

*Analysing the 'Crime Decline': Change and
Continuity in Crime and Harm.*

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Abstract:

Over the past two decades crime rates appear to have undergone a statistical decline in a number of predominantly Western countries. Representing a discernible break from the not too distant past, this remarkable reversal has unsurprisingly generated significant scholarly interest and spawned a voluminous literature seeking to explore and explain this purported 'international crime decline'. However, the evidence upon which claims of this apparent reversal are based appears less than robust and raises a number of questions regarding the validity of the 'crime decline' discourse. Accordingly, this research aims to critically interrogate the dominant data source at the heart of this discourse and begins to offer an alternative view of the reality of crime and harm by drawing upon original empirical research. To this end the thesis examines the wider socio-economic and politico-cultural context within which this decline is said to have occurred, highlighting the changing nature and landscape of crime and its ever deepening recalcitrance to precise measurement.

With a view towards reframing the 'crime decline' discourse a more accurate account of crime and harm is provided by drawing upon an ontologically grounded harm perspective. In doing so attention is drawn to a range of non-criminalised harms that do immeasurable damage to the wider social body yet remain absent from the optimistic claims of statistical reductions in crime. Moreover, in what marks a positive contribution towards the development of an empirically robust and theoretically persuasive account of the purported 'crime decline', a new empirically informed theoretical framework is advanced. Utilising this new framework this thesis may begin to explain why, despite its lack of aetiological affirmation, the 'crime decline' discourse has been so readily accepted. It is concluded that crime may not have simply 'declined' but mutated in ways that current indicators have been unable to capture. Ultimately, it is argued that rather than taking undue comfort in baseless claims of optimism we must participate in a gesture of refusal to enjoy the comforting myth of the 'crime decline'.

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Contents:

Abstract	1
Acknowledgements	2
List of Figures and Tables.....	5
Introduction: A Picture in Search of a New Frame.....	6
<i>Structure and Content.....</i>	<i>9</i>
Chapter One – Literature Review: Constructing the Statistical Quilt for the Comfortable Dream: Exploring the ‘International Crime Decline’	15
<i>The International Crime Victims Survey.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Practical Limitations and Methodological Issues of the ICVS</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Reframing the ‘International Crime Decline’ Discourse.....</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Criminal Obsolescence and the Mutation of Crime.....</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Constructing the Statistical Quilt.....</i>	<i>43</i>
Chapter Two: Research Context.....	47
<i>Contextualising Lake Town.....</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>Neoliberalism and Economic Globalisation.....</i>	<i>57</i>
<i>Globalising the Illicit.....</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>The ‘Glocal’ Connection.....</i>	<i>69</i>
Chapter Three: Invisible Crimes and Non-Criminalised Harms	79
<i>The Hidden Landscape of Global Crime.....</i>	<i>80</i>
<i>The Hidden Landscape of Everyday Crime</i>	<i>82</i>
<i>Zemiology and the Exploration of Non-Criminalised Harms</i>	<i>90</i>
<i>Criminology or Zemiology? Yes, Please!.....</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Finding ‘Harm’s’ Ontological Reality</i>	<i>103</i>
Chapter Four: Research Methodology	109
<i>Ontological and Epistemological Considerations.....</i>	<i>109</i>
<i>Research Design and Methods</i>	<i>119</i>
<i>Research Process</i>	<i>128</i>

Chapter Five: Research Findings	139
' <i>You Should Have Called it Skid Row</i> '	140
' <i>The Frontline is All-Around</i> '	146
' <i>Well That's Just Normal Now</i> '	153
' <i>You've Got Like Police Recorded Crime and Then You Have Crime</i> '	159
' <i>Crime's Changing, it's Evolving</i> '	162
' <i>People Believe What They Want to Believe</i> '	168
Chapter Six: Paradigmatic Dominance and Eyes Wide Shut: Beyond Positivism and Constructionism	175
<i>Positivism and Constructionism</i>	177
<i>Critical Realism; Beyond Positivism and Constructionism</i>	181
<i>The Turn to Speculative Realism and Transcendental Materialism</i>	186
<i>Managed Deaptation through the Pseudo-Pacification Process</i>	194
Chapter Seven: Dreaming Comfortably: Theorising the 'Crime Decline' and Modernity's Dream Myth	203
<i>Analysing Modernity's Dream Myth</i>	204
<i>The Myth-Sustaining Dream</i>	206
<i>The Myth of the 'Crime Decline'</i>	211
<i>A Multipurpose Dream Myth</i>	216
<i>Degrees of Assimilation</i>	219
Conclusion	229
References	242
Appendices	284
<i>Appendix 1: World map showing countries (excluding Europe) that have participated in the ICVS at least once between 1989 and 2010</i>	284
<i>Appendix 2: World map showing European countries that have participated in the ICVS at least once between 1989 and 2010</i>	285
<i>Appendix 3: World map showing available ICVS trend data from countries that have participated in at least three sweeps of the ICVS between 1989 and 2010</i>	286

List of Figures and Tables:

Figure 1: The 'Crime Decline' Tunnel of Vision.....39

Figure 2: Technology-Mediated Criminal Transference.....42

Table 1: The Three Ontological Domains of Reality.....112

Table 2: The Four Ontological Domains of Reality.....118

Introduction:

A Picture in Search of a New Frame.

During the past two decades we seem to have witnessed the emergence of a phenomenon commonly referred to as the ‘*crime decline*’ or ‘*crime drop*’ (Knepper 2012; Farrell et al 2014; Rizk and Bettaieb 2015). Initially detected in the USA and lauded as the ‘*Great American Crime Decline*’ (Zimring 2007), traces of the phenomenon’s underlying current have subsequently been found elsewhere as an emerging swell of evidence attests to its ‘international’ character (Knepper 2012; Baumer and Wolff 2014; van Dijk et al 2007; Tseloni et al 2010; Tonry 2014a; Farrell et al 2010). Accordingly, there now appears to be a growing belief amongst a number of scholars that “crime rates for all traditional violent and property offences are falling in all developed Western countries” (Tonry 2014b:viii). This unexpected turn of events has been dubbed “the most important criminological phenomenon of modern times” (Farrell et al 2014:421). Consequently, and perhaps unsurprisingly, it has stimulated a great deal of scholarly interest and spawned a voluminous literature intent on explicating its aetiological complexities.

Staking its claim as the methodological champion of the ‘international crime decline’ discourse, the International Crime Victims Survey has become both a standard source of cross-national information pertaining to trends in crime (Barkan 2012) and a common feature of numerous ‘international crime decline’ studies (Mayhew and van Dijk 2012). Indeed, it has been instrumental in helping to fashion claims of a “universal drop in crime” purported to have occurred from about the mid-1990s (van Kesteren et al 2014:65). So conclusive are these statistically driven proclamations professed to be, that any who dare disagree risk intellectual chastisement, for it is argued that no ‘informed’ person would do so (Tonry 2014a). However, there is little by way of convincing explanations accounting for this puzzling ‘criminological bombshell’ to warrant such resolute acceptance (Farrell et al 2010; van Kesteren et al 2014). Certainly, this perplexing reversal of hitherto upward trends in international rates

of crime presents for the discipline of criminology both a theoretical and an empirical challenge (Tseloni et al 2010; Knepper 2012). However, in its current condition, marred as it is by an unsettled identity (Lippens and Crewe 2015), constraining paradigmatic forces, intense political pressures and the entrenchment of policy-driven research (Hall and Winlow 2015; DeKeseredy 2012), it is likely to be a monumental uphill struggle. Nevertheless, there is undoubtedly a need for serious theoretical work capable of sorting out the statistical grit that continues to agitate any articulation of a persuasive explanation for the alleged 'crime decline' (Knepper 2015).

Convincing and certain as it may appear, "the 'crime-decline' thesis is not at all watertight" (Hall and Winlow 2015:122). Accordingly, it may not be unreasonable to question the validity of the 'crime decline' discourse without having one's credibility thrown into disrepute. Nor does it seem unreasonable to query the range and depth of the crime decline story and the wider socio-economic and politico-cultural context within which it is being told (Krivo 2014). Perhaps there is more to this complex phenomenon than there appears at first sight. Indeed, its almost pre-packaged readiness to be appropriated by politicians and scholars alike as a monolithic signifier of 'success' should signal that at least some degree of cautious scepticism is warranted (Hall 2010). In fact any 'informed' person might actually consider the 'international crime decline' trumpet to have been prematurely sounded.

Consequently, the purpose of this research is to pose these uncomfortable questions and begin to provide answers to them. More specifically, the study's principle aims are to investigate and analyse the validity of this alleged 'international crime decline', and in doing so it will seek to determine whether the dominant data source underpinning the 'international crime decline' discourse is robust enough to truly support such an assertion. Congruently, it will examine the extent to which the proponents of this discourse have, in the Nietzschean sense, simply heard only those questions for which they are in a position to find and offer answers (O'Hara 2004). Of particular importance is its aim to examine the wider socio-economic context within which this and concomitant claims of unprecedented peacefulness are said to have occurred.

Moreover, the thesis aims to explore both change and continuity in crime and harm and ultimately propose a new theoretical framework through which to view and understand the multifaceted complexities of the purported 'crime decline' and congruent assertions.

Consistent with the anticipated achievement of the aforementioned aims, this thesis is expected to make a number of original contributions to social scientific knowledge in general and to the 'crime decline' literature in particular. Among the most salient is the novel approach taken towards an analysis of the alleged 'crime decline', in as much as it constitutes the first substantive piece of research to explore this phenomenon via an innovative melding of cutting edge criminological theory, zemiology, critical realism and transcendental materialism. Whilst numerous studies authored by scores of interested scholars have crunched the numbers and plotted the statistical patterns and trends, few studies have sought to pierce the quantitative crust of the discourse in this way and peer beneath the limited statistical representations of selected forms of crime to investigate the lived reality of crime and harm in an age of 'declining rates of crime'. There is undeniably a paucity of rigorous qualitative research that has sought to explore and explain this alleged reduction in crime with robust empirical data and rich theoretical insights. Certainly, the relative absence of such work has undoubtedly contributed towards criminology's current failure to offer an adequate answer to the crime decline conundrum (Tonry 2014a; Winlow 2014b).

Reflecting upon this identified "failing of criminological theory and empirical study" (Farrell et al 2010:24), this thesis intends to contribute towards the development of an empirically robust and theoretically persuasive account of the purported 'crime decline'. This will be achieved by drawing upon the aforementioned philosophical and theoretical frameworks as well as original empirical research and theorising, in order to get beyond the poorly conceptualised and limited statistical readings that have been so emphatically applauded, to explore experiential lived realities of crime and harm. Ultimately, it is anticipated that this research will help to construct a possible explanation as to why we *may* be seeing statistical reductions in *some* forms of crime and

explicate the reason why such a profound assertion, currently devoid of aetiological affirmation, has been so readily sold by governments and scholars alike as a comforting cognitive commodity for public consumption (Hall and Winlow 2015). This thesis will therefore contribute towards a growing body of more cautious and critically informed scholarly work that continues to question the validity of claims espousing the increased engagement of the 'better angels of our nature' (Pinker 2011) and miraculous 'universal' reductions in international rates of crime (van Kesteren et al 2014).

The significance of this work thus lies in its expected ability to reframe the 'crime decline' discourse by applying to this familiar homily the researcher's developing theory of the *dream myth*. In doing so it is anticipated that a more accurate account of this important yet somewhat puzzling phenomenon can be articulated. Indeed, it is hoped that when viewed through a refocused criminological lens capable of capturing a more holistic picture of crime and harm, a theoretically persuasive and empirically grounded explanation to the elusive 'crime decline' mystery can be offered. However, before the thesis begins in earnest, it is perhaps instructive to offer an indication of what is to come in the following pages by providing brief outlines of the forthcoming chapters.

Structure and Content:

Chapter one traces the contours of the alleged 'international crime decline'. It sets out to chart a course through what has now become an imposing and voluminous sea of 'crime decline' literature. In doing so the chapter conducts a thorough review of this growing body of work and discerns the dominant voices behind the 'crime decline' discourse. Having identified such voices and what can perhaps be considered the dominant data source underpinning this optimistic discourse, they become the focus of thorough scrutineering. Following a critical interrogation it is revealed that this dominant source of data is not robust enough to support claims of an 'international crime decline' proposed by what can only be described as an embedded congregation of scholars (van Duyne 2011).

Accordingly, this first chapter attempts to offer a more accurate account of this so-called 'international crime decline'. This is achieved by first removing from the discourse its self-appreciating and overgeneralised trimmings before providing an alternative view as to why we may be seeing *statistical* reductions in some forms of crime. In doing so, the chapter introduces the idea of a 'crime decline tunnel of vision' and the concept of 'technology-mediated criminal transference' in an effort to advance the position that rather than simply declining, a co-evolutionary process of technologically driven criminal innovation, mutation and obsolescence has changed both the nature and broad landscape of crime in ways that our current indicators have been unable to adequately capture (Maxfield et al 2007; Farrell et al 2010). Finally, the chapter begins to consider the political utility of asserting and perpetuating inaccurate claims of internationally declining rates of crime and concomitant liberal progressive proclamations of unprecedented peacefulness.

The primary focus of the next substantive chapter is to outline the overarching socio-structural and politico-economic context within which this research is situated. To this end chapter two provides a thorough overview of the research location, charting its industrious rise to prominence and subsequent rapid descent into a hollowed out site languishing in a state of permanent recession and host to little more than a range of burgeoning criminal markets (Lloyd 2013; Hall et al 2008). Moreover, its position as a 'glocal node' deeply connected to the wider neoliberal global economy is explicated with a view towards weaving together more holistically both the micro and macro contexts with which this research has concerned itself. Accordingly, this chapter draws attention to the pervasive process of neoliberal economic globalisation and the concomitant globalisation of the illicit, exploring how such activity manifests itself and often culminates in what is referred to in this thesis as *deviant glocalization*. Essentially, having provided a small glimpse of the contemporary global context of crime and harm and their glocal manifestations, this chapter paints a more accurate picture of our current condition and the reality of life on the precipice. More to the point, it offers an analytically generalizable view of an economically fallow wasteland within which large numbers of economically redundant humans reside and regularly confront a raft of social issues, uncharacteristic of

an area purported to be part of a conglomeration of countries experiencing declining rates of crime and unparalleled peace (Bauman 2004; van Kesteren et al 2014; Pinker 2012).

Treading deeper into terrain uncharted by the data source that supports the prematurely triumphant 'crime decline' discourse, chapter three briefly explores the hidden landscape of global crime before excavating the equally neglected hidden landscape of everyday crime. Concerned primarily with the latter, the first part of this chapter endeavours to capture and convey the pervasive and almost inured mundanity of crime and victimisation in areas such as the one in which this research was conducted. Indeed, it illuminates the reality of living in areas where a mixture of 'social' and 'asocial' forms of crime form common constituents of everyday life seamlessly woven into the very social fabric itself (Hall et al 2008). Within such areas a plethora of unreported, unrecorded and unpublicised flows of crime form a persistent undercurrent to many lives marked by a constant vigilance to remain faithful to the all-important 'code of the street' (Anderson 2000). Yet outside the range of the statistical radar, such experiences fail to register amongst those trumpeting statements of incautious optimism. Conversely, this chapter brings into focus the 'shocking truth' of crime and victimisation occurring throughout the hidden landscapes conveniently kept out of focus (Davies 1997).

The second part of chapter three draws attention to numerous social harms excluded from the 'crime decline' discourse. Existing outside the orbit of official criminalisation these socially injurious events and absences are divorced from all consideration, as those who baselessly celebrate a job well-done continue to maintain a narrow focus upon 'conventional crimes' and 'ideal victims' (van Dijk and Shaw 2009; Carrabine et al 2009). Accordingly, the chapter utilises a harm perspective in order to explore these otherwise ignored social issues. Moreover, this chapter introduces the concept of '*the Anthropocene of harm*' and argues in favour of positioning the study of harm as a serious focal concern at the heart of the criminological enterprise, whilst cautioning against the advancement of false alternatives between zemiology and criminology. In an effort to help facilitate the harm perspective's ability to re-engage criminology's dialectical energy, the

last substantive section of chapter three attempts to provide the concept of harm with a firm ontological anchorage grounded in the reality of our times.

Introducing the methodological parameters of the study, chapter four begins by intricately delineating the ontological and epistemological considerations that have informed the research process. Subsequently, the chapter explores the use of a unique methodological framework that innovatively combines the harm perspective of the new zemiological movement and the philosophical doctrines of critical realism and transcendental materialism. Whilst this particular chapter necessarily focuses upon the methodological value of utilising such an intricate framework, its broader analytical efficacy is explicated throughout the thesis. Further demarcation of the underlying threads informing this research derives from a detailed examination of what the researcher refers to as '*soft positivism*'. Used to avoid the wholesale rejection of positivist inspired social scientific research, the concept encourages the proper utilisation of positivism as an initial analytical method of identifying interesting phenomena to be investigated more thoroughly by contextually sensitive qualitative research. Indeed, the position is advanced that when used in this capacity '*soft positivism*' offers a potential avenue of significant promise.

As is customary for a chapter on research methodology, the rationale behind the selection of research design, methods and instruments employed is then outlined in detail. Moreover, in addition to conveying the procedural manoeuvres undertaken during the data collection phase of this research, other pertinent considerations such as data analysis and the steps taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings are thoroughly explicated. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, towards the end of the chapter the necessary precautions taken to ensure the ethical integrity of the research are clarified.

Chapter five presents the research findings from the empirical component of this study. The original qualitative data offers an alternative view of crime and harm than the one enthusiastically articulated by the 'crime decline' discourse and its congregation of embedded scholars. Essentially, the chapter provides a

glimpse into experiential lived realities of individuals who find themselves in uncomfortable proximity to the worst effects of the dominant sociosymbolic order's actualised structures and processes. It is revealed that despite claims of *statistical* reductions in crime, everyday life for many participants continues to be characterised by various forms of crime, un-criminalised harms and almost perpetual cycles of victimisation. Accordingly, the evidence presented within this chapter suggests that there are a number of very convincing reasons not to believe the 'crime decline' discourse. However as the last section of this chapter demonstrates, there are numerous complexities to consider when trying to determine why such a demonstrably erroneous assertion has amassed such a large and accepting audience. With a view towards developing a new theoretical framework capable of addressing this conundrum, the chapter begins to lay the empirical foundation upon which the researcher's theory of the *dream myth* is subsequently built in chapter seven.

The need for developing new theories capable of providing empirically informed, theoretically rich and generally more persuasive accounts of the 'crime decline', and the multifaceted complexities of crime and harm more broadly, is explicated in chapter six. Initially, attention is drawn to the constraining presence of the dominant and subdominant paradigmatic forces that currently monopolise the mainstream criminological canon. In doing so, the chapter briefly highlights the current condition of contemporary criminology, noting its affinity towards aetiological entropy and the marginalisation of intellectual curiosity (Hall and Winlow 2012). The focus of the chapter then moves towards transcending these constraining influences by exploring the use of alternative positions capable of facilitating a more accurate and holistic examination of crime, its purported decline and social harms which remain otherwise opaque to the mainstream criminological canon. This is achieved by drawing upon the philosophical traditions of critical realism and transcendental materialism as well as the theory of the pseudo-pacification process. Together these positions help to explicate the creation and perpetuation of criminogenic subjectivities and clearly illustrate why liberal progressive assertions of a more peaceful society experiencing declining rates of crime is untenable. In short, they provide insights capable of furnishing us with a greater understanding of the current condition of our

sociosymbolic and politico-economic terrain, revealing how it is anything but conducive to an 'international crime decline' and unprecedented peacefulness.

Having already laid its empirical foundations, chapter seven sets out in detail the researcher's theory of the *dream myth* and begins to apply this new theoretical lens to the analysis of the alleged 'crime decline'. This developmental formulation explores and explains how, why and to what extent individuals have come to act *as if* they believe in such a demonstrably erroneous assertion. Accordingly, by drawing upon a range of perspectives, including contemporary psychophysiological dream science and the study of political myths, the theory of the dream myth offers insights into how the discourse of the 'crime decline' has been sustained and to what end. Essentially, by applying the theory of the dream myth, this last substantive chapter explicates the persistent longevity of inaccurate liberal progressive assertions in general and the 'crime decline' in particular. Crucially, before the chapter draws to a close it offers a potential avenue through which we may begin to move forward. The position being advanced within these closing stages is that before ambitious socio-structural and political-cultural transformations can be accomplished, we must first take a good look at the world as it really is and participate in a gesture of refusal to enjoy the comforting myths we have constructed.

By way of recapitulating the main arguments articulated throughout the various chapters, the conclusion provides a summary of the thesis. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, it reaffirms the importance of taking a good look at the worst without descending into despair (Becker 1975; Jeffery 2011). Fundamentally, its final objective is to promote a move from a state of denial to one of acceptance by helping to mobilise a willingness to confront the reality of our times. Subsequently it is hoped that in time this might aid the stimulation of genuine emancipatory enthusiasm and human flourishing (Wood 2012; Žižek 2011).

Chapter One – Literature Review:

Constructing the Statistical Quilt for the Comfortable Dream: Exploring the ‘International Crime Decline’.

In the years following the Second World War, statistical crime trends in the overwhelming majority of Western nations followed a seemingly relentless and unyielding upward trajectory that lasted almost four decades, from approximately 1955-1960 to around the mid-1990s (van Dijk et al 2012). The effects of this post-war crime boom were so pervasive (Sacco 2005) that crime rates, particularly on both sides of the Atlantic, continued to escalate during the most affluent post-war periods (Young 1986), presenting an empirical anomaly which Young (1988a:159) referred to as “the aetiological crisis”. Evidently, despite the attempted wholesale improvement of social conditions (Young 1988a), any sign of some imminent reprieve or amelioration was nowhere to be seen as “the processes that had driven crime up during the 1960s and 1970s all continued” (Reiner 2007:95). This continuation resulted in a veritable ‘crime explosion’ during the 1980s that reached its peak in the early to mid-1990s (Reiner 2007; van Dijk and Tseloni 2012). Whilst all available indicators pointed towards the perpetuation of this upward trend, contrary to all expectations crime rates in a number of predominantly Western countries appear to have declined during the past two decades (Knepper 2012), a perplexing conundrum which Young (2011:111) refers to as “the second aetiological crisis”.

Such an unprecedented reversal has unsurprisingly generated significant scholarly interest and spawned a voluminous literature which has sought to explore and explain the aetiological complexities surrounding this purported ‘international crime decline’ (van Dijk 2008; van Dijk et al 2012; Farrell et al 2010, 2011; Tseloni et al 2010). However, whilst there appears to be some agreement that crime rates began to fall first in the USA and then in Europe from around the early to mid-1990s (Knepper 2012; Farrell et al 2011; Rosenfeld and Messner 2009; Baumer 2010), there is little consensus amongst scholars regarding the precise causal factors thought to have stimulated and

maintained the international decline in crime rates (Tseloni et al 2010; Barker 2010). Indeed, despite the urgency with which plausible explanations have been sought, predominant causal hypotheses informed largely by research primarily focused upon the USA (Tseloni et al 2010; Rosenfeld and Messner 2009), remain rather unconvincing and have been found generally wanting (Farrell et al 2010). Amongst the most lauded hypotheses are those purporting that crime was driven down by strategic developments in policing, more punitive sentencing practices and mass incarceration, socio-demographic change, rising civility and self-control, the legalisation of abortion, the stabilisation of drug markets and the introduction of unleaded petrol (Baumer 2010; Farrell 2013).

It must be acknowledged that the aforementioned hypotheses are partial at best and by and large appear to lack any degree of external validity, rendering them inadequate as valid cross-continental explanations of declining crime trends (Farrell et al 2010; Tseloni et al 2012; van Dijk 2010). However it is important not to underestimate the significance of a growing convergence between nation states' criminal justice and penal policies, exemplified by the adoption in a number of industrial countries of what have been described as 'US-style' zero tolerance policing strategies, as well as harsher sentencing policies which are undoubtedly becoming "increasingly 'global' in character" (Jones and Newburn 2004:123). Nevertheless, there remains within the crime decline literature a paucity of adequate explanations capable of withstanding rigorous analysis whilst proving flexibly nuanced enough to account for subtle cross-national trend variations (Farrell et al 2010, 2011). Such an absence undoubtedly reflects the theoretical poverty of the discipline, or perhaps more accurately what Farrell et al (2010:24) aptly describe as both "a failing of criminological theory and empirical study".

Contributing in no small part to this failing is the fact that many of the causal hypotheses listed above have been informed by data gleaned from official national crime statistics and/or national victimisation surveys (Barker 2010; Rosenfeld and Messner 2009). Rather than promote a broader contextual view such data sources unhelpfully encourage methodological nationalism, as they frame the choice of issues to be studied and the means by which they should

be investigated within a scholarly scope that remains focused upon national contexts (Aebi and Linde 2010; Knepper 2012). Indeed it has been well documented that both official national crime statistics, particularly those collated by the police, and national victimisation surveys are replete with inherent practical and methodological limitations that render them unsuitable for cross-national comparative research (Westfelt and Estrada 2005; Mayhew 2008; Lewis 2012; van Dijk et al 2007). For instance, with regards to official criminal statistics, it is widely acknowledged that the general characteristics of the judicial process adopted by individual countries and the legal offence definitions employed often vary considerably, as do the ways in which different world regions mobilise their statistical counting rules (Aebi 2011; Mugellini 2008; MacDonald 2002). These rules not only determine what is and is not counted but also how and at what stage they are counted (von Hofer 2000), all of which evidently make cross-national comparisons using official criminal statistics fraught with significant pit-falls.

