala Smith, 2013; Jeffries, 2013). Finally and relatedly, all of these young women were linked to sex work – the politics of which is central in explaining risk of violence and homicide for this group (Kinnell, 2008). Ongoing stigmatisation and the construction of a deviant prostitute identity perpetuates and legitimates violence, while criminalisation exacerbates cultural stigma and situational risk with women seeking out risky spaces in order to avoid criminal justice sanctions (Kinnell, 2008; Sanders, 2016). Historically visible as Other, victim and criminal alongside their invisibility and lack of recognition as citizens (O'Neill, 2010), few viable solutions have ever been offered to address the 'everyday violence' faced by sex workers. As such, the continued Othering of sex workers and the failure to protect them from violence serves as a powerful example of the connections between gender, power inequalities and violence. **[AQ: 40]**

Using one's emotion as a starting point within academic analysis offers an alternative way for the criminologist to approach violence and victimhood. Jewkes raises concerns that emotional investment on the part of the researcher may compromise research in terms of ethics and rigour; however, as Hollway and Jefferson (2013) point out, it is research without feeling which is unethical, further arguing that objectivity comes with subjectivity and a strong commitment to reflexivity. Furthermore, rather than being 'too' close to the subject matter and consequently lacking in objectivity, beginning with emotion and admitting the influence of the self opens up space for enriching political and academic analysis and developing the criminological imagination (Jewkes, 2011; Walklate, 2018). It also offers an ethical opportunity for the criminologist to take a pause and think more carefully about the victims and violence we frequently make reference to – as an act of remembrance (Wilson et al., 2016), commemoration and 'bearing witness' (Walklate et al., 2015). **[AQ: 41]**

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## Author biography

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