Similarly, national victimisation surveys fare little better as suitable sources of comparative data. Not only are they conducted in a limited number of countries, making their data less prevalent than that provided by official criminal statistics, but they also tend to undercount certain types of offences, such as those of a sexual or domestic nature (Mayhew 2008). Compounding matters further they often exclude homeless, institutionalised and socio-economically disadvantaged people, inevitably resulting in severe underestimations regarding the overall level of crime (Lynch 2006; Currie 2009). Moreover, the comparability of national victimisation surveys is seriously compromised by distinct differences regarding methodology and other design features, which are compounded further by various political and financial constraints involved in their individual fielding (van Dijk et al 2007; Lynch 2006). Since neither official national crime statistics nor national victimisation surveys are adequate for cross-national comparative research, it is argued that “international comparisons of crime levels should as a rule be confined to findings of international victim surveys” (von Hofer 2000:77).

The International Crime Victims Survey:

Indeed it was these acknowledged inadequacies, coupled with the expressed need for better standardised measurements of crime and victimisation, that prompted a number of European criminologists familiar with the methodological intricacies of crime surveys to develop a purportedly ‘fully standardised’ criminal victimisation survey (Mayhew and van Dijk 1997; van Dijk et al 2007; van Dijk 2007a). Beginning development in 1987 following a Council of Europe meeting on crime prevention and the subsequent formation of a Working Group, the first International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) was conducted in 1989, in fourteen countries drawn predominantly from Western Europe and North America (van Dijk et al 1991; van Kesteren et al 2014; van Dijk and Mayhew 1992; van Dijk 2007a).

Essentially modelled after the Dutch, British and Swiss national surveys, the ICVS adopts many of their standard features (van Kesteren et al 2014). For instance, its main focus is to use a ‘standardised’ questionnaire to interview a sample of around 2,000 householders. This is achieved by randomly selecting one respondent aged sixteen or over from each household and asking those to respond to questions regarding their recent experiences of eleven types of conventional crime using the Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) technique (van Dijk 2011). In countries where this method is unsuitable due to insufficient national telephone penetration, face-to-face interviews are conducted with samples of between 1,000-1,500 respondents in the main cities (Mayhew and van Dijk 2012; van Dijk 2011). After being asked a series of screener questions using a five-year recall period, the respondent is asked to focus on the past twelve months and reply on behalf of the household regarding experiences of household property crimes (van Kesteren et al 2014). The respondent is then asked about personal crimes which the individual may have experienced, thereby providing an ‘overall’ measure of victimisation relating to the previous year (Mayhew and van Dijk 2012; van Dijk 2011; van Dijk 2007a).

Since its first fielding in 1989 the ICVS has, with some adjustments, subsequently been conducted in 1992 (van Dijk and Mayhew 1992), 1996

(Mayhew and van Dijk 1997), 2000 (van Kesteren et al 2000), 2004-05 (van Dijk et al 2007), and 2010 (van Dijk and Tseloni 2012). During this time it has purportedly conducted interviews with over 300,000 people in approximately 78 countries over a period of more than twenty years (van Dijk et al 2007; van Dijk 2008; van Dijk and Tseloni 2012). It must therefore be acknowledged that both the range and coverage of the ICVS is considerable (see appendix 1 and 2 of this document). Thus it is considered by some to be “without a doubt the most advanced survey instrument for measuring the extent, nature, and responses to conventional crime across different societies” (van Dijk and Shaw 2009:261). Consequently it has now become a standard source of cross-national information regarding trends in crime and victimisation (Barkan 2012). It is perhaps for this reason that it has formed the methodological linchpin of numerous contemporary studies that have sought to explore declining rates of crime with a broader scope than that associated with earlier ‘crime decline’ research (Mayhew and van Dijk 2012).

Whilst there has been important work done by those who draw more heavily upon other data sources (Aebi and Linde 2010, 2012a, 2012b; Westfelt and Estrada 2005), the vast majority of studies which comprise the international crime decline literature have used the ICVS to varying degrees. What is more, these studies have by and large been authored by an embedded congregation of scholars (van Duyne 2011) who now constitute the dominant voices in the ‘international crime decline’ discourse. It is this collection of voices that has emphatically claimed the existence of a “universal drop in crime” (van Kesteren et al 2014:65), or a “near universal drop in volume crime” (van Dijk et al 2007:16) as it is sometimes a little more accurately described. The evidence in support of such a claim is purportedly to be found in the fact that most countries in the developed world for which there is available trend data, of which there are said to be fifteen, have shown distinct downward trends in the level of criminal victimisation since 1995 or 2000 (van Dijk et al 2007; van Dijk 2007a). More specifically, some ICVS informed studies suggest that based upon available trend data from North America, Australia and nine European countries, victimisation by what is termed *common crime* has markedly declined, a trend mirrored it would seem, by two main cities in South Africa and Argentina (van

Dijk 2008; van Dijk and Tseloni 2012). The curvilinear trends in volume crime appear strikingly uniform among nearly all developed countries which show a curved trend since the mid-1980s, with peaks between 1995 and 2000 and declines thereafter of up to 50% or more (van Dijk 2008). In light of such uniformity it is thought that “a similar set of factors has been pushing up crime till 1995-2000 and pulling it down afterwards across the Western world” (van Dijk 2007a:129), with possibly similar factors at play within the surveyed South African and Argentinian cities (van Dijk 2008).

However, before such factors may be examined it must be acknowledged that whilst similar patterns are observable in relation to these international declines, it seems that not all offence types declined at the same time (van Dijk and Tseloni 2012). Indeed Tseloni et al (2010) have concluded, based upon an analysis of five main crime types from information gathered in 26 countries that participated in at least three sweeps of the ICVS, that burglary and car theft appear to have declined first towards the end of the 1980s. This was followed by dramatic international declines in theft from a car and theft from the person since 1995, whereas the decline in assaults only began towards the end of the 1990s. Although the downward trend of each crime type analysed by Tseloni et al (2010) are shown to be approximately the same across countries from the 1990s, reductions in property crimes relating to vehicles and burglary appear to be the most pronounced (van Dijk et al 2007; van Kesteren et al 2014). This is thought to indicate that the set of factors suspected to have initiated the crime decline impacted first upon burglary and car theft (Tseloni et al 2010).

Given the apparent uniformity with which analysed international crime trends have declined, causal explanations must be framed within an international perspective (van Dijk 2007a). Consequently, the position has been advanced that idiosyncratic or country-specific explanations, which characterise many of the most popular crime decline hypotheses reviewed by Farrell et al (2010) and others, should give way to more universally applicable explanations (van Dijk and Tseloni 2012). One such explanation which has garnered considerable support throughout much of the international crime decline literature is what has been termed the ‘security hypothesis’. This postulation purports that “changes in

the quantity and quality of security have played a major part in driving crime falls in most industrial societies” (Farrell et al 2011:151) by limiting the opportunities for the commission of certain forms of crime. Lending some credence to this position, ICVS trend data has revealed over the past few decades a widespread growth in responsive securitisation, a term used to denote the increased willingness of individuals, businesses, manufacturers and governments to invest in both the procurement and use of security measures capable of providing property protection (van Dijk 2008; van Kesteren and van Dijk 2010; van Dijk 2010). This process purportedly reduces the pool of criminal opportunities and eventually discourages new offenders from entering the criminal market (van Kesteren et al 2014).

Accordingly, it has been suggested that increased levels of improved security may have been “the determining force behind downward trends in volume crime” (van Dijk 2006:18), particularly burglary and vehicle-related crime (van Dijk et al 2007). As these are considered to be ‘debut crimes’ and ‘key-stone’ crimes, in that they encourage and facilitate involvement in other forms of crime (Farrell et al 2011), it is thought that:

The international drops in all types of crime, then, might have been triggered by early improvements in car and household security, resulting in drops in car theft and burglary with subsequent knock-on effects for other, more serious types of crime. (van Kesteren et al 2014:56-57)

Whilst such arguments and associated claims of a universal drop in crime are undoubtedly compelling, closer scrutiny of the foundations upon which they are based is warranted as there are numerous areas of contention worth investigating.

Practical Limitations and Methodological Issues of the ICVS:

Although the ICVS shares many of the same limitations familiar to all victimisation surveys (Coleman and Moynihan 1996; Jones 2009), the potency of such drawbacks and the effects they may have upon the results obtained or conclusions drawn is undoubtedly compounded by its international and

comparative dimensions (Lynch 2006; Mayhew and van Dijk 2012; Walklate 2007). In particular, due to fiscal constraints the ICVS relies upon small sample sizes of between 1,000-2,000 respondents aged sixteen and over. This inevitably “produces country-level crime estimates with significantly greater margins of error than those of surveys with much larger samples” (Tseloni et al 2010:378). Such restricted sampling limits its comparative capabilities to certain types of crime and precludes any investigation of victimisation experienced by those below the set age limit, thereby severely hampering its investigatory scope (van Kesteren et al 2000; Lynch 2006; Zvekic 1996). Moreover, in addition to estimates of relatively rare criminal events being made unreliable by such small samples, cross-national comparisons, particularly between developing and developed countries, are highly problematic. This is due to the fact that samples from developing nations are drawn from a single city whereas samples from developed countries are by and large nationally representative (Lynch and Pridemore 2011; Neapolitan 1997).

Similarly, the ICVS often yields relatively low response rates, with some countries in particular returning alarmingly low rates (van Dijk et al 2007; Travis et al 1995). This severely limits the confidence we can have in the accuracy of the findings for “a low response rate could induce a downward bias in crime rates if it resulted in further underrepresentation of hard-to-reach populations who experience more crime” (Tseloni et al 2010:377). This is a scenario which seems highly possible for two main reasons. Firstly, the ICVS has an acknowledged tendency to exclude certain population groups who may be more vulnerable to victimisation, because they are residentially unstable and difficult to locate (Winslow and Zhang 2008; van Dijk et al 2007). Secondly, not much is known about the contexts of non-respondents (Walklate 2008).

However, the issue of low response rates cannot be divorced from the inherent limitations associated with the CATI technique and Random Digit Dialling (RDD) sample design employed by the ICVS, which tend to omit large sections of the population who are most likely to be victimised (Neapolitan 1997; DeKeseredy forthcoming 2016). Coupled with this there is growing evidence to suggest that interview fatigue has begun to set in as a result of what Maxfield et al

(2007:304) term “survey saturation”, whereby the increased demand for respondents by market researchers and public surveyors has made people less compliant and more apathetic towards the demands of survey participation. Furthermore, with the rate at which fixed landline-only households are declining in conjunction with an ever growing proportion of households that only utilise mobile phones, “RDD surveys cannot rely any longer solely on landline samples, as this would fatally underrepresent the groups most at risk of crime” (Maxfield et al 2007:305).

One must also consider the logistical challenges and inevitable inconsistencies involved in recruiting, training and closely monitoring interviewers so as to limit the extent to which the subjective qualities of these ‘hired hands’ impact upon the responses given (Zvekic 1996; Roth 2004). Compounding matters further is the fact that telephone interviews do not facilitate lengthy and in-depth investigations for they are by necessity brief and artificial (Mayhew 2008; Fattah 1997). Additionally, pertinent concerns have been raised regarding the extent to which recruited participants are willing to divulge their experiences of victimisation over the phone (Pakes 2010). Whilst such concerns are often downplayed by those within the ICVS fold (Pakes 2010), external commentators such as Young (2003:36) have lamented the “maverick results” produced by its methodological naivety in expecting individuals to inform strangers about serious and sensitive victimisation experiences over the phone. It is however perhaps worth mentioning that in an effort to overcome some of the aforementioned CATI limitations, a series of pilot studies testing the viability of using Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI) were undertaken in 2010, with disappointing results (van Dijk 2012).

It is highly likely that the types of victimisation underreported in surveys like the ICVS are the same as those underreported in official criminal statistics and for many of the same reasons (Fattah 1997; Neapolitan 1997; DeKeseredy forthcoming 2016). For instance, many individuals who experience criminal victimisation are involved in crime themselves and are therefore reluctant to approach the authorities or participate in surveys (Currie 2009). Similarly, victims of sexual offences who do not report such occurrences to the police “are

also unlikely to report to a stranger administering a survey” (van Dijk and Shaw 2009:263). The failure of the ICVS to adequately capture experiences of victimisation by sexual offences is blatant, unsurprising and particularly well documented (van Kesteren et al 2000; Travis et al 1995; Westfelt and Estrada 2005). Aside from the problematic wording of the ICVS questions relating to sexual offences (Travis et al 1995) and the obvious reluctance participants may feel in answering questions of such a sensitive nature over the phone, the issue largely centres around the fact that the ICVS is event-oriented in that it conceptualises crimes as discrete and measurable incidents (Genn 1988).

Fundamentally, this itemised counting frame of reference isolates identified incidents of victimisation from the respondent’s broad continuum of lifetime experiences, and therefore underestimates all that is involved in the process of victimisation (Goodey 2000). Moreover, it fails to acknowledge that experiences of sexual assault, violence, abuse and many other forms of crime may form a ‘normal’ part of a respondent’s day-to-day life and cannot therefore be easily identified and counted as an incident with a distinct beginning and end (Genn 1988; Spalek 2006). Simply put, survey methodologies are incapable of capturing the intricacies of what are often prolonged and habitual processes of victimisation (Walklate 2008; Genn 1988). Additionally, it is worth noting that cultural differences in definitions and meanings of what constitute sexual offences vary among respondents both within and across nations, and cannot necessarily be overcome by carefully wording or correctly translating the survey questions (Neapolitan 1997; Naudé 2009; Pakes 2010).

Whilst difficulties relating to successfully transcending differential cultural meanings and adequately translating offence definitions are particularly acute for sexual offences, they are by no means confined to them. Indeed, despite claims that the ICVS uses “universally common definitions of main types of crime” (van Dijk 2008:41), there is evidence to suggest not only that no such universally common definitions exist but that the ICVS has struggled to overcome the methodological hurdles associated with “the problem of the cultural relativity of victimisation” (Fattah 2010:51). For instance, the ICVS questionnaire, which is said to have been translated by country co-ordinators

into more than thirty different languages, has proven incapable of faultlessly crossing linguistic barriers, for terms such as 'bribery', 'stranger' and 'robbery', among others, are shown to be particularly difficult to translate (Mayhew and van Dijk 2012). Interestingly, despite claims that ICVS data provides supporting evidence for the view that "victims across the world assess the relative seriousness of different types of crime very similarly" (van Kesteren et al 2014:65), and therefore share similar understandings of common types of criminality (van Kesteren et al 2014; van Dijk and van Kesteren 1996), the term 'seriousness' was found to be among those which proved difficult to translate (Mayhew and van Dijk 2012).

Accordingly the ICVS appears to show little appreciation of cross-national meanings and subjective interpretations of criminal victimisation, for in its drive to secure linguistic conversion it assumes that the same terms carry the same meanings in different languages, cultures and settings (Travis et al 1995; Crawford 2011). It is seemingly blind to the fact that not only may one term carry a myriad of very different meanings but that in certain contexts direct translation may be an unobtainable chimera (Crawford 2011). Moreover, where cultural customs preclude individuals from being recognised as victims either by themselves or by others having endured certain experiences, the relativity of victimisation takes on a new salience (Naudé 2009; Pakes 2010; Strobl 2004). The consequences of such oversights are by no means benign since the accuracy of any cross-national findings depends greatly upon the adequacy of the questions posed and the reliability of the translations to which they are subjected (Kury 2002). When such concerns are written out of consideration for cross-national empirical research the results obtained are likely to be shallow and misleading, with greater chance of revealing cultural variations in definition than in the incidence of crime (Travis et al 1995; Carrabine et al 2009).

Another salient concern is raised by the fact that the sample of countries involved in the ICVS has varied considerably from one sweep to the next, with only three countries having participated in all six sweeps, which essentially renders the results from the ICVS relatively unsuitable as a source from which to compare trends over time (Tseloni et al 2010; van Dijk and Tseloni 2012;

Westfelt and Estrada 2005). However, the issue which perhaps casts one of the biggest shadows of doubt over the ICVS and concomitant claims of a ‘*universal drop in crime*’ is the fact that available trend data, which is what is needed in order to substantiate such claims, is confined to fifteen Western developed countries that participated in at least four different sweeps of the ICVS (van Dijk et al 2007; van Kesteren and van Dijk 2010). Such Occidentalism is not ameliorated by the analysis conducted by Tseloni et al (2010), for it was acknowledged that the countries that met the criteria for inclusion significantly over-represented North America and Northern Europe. Their analysis provides trend data on *five* types of crime for 26 countries, deemed to have met the criteria for inclusion if they participated in at least three rounds of the ICVS, of which one had to be the 2000 sweep (Tseloni et al 2010).

This overrepresentation is illustrated in appendix 3, where the researcher has plotted the 26 countries for which there is available trend data on a world map, showing the number of countries to have participated in three to six sweeps. It should be noted that slight augmentations were made to the number of sweeps that certain countries have participated in, based upon recent data provided by van Dijk and Tseloni (2010) from the sixth round of the ICVS. This delineation makes it strikingly clear that claims of a “universal drop in crime” (van Kesteren et al 2014:65), or indeed even a “near universal drop in volume crime” (van Dijk et al 2007:16), should be significantly revised in light of the fact that 26 countries do not constitute a global perspective much less a ‘universal’ one. Essentially, and at its most basic, the ICVS presents a picture of the ‘universal’ that excludes the global. To further illustrate the point it is worth noting that out of the 54 countries on the African continent only ten have participated in the ICVS (van Dijk 2008), or thirteen depending on who you read (Naudé et al 2006; Naudé 2009). What is more, despite a great deal of crime occurring in rural areas (Parenti 2011), all were surveyed only at the main city level (van Dijk 2008; Alvazzi del Frate 2009). This not only leads to misrepresentations of the distribution of crime within a particular country but, as has already been articulated, makes cross-national comparisons difficult if not altogether impossible (Lynch and Pridemore 2011).

Consequently, based upon the forgoing criticisms and the evidence presented thus far, two important conclusions may be drawn. Firstly, it can be successfully argued that the ICVS has a general tendency to undercount the extent of crime within participating countries (van Dijk et al 1991; van Kesteren et al 2000; Mugellini 2008). Secondly, due to the limitations of its geographical reach, it severely underestimates the extent and magnitude of the world's "true crime story" (Zvekic 1996:15) and thus cannot substantiate claims of a 'universal' drop in crime. Moreover, and contributing in no small part to its inability to sketch even a rough outline of the global crime picture, the lens through which the ICVS views the 'crime problem' is regrettably both narrow and one-dimensional. That is to say it disproportionately focuses upon the measurement of 'conventional' crimes at the expense of any meaningful investigation of 'non-conventional' crimes (van Dijk and Shaw 2009) and non-ideal victims (Carrabine et al 2009). Thus "many offences, which produce a tremendous amount of social harm, therefore are usually not identified" (Pakes 2012:70).

Such salient limitations are perhaps in part the result of what has been termed the ICVS's "drive for standardisation" (Walklate 2008:211). Essentially, whilst the ICVS has undoubtedly failed in its endeavour to achieve a state of full standardisation (Mayhew and van Dijk 2012; van Dijk et al 2007; van Dijk 2007a), its incessant desire to secure its attainment has rendered much of the crime problem's multifaceted complexities invisible to its view (Walklate 2008, 2007; Heidensohn 2008). Contributing to such myopia is its positivistic underpinnings and deep-rooted Occidentalism which frame what can be asked and how, as well as what conclusions can be drawn from the data obtained (Walklate 2008).

Indeed, the ICVS's static and non-dynamic definition of victimisation and its equally static 'measurements' of crime have made it incapable of capturing global crimes, such as the plethora subsumed within the broad edifice of organised crime (van Dijk 2007a). Nor does it appear capable of capturing new forms of crime such as those aided by the rapid expansion of technological facilitators like the internet (Kirchhoff 2010; van Dijk 2007a), much less the rapidity and fluidity of today's mutating forms of crime and emerging criminal

markets (Hall 2012b; Reiner 2007). Consequently, the ICVS is marred by a fundamental failure to engage critically with that which cannot be easily measured. Not only does it omit from its investigatory remit any thorough investigation of non-conventional crimes and the complexities surrounding mutating forms of crime, emerging criminal markets, shifting motivational drives and evolving manoeuvres, but it overtly ignores numerous hidden and non-criminalised social harms which often do considerable damage to individuals (Pakes 2012; Pantazis and Pemberton 2012).

Accordingly, as with most methods of 'counting crime', a healthy scepticism regarding the adequacy and accuracy of the ICVS and its findings is both advisable and warranted (Mosher et al 2002). Whilst the ICVS and its findings are widely used by the most dominant voices in the 'international crime decline' discourse, the media and by what Heidensohn (2008:210) calls "comparative bureaucrats", such scepticism is perhaps beginning to take root within some sections of the criminological community who often greet the findings of the ICVS with "dismay and a general gnashing of teeth" (Young 2003:36). For instance, some commentators have criticised the ICVS for its methodological naivety and "positivistic oversimplification" (Heidensohn 2008:210) which has persistently led to the production of various "embarrassing findings" (Young 2004:20) and bizarre results, defying "any attempt at interpretation or explanation" (Reiner 2007:105). These shortcomings have earned the survey the dubious honour of being labelled "one of the crudest examples of criminological empiricism" (Matthews 2010:132).

When pared back and viewed with a more critical eye capable of sifting through the debris of self-appraisal, selective critique and unintelligible assertions, it becomes clear that many of the claims based upon information gleaned from the ICVS are not adequately supported by the data, thereby consigning much of what the ICVS has produced to the realm of "so what? criminology" (Matthews 2010:125; DeKeseredy forthcoming 2016). We should therefore exercise considerable caution when drawing conclusions regarding the 'international crime decline' (Nikolić-Ristanović 2012) based upon ICVS data. Indeed, it has been shown to have been complicit in painting a misleading picture of 'global'

crime trends by falling foul of the tendency to overgeneralise observed reductions in *some* property crime trends in *some* Western countries to other offences and other regions of the world (Aebi and Linde 2012b). Undeniably, the favoured ICVS inspired axiom, ‘declining property crime trends in North American and Northern European countries means ‘universally’ declining trends in all volume crime everywhere’, seems to have attained a level of common acceptance only via what Aebi and Linde (2012b:134, original emphasis) refer to as “*proof by assertion*”.

However, whilst there are those who more reservedly refer to these purported reductions in international crime trends as a “cross-Atlantic phenomenon” (Knepper 2012:363), it appears evident that even this more cautious assertion requires refined qualification. There are numerous examples of crimes within even some of the relatively well surveyed countries of North America and Europe that show no sign of declining but rather, in some instances, show discernible increases that fly in the face of claims of a ‘universal’ drop in crime (Aebi and Linde 2010, 2012a, 2012b; Killias 2010). For instance, in Canada incidents of self-reported victimisation by personal property theft and violent crime are said to have increased since 1999 (Moulton 2013). Similarly, Italy has been shown by Arcidiacono and Selmini (2010) to have experienced almost uninterrupted increases in property crimes from the 1970s and throughout the 1990s, with a second peak in ‘total crime’ higher than that registered in 1991 recorded in 2007.

Moreover, Killias (2010) notes that when countries are grouped together into categories demarcating those with either increasing or decreasing trends based upon ICVS data from 1989-2005, there are as many countries with increasing trends in robbery as there are with either decreasing or stable trends. Killias (2010) also highlights that where rates of assault are concerned countries with increasing rates represent the clear majority. Finding its way into the category of countries with increasing trends on both accounts it is of interest to note that Belgium has been identified by van Dijk and Tseloni (2012:16) as being “the only European country where levels of crime have not shown a decrease up to 2004-2005”. The same work by van Dijk and Tseloni (2012) also reveals that,

based upon data from the sixth round of the ICVS, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden were found to have experienced an increase in threats and assaults between 2005 and 2010. Van Dijk et al (2007) have also acknowledged that trends in personal theft have increased in England and Wales, Northern Ireland and Norway, whilst van Dijk (2008) has noted that overall victimisation rates have increased markedly in both Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Additionally, trends in burglary, threats and assault increased in Switzerland between 2005 and 2010 (van Dijk 2012), whereas violent crime in general, according to police, victimisation and insurance data, is said to have increased almost constantly over the last two decades (Killias and Lanfranconi 2012). These movements, along with other findings, lead Killias and Lanfranconi (2012:276) to conclude that there is strong evidence to support “those who doubt that the crime drop was a universal, uniform and ‘inevitable’ development”. Sharing this sentiment Aebi and Linde (2012a:70, original emphasis) have argued that “one cannot talk of a *general* crime drop in Europe” for they find no evidence to suggest that crime in Western Europe has followed a homogeneous trend. Indeed, the authors confirm that rape, assault and drug offences have increased constantly from the mid-1990s to 2007 according to official statistics, with such findings garnering support from evidence provided by police statistics and victimisation surveys (Aebi and Linde 2010). Consequently, based upon data gleaned from both police statistics and victimisation surveys (Aebi and Linde 2010:272) as well as from conviction statistics (Aebi and Linde 2012b:140, original emphasis) it has been concluded that “there is no *general* crime drop in Europe”.

These countervailing findings should be viewed alongside the fact that violent crime is increasing in many developing countries, particularly in some parts of Africa and Latin America (van Dijk 2008). Additionally, there appears to be no indication of declines, similar to those of some forms of common crime experienced in certain Western countries, for non-conventional crimes such as organised crime and corruption (van Dijk 2007b). All this of course is not to suggest that these alternative trends or the sources from which they derive

more reliably reveal or capture the true state of crime and harm, but merely to demonstrate that there are often insurmountable variations in purported crime trends. Such variations not only belie any notion of 'universal' declinations in crime, but perhaps indicate that there may be more than one side to the 'international crime decline' story.

Reframing the 'International Crime Decline' Discourse:

Having critically reviewed the many limitations of the ICVS, as well as the misleading image of a 'universal' or 'near universal' decline in volume crime painted by some of its most ardent proponents, what can honestly be said about the phenomenon of declining *rates* of crime? Fundamentally, when pared back and stripped of its self-appreciating and overgeneralised trimmings, the ICVS and its proponents do in fact provide part of the answer to what lies at the heart of the 'international crime decline' discourse. Indeed, and as the discussion above has no doubt intimated, when viewed with a more critical eye it appears that much of the discourse is built upon the fact that the ICVS has identified a *number* of predominantly Western developed countries that have experienced reductions in *certain* volume crimes, of which the most pronounced appear to be vehicle-related crimes and burglary (van Dijk et al 2007; van Kesteren et al 2014).

As previously mentioned these far from 'universal' declinations are said to have been driven by the widespread growth in responsive securitisation. Purportedly this has not only facilitated the 'hardening of suitable targets', but has by extension diminished the pool of potential offenders by blocking access to the 'debut' and 'key-stone' crimes that would have otherwise launched their criminal careers, thereby stimulating reductions in other forms of crime (van Dijk 2008; van Kesteren et al 2014; Farrell et al 2011). However, whilst the plausibility of this security based hypothesis should not be underestimated, close scrutiny of its purported uniformity and adequacy as a suitably holistic explanation is warranted.

The notion of responsive securitisation has been built upon ICVS data, predominantly gathered by asking respondents questions regarding their ownership of common household security measures (Mayhew and van Dijk 2012), which purportedly points to “a universal growth in the possession and use of security measures over the past few decades” (van Kesteren and van Dijk 2010:155). First and foremost it should be acknowledged that the very basis upon which this notion is predicated is highly questionable, in light of the fact that the ICVS question designed to solicit information relating to the ownership and use of common household security measures has proven problematic (Mayhew and van Dijk 2012). Indeed, it has been admitted that some respondents may purposely exaggerate about the amount and sophistication of security measures they possess since:

Being asked [over the phone] by unknown interviewers whether you have high-quality locks, a burglar alarm, or the number of hours (and even which hours) the house is left empty provokes a wary response from many respondents. (Mayhew 2008:252)

Moreover, the purported universality and uniformity of such responsive securitisation is, to put it politely, misleading for it has been well documented that there are numerous socio-economic differentials in the ability of individuals to access crime-reducing security measures (Tilley et al 2011; Hope 2007; van Kesteren and van Dijk 2010). For instance, it has been found that although the protection benefits offered by increased levels of enhanced security are undoubtedly greater for those who can least afford its procurement (Tilley et al 2011), greater take-up of available security measures has been registered amongst the more affluent members of society, particularly those in developed countries (Hope 2007; van Kesteren et al 2014; van Kesteren and van Dijk 2010).

Congruently, and in light of the role security technologies are thought to have played in driving down crime rates (Knepper 2012), there is ample evidence to suggest that the more affluent have benefitted greatly from the ability to shield themselves from property crimes by privately consuming enhanced security measures. Yet those from the lowest income quartile who can ill afford

expensive security measures have benefited far less from the purported falls in property offences (van Kesteren et al 2014). Furthermore it is likely that as the security gap increases between the affluent haves and the poor have nots (van Kesteren et al 2014) the disparity of benefits from this 'unequal crime decline' (Parker 2008) will continue to widen. Inevitably this will amount to a further deepening across different communities already observed levels of uneven criminal victimisation (Tilley et al 2011), thereby further disadvantaging those upon whom such victimisation disproportionately falls (Knepper 2012).

Whilst the notion of responsive securitisation and the broader security hypothesis provide potentially plausible yet geographically limited cross-national explanations for the declining rates of certain volume crimes (van Dijk et al 2007; van Dijk 2008), it can be successfully argued that such hypotheses encourage greater recourse towards a strategy of "*responsibilization*" (Garland 1996:452, 2001:124, original emphasis). Essentially this equates to a scenario "whereby individual citizens are expected to become active partners in the prevention and reduction of crime" (Tierney 2010:318). However, such undifferentiated expectation is undoubtedly a heavy burden to bear for those least capable of initiating or maintaining the implementation of high quality security measures (Knepper 2012; Hope 2007). Nevertheless, such incapability often results in victims being blamed for 'failing' to take the precautions necessary in order to prevent criminal victimisation (Rock 2002; Wright and Hill 2004). Additionally, it is worth emphasising that the explanatory scope of both responsive securitisation and the broader security hypothesis remain questionable beyond their capability to account for reductions in certain property and vehicle offences (Farrell et al 2011; Tonry 2014a). However, attempts have been made to extend the explanatory scope of such hypotheses by arguing that early security driven reductions in 'debut' and 'key-stone' crimes have facilitated the removal of the "low rung on the offending ladder" (Farrell et al 2011:164), therefore stalling or discouraging new offenders from beginning criminal careers (van Kesteren et al 2014). Yet such extensions should perhaps be revised since many other crimes provide "potential testing grounds" for both novices and those more committed to developing a criminal career (Winlow 2001:170).

Although the ICVS inspired notion of responsive securitisation and the broader security hypothesis undoubtedly provide part of the answer to the 'international crime decline' enigma, they by no means provide a holistic explanation. Indeed, they largely fail to acknowledge that alongside the introduction of technologically informed security innovations there are the co-evolutionary processes of the mutation of crime and perpetual criminal innovation-to-obsolescence cycles, which also may have contributed towards observed reductions in such offences (McQuade 2006). Accordingly, a more holistic explanation of apparent declinations in certain property offences requires a *dual* acknowledgement of the role security technologies have played. Although they may have played a significant role in reducing such offences, it must be acknowledged that the very introduction of such technologies may have accelerated the co-evolutionary process of the mutation of crime and concomitant criminal innovation-to-obsolescence cycles (McQuade 2006; Felson and Boba 2010).

In order to grasp such an explanation it is necessary to move beyond simplistic 'measurements' provided by current indicators such as the ICVS, which arguably capture crimes already entering stages of obsolescence (Farrell et al 2010), yet nevertheless continue to constitute the objects of focus within the narrow tunnel of vision concentrated upon by the 'international crime decline' discourse. Transcending this narrow tunnel of vision enables a more holistic appreciation of the roles the mutation of crime, the move of certain crimes into stages of obsolescence and the emergence of new criminal markets have played in facilitating the production of a potentially distorted and misleading image of what appears, at first sight, to be a downward trajectory in international crime trends. It is to the delineation of such an appreciation that this chapter now turns.

Criminal Obsolescence and the Mutation of Crime:

The technologically competitive realms of crime and the methods of agencies charged with its prevention are inextricably linked and co-evolving, for innovatory technological advances made within one realm stimulate

concomitant, although often unequal, advances in the other (McQuade 2006). Such co-evolutionary technological innovation has been likened by McQuade (2006:35) to “a civilian arms race”, which is arguably being won by criminal factions who have proven to be more flexible, agile and technologically adroit than the policing and security enterprises of many nation-states, who appear incapable of outmanoeuvring their criminal competitors (Thachuk 2007). Indeed, as articulated in the next chapter, it has been well documented that criminals have by far been the greater beneficiaries of the entrepreneurial opportunities created by the technological advances that have both driven and emerged out of the process of globalisation (Shelley 2011). Not only have such advances created new commodities and markets which inevitably open up opportunities to commit new and/or adaptive forms of crime, but they have increased the efficiency, effectiveness and profitability of criminal entrepreneurs (Thachuk 2007; Kennedy 2010; Viano 1999).

Accordingly, it can be argued that as a result of technologically driven changes in the modus operandi of various forms of crime, alongside the development of new criminal markets and additional opportunities for the committal of crime (Sutton 2007), we are witnessing both an evolutionary mutation of certain forms of crime and the simultaneous move of other crime types into stages of obsolescence (Hall 2012b; Walsh 1994). As a coalescence of factors primarily associated with the process of globalisation have stimulated various criminal opportunities and given rise to new types of crime and new ways of committing old offences, so too have they functioned to suppress or systematically block off certain forms of ‘ordinary’ or conventional crime (Hall 2012b; Reiner 2007; Walsh 1994).

Fundamentally crime, with its evident capacity for adopting and adapting technological advances for illicit purposes, should not be conceived as static but should be viewed as a fluid and dynamic entity, capable of creating new and favourable contexts for itself as it moves through its own innovation-to-obsolescence cycles (Findlay 1999; McQuade 2006). Essentially, this co-evolutionary process of technologically driven criminal innovation, mutation and obsolescence occurs when ordinary or conventional crimes evolve, via the

incremental implementation and utilisation of technological variations of the techniques associated with its application, into what has been termed *adaptive crime* (McQuade 2006). This then renders older and more traditional variations increasingly obsolete, with further advances creating entirely new forms of crime which have the potential to induce the waning into obsolescence of both some forms of ordinary crime and certain adaptations (McQuade 2006; Sacco 2005).

If we inverse the 'technology crime wave' illustrated by McQuade (2006) it becomes apparent that perceived downward trends in certain forms of conventional crime could be the result of traditional means of committing these relatively well-measured crimes beginning to enter stages of obsolescence. Particularly as applied technological innovations facilitate the mutation of their modus operandi making them harder for law enforcement agencies to identify and counter. Further downward trends are mistakenly observed when radical innovative use of technology creates new forms of crime, which not only quickly stimulate considerable interest amongst the criminal fraternity but are hardly recognised let alone adequately understood by law enforcement agencies (McQuade 2006; Aebi and Linde 2010; Williams and Wall 2013). This process is particularly well illustrated by the plethora of *adaptive* and *new* forms of crimes which have emerged as a result of the introduction and proliferation of the internet which, as it happens, is thought to have roughly coincided with the onset of the 'crime decline' (Farrell et al 2011).

Indeed, many forms of conventional crime have migrated from the real-world into cyberspace (Brenner 2007). This migration, or perhaps more aptly termed mutation, transforms these conventional crimes into adaptive crimes, or 'computer assisted' crimes in the lexicon of the cybercrime literature, where in the realm of cyberspace they find a renewed lease of life (Jewkes and Yar 2010). Examples of such adaptation include money laundering and fraud, in addition to cyberstalking, bullying and the dissemination of hate speech, which have undoubtedly proliferated following the introduction of Web 2.0 social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook (Yar 2006; Jewkes and Yar 2010; Wall 2010, 2013). Other examples include the selling and purchasing of

drugs and counterfeit pharmaceuticals online where more efficient distribution networks than those associated with street dealers can be organised (Hall 2012b; Hopkins Burke 2014), as well as using online auction sites like eBay to sell and buy stolen and counterfeit products. Such criminal ventures in particular serve to highlight the wider changes that are currently reshaping the traditional criminal marketplaces (Treadwell 2011).

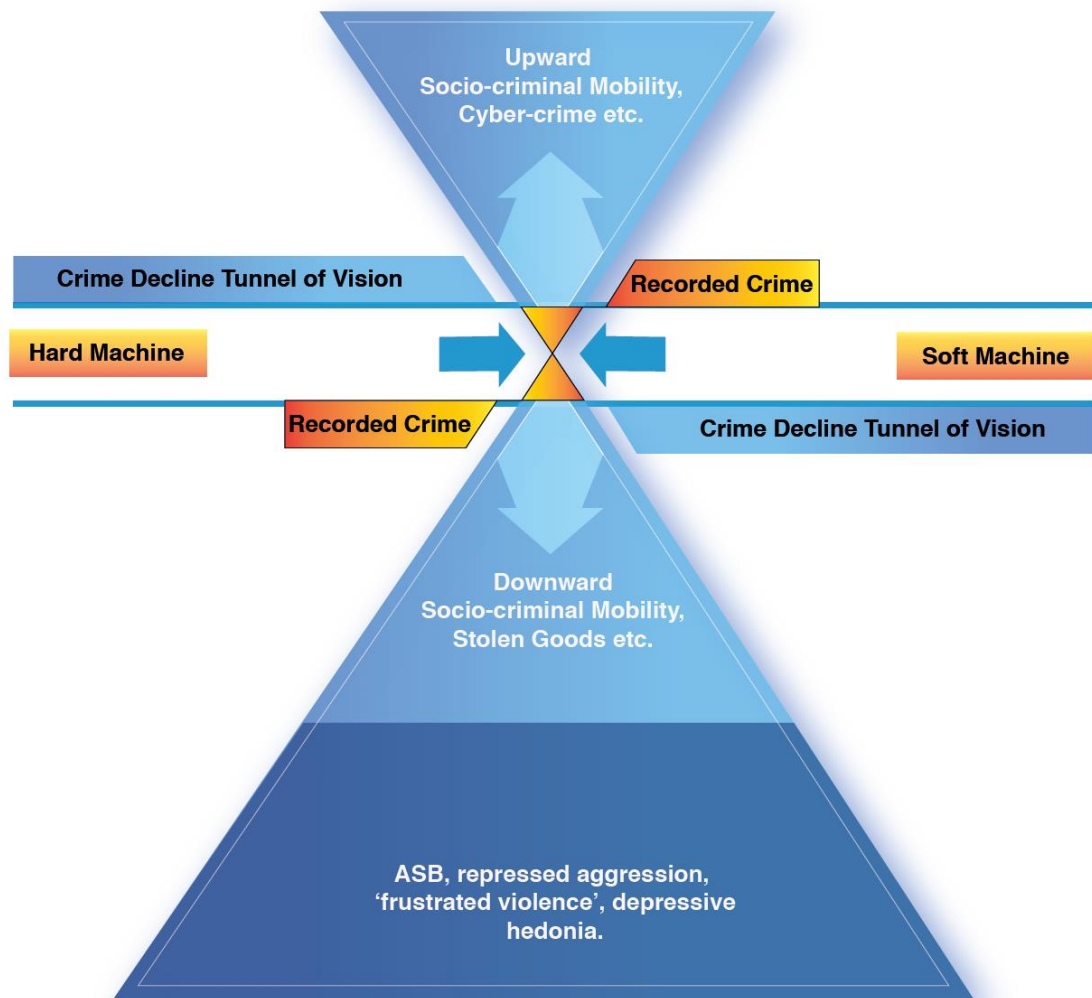
The successful negotiation of these new illicit terrains does not necessarily require the sophisticated esoteric knowledge of a computer programmer, for they can by and large be navigated by anyone who has a relatively firm grasp of and access to social networking sites (Williams and Wall 2013). Alongside this attractive feature of the new criminal terrain, criminal entrepreneurs are inclined to utilise the “(cyber)bazaar” (Treadwell 2011:187) for other practical reasons. For instance, not only does it enable offenders to operate anonymously (Sutton 2007) but it drastically reduces the requirement of physical proximity between the offender and the victim, facilitates a one-to-many victimisation ratio and is undoubtedly difficult for the authorities to monitor and control (Brenner 2007).

Congruently, the establishment of the internet has spawned *new* forms of crime, or what is referred to in the cybercrime literature as ‘computer-focused’ crime, which not only emerged in tandem with the internet but cannot exist in isolation from it (Yar 2006). Examples of such new computer-focused crimes include the dissemination of malicious software, denial of services attacks and spamming (Jewkes and Yar 2010; Wall 2010). The proliferation of such crimes is reflected in the near-pervasiveness of the internet as an artefact of everyday life (Jewkes and Yar 2010). Indeed, as poor as current indicators may be shrouded by the massive dark figures of under-reporting and under-recording (Yar 2006), they point towards the rapid and continued growth of cybercrime (Lovely 2011) to the point where it has been registered in some countries as “impacting on more of the public than traditional acquisitive crimes such as burglary and car theft” (Williams and Wall 2013:247). This has lead even the most ardent ICVS supporter to acknowledge that observed drops in certain volume crimes have been offset by the rise of such new types of crime (van Dijk 2008).

Evidently, both the nature and broad landscape of crime is changing in ways that current indicators are incapable of capturing (Maxfield et al 2007). Consequently, “it is possible that crime has not dropped overall but that it has changed form in ways that current indicators have not adequately captured” (Farrell et al 2010:33). It can therefore be argued that indicators such as the ICVS have not identified a downward trajectory in some international volume crime trends. Rather, it is perhaps more plausible to suggest that, constrained by its narrow conception of crime and victimisation (van Dijk 2007a; van Dijk and Shaw 2009), it has instead simply captured the waning into obsolescence of those crimes upon which it disproportionately focuses, whilst omitting from its view those which have mutated and transcended their terrestrial boundaries.

Whilst such myopia is particularly acute within the ICVS it is by no means restricted to it, for it is shared by both national victimisation surveys (Sutton 2007) and police recorded statistics (Zvekic 1999). The overall net result of this collective myopia is a form of ‘crime decline tunnel vision’, whereby only that which can be easily measured and quantified are explored at the expense of any meaningful investigation of actions which fall outside this limited criteria (Lomell 2010). Subsequently these remain persistent silhouettes resigned to the mere periphery of this narrowly focused ‘crime decline’ tunnel of vision, of which a visual representation is presented below in figure 1.

Figure 1: The 'Crime Decline' Tunnel of Vision.



What the above illustration essentially shows is that the narrow range of recorded crime upon which the 'crime decline' discourse focuses its attention represents merely the tips of two icebergs. Yet whilst the areas of criminality which exist outside of these recorded tips remain largely unacknowledged, many of the identifiable volume crimes that are recorded are relatively well controlled by what can perhaps be called the 'hard' and 'soft' machines of the state (Young 1975). Put simply, the 'hard' machine comprises those institutions which endeavour to control crime via overt coercion such as the police, the probation service, the courts and the prison. Whilst these institutions cannot be credited with causing observed reductions in international volume crime trends on account of their aforementioned lack of external validity, it has been acknowledged that strategic developments in policing and sentencing policy have undoubtedly contributed in some marginal way to such reductions

(Rosenfeld and Messner 2009; Hall 2012b; Zimring 2007). Augmenting such marginal contributions however, are those institutions and organisations which comprise the 'soft' machine, such as education, healthcare (Knepper 2012) and the repressive regulatory welfare system (Quinney 1977; Piven and Cloward 1993). To these, one could add the crime-reducing potential of voluntary-charitable third sector organisations such as the Stockton Town Pastors (Kotzé and Whitehead 2011) and Community Chaplaincy (Kotzé 2013).

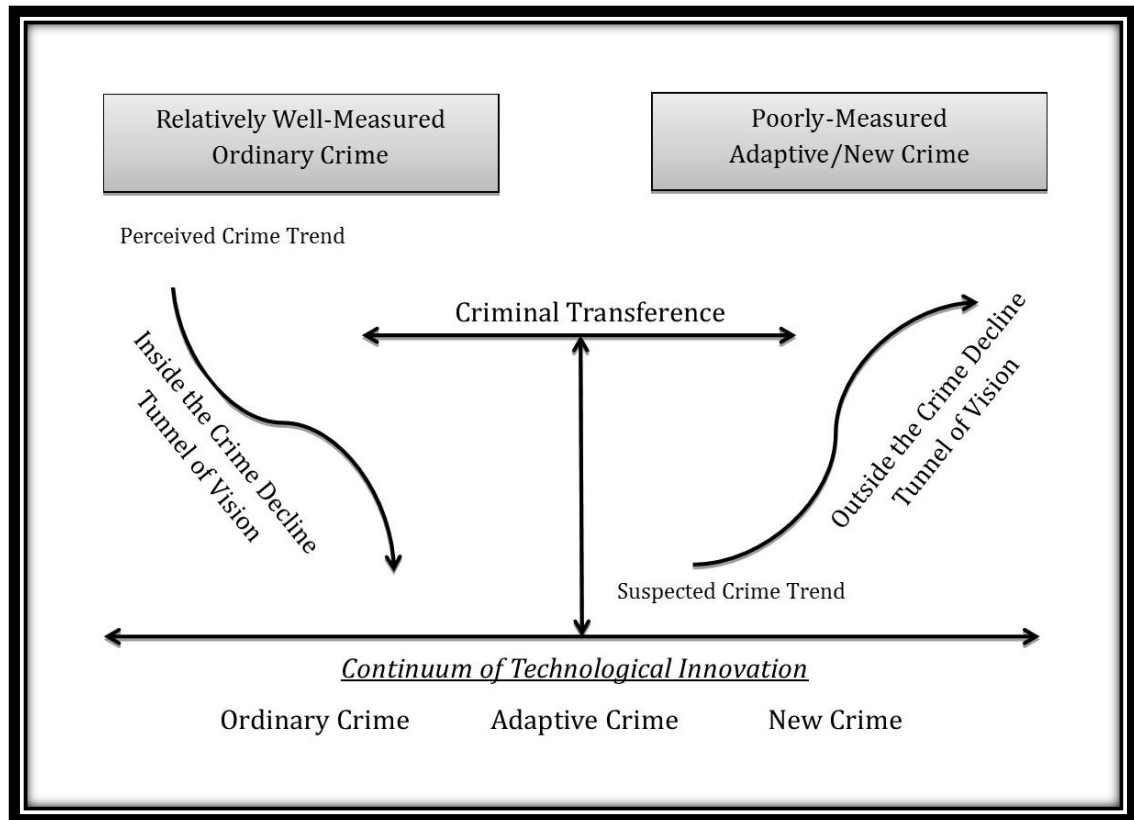
Whilst the orchestrated 'squeezing' of both the 'hard' and 'soft' machines has stimulated reductions in certain property offences by accelerating their move into obsolescence, it must be acknowledged that in the new space created by the repressive effects of these machines have emerged new forms of crime, criminal markets, adaptive manoeuvres and evolving criminal motivations. This should not however be misconceived as a simple 'hydraulic model'. Whilst the pressure collaboratively exerted by the 'hard' and 'soft' machines creates the space within which new and adaptive forms of crime may occur, it does not necessarily determine what occurs in this space. In other words, the context for displacement is created but the dynamics of movement are still predicated upon the actualisation of agentic energy.

Fundamentally, the combined effects of the 'hard' and 'soft' machines coupled with the introduction of applied technological advances have contributed, however unwittingly, towards stimulating and facilitating the acceleration of innovatory criminal momentum, by blocking off traditional opportunities for the committal of conventional crime whilst simultaneously opening up new opportunities (Rizk and Bettaïeb 2015). Consequently, those capable of navigating the technologically sophisticated contours of new lucrative criminal avenues are able to successfully achieve upward socio-criminal mobility. Conversely, those who are either unwilling or incapable of attaining the requisite levels of technological complexity necessary for such upward mobility, either risk greater chances of detection (McQuade 2006) or create successful techniques of circumvention appropriate to the committal of crimes associated with downward socio-criminal mobility. What is more, they must do this all whilst traversing the borders of complete descent into the realms of depressive

hedonia, soft narcosis (Fisher 2009) and 'frustrated violence' (Parker 2008; Taylor 2013).

In terms of exploring the parameters of the purported 'international crime decline' this delineation of the above illustration may help to explain why reductions in certain volume crimes have been observed. Quite simply, it has been shown that as many conventional forms of crime have been 'squeezed' into stages of obsolescence, simultaneous criminal movements in either an upward or downward direction have occurred. However, rather than attempt to chart the rapidity and fluidity of such movements, current indicators, upon which the discipline of criminology increasingly depends for the construction of its knowledge, by and large continue to measure criminal obsolescence, thereby potentially rendering much of this criminological knowledge out-of-date (Nelson et al 2014). Indeed with reference to police recorded statistics and surveys such as the ICVS in particular, it is evident that the plethora of crimes and social harms subsumed within these divergent movements continue to exist outside of their narrow 'crime decline' tunnel of vision. Certainly, the technologically facilitated crimes associated with upward socio-criminal mobility prove particularly difficult to identify, detect and measure (Brenner 2007). Likewise, the crimes and social harms associated with downward socio-criminal mobility, such as the normalised distribution of stolen and counterfeit goods amongst community beneficiaries, remain neither reported to nor seem to be of concern to the police or the ICVS (Reiner 1996; Treadwell 2011; Hall 2012b).

Presented in figure 2 below is a process that could perhaps be termed 'technology-mediated criminal transference'. This facilitates further explanation as to how and why the processes of criminal innovation, mutation and obsolescence contribute towards the perceived observation of downward trends in certain conventional crimes.

Figure 2: Technology-Mediated Criminal Transference.

Fundamentally, the above illustration shows the perceived downward trend in the relatively well-measured volume crimes included within the narrow 'crime decline' tunnel of vision. However, as alluded to previously these crimes might not have declined simply due to the successful application of security technologies. Instead, they may have entered stages of mutation or obsolescence as a result of the combined effects of the innovative application of available technological advances and the pressure collaboratively exerted by the 'hard' and 'soft' machines. Accordingly, as the criminal terrain evolves with certain ordinary crimes becoming obsolete whilst others mutate into adaptive crimes, and entirely new forms of crime begin to emerge as the continuum of technological innovation expands (McQuade 2006), a process of technology-mediated criminal transference occurs.

Again, rather than being understood in 'hydraulic' terms, it should be acknowledged that this process is mediated by agentic energy and individual levels of technological complexity. Essentially, it involves individuals becoming increasingly involved in either adaptive or new forms of crime which are poorly,

if at all, measured by conventional indicators and therefore exist outside the 'crime decline' tunnel of vision (McQuade 2006; Treadwell 2011). Consequently, it is highly probable that what appears at first sight to have been a sustained downward trajectory in rates of certain volume crimes could in reality be nothing more than a statistical artifice. In fact it may simply be a reflection not only of the tendency of criminology's current indicators to measure crimes which may already be entering stages of obsolescence (Farrell et al 2010), but of their reluctance to engage with the plethora of hard-to-measure crimes and social harms that exist outside of their narrow field of vision.

However, particularly with regards to the ICVS, such myopic tunnel vision is not necessarily the result of ignorance towards the existence of these unacknowledged forms of crime and social harm, for the ICVS literature is replete with selective criticisms and caveats warning of its inherent limitations and drawbacks in this area (van Dijk 2007a; van Dijk and Shaw 2009; van Dijk 2011; Mayhew and van Dijk 2012). Rather it appears to emanate from a kind of methodologically oriented ideological fantasy akin to that described by Žižek (1994a:316) as "they know that, in their activity, they are following an illusion, but still, they are doing it". Accordingly, this permits the committal of a form of Giffen's paradox, whereby after positioning within the work a brief cautionary note explicating the inherent limitations and drawbacks of their methodology and research design, they proceed to utilise the data gleaned from such research with abandon (Young 2004). Yet to be answered however is why and to what end has this misleading image of declining crime trends identified by those who utilise the ICVS, which itself is firmly politically framed within the Anglo-American axis (Walklate 2007), been so widely and uncritically perpetuated by numerous nation states and their media enterprises? Whilst no definitive answer to this question can be provided here, the remainder of this chapter will focus upon exploring the basis for one possible explanation.

Constructing the Statistical Quilt:

Fundamentally, we now occupy an age of unrestrained global finance where the once "complex and convoluted" governmental task of maintaining an 'orderly

state' (Bauman 1998:120) has been severely narrowed down to the task of fighting crime, primarily as a means of providing "a 'safe environment' for market forces to operate in a global economy" (Chan 2005:343). Therefore, the argument being advanced here is: what better way to validate such a narrowing governmental focus, whilst simultaneously disguising or downplaying the fact that "the global capitalist system is approaching an apocalyptic zero-point" (Žižek 2011:x), than to posit the existence of an 'international crime decline'? There undoubtedly exists within Westernised capitalist nations a vested interest and potent drive amongst governments to ensure that its citizenry continue to participate in the capitalist driven culture of conspicuous consumption, whilst striving for the attainment of the immortality symbols conferred only via the unquestioning committal to the dominant sociosymbolic order (Becker 1975; Winlow and Hall 2013). Only such commitment permits the uninterrupted access to subjects' fundamental fantasy-constructions (Myers 2003) and encourages them to embrace further a capitalist culture in denial of its problems (Stiegler 2010). Ultimately, this facilitates the maintenance of a fetishized fantasy vision of "the idyllic image of Western civilisation" (Žižek 2008a:75) in general and of liberal-capitalism in particular as being the least worst of all possible economic systems (Hall and Winlow 2015).

It can be argued that the misleading image of the purported 'international crime decline' has been utilised expediently by governments to polish their image and reaffirm their position amongst the electorate (Hall and Winlow 2015). Certainly, this convenient discourse constitutes a valuable commodity for those eager to divert the citizenry's' gaze from the deeply rooted and ever exacerbating inequality, perpetual instability and destructiveness of the current dominant sociosymbolic order (Hall 2012a). This politically useful distraction appears to have revolved around disproportionately crediting a number of factors, seemingly within nation states' control, with spurring the genesis of this unprecedented decline in crime. Chief amongst them of course is the states' 'monopoly of force' (Elias 2000) which has supposedly, via the orchestrated mobilisation of institutions and organisations which comprise the 'hard' and 'soft' machines, effectively controlled crime and created pacified social spaces free from acts of criminality. Since "the capacity of government to reduce crime is an

article of faith that is hardwired into the mission and organisation of many government organisations” (Zimring 2007:34), this ‘victory’ over crime by those agencies whose principal occupation is geared towards its control and containment has the potential to revive public faith in the efficacy of nation states’ political and administrative framework. Consequently, there is an acknowledged tendency not only to overreact to ‘good’ crime news but to attribute such good news to governmental intervention (Zimring 2007).

Similarly, and perhaps more broadly, it has been posited by the conglomeration of cross-party ‘capitalist realists’ who serve to bolster and maintain the liberal-capitalist system itself (Hall and Winlow 2015), that the unprecedented downward trajectory in crime, and violence in particular, is simply an inevitable by-product of capitalism’s current dominant configuration (Pinker 2012; De Wolf 2012). Simply put, it is argued that the widespread permeation of the ‘innately peaceful’ activity of ‘gentle commerce’ has fostered an era of peace by substituting trade for force, encouraging empathy and amity between individuals, and placing a premium upon the use and development of reason (De Wolf 2012). Congruently, alongside capitalism’s purported ability to productively channel otherwise potentially destructive feelings of self-interest and competitive individualism into a collective ambition to “make money, not war” (De Wolf 2012:127), its associated commerce is said to encourage an empathetic social psychology, capable of cultivating a greater exercise of reason via the negotiated exchange of ideas. Ultimately, this is thought to culminate in a more reasoned and smarter society and by extension a less violent world (De Wolf 2012; Pinker 2011).

Despite the existence of significant countervailing evidence (Winlow 2014a; Rose 2013), the message being advanced is deceptively clear and simple; due primarily to the Western world’s current socio-economic and politico-cultural configuration “we may be living in the most peaceable era in our species’ existence” (Pinker 2012:xix). This is a message within which the ‘international crime decline’ is poised to look as though it fits comfortably. However, as this chapter has shown, great care should be taken when drawing such conclusions for the evidence upon which they are based is often weak at best and at worst

distorted, deceptive and entirely misleading. Yet it is salient to note that such 'delusions of peace' (Gray 2011) in the twilight of global capitalism's fast approaching zero-point are not necessarily the simple result of some politically knitted ideological illusion "masking the real state of things" (Žižek 1994a:316) from the wider citizenry. Rather, they could be said to emanate from the state of "collective fetishistic disavowal" (Žižek 2011:x) within which many of us now live.

Could it be that this collective fetishistic disavowal of the reality of crime and harm in today's world is a symptom of our inclusion within modernity's *'dream myth'*? That is to say within a fantasy-construction that — bolstered by its intricate statistical quilt, which draws its strength from "the high levels of innumeracy among members of the general public" (Sacco 2005:58), and the associated inclination of many to "simply accept every statistic they hear, or accept what they have heard many times" (Dorling and Simpson 1999:3) — allows us to maintain access to our 'sense of reality', enabling the unhindered continuation of the internalised ideological rituals of life within capitalist society (Myers 2003). Whilst this question is at this stage obviously rhetorical, it is hoped that as this thesis progresses the distance towards a possible answer will be significantly reduced. However, before endeavouring to cover such untrodden ground it is pertinent to position this thesis in terms of the broader socio-economic and politico-cultural milieu within which it is located. Accordingly, it is to this positioning that the thesis now turns its attention.

Chapter Two:

Research Context.

Despite the development of what has now become a voluminous body of research literature endeavouring to explore the aetiological complexities of the purported 'international crime decline', there remains a considerable void in this scholarship. This is characterised by a paucity of rigorous theoretical and empirical research that has sought to peer beneath the statistical quilt and move beyond the socially decontextualized and occidental statistical quantification that characterises much of the current 'crime decline' literature, and the ICVS in particular (Walklate 2007, 2008; Fattah 2010; van Dijk and Shaw 2009). Indeed, the vast majority of the embedded congregation (van Duyne 2011) of scholars whose research efforts constitute a considerable proportion of the crime decline literature (see for example van Dijk et al (2007, 2012), Farrell et al (2010, 2011), Tseloni et al (2010) and Tilley et al (2011)), utilise with precipitous zeal the array of methodological techniques associated with positivism proper. Referred to in this thesis as 'hard' positivism, this practice arguably yields "quantitative accounts of crime, criminality and criminalisation that re-produce numerical life rather than everyday life" (Presdee 2004b:41).

Fundamentally, such quantitative accounts represent, in their failure to measure the true extent of crime (Muncie 2001), a "pale shadow of the total volume of illegalities" present in society (Pearson 1983:218). Moreover, they serve to obfuscate research participants' lived social realities by maintaining a narrow and one-dimensional conceptualisation and analytical focus upon 'ideal' victims and the measurement of 'conventional crimes'. In doing so they often remain recalcitrant in acknowledging that the category of 'crime' excludes many serious harms (Young 2011; Hillyard and Tombs 2007) which may represent, in contrast to those legally defined as criminal, a larger "number of the total harms that we experience" (Pantazis and Pemberton 2012:43).

Consequently, the position can be advanced that such embedded scholarship, characterised by its distanced research practices and unyielding fidelity towards the ‘fetishism of numbers’ (Young 2011), facilitates the maintenance of a pragmatically oriented administrative ‘fact factory’ (Presdee 2004a). The primary task of this booming industry is the manufacture and distribution of ‘suitable’ statistical facts (Presdee 2004b), pre-packaged and wholeheartedly accepted by official bodies and academics alike who remain wedded to the “tacit assumption that counting crime somehow is the inevitable step towards understanding it” (Pakes 2012:70). However, it has been argued that such unchecked ‘hard’ positivism in fact serves only to strip from our investigatory remit any understanding of the myriad complex meanings surrounding the commission of criminal acts (Pakes 2010; Levitas and Guy 1996). Inevitably this precludes the ability to investigate in any meaningful way individuals’ beliefs, meanings, understandings, accounts and lived experiences of crime and harm. Indeed, it is only by engaging in verbal exchanges with those who are frequently subject to the real effects of actualised structures and processes — and who are recruited at the emotional/material level and assimilated into the ideological base of the very sociosymbolic order that produces harmful effects to human communities (Winlow and Hall 2013) — that we can begin to better understand the complex nature of crime and harm in today’s world. Such a critical realist and transcendental materialist informed approach has, as of yet, evidently not been applied to the theoretical and empirical exploration of the purported ‘international crime decline’.

It is within this neglected scholarly milieu that the current study is located and marks the first substantive piece of research that has sought to fill this void, by utilising a combined zemiological, critical realist and transcendental materialist framework in order to explore and analyse change and continuity in crime and harm. The research is a preliminary exploratory overview of the way in which the ‘international crime decline’ has been misleadingly represented. It does not provide a definitive answer to whether or not crime is declining, but rather serves to set the scene for ongoing research on a technologically sophisticated new generation of crime and harm and contribute towards the generation of a

greater willingness to explore and theorise the 'dark figure' of crime that exists in today's world.

Since context is essentially essence unpacked, the purpose of this chapter is to explore both the local and global context within which this research is located. The chapter will delineate the socio-economic rise and fall of an area referred to in this thesis as 'Lake Town' and the wider conurbation of which it is a part. It then seeks to explicate its position as a 'glocal node' within the wider neoliberal global economy, with a view towards weaving together more holistically both the micro and macro contexts with which this research has concerned itself. Before this is done however, it must be acknowledged that whilst the findings of this research are generalizable at the theoretical or analytical level, as will be explained in chapter four, there nevertheless remains a need for such research to be replicated within similarly small locales or regions. This will enable us to approach a more holistic view of the 'real world' harms endured by those who find themselves in uncomfortable proximity to the negative effects of the dominant sociosymbolic order's actualised structures and processes. It will also go some way towards helping us avoid reductionism and/or the ecological fallacy (Bachman and Schutt 2014).

Contextualising Lake Town:

The title of this section is perhaps a little misleading in as much as a great deal of the contextualising that is to be done here focuses not only upon Lake Town but also the area known as Teesside. There are two main reasons for this. First and foremost, in order to protect the identity of the town to which the researcher has ascribed the pseudonym 'Lake Town', many of the socio-economic and other contextualising details must of necessity remain relatively vague. Nevertheless, they may still be articulated through reference to the somewhat reflective context of Teesside. Secondly, and perhaps rather conveniently, the history of Lake Town is in fact intimately connected with the wider industrial development of Teesside. A contextualisation of the latter therefore implicitly entails contextualising the former but in a safer and more covert way, ensuring that Lake Town and its residents' anonymity is maintained.

Situated in the North East of England and positioned within the conurbation which constitutes a locality known as Teesside, an area which itself is recalcitrant to precise delineation (Pailor 2002), Lake Town has a relatively brief yet turbulent history. Much of this is owed to both the industrial development that spurred the genesis of this very locality and the wider socio-economic changes in the global economy that facilitated its rapid decline. In contrast to many of the other towns which make up the Teesside conurbation, many of which possess a market town heritage predating the onset of nineteenth-century industrial expansion (Beynon et al 1994), Lake Town was literally born of industry. It was a direct product of the industrial revolution and the accompanying consolidation of a capitalist mode of production which facilitated its rapid and powerful economic inception, ultimately breathing life into what became a fast-growing town at “the heart of industrial Teesside” (Beynon et al 1994:11; Foord et al 1985; Shildrick et al 2012).

Traditionally Teesside has been dominated by heavy industry, and such domination has predominantly taken both a physical and social form to which its vast and striking industrial landscapes, as well as its mainly working-class character, can pay testament (Foord et al 1985). It is perhaps difficult to believe that much of the physical area itself did not exist prior to the industrial boom of the mid-nineteenth century, when Teesside was literally created from scratch with some industries seemingly emerging overnight (Beynon et al 1994; Gleave 1938). Built as a series of distinct settlements, or what Beynon et al (1994:23) refer to as “company towns” and eventually amassing a considerable labour force via a system of employer-controlled immigration, Teesside developed into a major industrial conglomeration (Beynon et al 1994). Its steam-powered heart beat in accord with the connective sinews provided by the ever extending rails of the Stockton and Darlington Train Company (Pailor 2002). Evidently, Teesside originally forged its contours in iron and steel alongside the development of engineering and shipbuilding industries, but following World War One, however, a new industrial entity emerged on Teesside in the form of the chemicals industry (Foord et al 1985; Beynon et al 1994).

Essentially, an ironworks industry developed on Teesside because it was a suitable site for the assembly of the necessary raw materials (Gleave 1938). At its epicentre, and benefiting from the extension of the Stockton and Darlington Railway (Pailor 2002; Beynon et al 1994), Lake Town was discovered to be part of a conglomeration that offered outstanding geographical and technological advances that made it a particularly well suited site for the production of iron, transforming it into an industrial hub (Appleton 1929; Beynon et al 1994; Lloyd 2013). Consequently, such geo-technological potential became the basis for the development of a powerful industry that would see Lake Town become one of the leading iron ore towns in England (Gleave 1938; Lloyd 2013).

However in a process implicating Lake Town, technological advances made during the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth century facilitated the partial displacement of iron with steel as the new product of interest on Teesside (Gleave 1938; Beynon et al 1994). Indeed, a number of seemingly unique geographical advantages meant that Teesside's steel production advanced apace with the fabrication requirements of constructional engineering and the shipbuilding industry's need for plates and angles providing a dependent market (Gleave 1938). However, this demand was not solely reserved for steel as the rapid expansion of the engineering and shipbuilding industries ensured that Teesside's iron and steel remained in high demand, prompting a number of significant mergers in the area's iron and steel industry from around the turn of the century (Beynon et al 1994). Whilst these mergers were stimulated by an increasing scale of production, they were also in part due to a downturn in the shipbuilding industry (Beynon et al 1994). Despite being deeply affected by the national economic depression following the First World War Teesside's steel companies, with their unique proximity to the river Tees, the "lifblood of the Tees Valley" (Woodhouse 2002:99), continued to adapt and survive by remaining competitive via various processes of rationalisation, diversification and continuous technological advances (Gleave 1938; Beynon et al 1994). However fleeting, such adaptive survival meant that in 1938 Teesside was deemed to be Britain's main steel producer (Gleave 1938).

With similar cogency the chemical industry positioned itself vigorously upon Teesside (Beynon et al 1994; Hudson 1989), an industry with which Lake Town has been involved since around the mid-nineteenth century (Tomlin 2002). The primary stimulus triggering the purposeful production of chemicals on Teesside however proved to be the First World War, when chemicals were sought to produce explosives and weaponised chemical compounds such as Mustard Gas (Beynon et al 1994; Tomlin 2002). Subsequently, with the emergence of Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) in 1929, Lake Town contributed significantly in leading the industry in the production of chemicals (Lloyd 2013). Congruent with the First World War, the Second World War provided an industriously productive stimuli provoking the development of new chemicals, as well as increasing the demand for existing products elevating production levels to new heights (Beynon et al 1994). Thereafter, with the continued development of its interlinked plants, ICI created on Teesside a chemicals industry of considerable significance (Beynon et al 1994) and one which Lake Town undoubtedly benefited from. Indeed, as Lloyd (2013:12) notes, “petrochemicals had replaced iron and steel as the engine of the local economy and there was virtually full employment in the town at the end of the 1960s”.

Evidently, these core industries provided the predominantly male workforce in Lake Town, and Teesside in general, with relatively well-paid and secure employment to such an extent that they became “associated with the idea of a ‘job for life’” (Beynon et al 1994:186). This was true not simply for one but for multiple generations of sons who would pursue with almost preordained success similar occupational roles their fathers had adopted (Winlow 2001; Winlow and Hall 2006). Based upon the assumption that these industries would remain and continue to offer meaningful, stable and secure employment workers, along with their families, developed a deep commitment to the area (Beynon et al 1994). Fundamentally, as a result of a tacit recognition of the shared hardships of hard manual labour and the beneficial prospects of developing close-knit communal ties built upon interdependency, mutuality, reciprocity and collective identity, a strong working-class culture and community was forged (Hall et al 2008; Lloyd 2013). The internal logic of these communities was seamlessly interwoven with every timely beat of the industrial

heart around which Teesside and Lake Town in particular grew up (Lloyd 2013), consequently “the character of the industry left its impression upon local social and cultural life” (Beynon et al 1994:16).

This industrially facilitated solidification of a working-class habitus was a process common to many other North East English towns and cities during the period of industrial modernity (Winlow 2001; Hall et al 2008; Lloyd 2013). Indeed Hall et al (2008) advance the position that regardless of the numerous local and regional variations assumed by the working-class habitus, there existed a basic form that would guide the majority of individuals along a clearly marked trajectory. Following such coordinates would often result in the attainment of a well identified and somewhat predictable biography with which individuals could pursue meaningful lives, even “in the face of their ongoing subjugation to and exploitation by those who owned and controlled the means of production” (Hall et al 2008:21). Accordingly, working-class communities that forged their collective contours around the development of specific heavy industries, such as those that emerged in Lake Town, internalised cultural characteristics which were at their very core formed around a rationale geared towards productive work (Winlow and Hall 2006). In fact such work produced an overwhelmingly influential orbit encompassing virtually every facet of their residents’ lives (Winlow and Hall 2006). For these individuals the expectation that such work would continue to be available remained an unquestionable certainty, a seemingly timeless fact of life that, by the time deindustrialisation hit the area in the 1970s, had become doxic (Winlow and Hall 2006; Lloyd 2013).

From its inception Teesside has been intimately interwoven with the changing nature of the global capitalist economy (Beynon et al 1994). As a result the region, following the global economic crisis which began in the early 1970s, suffered dramatically from the rapid internationalisation of its narrowly ranged core industries (Shildrick et al 2012). The resulting retrenchment of local employment affected the local population considerably as virtually full male employment gave way to widespread unemployment (Shildrick et al 2012; MacDonald and Marsh 2005). Indeed, despite the previous optimism with which the Teesside Survey and Plan advocated the modernisation and diversification

of the region's economy, unemployment and insecurity became the new distinguishing features characterising the old 'job for life' heavy manufacturing industries (Foord et al 1985; Brown 1995). This new culture of uncertainty and insecurity was used expediently by employers, who had been forced by global economic competition to streamline their operations, in order to increase the intensity of work performed by what was now a significantly smaller and more flexible workforce (Brown 1995; Lloyd 2013).

This transformation must however be seen within a wider context as part of a milieu within which the Keynesian compromise was swiftly displaced by a new neoliberal social order, for which the Labour government had laid the initial foundation and upon which Thatcher's Conservative government built their destructive policies (Duménil and Lévy 2005; Hudson 1989). Indeed, armed with a rationale underpinned by the doctrine of monetarism, the Conservative government pursued wholeheartedly the abandonment of governmental responsibility for the maintenance of full employment, which had hitherto been a fundamental feature of the post-war Keynesian consensus (Armstrong et al 1984). Fundamentally, we have since the late 1970s witnessed the reorientation of capital accumulation as it has become directed towards manufacturing the consumable objects of our desire rather than catering to our needs (Lloyd 2013). This dramatic reorientation has freed it from its previous dependency upon massed labour and full employment, a process which has proven to be devastating to the local labour markets of places like Teesside (Lloyd 2013; Harvey 2007). Evidence of such devastation lies in the fact that a large "proportion of the area's population has become permanently surplus to the requirements of employers" (Beynon et al 1994:194), as approximately 100,000 jobs in Teesside's industries were lost between 1971 and 2008 (Shildrick et al 2012).

In order to fill this deindustrialised void service sector employment grew rapidly in Teesside changing markedly the employment structure of the area (MacDonald and Marsh 2005; Brown 1995). However much of this employment growth was in low-paid, low-skilled, precariously flexible, unstable and insecure forms of work. Characterised by the short-term or zero-hour contracts of

temporary, part-time or casual work, such employment exists on the precipice as a peripheral employment sector within which employees have no rights or benefits (Brown 1995; Reiner 2007). Nevertheless, these hyphenated forms of employment now provide the majority of jobs on Teesside (MacDonald and Marsh 2005). Individuals now increasingly find themselves “drafted into the ranks of a new downgraded and depoliticised workforce” (Hall et al 2008:24), vying against each other in a gladiatorial contest of competitive individualism for the chance to secure “even the most tenuous or unsuitable scraps of work” (Southwood 2011:11). Rather than providing a spring board into higher paying jobs, these peripheral and precarious forms of employment serve to trap those who are (un)lucky enough to secure them in a deleterious low-pay, no-pay cycle as they spend their life surfing between various low-paid and insecure jobs (Shildrick et al 2012). Often this experience is punctuated only by what can sometimes prove to be lengthy periods of unemployment and welfare benefits claiming (Shildrick et al 2012). Consequently, in the face of such endless precarity the distinction between employment and unemployment has become increasingly arbitrary, for under the conditions of short-term and insecure employment the work of the career jobseeker is never ending (Southwood 2011).

Evidently Teesside, and Lake Town in particular, have struggled to come to terms with and recover from the effects of a swift and ruthless process of deindustrialisation and the myriad social and economic problems which have subsequently besieged the area (Lloyd 2013; Shildrick et al 2012; Beynon et al 1994). As a result Lake Town is positioned within the top 10% most deprived local authorities in England (Department for Communities and Local Government 2015) and exhibits, in congruence with most areas of deprivation, a broad range of overlapping issues (Bounds 2013). For instance whilst labour market statistics should be read cautiously, for they are often replete with blurry and ambiguous definitional boundaries (Green 1999), they reveal that Lake Town often exhibits unemployment rates noticeably higher than the national average (Shildrick et al 2012). The latest figures for example, show that 11.0% of the economically active population were unemployed from October 2014 to September 2015, whereas the national figure was much lower at 5.4% (ONS

2016a). Similarly, in February 2016 4.9% of the working age population in Lake Town were claiming out-of-work benefits, which is more than double the percentage for Britain as a whole (ONS 2016a). Lake Town also had a higher number of hospital stays for alcohol related harm per 100,000 of the population in 2013-2014 than the English average, and could thus be noted as being amongst the worst in the country (Public Health England 2015). Furthermore, both the estimated number of users of opiates and/or crack cocaine in 2011-2012, and the rate of self-harm induced hospital stays in 2013-2014, were also amongst the worst in England (Public Health England 2015).

Unfortunately, rather than representing any glimpse of imminent reprieve or amelioration it appears that the austerity measures implemented by the last Coalition government have affected Lake Town, particularly its most vulnerable and disadvantaged residents, disproportionately. Yet the deleterious effects and likely results of such systemic violence were arguably known in advance as Lake Town was thought to be “the least resilient to planned government cut-backs” (Shildrick et al 2012:47). Whilst Lake Town has already been characterised for some time as an area languishing in a state of permanent recession blighted by unemployment and a burgeoning criminal market, with a rate of crime that already well exceeds the national average (Hall and Winlow 2005a; Hall et al 2008; Lloyd 2013), it can be argued that the Coalition’s austerity measures have served only to further exacerbate its precarious position.

Yet in line with the progressive picture painted by the ICVS, both national and local level crime data purportedly continue to show a downward trajectory. Indeed, according to the Crime Survey for England and Wales crime covered by the survey follows a similar curvilinear trend to that identified by the ICVS. The data suggests that crime increased steadily from 1981, reached a peak in 1995 and then followed an overall downward trend thereafter. Despite some year to year fluctuations the general underlying trend is said to have continued downwards (ONS 2016b). Similarly, local level crime data appears to mirror this general downward trajectory with seemingly little year to year fluctuation (Tees Valley Unlimited 2013). Considering the numerous and often similar

methodological issues exhibited by such data sources discussed at length in the previous chapter, this ‘international’, national and local statistical parity is perhaps unsurprising. What such parity appears to infer, despite severe and highly visible socioeconomic dislocation, is that there is no *statistically* significant spatial mismatch between these macro and micro contexts. This therefore serves to imply that the ‘crime decline’ is indeed an ‘international’ phenomenon that has manifested itself not only at the national but local level. However, as this thesis will continue to demonstrate, the reality of the situation in Lake Town is very different from the progressive world view portrayed by the ‘international crime decline’ discourse; as is the case for many characteristically similar locales and regions around the world.

Indeed, although Lake Town, and the wider conurbation of which it is a part, has suffered greatly from the socio-economic fallout of the industrial decline which began in the 1970s (Beynon et al 1994; Shildrick et al 2012), it is by no means unique in this way as its plight mirrors that of “numerous other towns and cities throughout the industrialised West” (Lloyd 2013:25). Consequently, as will be explicated in chapter four, the study of Lake Town as an exemplifying case facilitates, through a process of analytical generalizability, an analysis of the wider socio-economic and political context of which it is a part. It is primarily for this reason that the researcher chose to focus his empirical research efforts within this location.

Neoliberalism and Economic Globalisation:

Evidently, and as alluded to above, the plight of Lake Town should not be understood as emanating from some innate or inevitable internal failing of its industrial heart. Rather such failing emanated from the forceful puncturing of its essential socio-economic organs by globalising forces, of which neoliberalism has become the primary motor (Cowling 2012; Passas 2000). Whilst it has been acknowledged that “capitalism was globalising from the start” (Kiely 2009:46), it can be argued that contemporary economic globalisation, although similar in some respects, is qualitatively different from earlier periods of global capitalism (Held and McGrew 2002). Indeed in its contemporary guise modern economic

globalisation is dominated by neoliberalism (Shaikh 2005), an economic doctrine which has successfully positioned itself “as the reigning policy discourse for globalisation since the early 1980s” (Scholte 2005:39). Fundamentally, as the Bretton Woods agreement gave way to the so called Washington Consensus (Kiely 2009; James 2008), “the neoliberal project of globalisation” (Schirato and Webb 2003:26) sought to ensure the globalisation of Western capitalism, by dismantling barriers to trade and investment and reducing international regulations (Stiegler 2010; Shelley 2011).

Purportedly, this liberalisation of global economic trade, investment and finance was pursued under the guise of the neoliberal axiom that unrestrained markets would have the potential to serve global economic needs and generate full employment for those who wished to work, thereby producing economic growth that would seemingly benefit the whole world (Shaikh 2005). Such an axiom was predicated upon the notion of successful global economic convergence, whereby every individual element of the social body would be able to find or establish a suitable market niche. In turn this would supposedly create a highly competitive free-market economy, from which even those inhabiting the furthest reaches of the globe would benefit from the “trickle-down effects of wealth creation” (Passas 2000:23). Such an optimistic appraisal, coupled with associated developments driven by the compression of time-space, which has been facilitated by the rapid advances in information and communication technologies (Hall 2012b; Schirato and Webb 2003), undoubtedly contributed towards the previously unimagined acceleration of the globalisation process (Scholte 2005).

Rather than producing the even playing field intimated by notions of convergence, the solidification of a fully-blown global capitalist economy established in the twilight of the twentieth century has served only to accentuate divergence (Schirato and Webb 2003). Indeed, being braver with Bauman’s (1998:2) assertion that “globalisation divides as much as it unites”, one could perhaps advance the position that it divides *more* than it unites, particularly in light of the fact that “the spread of global capital has helped to produce what could be termed ‘the globalisation of inequality’” (Schirato and Webb 2003:93).

Such divergence and the inevitable inequality that accompanies this uneven global economic development is not however confined to a simple disparity between distant geographical regions and countries. Rather it manifests itself in complex ways opening up great chasms between social groups *within* countries and local regions (Kennedy 2010).

Fundamentally, substantial and severe economic inequality within and between nation states is but one of the many significant consequences of what James (2008) terms selfish capitalism. This is a form of political economy akin to what Kennedy (2010:56) equally aptly refers to as “predatory capitalism”, a doctrine based upon the hegemony of neoliberal economic globalisation. The argument being advanced here is that in comparison to the recent past global capitalism has assumed a more demanding and less accountable demeanour, whereby a minority are conferred lavish rewards and elevated to social levels seemingly beyond reproach at the expense of an increasingly insecure and superfluous majority (Kennedy 2010).

Rather than endeavouring to revive Keynesian measures capable of ensuring the social and economic stability of the wider social body, maximising returns and profits for business leaders and their conglomeration of shareholders has become the zeitgeist. For Kennedy (2010:56) this “partly explains the rapidly changing and perhaps worsening employment and work conditions experienced by people more or less everywhere”. This malaise is emblematic of the forceful displacement of the Fordist social contract by the post-Fordist regime of accumulation ushered in by neoliberal globalisation (Scholte 2005). In essence this regime of accumulation, replete with its mass of ironically termed ‘labour-saving’ technologies, facilitated the attainment of ‘jobless growth’ within both manufacturing and service industries alike, therefore eliminating any possibility of ever achieving full employment (Scholte 2005). By reversing the flows of trade and capital in what could perhaps be considered the most audacious move in economic history, neoliberal economic globalisation secured the means to jettison the need for a mass industrialised workforce in the West (Winlow and Hall 2013; Varoufakis 2011). However, it simultaneously managed to maintain profitable levels of manufacture and investment by successfully relocating to

low-wage sites in the East and South labour-intensive systems of production, whilst introducing credit and intensifying the consumption of commodified goods in the West (Scholte 2005; Winlow and Hall 2013).

The upshot of this is that the Hegelian master-slave dialectic, or put more contemporarily the capital-labour relation, no longer holds sway over the capitalists' narcissistically self-affirmed achievement of 'special liberty' (Hall 2012b). Indeed, within a world where the global economy now requires only twenty percent of the world's population to perform all necessary work, effectively rendering eighty percent of the population economically redundant and surplus to capitalist requirement (Žižek 2011), capitalists no longer need labourers, or their recognition, in the way they once did (Hall 2012b). Accordingly, as businesses and corporations continue to further globalise their operations by moving from older Northern industrial centres, such as Lake Town, to more recently developed sites in the East, South and elsewhere in pursuit of still lower wage rates (Scholte 2005; Kennedy 2010), the competition for employment takes on a new salience for much of the world's population. Many find themselves embroiled within a gladiatorial contest in which only those who can quickly assimilate the neoliberal ideals of competitive self-interest and egoistic individualism are deemed fit enough to compete for even the most tenuous, insecure and impractical forms of work (Reiner 2007; Southwood 2011). Further tipping the balance of power in favour of the predatory capitalists is the fact that their employer bargaining power over such work has been considerably boosted (Scholte 2005).

Consequently employers, relieved of the burdensome requirements of mutuality and reciprocal recognition, do not hesitate to demand an increasingly mobile, competitive and ever accessible workforce capable of producing greater outputs for lower wages (Southwood 2011). Yet the social benefits and economic security once associated with the status of active employment are simultaneously reduced as employers pursue greater flexibility and leanness (Southwood 2011; Kennedy 2010). Such pursuits manifested themselves most sharply within the service and retail industries that rapidly arose as a deceptive panacea as deindustrialisation swept across much of the globe's industrial

heartlands (Armstrong et al 1984; Hall 2012c). However, they have undoubtedly become embedded components of nearly all forms of work spread throughout the post-industrial landscape (Cederström and Fleming 2012). Security of tenure has become but a memory of a bygone age as “‘flexibility’ becomes the watchword with respect to labour markets” (Harvey 2007:75). Such flexibility has become accepted as constituting the core component of the predominant forms of post-industrial working arrangements, characterised by insecure and precarious part-time, temporary, short-term and zero-hour contract employment (Edgell 2006). Moreover, it has become internalised at the psychosocial level by an increasingly individualised and depoliticised post-Fordist workforce who have little choice but to be ‘flexible’ in accepting both short and long hours, low wages, poor benefits and dubious health and safety standards as well as loosened laws regarding hiring and firing (Hall et al 2008; Scholte 2005).

All this has congealed to form a global state of precarity whereby large masses of the world’s populations uncomfortably oscillate between states of underemployment and unemployment, embroiled in treacherous ‘low-pay no-pay cycles’ (Hall 2012c; Shildrick et al 2012). For whilst the solidification of neoliberal economic globalisation has freed the predatory capitalists from their localised constraints, allowing them to move freely through deregulated market space in pursuit of profits, labour has become increasingly fractured and forcefully localised (Schirato and Webb 2003; Bauman 1998). Indeed, it appears that neoliberal economic globalisation “has promoted the free movement of everything but labour” (Passas 2000:33). Prevented from following with commensurate ease capital’s unrestricted cross-border movements (Scholte 2005), many individuals find themselves locally bound, cut off and left behind (Bauman 1998). As a result they experience the fading and vanishing of their livelihoods as local economies once capable of sustaining their inhabitants are destroyed by economically driven globalising forces, producing in their wake “the exclusion of millions incapable of being absorbed by the new global economy” (Bauman 1998:75).

As alluded to previously, this duel process of capital flight and the enforced localisation of less skilled labour are characteristic of deindustrialised Lake

Town, an area whose inhabitants would perhaps agree with Bauman's (1998:2) assertion that "being local in a globalised world is a sign of social deprivation and degradation". Unable to follow the alluring path to prosperity so convincingly lauded by the advocates of neoliberal economic globalisation they are "locals by fate rather than choice" (Kennedy 2010:178). As a result they are forced to compete for what little employment remains in a process which itself further disrupts diminishing solidarities and reciprocal links to social capital (Kennedy 2010). Whilst the 'winners' of this competitive race to the bottom achieve only spasmodic economic security, the 'losers' simply contribute to the localised stockpile of what Bauman (1998, 2004:5) refers to as "'human waste', or more correctly wasted humans".

However, the globalised production of human waste has not simply resulted in the confinement of individuals to their locale's ghettoised waste-disposal sites (Bauman 2004). Rather it has contributed to the forceful ejection of large sections of the world's population as they are driven from their homes and uprooted from places now incapable of offering sustenance, cultural quilting points (Žižek 2008a), or in fact any glimpse of socio-economic stability or promise (Bauman 2004). Accordingly, as Schirato and Webb (2003:152) cogently note, "for the most part people are moving unwillingly, and arriving unwelcomed", as they attempt to navigate, or if necessary circumnavigate, the guarded borders of the promised lands (Passas 2000).

Condemned to vagabondage these individuals' status is reduced to nothing more than constituting the world's mobile human waste, "the 'excessive' and 'redundant', that is the population of those who either could not or were not wished to be recognised or allowed to stay" (Bauman 2004:5). The reference to recognition in this context is significant, for, as will be explained in the next chapter, the experience of being denied recognition in terms of the modes of recognition identified by Honneth (1996) constitutes social harm (Yar 2012). Accordingly, rather than guaranteeing economic convergence and a better quality of life for the world's population, the solidification of neoliberal economic globalisation has facilitated the polarization of whole groups of individuals into either extreme wealth or poverty (Hall 2012b). In doing so it has contributed

significantly towards the mass production of human waste, which is perhaps one of the clearest indicators revealing the extent to which “industrialised capitalism disadvantages and damages the mass of humanity” (Taylor 2013:22).

Existing in the deluge of such damaging disadvantage, these wasted humans, “the so-called losers of globalisation” (Thachuk 2007:3), undoubtedly find it increasingly difficult to survive by legitimate means within the highly competitive licit economy. Some are therefore often forced to pursue deviant solutions to resolve structural problems (Passas 2000). In essence, globalisation and its neoliberal motor appear to have, upon first glance, triggered a condition of global anomie by activating criminogenic asymmetries which simultaneously facilitate the generation of criminal motivation and the weakening of social controls (Passas 2000). However, upon closer inspection it can be argued that rather than generating a state of complete ‘normlessness’, the process of neoliberal globalisation has cultivated fragile and differentiated pseudo-pacified normative strategies, which on balance stimulate capitalism’s toxic competitive drive, values and practices more than foster its attenuating or insulating faculties (Hall et al 2008). Inevitably this promotes a latently criminogenic socio-cultural milieu within which there exists increasingly favourable opportunities for illicit conduct, to which large populations have become equally susceptible for criminal recruitment and/or victimisation (Hall et al 2008; Passas 2000). Consequently, as Findlay (1999:1) points out, “globalisation creates new and favourable contexts for crime”.

Globalising the Illicit:

The very same politico-technical forces which helped secure the neoliberal economic globalisation of Western capitalism, by creating more porous borders through which liberalised financial trade and investment flows could move largely uninhibited, also facilitated the globalisation of crime and criminal markets (Kennedy 2010; Galeotti 2005). Indeed as Shelley (2011:3) lucidly articulates, “globalisation has increased the opportunities for criminals, and criminals have been among the major beneficiaries of globalisation”. However,

the globalisation of crime, or what Gilman et al (2011:2) term “deviant globalisation”, should not be viewed as simply representing the dark, cancerous and victimising side of an otherwise healthy and positive globalising process. Instead, it is necessary to note not only the inextricably linked and bounded nature of deviant and mainstream globalisation but acknowledge that the former may in fact represent the real nature of the latter (Gilman et al 2011; Aas 2013). Congruently, the position has been advanced that deviant globalisation can be understood as “the purest expression of free-market capitalism” (Gilman et al 2011:15). Therefore any attempt to explore the two as being opposite and antagonistic entities articulated within a binary discourse of duality and diametric opposition, is in danger of failing to capture the multifaceted and complex nature of globalisation in all its guises (Hall 2012).

Essentially there are no plain, clear and simple lines of delineation to be drawn between mainstream and deviant globalisation. Indeed, the latter is no simple by-product or side effect of the former but rather an aspect of its operationalization, complete with similar features and flows which make it almost indistinguishable from its more visible mainstream counterpart as it comfortably operates in the shadows of the licit global economy (Gilman et al 2011; Hobbs 2013). To further complicate matters, these two inseparable streams of globalisation undulate between licit and illicit, visible and hidden, as well as conventional and rogue activities (Gilman et al 2011; Hall 2012). Nowhere are these nebulous undulations more visibly evident than within the realm of transnational organised crime. Actors who operate within this contentious criminal category often solicit the establishment of competitive yet symbiotic relationships with economic and political officials of ‘weak’, ‘collapsed’, ‘rogue’ or other forms of parapolitical states willing to compete in illegality (Dick 2009; Cribb 2009; Ruggiero 2009).

Corruption undoubtedly plays its part as a conduit through which the volatile currents of transnational organised crime can flow in and across suborned states of convenience, no-go zones and zones of ambiguity, in ways which serve to further undermine and destabilise nation states and their ability to prevent the sale of human misery (Thachuk 2007; Williams and Baudin-

O'Hayon 2002; Hobbs 2013; Messner and Rosenfeld 2000). However, one would be remiss not to acknowledge the extent to which the illicit trade of numerous criminal enterprises, associated with the vast expanse of transnational organised crime, functions as a critical source of revenue for otherwise sagging economies (Thachuk 2007). Consequently, in light of the fiscal benefits which accompany the infiltration of the legitimate economy by illicit trade and commerce, governments are reluctant to pursue and ensure control of such illicit dealings beyond the mere tokenistic measures necessary to protect their public image, as to do otherwise would negate their fiscal interests (Hall 2012c). Perhaps one of the clearest examples of such governmental benefit is that of local Chinese governments. Incentivised by the acquisition of revenue from tax placed upon tobacco leaves, they encourage farmers to produce quantities of tobacco beyond set quotas, thereby producing a surplus of raw tobacco for the manufacturing of counterfeit cigarettes (Shen et al 2010). Not only are such governments evidently reluctant to pursue the closure of counterfeiting businesses utilising locally grown tobacco, they actively protect the illegal production of cigarettes in order to maintain access to a lucrative source of tax revenues (Shen et al 2010; von Lampe et al 2012).

What the deviant globalisation literature makes strikingly clear is that alongside the growth in various licit opportunities, globalisation has provided unprecedented opportunities for criminal enterprises and entrepreneurs (Shelley 2011). It has undeniably afforded them the opportunity to operate more effectively by increasing their profitability and destructive impact. It also enables them to move increasingly undetected with relative ease, as they cross borders and expand their activities in new regions by exploiting with competitive vigour the severe declines in regulatory border controls (Williams and Baudin-O'Hayon 2002; Viano 1999; Shelley 2011). Indeed, as it responds to the same pressures and opportunities "the global underworld is evolving every bit as rapidly as its legal, 'upperworld' counterpart" (Galeotti 2005:4).

Facilitated by rapid economic and technological change and furnished with innovative tools and techniques, criminal entrepreneurs have successfully capitalised upon both the demand for goods and services otherwise

unobtainable from the licit economy, and the almost unlimited supply of 'suitable victims' created by the "wasteful, rejecting logic of globalisation" (Bauman 2000:205; Galeotti 2005; Gilman et al 2011; Aas 2013). Consequently, various forms of trafficking and smuggling, alongside numerous other types of crimes subsumed within the broad edifice of transnational organised crime, have become booming industries (Thachuk 2007; Shelley 2011). For instance, with its ability to produce huge amounts of profit, human trafficking has become one of the fastest growing and most lucrative criminal enterprises in the world (Steele 2014; Galeotti 2005).

Traffickers respond to the growing demand for persons suitable for cheap labour and prostitution by exploiting the increasingly available supply of individuals desperate to circumnavigate strict immigration regulations and militarised border controls in search of better lives (Aas 2013; Aronowitz 2011; Williams and Baudin-O'Hayon 2002). This lucrative enterprise is facilitated by the growth of global transportation networks and the expedient use of intermodal shipping containers, some of which have been outfitted with sophisticated atmospheric controls and odourless waste disposal systems (Nordstrom 2007). Similarly, the illegal trade in human organs is a business opportunity that has been quickly seized by criminal entrepreneurs who have taken advantage of its largely hidden and insufficiently controlled nature (Gilman et al 2011; Ambagtsheer et al 2013).

Perhaps the most profitable and globally expansive criminal business however is the illegal narcotics trade, which generates half of all profits made by both organised and non-organised crime, equating to 1.5% of the world's GDP (Galeotti 2005; Fabre 2009). Operating in a more networked and business-like fashion the illicit global 'narcobusiness' has greatly diversified and intensified the production of its products (Galeotti 2005). Moreover, it has become increasingly adept at utilising with great effect an incredibly feverish shipping industry capable of inspecting "a maximum of only 5% of the cargo passing through customs" (Nordstrom 2007:118) in order to successfully connect expanding zones of production, transit and distribution (Hall 2012b).

One should also give consideration to the largely invisible and often ignored trade in counterfeit pharmaceuticals, for which there is comparatively little empirical data (Nordstrom 2007). However, what little has been documented reveals that “an estimated 10% of all the medicines traded globally are counterfeit” (Thachuk 2007:15). Although with levels of trade rising markedly as the consumer demand for cheaper medicine increases, estimates of scale and scope are more than likely to be under-representative (Kennedy 2010). It is salient to note that the threat of harm to individuals who consume counterfeit pharmaceuticals is considerable and should not be underestimated, for the products often contain only a very small proportion of the active pharmaceutical ingredients essential for addressing the consumer’s ailment (Thachuk 2007; Kennedy 2010). This not only nullifies the effectiveness of treatment but can potentially result in the consumer’s death (Hopkins Burke 2014).

As with the counterfeit pharmaceutical trade, which has developed an efficient and lucrative online dimension capable of augmenting traditional trafficking methods (Hopkins Burke 2014), other factions of innovative and adaptive criminal organisations, as well as individual criminal entrepreneurs, have become increasingly adept at utilising technologies which have both driven and emerged out of the process of globalisation (Thachuk 2007). The most pertinent of which is perhaps the internet, which has facilitated “the mutation of analogue to electronic and digital forms of deviance and crime on a transnational scale” (Sandywell 2010:42). Indeed, the near global permeation of internet facilities has both accelerated and simplified the distant communication of intelligence and the coordination of activities. This has itself been a driving factor in establishing looser and more flexible cross-border criminal networks to which various ethnic groups now associate (Kennedy 2010; Galeotti 2005). Moreover, criminal proceeds generated from such cross-continental collaborations are often ‘cleaned’ via sophisticated money-laundering techniques, capable of retaining the money’s virtual form of bits and bytes before being electronically “transferred across multiple jurisdictions with speed, ease and often with anonymity” (Williams and Baudin-O’Hayon 2002:132).

Fundamentally, the sheer pervasiveness and embedded nature of new digital information technologies has rapidly transformed the operational structure and remit of both organised and non-organised crime to the point where “our normal categories of crime and criminality seem wholly inadequate” (Sandywell 2010:39). Indeed alongside the waning of certain crimes into stages of obsolescence has been an evolutionary mutation of technologically enabled adaptive and new forms of crime, to which both criminal justice agencies and criminologists have been considerably slow to react (McQuade 2006; Thachuk 2007). It can be successfully argued that criminal factions are considerably more adroit in assimilating the schematic knowledge required to navigate the technologically sophisticated contours of a globalising world, proving to be “smart adversaries with a capacity for learning, high levels of adaptation, and a ruthlessness and nimbleness that governments are rarely able to replicate” (Williams and Baudin-O’Hayon 2002:141).

It is perhaps worth noting that transnational organised crime in particular is evolving at a rapid pace. Those who operate within its fold are particularly quick to capitalise upon technologically sophisticated and highly profitable criminal facilitators which allow them to fluidly embrace new markets, transgress traditional hierarchies and in some cases ultimately move entirely beyond physical transgressions against easily identifiable victims (Galeotti 2005; Albanese 2011; Findlay 1999). Evidently, “transnational organised crime is not stagnant, but is an ever-changing industry, adapting to markets and creating new forms of crime” (Hopkins Burke 2014:423). Considering the range of illicit activities pursued by transnational organised crime groups, as well as the frequent emergence of extremely profitable new and adaptive forms of crime, it is perhaps unsurprising to note that there have in fact been considerable increases in crimes deemed to be transnational in nature (Kennedy 2010; Hopkins Burke 2014; Gilman et al 2011).

However, as with globalisation in general, the explosive increase in transnational organised crime as well as crimes associated with looser and more transient networks (Hopkins Burke 2014; Kennedy 2010; Gilman et al 2011), should not be simply viewed as an external problem ‘out there’ but as an

'in here' phenomenon "that impacts on community experiences of crime and victimisation at the local level" (Goodey 2005:225; Giddens 1999). This is a salient point worth reiteration for there still remains a tendency to view transnational organised crime in particular as an external threat enunciated with all the lexical vigour of an alien conspiracy theory (Hobbs and Antonopoulos 2013). Yet this only serves to perpetuate the articulation of unhelpful and dichotomous discourses within which a disproportionate focus upon the transnational serves only to obscure the local view, subsequently precluding any thorough exploration of the complexities surrounding the interplays between macro and micro contexts (Edwards 2005; Hobbs and Antonopoulos 2013; Hobbs and Dunnighan 1998).

Having expressed concerns regarding the inadequacy of scholarly investigations of organised crime rooted in notions of transnationality, a number of scholars have preferred instead to highlight the particular importance of understanding organised crime's dynamic local context (Hobbs and Dunnighan 1998). This is because rather than being experienced in some abstract field of transnationality devoid of relations "it is at the local level that organised crime manifests itself as a tangible process of activity" (Hobbs 1998:408). Indeed organised crime, as Hobbs (1998:419) goes on to articulate, is "local at all points". Accordingly, it is within this context that Robertson's (1995:26) conceptualisation of the term "glocalization" can and has been put to work as an organising framework through which to explore both organised and loosely networked forms of crime (Hobbs and Dunnighan 1998; Edwards 2005; Winlow 2001).

The 'Glocal' Connection:

In what has understandably become an often quoted passage Robertson (1995:34) maintains that:

[I]t makes no good sense to define the global as if the global excludes the local. In somewhat technical terms, defining the global in such a way suggests that the global lies beyond all localities, as having systematic properties over and beyond the attributes of units within a global system.

This captures quite nicely the essence of the backcloth against which Robertson advances the notion of glocalization, a concept which, despite being either marginalised or simply glossed over by much of the globalisation literature (Bauman 1998), has certainly proven to be an important one. It has essentially reframed the often polarised global-local problematic so as to reflect with greater accuracy the way in which the global and the local interact and integrate in a process which ignites their bilateral implosion. From this process emerges the 'glocal', comprising an idiosyncratic mix of the two (Robertson 1995; Ritzer 2007).

Whilst there undoubtedly remains a certain cultural embeddedness or localised root inherent within globalising conditions (Aas 2013), it is nevertheless becoming increasingly rare if not altogether impossible to find within the world locales entirely untouched by the enveloping processes of globalisation (Ritzer 2007). Indeed, culminating in what Ritzer (2007:159, original emphasis) terms "the *death of the local*", the co-evolutionary implosion of the global and local facilitates the rapid evaporation of anything hitherto purely local to the extent that "much of what we often think of as the local is, in reality, the glocal" (Ritzer 2007:31). This is not to say however that localised cultural and normative arterials dry up and disintegrate entirely, quite the contrary in fact as even within the glocal there certainly remain important vestiges of the local (Ritzer 2007; Kennedy 2010). Rather it is to suggest that local understandings combine with broader global influences to form new understandings or points of reference around which social actions may be framed (Winlow 2001). Fundamentally, local social relations indigenize globally appropriated socio-economic and politico-cultural elements which are subsequently seamlessly quilted into local experiential lifeworlds (Kennedy 2010). This in turn helps to perpetuate, if only in adulterated form, the globalising project, thereby involving both the global and the local in a relationally obscure parasitic symbiosis (Kennedy 2010; Edwards 2005).

When applied to the social scientific investigation of crime and criminality, the use of glocalization as an organising framework allows us to explicate how crimes inevitably manifest themselves at the local level, as external

criminogenic influences are inscribed upon the demands of local criminal markets to which deviant entrepreneurs respond (Goodey 2005). Indeed, as Winlow (2001:166) cogently notes, “crime and criminals have adapted to their changing cultural environment and have absorbed the influence of the global, while not entirely casting off the historical and local”. Interpretations of globalising influences mediated via the remnants of localised historical and cultural referents are integral to the successful navigation of new marketised spaces, opened up by the ever deepening coalescence of global and local alliances within both the realms of the licit and illicit (Winlow 2001; Hobbs 2013).

However, in what undoubtedly represents a discernible break with the recent past (Hobbs and Dunnighan 1998; Winlow 2001), criminal entrepreneurs have been able to establish flexible alliances and ever-mutating interwoven networks with similar entities. Such associations are capable of providing varying degrees of brokerage from either within or outside geographical nodes of operation, as numerous forms of serious and organised crime groups become increasingly adept at occupying both local and global contexts (Hobbs 2013; Hobbs 1998). Consequently, a great many criminal career trajectories are no longer bound to geographical locations characterised by stereotypical images of the urban ‘under world’ (Hobbs 2013). The jettisoning of nostalgic practices once associated with the ‘local firm’, alongside the expedient use of market broadening brokerage, have proven to be useful mediums through which the spheres of both the local and the global may be traversed (Hobbs 2013; Winlow 2001). Accordingly, rigid hierarchies no longer constitute the dominant structural characteristic of serious and organised crime groups (Albanese 2011). Such factions are now widely recognised as being characterised by complex and flexible criminal networks, imbued with unaffiliated criminal freelancers capable of operating in numerous different localities with seemingly infinite collaborators (Ruggiero 1993; Hobbs and Dunnighan 1998).

What this brief delineation of the multifaceted and complex interplay between loosely structured local and global networks of negotiated criminal collaborations has shown is that ultimately “our experience of crime is grounded in the local” (Hobbs and Dunnighan 1998:289). Indeed, despite being unable to

attain a palpable foothold within the empirical organised crime literature (Hall 2012), it was Hobbs' (1998) lucid excursion down the glocal that highlighted the importance of local contexts. This contribution stimulated others to note the inexorable rise of glocalized criminal markets which operate in a global shadow economy by fostering 'glocal nodes', predicated upon the collaborative melding of global networks and localised knowledge (Hall 2012b, 2012c). "Appreciating the geographic particularities of deviant flows" (Gilman et al 2011:10) and recognising the importance of positioning glocalized nodal points as essential units of analysis (Edwards 2005), the remainder of this chapter will focus upon the explication of Lake Town as one such 'glocal node'.

Much has been made of the importance of understanding the complex flows of flexible criminal networks that manifest themselves within local contexts, and rightly so. However, this should not detract from the fact that "crime is also part of the complex articulation of cultural and economic conditions that originate beyond the local" (Hobbs 2013:222). Indeed, as outlined at the beginning of this chapter, Lake Town suffered greatly from the socio-economic fallout of widespread deindustrialisation, a process which produced various casualties including the disintegration of traditional forms of community which once characterised the identity of the working-class (Hall and Winlow 2005a). Fundamentally, it can perhaps be argued that the resultant loss of communal ties and a sense of groundedness which accompanied the displacement of a collectively shared working-class habitus (Scholte 2005; Schirato and Webb 2003), is akin to the frantic unravelling of the quilting points which once maintained the illusory fantasy of the social democratic big Other, the collective fib to which we all subscribed (Myers 2003).

The position being advanced here is that following the demise of the partial and fragile social democratic big Other and the symbolic efficiency which previously buttressed its ideological structure, the subject has become encumbered with an oppressive and terrifying freedom (Winlow and Hall 2013). This terrible sense of independence is sustained, if not intensified, by the big Other's innate state of lack, inconsistency and fragility of which the subject becomes increasingly aware as separation from the big Other solidifies (Winlow and Hall

2013; Žižek 2000b, 2006). With diminished authority the big Other fails to retain subjects of nature or tradition and in their place emerge creatures imbued with freedom of choice purchased with the severance of all conventional ties (Myers 2003). Devoid of traditionally verified points of reference that provide “the ultimate horizon of meaning” (Žižek 2006:10) and cultural yardsticks against which symbolic identities can be measured, the subject approaches a state of hysteria (Žižek 2000a). Indeed, one is forced to permanently question the symbolic identity conferred by a big Other now incapable of determining appropriate social protocols (Winlow and Hall 2013).

As a response to the increasingly senseless and ungrounded nature of deindustrialised social spaces which individuals are now forced to inhabit, attempts to restore some semblance of order are pursued by constructing various little others intended to take the place of the big Other (Winlow and Hall 2013; Žižek 2008b). Predominantly these little others take the form of an expanding network of unconvincing bureaucratic authorities (Winlow and Hall 2013). It can be argued however that glocalised criminal networks may in fact constitute yet another form of little other, through which individuals may find new reference points capable of providing meaning. Indeed, penetrating the void created by the absence of working-class ideological and socio-cultural quilting points, glocalised forms of crime serve to re-energize local and regional opportunities for economic activity in Lake Town’s otherwise barren deindustrialised wasteland (Hall 2012b). This point may perhaps be further clarified by augmenting slightly Hobbs’ (1998:409) assertion that “when the material base for such communities is removed [loss of the big Other], crime becomes located within loose collectivities of *ad hoc* groupings [little others]”. Fundamentally, whilst inevitably corrosive to many individuals’ quality of life and communities’ social relations, both organised and non-organised criminal networks function to reintroduce some sense of adulterated stability and offer various ‘employment’ opportunities in the realm of criminal entrepreneurship (Hall 2012b, 2012c; Hobbs 1998). Indeed crime is, Winlow (2001:170) argues, “one of the few traditional trades that still offers an apprenticeship in the post-industrial North East”.

Accordingly, for those seemingly devoid of accessible legal avenues through which consumer-stimulated ambitions and commodified desires may be at least temporarily satisfied, involvement in networked criminal entrepreneurship often provides mediated means of momentarily slaking such desires and facilitating the attainment of stimulated ambitions (Hall and Winlow 2005a). Arguably, it is precisely because such criminal entrepreneurship caters for these more reliably stimulated baser human drives and desires within organically organised relations of trust and reciprocity that criminal markets are, economically speaking, more stable than their legitimate counterparts (Hall 2012b). Moreover, glocalised criminal networks provide those who constitute the social debris of deindustrialised communities such as Lake Town with suitable touchstones indicative of those associated with the traditional working-class habitus, from which they derive a sense of order however distorted and sporadic it may be (Hobbs and Dunnighan 1998; Hobbs 1998). This may be because such networks are inherently imbued with a resonance reminiscent of the localised criminal organisation historically deeply entrenched in urban working-class culture (Hobbs 2001). Proving incredibly seductive and comparing favourably with the otherwise bleak reality of life in deindustrialised Lake Town, glocalised forms of crime offer modified frames of reference for the interpretation of symbolic success (Winlow 2001). Moreover, they reframe the context within which the reinterpretation of traditional working-class methodologies serve as viable means through which such success can be pursued (Hobbs 2013).

Working within a plethora of newly created fertile domains of illegality created by the harsh post-industrial milieu engulfing locales such as Lake Town (Hobbs 1998), many criminal entrepreneurs operate as fluid, flexible, multi-dimensional and interlocking hubs. They are able to pursue opportunities likely to yield pecuniary success via the expedient use of a wide range of networked interactions, which ultimately facilitate involvement in an immense gamut of deviant entrepreneurship (Hobbs 2001, 1998; Hobbs and Dunnighan 1998). The characteristically flexible, mobile and often transient nature of these hubs allows them to operate on ever-changing terrain “exploiting geographic space without being restrained by territorial imperatives” (Hobbs 2001:554). Indeed, having established artificial yet instrumental relationships with other criminal

freelancers (Hobbs 2001, 1998), criminal entrepreneurs are able to utilise the 'earned' stock of bridging social capital to transcend specific neighbourhoods and operate across different locales (Hobbs and Dunnighan 1998; Hobbs 2001; Winlow 2001).

Such entrepreneurial diversification may function as a springboard likely to secure hubs with upwardly mobile career trajectories marked with varying degrees of success (Hobbs 1998). A precursor of such success is however mediated by the ability to cater for "indigenous renditions of global markets" (Hobbs 1998:416). Accordingly, the solicitation of local knowledge obtained via the establishment of glocal connections, particularly with young people whose cultural capital can be used to help attract customers and boost sales within specific glocal nodes, is of considerable importance (Hall 2012b). Consequently it can perhaps be argued that whilst glocalized criminal networks and interdependent hubs maintain a fairly loose and horizontal hierarchy, there nevertheless remains a discernible distinction between those on the demand side, those who occupy the lower end of the supply chain and those higher up the chain (Hobbs 2013). Simply put, there exists what can perhaps be viewed as a diagonal hierarchy of criminal entrepreneurs. Those hubs who possess denser webs of information linking networks, due to their higher degree of embeddedness within their operational realm of criminal entrepreneurship (Hobbs 1998), retain higher standing than those who simply labour opportunistically or sporadically for such hubs.

Preliminary evidence for such an assertion is drawn from the researcher's empirical data where it was discovered that a respondent, who was no stranger to low level criminality, was simply holding a significant quantity of cocaine for what was described as 'quite an established' dealer for payment of £100. Whilst the dealer's status as a well-established hub with numerous interconnecting links undoubtedly imbues him with considerable standing as a criminal entrepreneur, the respondent's involvement was purely opportunistic thus simply making him, in his words, "the little knob-head at the end of it". What this brief delineation provides is a slightly more nuanced view of traditional vertical/horizontal hierarchy debates by positing what can perhaps be termed

the *hierarchy of embeddedness*. Essentially, this reveals a more diagonal hierarchical trajectory based upon an individual's degree of embeddedness and concomitant density of networks within the realm of criminal entrepreneurship. However, it must be stressed that this is not to suggest that this transient diagonal hierarchy is emblematic of some fixed structure of criminal entrepreneurship. Rather it simply reveals the existence of varying degrees of embeddedness amongst those who form "a series of temporary social arrangements that enables a constantly changing group of actors to make money from predominantly criminal opportunities" (Hobbs 1998:413).

Adding credential weight to the notion of analytical generalizability presented in chapter four, Lake Town's glocalised hubs and the stock pile of sporadic and opportunistic 'labourers' who contribute to both their operational capacity and reservoir of local social and cultural capital, are evidently reminiscent of those identified by Hobbs and Dunnighan (1998). Indeed, a seemingly eclectic mix of sporadic and opportunistic labourers and more deeply embedded hubs have forged interlocking yet transient networks of diagonally hierarchized relationality, in order to traverse with greater success shifting terrains characterised by an increasingly dense blend of the local and the global (Hobbs 2001). Representing a synthesis of local cultural influences and global inputs (Winlow 2001), Lake Town's glocalised networks of criminal entrepreneurs are suitably positioned to respond to local demands for illicit goods and services.

Accordingly Lake Town, as well as the wider conurbation of which it is a part, hosts established markets in the illegal sale of contraband and counterfeit cigarettes (Antonopoulos and Hall 2015), alongside a formidable narcotics industry dominated primarily by thriving heroin, cocaine and ecstasy markets (MacDonald et al 2007; Shildrick et al 2012; MacDonald and Marsh 2005; Lloyd 2013). Additionally, in congruence with other glocal nodes (Treadwell 2011), the sale of stolen and counterfeit commodities has become a staple of many criminal entrepreneurs who have capitalised upon the expedient use of technological facilitators such as the internet in order to transform the traditional trade into a more lucrative venture. That is, one capable of catering for a burgeoning consumer demand for recognised yet affordable symbols of

success associated with active involvement in the legitimate formal economy (Treadwell 2011; Hall 2012). As will be further explicated in chapter five, Lake Town's criminal beneficiaries often view such entrepreneurs as providing a necessary service to an otherwise disadvantaged community. This is commensurate with other areas whose consumer-oriented criminal entrepreneurship is geared towards catering for those who find themselves unable or unwilling to participate in the legal procurement of high valued commodities (Antonopoulos et al 2011).

Consequently involvement in — to coin a phrase inspired by Gilman et al (2011) — *deviant glocalization* may provide those on the precipice of post-industrial communities such as Lake Town a potential escape from poverty or the drudgery of low-pay no-pay cycles of underemployment and unemployment. It may also enable community beneficiaries of such criminal entrepreneurship to experience the spasmodic acquisition of commodified success symbols (Kennedy 2010; Hall 2012). Indeed, these two facets emerged frequently during the empirical data analysis which is presented in chapter five. However, it is perhaps worth mentioning at this early stage that these two outcomes of involvement in deviant glocalization should be divorced from the romantic images of philanthropic criminals which impoverished early radical criminological writings (Jones 2006). Certainly, whilst the acquisition, if not the means of acquisition, of commodified success symbols may be viewed under certain circumstances by some as being socially licit (Hall 2012), the social harm involved remains considerable. Indeed, both the entrepreneur and the beneficiary are forced to purchase their modicum of symbolic recognition via illicit means. However, the social harm risked or endured by both factions during the phases of procurement, sale and acquisition of tangible symbols of recognition remain either unacknowledged or simplistically reduced to discrete and quantifiable incidents of actions, officially defined as criminal within the narrowly focused and event-oriented 'crime decline' discourse (Genn 1988).

Nevertheless, it is within the precarious milieu of the glocal node and its wider context outlined above that those with whom the researcher spoke find themselves battling for survival amongst the insecurity that pervades what

remains of communities hollowed out by the aforementioned globalising processes. Indeed, it is here that the majority of those who participated in this research endure numerous and considerable forms of crime and social harm, unamenable to the rigid counting frames of reference preferred by the survey methodologies that inform the prematurely triumphal 'crime decline' discourse (Genn 1988). Accordingly, it is to these largely ignored flows of crime and harm that chapter three directs its attention.

Chapter Three:

Invisible Crimes and Non-Criminalised Harms.

As the last two chapters have shown, politically influential sections of criminology continue to be constrained by a narrow view of what constitutes the 'crime problem' (Muncie 2000), and therefore remain largely out of step with the momentous changes in the dynamics of criminality occurring throughout the social landscape (Hil and Robertson 2003). Contributing in no small part to this unsynchronised position is the hegemonic dominance afforded to the utilisation of standardised survey-based methodologies by an embedded congregation of 'datasaur' (Young 2011). These 'creatures' remain contently committed to conducting a-theoretical quantitative research grounded in narrow conceptualisations of 'crime' and 'victims' (DeKeseredy forthcoming 2016; Pointing and Maguire 1988). Such commitment results not only in distortions of the extent, nature and distribution of crime and harm but actively contributes towards perpetuating the invisibility of certain types of crime; particularly those that do not fit neatly into the simplistic counting frames of reference favoured by those in pursuit of pragmatic expediency and blinkered visions of 'what works' (Jupp et al 1999; Squires 2013).

Taking pride of place as one quintessential manifestation of the tendencies alluded to within the above sketching of the broad criminological landscape is the ICVS. This research instrument and those who have utilised its data to claim the existence of a 'universal drop in crime' have undoubtedly contributed towards maintaining the invisibility of many serious global crimes, thereby distorting the world's 'true crime story' (Zvekic 1996). Indeed, they have selectively chosen and customised their view of crime, developing explanatory accounts based upon empirical excavations that scratch only the tip of the iceberg (van Dijk 2007a). This leaves untouched the quantitatively greater and qualitatively different flows of crime situated below the surface (Bottomley 1979). Consequently despite claims that surveys such as the ICVS "provide an estimate of the true level of crime experienced by victims, including the so-

called dark numbers” (van Dijk 2008:41-42), the “doubly-dark” figures of many international crimes (Rothe and Kauzlarich 2014:10) continue to overshadow the ICVS’s practical and methodological capabilities thereby eluding its investigatory scope (van Dijk 2007a; van Dijk and Shaw 2009).

Indeed, many international crimes that produce a tremendous amount of harm continue to be ignored by the ICVS and its proponents, and are thus not considered when making claims of ‘universally declining crime rates’. However, the following brief excursion through this hidden landscape is not necessarily intended solely as a critique of what the ICVS has *not done*, for some of its main proponents readily admit its shortcomings in charting the hidden flows of a number of global crimes (van Dijk 2007a; van Dijk and Shaw 2009; van Dijk 2011). Rather it serves to forcefully highlight the state of fetishistic disavowal that pervades the ICVS and draw attention to the scholarly irresponsibility of trumpeting overgeneralised, and quite simply untrue, assertions of a “universal drop in crime” (van Kesteren et al 2014:65). This will be achieved by positioning against the backdrop of such claims a number of particularly harmful crimes that maintain a global resonance.

The Hidden Landscape of Global Crime:

By “mapping the contours of invisibility” Jupp et al (1999:5) helpfully identify seven independent yet mutually reinforcing characteristic features, which together can be utilised to assess the *relative invisibility* of crime. These features include a lack of knowledge, statistics, theory, research, control, politics and panic (Jupp et al 1999). A number of these characteristic features are certainly exhibited by many of the globe’s prolific hidden crimes, including the burgeoning and extremely lucrative trade in human trafficking (Thachuk 2007; Steele 2014; Galeotti 2005), which not only remains unamenable to reliable measurement but to adequate individual and organisational awareness (Aronowitz 2011; Clause and Lawler 2013). Similarly, there is little empirical data on the often ignored trade in counterfeit pharmaceuticals (Nordstrom 2007), and perhaps even less professional and consumer knowledge surrounding the extent to which illicit traders have successfully inserted

counterfeits into the legitimate supply chain (Chaudhry and Stumpf 2013). Moreover, many illicit pharmaceutical traders have effectively utilised technological innovations as facilitators of invisibility (Francis et al 1999; Hall and Antonopoulos 2015), with approximately over half of all medicines sold via the internet in 2008 being classified as counterfeit (Dégardin et al 2014). However, relevant legislation to effectively combat the problems posed by these internet pharmacies is often non-existent (Dégardin et al 2014).

These identified features of invisibility are further evident within economic crime, which despite its toll exceeding that of 'conventional crime' remains absent from crime audits and victimisation surveys (Croall 2009). Such crime is less likely than its more 'conventional' counterparts to feature in the media and many of those who fall victim to it remain largely unaware of their victimisation (Croall 2009; Box 1989). Similarly, despite the significant threat posed to our planetary well-being, there is relatively little knowledge regarding the scale of transnational environmental crime nor the types of criminality involved (White 2011).

Consequently, it can be successfully argued that these crimes alongside those articulated in chapter two, though harmful, are conspicuous only by their absence within the ICVS inspired 'international crime decline' discourse. Indeed, they appear to have gained a state of exception based upon their designation as 'non-conventional' crimes. This status has seemingly allowed the embedded congregation of scholars associated with the crime decline discourse to fetishistically disavow their existence, whilst maintaining an unjustifiable focus upon the 'conventional' crimes thought to be more amenable to statistical measurement (van Dijk and Shaw 2009; van Dijk 2007a). However, the purpose of this chapter is not to further explore the analytical absence of such 'non-conventional' crimes, for this relatively straightforward critique of the ICVS has already been presented within this thesis, and has to some extent been conceded by one of its major architects (van Dijk and Shaw 2009; van Dijk 2007a). Rather the significance of this section of the chapter lies in the excavation of the hidden landscape of everyday crime and the illumination of the persistent and almost mundane nature of crime and victimisation, both

perpetrated and experienced by individuals as a social fact seamlessly woven into the fabric of everyday life (Hall et al 2008).

The Hidden Landscape of Everyday Crime:

Despite the inordinate focus placed by the ICVS and its proponents upon uncovering the ‘true’ extent and ‘actual’ experiences of victimisation by conventional crime among ‘ordinary’ people (van Dijk 2008), quite often the experiences and repressed views of the ‘silent majority’ remain either uncaptured or entirely unsolicited (Hall and Winlow 2015). Consequently such accounts, which contribute enormously to the dark figure of conventional crime, remain hidden from the ICVS’s ‘tunnel of vision’ (see figure 1). Indeed, it has already been established that the ICVS appears incapable of capturing sensitive and often prolonged and habitual experiences of sexual assault and other forms of abuse, by remaining wedded to its methodological naivety and itemised counting frame of reference (Young 2003; Genn 1988; Goodey 2000; Spalek 2006).

Similarly, although attempts have been made by the ICVS to solicit data on the exposure to drug-related problems in *developed* countries (van Dijk et al 2007), it remains incapable of capturing both the nature and extent of this largely hidden crime let alone providing any indication of its evolution or trends over time (Barton 2011; Aebi and Linde 2010). Such failure is not surprising for there are numerous reasons which preclude the reporting of drug activity to either the police or a stranger administering a survey. First and foremost it must be acknowledged that not only has the dealing of illicit drugs become a normal part of everyday life for many individuals living in post-industrial locales such as Lake Town (Hobbs 2013), but that the consumption of a number of ‘recreational’ drugs has also become normalised (Aldridge et al 2011). Even among abstainers drug use is often tolerated and rarely reported to officialdom despite retaining its ‘deviant’ branding (Barton 2011). To complicate matters further, there is evidence pointing towards the existence of a hierarchy of *acceptable* drug use, a phenomena similar to what Shildrick (2002:44) terms “differentiated normalisation”. In essence, this refers to a mentality whereby many individuals

tend to view the use of certain drugs, such as cannabis for example, as being relatively unproblematic, or at least not sharing the same social stigma attached to the distribution or use of 'harder' drugs (Shildrick 2002; MacDonald and Marsh 2002; Barton 2011).

However, besides being "unable to adequately reach the hidden population of drug users" (Barton 2011:29), perhaps one of the strongest inhibitors to the pursuit of data concerning 'exposure to drug-related problems' is the fear of reprisal (Anderson 2000), for "disastrous consequences await those who snitch" (Jacobs 2000:29). Indeed, whilst a firm adherence to an informal 'code of the street' serves to mitigate feelings of insecurity and vulnerability fostered by growing distrust towards institutions of legal authority (Evans et al 1996), it tends to cultivate deeper distrust of officialdom and the imposition of strong normative injunctions to avoid 'grassing' or 'snitching' (Anderson 2000; Rosenfeld et al 2003). Organised around such a code of conduct, those involved in the drug trade often employ extreme violence as a means of punishing both actual and perceived violations of the code (Anderson 2000).

Consequently, a disproportionate share of violent crime is perpetrated against those who are themselves involved in various forms of crime, from low-level drug dealing to property offences and assaults (Jacobs 2000; Rosenfeld et al 2003). Representing "one of criminology's dirty little secrets" (Topalli et al 2002:337), this often ignored phenomenon indicates that most serious crime involves non-ideal victims and takes place beyond the view of criminal justice practitioners and surveyors. Indeed Currie (2009) explains that not only are such victims unlikely to be contacted by victimisation surveys, but that they are even less likely to respond honestly about their experiences if they were contacted. The upshot is that those who are most at risk of being subject to violent victimisation, and in fact "make up a disproportionate share of crime victims" (Rosenfeld et al 2003:307), remain shadowy silhouettes lying beyond the sampling boundaries of surveys like the ICVS.

For many of these individuals, particularly those involved in the drug trade, experiences of violence are both commonplace and normal aspects of everyday

life, often viewed as unexceptional occupational hazards (Jacobs 2000). Indeed, whilst in possession of valuable merchandise and often considerable sums of money with no recourse to protection from legal authorities, drug dealers make alluring targets with a high rate of victimisation (Jacobs 2000; Topalli et al 2002). With this high risk of victimisation and an inability to call upon formal justice mechanisms, drug dealers rely heavily on forms of retaliation as a mechanism of informal control (Jacques et al 2014). Such retaliation, described by Jacques and Wright (2011:733) as “unilateral self-help accomplished through theft, fraud, vandalism, or violence”, is a common reaction with the simultaneous purpose of punishing acts of robbery or ‘taxing’ and deterring others from attempting similar transgressions. Simply put retaliation, as a form of swift, certain and severe street justice, is utilised to right perceived wrongs and create or solidify a reputation for formidability as this remains one of the only available mechanisms capable of deterring future victimisation (Jacobs 2000; Jacques et al 2014). However, episodes of retaliation following experiences of robbery or ‘taxation’ often ignite acts of counter-retaliation which serve to draw into emergent conflicts a greater number of participants, thereby helping to sustain potentially lethal retaliatory cycles and contributing towards the contagion of aggression (Jacobs 2000).

Despite the sheer pervasiveness of this normalised phenomenon — which is deeply embedded and widely recognised within a street culture that has emerged in the form of a little other presenting itself as a realistic alternative to the social democratic big Other — it barely appears in crime statistics (Jacobs 2000). Indeed, drug robbery remains the quintessential hidden crime existing beyond the law and below the surface of official recognition (Jacobs 2000; Topalli et al 2002). It must be acknowledged however, that a number of other violent crimes exist on this plane equally entrenched in the ‘code of the street’, where episodes of ‘taxing’, retaliation, counter-retaliation and street justice remain pervasive and bound up with the normative injunction not to grass (Jacobs 2000; Evans et al 1996).

One such example is the often violent victimisation experienced by the homeless who, despite being more likely than the general population to be

victims of crime (Fitzpatrick et al 1993) and in fact are victimised disproportionately often (Lee and Schreck 2005; Garland et al 2010), are excluded from the ICVS's consideration due to their 'non-residential' status. Whilst already existing in a perilous and "ultimate state of victimisation" (Fitzpatrick et al 1993:366), the homeless are often subject to further victimisation by both the general public and other members of the homeless population. In some cases the latter are acting in retaliation to prior transgressions and therefore alternate between the roles of victim and offender (Lee and Schreck 2005). The extant literature indicates that instances of theft, intimidation, harassment, assault, robbery and sexual exploitation are common experiences among the homeless, and constitute for many of those who have experienced prolonged or multiple stints of homelessness a routine aspect of everyday life (Huey and Quirouette 2010; Garland et al 2010; Lee and Schreck 2005).

Consequently, it can be successfully argued that the claims of declining rates of crime stand in stark contrast to the high rates of victimisation experienced by the homeless (Lee and Schreck 2005). Evidently, whilst the daily lives of this forgotten population and the means by which they endeavour to survive them is often criminalised, their victimisation remains hidden in plain sight (Garland et al 2010). Compounding this invisibility is the fact that such victimisation is severely underreported as many homeless people feel unable or unwilling to inform law enforcement agencies or even other state-based institutions (Huey and Quirouette 2010; Garland et al 2010). Interestingly, a frequently offered reason as to why many homeless people do not report their victimisation is the strict adherence to the same normative prohibition against grassing discussed above (Huey and Quirouette 2010). Certainly, breaching this "most sacred of all taboos" (Ancrum 2014:52) is to risk violent retaliation and potentially debilitating exclusion from one's peer group and the reciprocal bonds that help to sustain life on the street (Huey and Quirouette 2010).

Strict adherence to this normative prohibition against grassing has undoubtedly assumed a position of salience throughout large segments of the wider social body, including among the otherwise law-abiding (Morris 2010). This is

particularly the case for those locked in marginalised and crime rich areas of permanent recession such as Lake Town, where safety, status and the prospects of simply 'getting by' all depend on maintaining a deep commitment to the 'no-grassing rule' (Ancrum 2014). Indeed, in such areas where the 'special liberty' of those who dispense street justice retains a conspicuous omnipresence (Hall 2012b; Evans et al 1996) "the ability to mind one's own business is vital" (Jacobs 2000:29).

For this reason many individuals "see but don't see" (Anderson 2000:132) in that they actively endeavour to ensure that people do not notice them witnessing matters of 'street business' in order to preserve their personal safety. This necessary blindness in plain sight of often brutal victimisation has become a *doxic* response within communities where high rates of crime and victimisation constitute a normal social fact, simply representing yet another obstacle to be routinely negotiated (Young 1999; Garland 2001). Thus despite *statistically* diminishing crime rates a number of economically marginalised locales remain blighted by a plethora of harms and illegalities that continue to go largely unreported (Hall et al 2008). Certainly for many of those who fall victim to them, such experiences retain a remarkable familiarity exemplified by the military abbreviation SNAFU — Situation Normal, All Fucked Up (Groombridge 2013).

It must be acknowledged however that alongside the normalisation of such criminal encounters lies the issue of structural normalisation, whereby rather than simply serving to fracture or destroy purportedly functional communities "certain types of crime increasingly function as part of the reproduction of social and economic life" (Lea 2002:140). Accordingly, many individuals may 'see but don't see' because they actively support and benefit from such *social crime* (Anderson 2000; Lea 1999). To act differently is to risk potentially jeopardising the social function of these forms of crime, especially those associated with the informal or hidden economy (Yates 2006). Comprising acts of unreported and illegal economic transactions such as illicit drug distribution, prostitution and the trading of stolen or counterfeit goods, the hidden economy operates in the shadow of the legitimate economy and often constitutes a normal everyday

feature of many ordinary people's lives (Beirne and Messerschmidt 1995; Henry 1978).

Whilst those on the supply side of the hidden economy undoubtedly utilise such normalised entrepreneurial ventures for the asocial pursuit of "fantasised positions of social distinction and 'respect'" (Hall et al 2008:13), these illicit transactions are nevertheless sustained by those on the demand side who not only tolerate such illegalities but view them favourably as meeting their socio-economic needs (Lea 1999, 2002). Certainly, for many of those existing within a milieu pervaded by substantial levels of poverty, inequality, unemployment and sporadic periods of underemployment in low-paid and insecure forms of work, involvement in the hidden economy has become a reasonable and attractive method of survival (Lea 2002; Henry 1978). In particular, shoplifting and the trade in stolen and counterfeit goods have assumed a position of particular salience in many poor communities, as not only are they considered to be necessary for survival but they are instrumental in facilitating access to otherwise unaffordable commodities (Lea 1999; Yates 2006). For those involved in this 'survival' model of social crime "taking the opportunity to supplement their often low standard of living seems common sense not crime" (Parker et al 1988:106).

Accordingly, attitudes towards such activities are often framed within wider ideological mechanisms which operate to help modify socially determined distinctions between legitimate and illegitimate behaviour (Jupp et al 1999). This serves to blur previously clearly delineated boundaries and ultimately legitimise the endeavour to solve structurally induced problems via involvement in the hidden economy, despite potentially severe legal sanctions (Lea 2002; Sutton 2005). The upshot of this is not simply a broad gamut of 'tolerated illegalities' (Foucault 1991), but an established hierarchy of acceptability complete with a lexicon imbued with deliberate linguistic confusion that renders invisible many of the crimes associated with the hidden economy (Muncie 2001; Henry 1978), especially those considered to be "providing a valuable service" (Wiltshire et al 2001:203). Consequently, this invisibility is maintained by a community of complicit beneficiaries who remain absent of any need to "neutralise that which

is already normal and expected” (Lea 2002:139). Moreover, its membership of individuals, who have no interest in providing those representing legitimate authority with information flows capable of disrupting the social function of the hidden economy, tend to increase rather than diminish (Lea 2002). Since both effective policing and the construction of official or surveyed statistics remain dependent upon high levels of information provided by the public (Lea and Young 1993), it is highly possible that much of the social crime associated with the hidden economy persists as a large proportion of crime’s dark figure (Henry 1978; Yates 2006).

This persistence and its subsequent absence from the ‘crime decline’ discourse should not be viewed lightly as unimportant ‘*petty*’ crime, as the potential for severe harm remains omnipresent for those who participate in the hidden economy. Indeed, not only are participants forced to flirt dangerously with sanctionable illegality, but the forms of social crime within which they engage are likely to be absorbed and tied up with more organised and harmful criminal enterprises capable of infiltrating and moulding such tolerated illegalities to suit their purpose (Henry 1978; Lea 1999, 2002). Lea (2002:141) makes the point well when he notes that:

The survival strategies of poor communities increase the hegemony of criminal groups as simultaneous sustainers and destroyers of the social fabric. The loanshark and his debt-collecting thugs are not far behind the shoplifter selling cheap stolen goods.

However, those locked in areas of permanent recession often have little choice than to offset their socio-economic redundancy by becoming complicit beneficiaries of burgeoning criminal markets, whilst retaining a constant and exhausting vigilance as they negotiate the intertwined contours of harmful and beneficial criminal activity (Lea 1999, 2002). As with those involved in the drugs trade, participants of the hidden economy have little if any recourse to protection from legal authorities following victimising events, lest they risk exposing their own involvement in the social crime from which they extract the last vestiges of adulterated stability (Lea 2002; Yates 2006). Devoid of such legal recourse, and with their largely self-policed estates subject only to

episodic incursions by the police, volatile street justice and its normative prohibition against grassing remains the order of the day (Lea 2002; Jacobs 2000; Evans et al 1996).

Consequently, much of this landscape remains hidden as its associated forms of crime retain their invisibility by becoming increasingly normalised and embedded deeper into the social fabric, ontologically and epistemologically detached from the view of the state, its congregation of scholars and their statistical records (Hall 2012b). Indeed, it is now widely acknowledged that crime statistics, whether produced by state officials or victimisation surveyors, produce a distorted and misleading indication of the extent and nature of harm present in society (Hillyard and Tombs 2004). As the above sketching has shown, politically influential sections of criminology continue to operate with this statistically myopic view of crime, often understanding victimisation only in a very narrow and cursory way (Jupp et al 1999; Elias 1986). The extent of victimisation is evidently much more prevalent and widespread than official definitions or indicators would have us believe (Muncie 2001).

However, it is pertinent to note that it is a little more complicated than official definitions of crime — cleverly carved up to retain statistically measurable segments whilst discarding the offcuts of ‘petty’ summary or complicated ‘non-conventional’ crimes — serving to mask the true state of things, for we know very well the ‘shocking truth’ about this hidden landscape (Davies 1997). Instead, it is a *combination* of collective fetishistic disavowal and an unyielding adherence to the powerful traditional discourses of crime, by both academics and vast sections of the social body who appear unable not only to equate wider social harms to these discourses, but to transcend such narratives, that allows the broader scope of victimisation to remain hidden from view (Pantazis and Pemberton 2012; Bottomley 1979). Accordingly, recognition of this dual inability to either acknowledge or “escape the straightjacket of officially defined ‘crime’” (Barton et al 2007:202) has prompted a number of scholars to marshal a move beyond the legalistic conceptualisation of ‘crime’, as “the fundamental empirical-analytic category for criminological inquiry” (Yar 2012:56), towards a social harm approach (Hillyard et al 2004).

Zemiology and the Exploration of Non-Criminalised Harms:

A central focus of the new zemiological movement has been the provocation of crucial epistemological and ontological debates concerning, among other things, the critical interrogation of the problematic concept of ‘crime’ (Hillyard and Tombs 2004; Lasslett 2010). Although the Latin origin of the word ‘crime’, *crimen*, was heavily imbued with broad notions of harm its contemporary manifestation is now used to capture only a very narrow range of acts deemed to be in violation of state sanctioned legal codes (Muncie et al 2010; Henry and Milovanovic 1996). Such legal codes however only cover a partial list of harms (Milovanovic and Henry 2001) and portray other harmful acts which exist outside of this remit in such a way as to discourage the wider citizenry from considering them as ‘crimes’ (Tombs and Whyte 2010). Importantly, this reveals the apparent lack of some identifiable intrinsic feature present in all ‘crimes’ that justifies their designation as such (Hillyard and Tombs 2007).

Consequently, it has been argued that not only does the legal category of ‘crime’ lack any ontological reality (although see Lasslett 2010) but it excludes many serious harms which cause considerable damage to the wider social body (Hillyard and Tombs 2007). Such harms are often more widespread and damaging than many of the incidents that constitute the contemporary ‘crime problem’ (Muncie 2000). Nevertheless, the resilience of such a blinkered view of the ‘crime problem’ serves to obfuscate “the range of misfortunes, dangers, harms, risks and injuries that are a routine part of everyday life” (Muncie 2000:222). Therefore, it can be argued that the measurement of ‘crime’, a task with which the ICVS and its proponents have concerned themselves for over two decades, does not capture the level of social harm present in society to which many individuals fall victim and which often constitutes their experiential lifeworld (Tifft and Sullivan 2001).

By contrast the zemiological project, with the somewhat more ontologically grounded concept of harm as its empirical-analytical object of inquiry (Hall 2012b), is better suited to providing a more accurate picture of the broad gamut of socially injurious events people endure (Hillyard and Tombs 2007). Such an

approach brings into focus a number of important harms that continue to remain untouched by the rhetoric surrounding ‘crime’ (Tombs and Hillyard 2004). Moreover, it serves to break the silence of criminology regarding pressing social issues such as the widespread and devastating nature of preventable harms, which are arguably more pervasive than ‘crime’ (Pemberton 2007; Box 1981). Many of these harms emerge as a consequence of the way in which post-industrial society is organised (Pantazis and Pemberton 2012). That is to say that they are structurally embedded within the very architecture, as integral and necessary components, of neoliberal economic and political organisation (Barton et al 2007; Tombs and Hillyard 2004). However, as will be explained, it is also necessary to acknowledge the way in which this harmful societal organisation is inter-subjectively actualised and reproduced via a perpetual and active solicitation by the wider citizenry to the very culture and subjectivity it endeavours to cultivate (Hall 2015). Such an acknowledgement is salient precisely because it is all too often incorrectly articulated by right wing criminologists or entirely ignored by ‘leftist’ criminology (Hall 2012b).

Perhaps one of the clearest examples of socio-structurally induced harm is poverty, for it currently causes “more death, disease, suffering and misery than any other social phenomenon” (Gordon 2004:251). However despite representing the world’s greatest source of social harm, real political will to ameliorate this pressing social issue remains impotent (Gordon 2004). As a result poverty has continued to grow remorselessly over recent decades, including within the economic powerhouses of the UK and the USA (Dorling 2010). The fact that such growth has occurred within the two parent countries that gave birth to a revived free market capitalism is not surprising (Kiely 2009), for they represent the epicentre of a series of tenets that serve to uphold injustice (Dorling 2010). For instance, it has been argued that the subsequent poverty that results from violations of economic and social rights is “partly a result of a neoliberal philosophical position which equates justice and liberty with freedom from intentional coercion” (Gordon 2004:263). Simply put, the inordinate neoliberal focus upon protecting *negative rights* to non-interference precludes the meaningful application of *positive rights* to aid, which undoubtedly requires more extensive action from the state (Fagan 2011). Moreover, it

sustains our collective adherence to a set of basic regulatory moral norms based upon the notion of causation, allowing us to deny responsibility for harms resulting from a failure to act (Persson and Savulescu 2014).

Despite requiring only a marginal redirection of the flow of income from the world's richest 20% to the poorest 20% to dramatically change the extent and severity of the social harm caused by poverty (Gordon 2004), international income inequalities continue to widen (Dorling 2010; Wilkinson and Pickett 2010). It is perhaps unsurprising to note that the greatest financial chasms between the rich and the poor exist in neoliberal countries, particularly the USA and the UK (Pantazis and Pemberton 2009). For instance, Chernomas and Hudson (2007) note that in the USA the income received by the bottom 90% of the population fell by 7% whilst that of the top 1% rose by 148% between 1973 and 2000. Such disparities further reveal the extent to which the neoliberal economic restructuring discussed in the previous chapter has exploited, disadvantaged and damaged large sections of humanity without attracting legally codified condemnation (Taylor 2013).

Dorling (2010) argues that such growing financial inequalities have resulted in a large and ever-growing proportion of individuals being excluded from the norms of society. However, it can be argued that rather than being barred from these societal norms, those defined as 'socially excluded' are also subject to its dominant cultural injunction to enjoy (Winlow and Hall 2013). Indeed, akin to their 'included' counterparts they *over identify* with the culture of consumerism and pursue with commensurate vigour its intoxicating symbolic power (Buccellato and Reid 2014). What they are in fact excluded from is the pseudo-pacified means by which they can "engage in *consumer* forms of hedonistic indulgence" (Winlow and Hall 2013:114, original emphasis). Nevertheless, what remains agreeable is that those deemed socially excluded are increasingly experiencing a new kind of poverty in that they are poor, indebted and excluded from legitimate opportunities to attain symbolic success (Dorling 2010; Horsley 2015).

With an estimated sixth of all households in countries like those constituting Britain being home to the new poor, the phenomenon is certainly extensive (Dorling 2010), and at its heart lies a collective state of indenture, “the terrifying spectre haunting the neoliberal era” (Taylor 2013:70). Living with this terrifying spectre has become a common experience for many Britons (Southwood 2011), with debt becoming a state of necessity in order to simply ‘get by’ for approximately a fifth of the population (Dorling 2010). However far from being confined to the production of financial inequalities, the latest manifestations of rising inequality and the attitudes which help to sustain them serve to maintain differentially distributed access to education, healthcare, employment and housing (Dorling 2010; Tombs and Hillyard 2004). Following the 2008 ‘credit crunch’ such inequalities deepened in the wake of the foreseeable and thus preventable consequences of the Coalition government’s austerity measures, which have served only to intensify the harms and indignities already suffered by large sections of the social body (Pantazis and Pemberton 2012; Winlow and Hall 2013).

For instance, despite trying to mask its extent by counting individuals working one hour or more a week or those on a zero-hour contract as ‘employed’, high levels of unemployment has been a resulting harm of severe consequence (Hall and Winlow 2015). Indeed individuals denied participation in the labour market suffer a double bind of exclusion, for not only are they excluded from the opportunity to attain self-worth via involvement in productive economic activity but they are subsequently excluded from the realm of legitimate consumerism (Pemberton 2004; Pantazis and Pemberton 2009). Economically unintegrated and socially excluded, “this section of the population has become the ‘by-product’ of capitalist society” (Pemberton 2004:80).

Such socio-economic harm is largely a result of government policies intent on maintaining a commitment to capitalist realism, complete with its broad system of diverse harms which are reproduced in its conventional culture and subjectivity (Hall 2015). Accordingly, it could be argued that those who suffer from structurally induced unemployment have been victimised by the capitalist system (Ward 2004). Although such victimisation often escapes the analytical

and empirical purview of criminology, the social harm perspective takes full cognisance of the harmful effects caused by unemployment and the inevitable socio-economic exclusion that follows (Barton et al 2007). Similarly, by training this zemiological lens upon the widespread social phenomenon of homelessness it becomes clear that such indignity is a state induced harm that, despite existing outside the orbit of official criminalisation and thus mainstream criminological inquiry, should be considered a criminal failure to intervene (Milovanovic and Henry 2001; Henry and Milovanovic 1996; Salmi 2004).

However, rather than optimistically assuming that such harms will immediately disappear once they are criminalised and obviated by minor and periodic policy tweaks (Bottomley 1979; Hall 2015), it must be acknowledged that they are the result of the fundamental systemic violence of global capitalism (Žižek 2009a). Indeed, they are inherent manifestations of our current social conditions which automatically create excluded and dispensable individuals (Žižek 2009a). It is perhaps within this overarching context that the harm perspective begins to show its true worth, for it can explore wider aetiologies of harm production from a perspective unrestricted by concerns for establishing proxy measures of intent (Pemberton 2007; Hillyard and Tombs 2007). From this perspective new and interesting possibilities emerge for the allocation of responsibility for the occurrence of adverse harms, which arise due to the failure to deal adequately with structurally embedded social issues (Hillyard and Tombs 2007). Such possibilities allow us the opportunity to hold accountable the entire liberal-capitalist way of life, rather than simply those in possession of concentrated corpo-criminal power (Hall and Winlow 2015).

Such accountability is of considerable importance as there is evidence to suggest that the most widespread harms are in fact structurally embedded within the global capitalist system itself and occur largely as a result of a socio-political omission to act (Pantazis and Pemberton 2012). Certainly, the number of injuries sustained by individuals as a result of states omitting to ameliorate specific social conditions is overwhelming (Rothe and Kauzlarich 2014). However, it is salient to note that whilst responsibility for the production of the aforementioned examples of social violence by omission can be laid firmly at

the feet of the state (Salmi 2004), we are ourselves complicit in perpetuating both the structural conditions and ideological tenets that sustain these socially violent omissions (Dorling 2010; Hall and Winlow 2015). Indeed by maintaining a collective commitment to fetishistically disavow the harmful injustices orchestrated by the global capitalist project, large sections of the population simply reproduce and actively solicit the very sociosymbolic order that produces inordinate social harms (Winlow and Hall 2013).

This complicity in the production of harm could perhaps be termed '*the Anthropocene of harm*', a term that arguably provides a more accurate description of the phenomenon than those which refer only to the violence of systems or structures. Few zemiological perspectives have attempted to capture this anthropocentric dimension of harm as much as Pemberton's (2004) developing theory of moral indifference. This theoretical framework seeks to capture the "inactivity of capitalist societies to the human suffering caused by their organisation" (Pemberton 2004:67), and the creation of a culture of moral indifference among both those who perpetrate harm and those who have effectively become inactive bystanders to such harm.

However, it must be acknowledged that whilst Pemberton's theory points us in the right direction it is only partially correct, for it fails to take adequate cognisance of the prerequisite epistemological dimension of a moral indifference towards harm. That is, it fails to recognise that to feel a sense of moral indifference one must have an *accepted* knowledge of the harmful events thought to stimulate such sensibility. Yet the attainment of such knowledge is all but precluded by the dominant sociosymbolic order's inculcation of a state of collective fetishistic disavowal. Indeed, this convenient refutation of that which we know to be true but cannot bring ourselves to really believe effectively serves to suppress the stimulation of morality, and in time prevents its development altogether (Žižek 2011). Certainly, one cannot feel morally indifferent towards social harms that one disavows knowledge of, and it is in this sense that such disavowed knowledge precludes the animation of our moral sensibilities towards social harm.

However, even amongst those who remain partially resistant to the broad ideological technique of fetishistic disavowal, and thereby acknowledge the existence of adverse social harms, a sense of moral indifference is maintained. This is because their assimilation to the dominant negative ideology of capitalist realism and its associated identity politics function to 're-naturalise' capitalism and the acceptance of things as they are (Fisher 2009; Žižek 2008b). Moreover, such moral indifference is often mediated by a perverse morality grounded in a strong Protestant vision of the undeserving, which serves to cultivate feelings not simply of indifference but of disdain towards those who suffer the harmful indignities of injustice (Eagleton 2009; Fredman 2008). Indeed, it is thought that those unfit to pursue their self-interests in the neoliberal free market actively court the harm that befalls them (Fredman 2008). Consequently, it is this strange bedfellowship of collective fetishistic disavowal and mediated moral indifference that fully constitutes the aforementioned anthropocentric dimension of harm.

Toiling relentlessly to maintain the symbolic machinery that both creates and perpetuates this culture of collective fetishistic disavowal and mediated moral indifference, economic and political elites endeavour to validate the socio-structural harms endured by large sections of society (Pemberton 2004). To a large extent this is achieved via an unyielding ascription to the dominant negative ideology of capitalist realism and its presentation as the least worst of all possible economic systems (Fisher 2009; Winlow and Hall 2013). Accordingly, the consent of subordinate groups is maintained by reasserting the idyllic image of liberal-capitalism whilst simultaneously creating physical and mental distance between those who perpetrate and witness social harm and those who suffer its indignities, thereby suppressing both moral and social responsibility (Pemberton 2004).

As previously alluded to, this distancing and suppression is facilitated by the successful assimilation of the wider citizenry into a common-sense hierarchy of immorality, one which limits moral and legal abhorrence to immediately visible harms resulting from intentional acts (Box 1989). Consequently, collective culpability for the perpetuation of preventable harms is severely diminished as

we increasingly become socialised into feeling “more responsible for the harm we cause than for the benefits we fail to cause... [since we] have moral duties or obligations not to harm, but not to benefit” (Persson and Savulescu 2014:4). In other words, we retain a resolute adherence to the maintenance of *negative rights* to not be interfered with or intentionally harmed whilst affording less weight to the application of *positive rights* to be benefited (Persson and Savulescu 2014; Driver 2007). In essence neoliberal subjects feel morally indifferent towards socially mediated harms that exist outside of their empirical domain of experience. More specifically, as the physical and mental distance between the inactive bystander to harm and the actualised events endured by the victimised increases, the subject’s optical perspective of socially mediated harm is reduced, as are feelings of moral responsibility (Pemberton 2004; Bhaskar 2008a).

Simply put, a collective state of fetishistic disavowal of both knowledge and moral responsibility for socially mediated harms is secured by a politically facilitated physical distancing and mental suppression of the effects of such induced harm. Strengthening this collective mentality further is the political and criminological focus upon the relative visibility of certain forms of ‘crime’ compared to that of social harm, alongside the perpetual representation of the former as constituting the major source of societal damage (Henry and Lanier 1998; Pemberton 2007). This focus upon the more visible forms of subjective violence conveniently serves to distract the citizenry from the more widespread and structurally embedded forms of systemic violence and its anthropocentric dimensions (Žižek 2009a). However, it must be acknowledged that quite often such distraction is a comforting and welcomed official reaffirmation of the subject’s obsessive denial of broader social issues (Žižek 2011).

Indeed, whilst remaining fixated upon a narrow range of immediate and relatively visible forms of officiated ‘crime’, one is able to remove any lingering vestige of moral responsibility for the myriad harms of reduction and repression which one has been latently complicit in perpetuating (Henry and Milovanovic 1996). For many, simply making charitable donations that help to maintain the “humanitarian mask hiding the face of economic exploitation” (Žižek 2009a:19)

can further facilitate the removal of these lingering vestiges. Accordingly '*the Anthropocene of harm*' takes on a new salience for whilst the neoliberal state and its economic agents hold the smoking gun, we remain complicit in its loading by soliciting the conditions for the rise of the very socially induced harm we try to either temporarily ameliorate or entirely disavow (Žižek 2009a).

Although many forms of socio-structurally induced harms, and the largely charitable means by which they are temporarily dealt with, have become naturalised and normalised in political and media representations of everyday life (Hall and Winlow 2015; Žižek 2011), their socially murderous effects have lost none of their terrible potency (Chernomas and Hudson 2007). Consequently, despite mainstream criminology's silence on the matter, it remains important to highlight both the physical and psychological experiential reality of social harm produced by the political and socio-economic organisation of society (Hall and Winlow 2015).

Alongside the economic and physical manifestations of injustice — such as poverty, unemployment, homelessness, environmental pollution, the denial of basic intermediate needs and declines in the overall quality of life — that many people experience (Pantazis and Pemberton 2009; Taylor 2013), substantial increases in mental ill-health have accompanied the solidification of selfish capitalism (James 2008). Indeed, it has been widely acknowledged that anxiety and depression have become endemic features of a stress infested precarious existence that now constitutes normality for many in the neoliberal era (Taylor 2013; Southwood 2011; Dorling 2010). However, as the 'dose-response' effect of growing inequality yields higher levels of poor mental health (Dorling 2010), it remains those at the bottom of the economic hierarchy that suffer the most (Wilkinson and Pickett 2010).

Certainly, living in a state of incessant 'predictable unpredictability', endeavouring frantically to outmanoeuvre one's economic obsolescence by entering a cycle of non-stop inertia and frenetic (in)activity (Southwood 2011), facilitates the descent into obsessional neurosis; a sub-set of hysteria whereby the subject tries to satisfy the big Other's suspected injunction to work (Myers

2003). Of course the subject's exhausting attempt has already been foiled by a predatory capitalism that no longer requires a mass industrialised workforce and is therefore thrust deeper into a state of ontological insecurity, bereft of a sense of context, meaning or identity and left only with a lingering depressive anxiousness regarding one's place in society (MacKian 2012). Much of this lingering depressive anxiousness quickly becomes *objectless*, as its socio-structural genesis is all but replaced by a diverse array of ideologically manufactured threats which serve to stimulate an anticipatory sense of further loss that constantly and irrevocably haunts the psyche (Hall and Winlow 2015).

The resultant poor psychological health congeals in the neurological circuits and immune systems of those subject to such inequitable socio-economic conditions, ultimately affecting their physiological functioning (Wilkinson and Pickett 2010). Indeed, chronic stress and anxiety can cause a myriad of bodily ills including rapid aging, cardiovascular disease, infections and damage to the adrenal glands and reproductive organs (Wilkinson and Pickett 2010). The overall consequence of such induced ill-health is that people with limited social standing tend to die younger in societies where inequality is sharpest (Chernomas and Hudson 2007). However, it appears that society has become accustomed to socio-structurally induced psychological ill-health and the social murder that often results from it (Dorling 2010). This is perhaps in large part due to the fact that neoliberalism purposely encourages and distributes psychological distress among large sections of the social body; feasting upon the insecurity it cultivates (James 2008; Winlow and Hall 2006).

Serving to attenuate the effects of such distress so as to maintain a sublimated and manageable excess, the manufacture of various pharmaceutical treatments has been used to "cope with the consequent despair on a mass scale" (Dorling 2010:4). Indeed, despite the possibility of harmful side effects the normalisation of self-administered psychopharmacological treatments has become significant (Dorling 2010; Taylor 2013). Viewed alongside the high volume of illicit drugs and alcohol consumed in neoliberal societies, the overall picture provides a very clear indication of "the pain wrought by inequality on a very large scale" (Wilkinson and Pickett 2010:72).

Criminology or Zemiology? Yes, Please!

Evidently, the zemiological perspective is capable of taking full cognisance of a wide range of socio-structurally induced harms and their pervasive economic, psychological and physical effects, which remain otherwise opaque to mainstream criminology (Hall and Winlow 2015; Hillyard and Tombs 2007). Consequently, not only have a number of critically informed scholars rallied for a reconceptualization of criminology's legitimate domain of inquiry from 'crime' to 'harm' (Muncie 2000), but others have evoked a drive to move entirely 'beyond' the discipline of criminology itself (Hillyard et al 2004). On the surface very little appears to be problematic about such endeavours, indeed much of what has been written so far in this chapter adheres to the expressed need to reposition harm at the forefront of the criminological enterprise. However, we must remain cautious regarding drives to dispense with criminology in favour of zemiology, for whilst the imposition of this dualistic false alternative appears 'promising' there remain numerous pitfalls (Žižek 2000a).

First and foremost it must be acknowledged that although many of the assertions made by the pioneering zemiologists are undoubtedly true, the claim that "'crime' consists of many petty events" (Hillyard and Tombs 2004:12) is a complete misnomer. Certainly, the argument — made via the use of positivist statistics no less — that the vast majority of events defined as 'crime' often create little physical or financial harm and would not "score particularly highly on a scale of personal hardship" (Hillyard and Tombs 2007:11), pays no regard to the experiential reality of crime alluded to above. Indeed, it has already been noted that "crude national or regional statistics tell us very little about what actually goes on in the nooks and crannies of everyday life" (Hall et al 2008:ix). Whilst the category of 'crime' is undeniably socially constructed, the outcome of individuals acting towards its culturally mediated production inevitably produces real consequences for those involved, who experience this reality as harm in the empirical domain of everyday life (Henry and Milovanovic 1996; Bhaskar 2008a).

Make no mistake, the accumulation of what some of the early zemiologists considered to be *'trivial'* or *'petty'* offences undoubtedly causes considerable harm to those who endure them (Young 1975, 1988b). Accordingly, it must be acknowledged that whilst *'crime'* is only the tip of the iceberg (Lea and Young 1993), it remains a problematic tip nonetheless. It continues to disrupt the lives of many, but particularly those who occupy disastrous locales blighted by a raft of social issues among which *'crime'* retains a salient position (Hall et al 2008). *'Petty'* offences co-exist alongside issues of socio-economic marginalisation and often intertwine with acts of violence and intimidation to form harmful and corrosive flows of under-reported and under-recorded crime, often perpetrated by and against the powerless, creating a milieu of fear and suspicion (Hall 2012b). Grounded in bitter experience rather than mass-media constructions (Winlow and Hall 2006), individuals locked in such fear inducing milieus experience fear of crime as a concrete universal truth and not simply as objectless anxiety (Hall and Winlow 2015).

To a large extent such fear constantly functions as a rational response guided by experiential *'intuitions'* honed to protect oneself from impending attacks (Sparks 1992). However such protection comes at a price, for fear induced chronic over activation of the endocrine system, which marshals an individual's fight-or-flight response, severely damages the physiological functioning of the body and therefore dangerously diminishes one's health (Hill et al 2005; Wallace 2012). Despite the harmful consequences of such psychophysiological manifestations of fear, criminologists have largely neglected this facet from their investigations of the fear of crime (Sacco 2005). Yet it would appear that so too have some of the early zemiologists who evidently do not concern themselves with the consequences of the *'trivial'* and *'petty'* events which constitute *'crime'* (Hillyard and Tombs 2007).

Indeed, these scholars appear to commit the cardinal error of separating events which manifest themselves as *'crime'* from the broader socio-structural harms generated by liberal-capitalism (Lea and Young 1993; Pemberton 2007). This separation excludes criminal harms from the analysis of social harm as if the two were isolated problems, weighted and judged to be amenable either to

exploration or ignorance (Pemberton 2007; Lea and Young 1993). However, it makes little sense to subject the un-criminalised socio-structurally induced harms discussed above to critical zemiological scrutiny without carrying the analysis through to its ultimate conclusion. That is to acknowledge that beyond the social harm generated by the state's systemically violent acts of omission and indifference lies the criminal harm both perpetrated and endured by the very victims of such systemic violence. Evidently, if we are to adequately explore the production of social harm in all its multifaceted complexity it is necessary to move beyond the crude structuralist approach adhered to, at least for the most part, by many of the early zemiologists and adopt a more holistic approach (Hillyard et al 2004). Certainly, as early sections of this chapter have made clear, the powerless are victimised from all directions and subject to *both* social and criminal harm (Lea and Young 1993).

Consequently the drive to move 'beyond criminology' solely towards zemiology appears problematic and more than a little misguided, for there is no reason why we cannot have both tea and coffee whilst having our cake and eating it too. The position being advanced here is a simple refusal of choice between the false alternatives of criminology or zemiology (Žižek 2000a). Interestingly, this refusal of choice does not appear anathema to those who blazed the zemiological trail (Hillyard et al 2004). Indeed, despite some scholars retaining feelings of disdain towards the investigation of what they consider to be the '*petty*' bulk of crime (Hillyard and Tombs 2004, 2007), the romanticised downplaying of serious harms caused by criminal acts and the simplistic separation of criminal and social harm is not endorsed by all the early zemiologists (Hillyard et al 2004; Barton et al 2007). Rather they maintain that the true endeavour of the zemiological movement has been to remove the constraining brackets surrounding criminological investigation in order to broaden its legitimate parameters of study, so as to incorporate a wide range of un-criminalised and hidden harms as serious focal concerns within its orbit of inquiry (Muncie 2000; Hopkins Burke 2014). Zemiology thus functions to re-engage criminology's dialectical energy enabling a more holistic exploration of *both* 'crime' and 'harm' (Hall and Winlow 2015). However, this re-engagement is undeniably still in its infancy and there remains considerable work to be done,

particularly surrounding the task of providing the concept of harm with a firm ontological anchorage grounded in reality (Hall and Winlow 2015).

Finding 'Harm's' Ontological Reality:

It has been routinely commented that the concept of 'harm' is more ontologically grounded than the legal category of 'crime' (Hillyard et al 2005; Hall 2012b). However, this statement still requires some careful clarification for, as some zemiologists readily admit, 'harm' is still quite a nebulous term covering an inordinate range of heterogeneous phenomena of varied significance and consequence (Hall 2014a; Hillyard et al 2005). Consequently, whilst the harm perspective opens promising developmental avenues for the hitherto constrained discipline of criminology, it nevertheless remains beset with numerous conceptual issues and ambiguities thereby retaining a lack of specificity (Yar 2012). Attaining some semblance of specificity requires identifying and distinguishing between what constitutes consensual core and peripheral harms (Hall and Winlow 2015).

Making such distinctions is by no means an easy task. One runs the very real risk of restrictively reducing the consensual core so that only a very narrow range of the most brutal harms are included (Hall 2014a), or expanding the core beyond its limits so as to render the concept of harm analytically and empirically ineffectual (Hall and Winlow 2015). Accordingly, it has been argued that the successful determination of what actions or events should be considered part of this harmful core requires a normative rationale firmly grounded in an understanding of the human condition (Pantazis and Pemberton 2009). Grounded in this understanding the needs-based harm perspective provides a reasonable starting point in the development of such a rationale (Pemberton 2007). Simply put, this perspective endeavours to demarcate subjective wants and desires from the pre-requisite human needs essential for human well-being and posits that harm results from the denial or non-fulfilment of these needs (Pemberton 2007).

Helping to further refine this still quite amorphous position by honing in a little more precisely upon the ‘basic needs’ required to secure human integrity and well-being, Yar (2012) utilises the concept of recognition, itself considered to be a vital human need (Williams 2000), in order to try and remedy the ontological deficit currently pervading zemiology. Drawing upon Honneth’s (1996) recognition-theoretic which usefully identifies three forms of recognition — love, rights and esteem — essential for human self-realisation, Yar (2012) positions the denial of recognition as constituting the fundamental kernel of social harm. It is argued that since these three forms of recognition correspond to the basic requirements necessary for self and inter-subjective integrity, “social harms can be understood to comprise nothing other than *the inter-subjective experience of being refused recognition with respect to any or all of these dimensions of need*” (Yar 2012:59, original emphasis).

Grounding the concept of harm in the refusal of recognition provides the heterogeneous phenomena identified by social harm theorists with some degree of conceptual clarity and unity, for the ontological reality of these harms can be said to lie in their proclivity towards the inducement of non-recognition and disrespect (Yar 2012). This initial ontological anchorage of the concept of harm undoubtedly draws us closer towards identifying the consensual core. However, it remains questionable whether the simple restoration of social recognition, which in the neoliberal imagination remains wedded to the preservation of *negative rights*, is sufficient to alleviate the social harm induced via the omission or purposeful negation of *positive rights* (Hall and Winlow 2015). Indeed, it can be argued that any attempt to restore recognition alone borders on impropriety for the very social interdependency upon which social recognition was originally based has been severed (Hall 2015).

Where once the mutual recognition of the Hegelian master-slave dialectic framed the social relations between capitalists and labourers, today’s neoliberal global economy has transcended this position of mutuality (Hall and Winlow 2015). Endowed with the ‘special liberty’ granted by the solidification of the eighty/twenty labour relation referred to in the previous chapter, capitalists no longer require the mass of labourers, or their recognition, they once did (Hall

2012b; Žižek 2011). Accordingly, the simple restoration of inter-subjective recognition will not suffice as a harm reducing mechanism whilst structurally induced social inequalities and economic redundancies persist. Little recognition can be legitimately attained by those who no longer possess the means to actualise their potential, and whom continue to be viewed by those who wield self-affirmed 'special liberty' as little more than globalised human waste (Hall 2012b; Bauman 2004). Essentially, it is not enough to espouse the reaffirmation of social recognition whilst retaining untouched the wider political and socio-economic milieu that fostered its severance. Rather, what is needed is the simultaneous restoration of social recognition and concerted systemic social change (Hall 2012b; Hall and Winlow 2015).

Indeed it is precisely because struggles for recognition occur within a milieu of exacerbated inequality and socio-economic and symbolic injustice, that affirmative attempts to restore recognition without systematically disturbing the dominant sociosymbolic order fail to pay dividend (Fraser 1995). Whilst social recognition retains a position of considerable salience to the human condition, it remains little more than an illusory or abstract right so long as it continues to be divorced from an equitable socio-economic base capable of providing every element of the social body the means to actualise this recognition (Marx 1843 [2012]). To be 'recognised' in the current dominant sociosymbolic order is only to be given permission to acknowledge that one has the *negative right* to such recognition (Marx 1843 [2012]). This acknowledgement simply allows the right-holder to pursue a position of social recognition without providing the structural means necessary to actualise inter-subjective recognition and meaningful *positive rights* in the first instance (Fagan 2011). Accordingly, the revival of inter-subjective recognition cannot in and of itself function to reduce the myriad social harms endured by the neoliberal subject for it evidently fails to consider the harms caused by such *absence*. That is, to acknowledge the reality of negative existences and the inscription of their causative influences within the domain of the real, which inevitably manifest themselves as constraining ills experienced by individuals as harm in the empirical domain (Nellhaus 2007; Bhaskar 2008b). Such as, for instance, the experience of enduring social harms caused by the withdrawal of meaningful economic participation, the

retrenchment of non-privatised welfare or the absence of other *positive rights* (Hall and Winlow 2015; Southwood 2011).

Consequently the restoration of recognition must be accompanied by a reinvigorated application of *positive rights*, capable of securing for all the ability to exercise this vital human need (Fredman 2008). In other words, renewed emphasis must be directed towards providing the socio-structural conditions conducive to the exercise of one's social recognition, via the solidification of actionable *positive rights* to "equality, education, healthcare and the means of earning a living and supporting [one's] family" (Halstead 2008:13). However this requires more than tokenistic gestures of affirmative recognition and economic redistribution, which by their very nature presuppose the continuation of inequality (Fraser 1995). Indeed, it exacts a combined implementation of *transformative economic distribution*, via the fundamental restructuring of the existing relations of production, and *transformative recognition* which in turn restructures the current differentiation of social recognition (Fraser 1995). Although, it is salient to note that such implementations must take place within a stable and sustainable socio-economic system (Hall and Winlow 2015). Only via the establishment of such a system and the solidification of substantive equality grounded in full socio-economic participation (transformative economic distribution) and universally recognised citizenship (transformative recognition) can we secure a position of true human emancipation and flourishing (Fredman 2008; O'Connor 2013).

This is the dual position upon which a revitalised and ontologically grounded social harm perspective can be established, from which we may begin to more precisely demarcate the consensual core of harm as that which leaves whatever or whoever affected in a worse condition than before the enactment or absence of an action, system, process or event. Therefore, rather than limiting the core to the denial of recognition alone its circumference must extend to include the socio-structural negation of the means by which recognition can not only be attained but actualised. Certainly, the retention of a resilient focus upon the preservation of the negative right to recognition alone not only risks perpetuating social harm under the guise of what could perhaps be termed

pseudo-recognition, but diminishes the original zemiological pursuit to incorporate within our vision of what constitutes harm the omission of positive rights and duties (Pemberton 2004). Accordingly, the position being advanced here is that a new conceptual framework, built upon the empirical-analytic concepts of recognition *and* distributive economic participation, provides the harm perspective with a firm ontological anchorage grounded in the reality of late capitalism (Hall 2015). From here we can begin to establish, revise and investigate more holistically core social harms (Hall and Winlow 2015).

Moreover, from this position the contemporary juxtaposition of 'harm' and 'crime' as being antagonistic conceptual alternatives can be dissolved (Yar 2012). Indeed, it has already been established that it serves no useful purpose to impose a choice between these false alternatives, proceeding to investigate these artificially imposed brackets as if they exist in isolation divorced from one another and their effects (Hillyard et al 2004). Certainly, many of the individuals with whom the researcher spoke experienced both criminal and non-criminalised harms from multiple directions and layers of the social body. Consequently, the interconnectedness of systemic social harms and the inevitable 'criminal spillage' that follows assumes a simple yet corrosive resonance for a number of Lake Town's residents (Hall 2014a). Indeed, many individuals articulated narratives that portray all too clearly the experience of suffering socio-structurally induced harm, whilst simultaneously enduring and/or perpetrating criminal acts against those in similar socio-economic conditions.

Fundamentally, such accounts are indicative of the fact that social harm, in the form of the denial of recognition and distributive economic participation, is not only generated at the macro level but simultaneously exercised and experienced at the micro level. For instance, in areas such as Lake Town many residents are often denied the negative rights to recognition and non-interference, as well as the positive right to legitimate economic participation, by socially intimidating and economically monopolising branches of glocal criminal networks (Hall 2015, 2012b). In essence, many of Lake Town's residents experience the systemic denial of both negative and positive rights whilst simultaneously having such denial further reinforced by those who illegally

sustain and destroy the area's social fabric (Lea 2002). Therefore, as the findings in chapter five suggest, the social harm perspective must once again take cognisance of the fact that beyond socio-systemic induced harms lie perpetual flows of corrosive yet largely normalised criminal harms, both perpetrated and endured by the very victims of such socio-systemic harms. Before such findings can be presented however, it is necessary to address the multifaceted methodological parameters which have informed the research process and it is to their delineation that the next chapter now turns.

Chapter Four:

Research Methodology.

The purpose of this chapter is to delineate the ontological and epistemological considerations that have informed the researcher's decision-making process regarding the selection of the particular research design, appropriate methods, instruments, procedural manoeuvres and other pertinent methodological considerations. These considerations have been collated and put to work to form a robust methodological framework capable of eliciting not only individuals' articulable experiences of crime, but also their tacit or disavowed knowledge of non-criminalised social harms. This has primarily been facilitated by combining the harm perspective of the new zemiological movement with the philosophical traditions of critical realism and transcendental materialism. Together these provide the discursive space within which individuals may express their lived experiences of harm without being constrained by legalistic conceptualisations of criminality. Through the use of this unique methodological framework participants were encouraged to think beyond the dominant capitalist realist ideology, official terminology and rhetoric in order to express their otherwise disavowed drives, desires and real world experiences of both recognised and unrecognised forms of social harm.

Ontological and Epistemological Considerations:

As previously mentioned, underpinning this research is a complex methodological framework which combines, alongside the aforementioned zemiological perspective, the philosophical traditions of critical realism and transcendental materialism. Accordingly, it is necessary to provide here a brief discussion of these two intricately complex systems of thought for two important reasons. Firstly as a means of explicating the fundamental ontological and epistemological groundings and the accompanying influence that such considerations have had upon the methodological structure of this research.

Secondly, this discussion will serve as a brief introduction for those who may not necessarily be familiar with these traditions.

Critical realism, initially associated with the foundational work of Bhaskar (2008a, 1998) and subsequently Archer et al (1998), Sayer (2000, 2010) and Danermark et al (2002) among others, is a sophisticated philosophical and methodological movement. It can perhaps be best described as “one of a range of postpositivist approaches positioned between positivism/objectivism and constructionism/relativism” (Clark 2008:167). This movement emerged as a result of the sustained critique of the seemingly antagonistic and diametrically opposed dominance of both positivist empiricism and constructionist/interpretivist relativism (Bhaskar 1998; Elger 2010; Iosifides 2011a; Wynn and Williams 2012). Indeed, critical realism advanced itself as a viable alternative capable of transcending such paradigmatic tensions and unhelpful dichotomies by proposing “a way of combining a modified naturalism with a recognition of the necessity of interpretive understanding of meaning in social life” (Sayer 2000:3). Consequently, social scientists operating within a critical realist framework accept a transcendental realist ontology whilst simultaneously retaining a form of epistemological constructionism and relativism, in addition to an axiologically inspired emancipatory focus (Maxwell 2012; Easton 2010a).

Fundamentally, and at its most basic, critical realism assumes the existence of a real world ‘out there’ (Easton 2010a; Wynn and Williams 2012), a reality independent of human knowledge or identification of it, and “at the same time a dimension which includes our socially determined knowledge about reality” (Danermark et al 2002:6; Iosifides 2011a; Sayer 2010). However, it is salient to note that such socially determined knowledge is always conceptually mediated, theory laden and thus fundamentally partial, incomplete and fallible. Therefore there is a hiatus in the relationship between knowledge and its object (Maxwell 2012; Sayer 2010), or more precisely, between the intransitive and transitive dimensions of social scientific knowledge and inquiry (Bhaskar 1998; Sayer 2000; Iosifides 2011a). Synonymous with ontology (Engholm 2007), the intransitive dimension consists of the multifaceted entities which comprise the

world, its structures, systems of social relations and other physical processes and social phenomena (Wynn and Williams 2012; Iosifides 2011a). These operate independently of our ability to identify or understand them, but nevertheless form the objects of science (Wynn and Williams 2012; Sayer 2000). Congruently, and for its part synonymous with epistemology (Engholm 2007), the transitive dimension includes our constructed theoretical propositions, discourses and conceptual schemes which form the basis of our tentative knowledge regarding the intransitive dimension (Iosifides 2011a). This uncertain knowledge base has gradually been generated through inherently fallible reasoning and scientific research and is inevitably, as a matter of course, continuously subject to revision and reinterpretation (Wynn and Williams 2012).

This distinction between the intransitive and the transitive dimensions infers that the world, as it exists 'out there', cannot simply be reduced to, or conflated with, our perceptions and direct experiences of it (Sayer 2000; Wynn and Williams 2012). Indeed to do so would be to commit what has come to be termed the 'epistemic fallacy', whereby statements about being are investigated in terms of statements about knowledge (Bhaskar 2008a). In other words, by conflating ontology with epistemology, transposing being into knowledge of being (Cruickshank 2007), we reduce "what is to what we can know about it" (Danermark et al 2002:21). It must therefore be acknowledged that the complex nature of reality is not exhausted merely in what individuals perceive or directly experience for reality is differentiated and stratified (Bhaskar 1998). It is characterised by 'ontological depth' and is comprised of multifaceted layers, structures and relations which possess productive powers and causal mechanisms that are not directly observable or comprehensible (Iosifides 2011b). They can however be experienced indirectly, although only in a fractional and spasmodic way, by individuals through the effects of events causally produced by these powers and mechanisms (Danermark et al 2002).

It is this identification of a stratified ontology, as opposed to what might be regarded as a flat ontology characteristic of both positivism and constructionism (Easton 2010a), that forms a key aspect of critical realism (Wynn and Williams 2012). It is also one which Bhaskar (2008a) helpfully facilitates the exploration

of by providing an ‘ontological map’, charting and delineating three distinct yet overlapping ontological domains of reality (Danermark et al 2002). Indeed, as depicted in Table 1 below, Bhaskar (2008a) differentiates between the domains of the real, the actual and the empirical.

Table 1: The Three Ontological Domains of Reality.
(Adapted from Bhaskar 2008a:13).

	<i>Domain of Real</i>	<i>Domain of Actual</i>	<i>Domain of Empirical</i>
<i>Mechanisms</i>	✓		
<i>Events</i>	✓	✓	
<i>Experiences</i>	✓	✓	✓

The domain of the real refers to the underlying generative mechanisms, structures and relations which, when appropriate contextual circumstances and contingent conditions coalesce to stimulate what are predominantly latent or unexercised tendencies, possess the causal power to produce events and phenomena in the actual realm (Clark 2008; Iosifides 2011a). Consequently, the domain of the actual refers to what eventuates if and when the causal powers which reside within the real are enacted (Sayer 2000; Wynn and Williams 2012). However, as alluded to previously, both the domains of the real and the actual remain recalcitrant to direct observation and can be perceived only fallibly (Clark 2008). Therefore, they produce patterns of events which inevitably occur regardless of the capability of the human condition to observe their existence (Wynn and Williams 2012; Christie et al 2000). As a result, despite our social scientific interest orbiting the predominantly unobservable domains of the real and the actual, the researcher has instead to “deal with what can be observed in the realm of the empirical” (Ackroyd 2009:533).

Indeed, it is within the domain of the empirical that social actors may spasmodically observe and experience, either directly or indirectly, phenomena, events and processes emanating from the domain of the actual. Informed by such empirical actualities individuals subsequently attempt to construct conceptual and interpretive schemes that may facilitate the partial and fallible

apprehension of reality (Iosifides 2011a; Danermark et al 2002). However, it should be acknowledged that what is observed or experienced may not be interpreted uniformly by different social actors, in as much as there is an implicit process of interpretation that intervenes between the realms of the actual and the empirical (Easton 2010a). Consequently, engagement with what Sayer (2000:17) refers to as the “interpretive or Hermeneutic dimension” is of acknowledged importance to critical realism (Smith and Elger 2012). Indeed, critical realists view social phenomena as being intrinsically meaningful and thus it becomes necessary, if one is to understand the dominant cause of societal action, to attain some understanding of the reasons and meanings that individuals assign to their actions (Sayer 2000; Manicas 2009; Danermark et al 2002). Fundamentally, the position being advanced is that social actors’ meanings, beliefs and reasons have consequences (Maxwell 2012). They can be causes of social events (Sayer 2010) in that they provide the influential generative mechanisms or underlying motivations conducive to the production of behavioural impulses, which correspond towards a tendency for the social actor to act in certain ways (Maxwell 2012; Krauss 2005; Wynn and Williams 2012). Accordingly, “the beliefs, understandings, and meanings of humans do matter — not because they determine what objective reality is but rather because they are likely to influence behaviour” (Clark 2008:169).

It should also be acknowledged that critical realism supports the view that the wider physical contexts within which individuals are situated causally influence their beliefs and perspectives. Therefore it treats both individuals’ meanings, beliefs and perspectives, as well as their wider socio-structural situations, as real and causally interactive social phenomena (Maxwell 2012). Evidently, significant understanding of individuals’ meanings, beliefs and reasons and how such ‘mental’ phenomena exert causal powers is crucial for our ability as social scientists to explore and explain the complexities of the social world (Danermark et al 2002). This is a task to which critical realism is particularly well suited. It can be utilised to guide research into lay beliefs, accounts and experiences (Clark 2008) of how the actualities of stimulated structural mechanisms and processes exert potentially harmful effects upon individuals’ lived realities.

However, this should be tempered with two important caveats. Firstly, it should be acknowledged that individuals may possess, and subsequently act upon, a misunderstood and altogether imperfect view of themselves and their wider socio-economic and cultural circumstances, inevitably resulting in the solicitation of data pertaining to inaccurate accounts of reality (Manicas 2009; Wynn and Williams 2012; Sayer 2010; Clark 2008). They may also possess tacit rather than articulable knowledge (Fleetwood 2005) in that, in the case of this research, individuals may publicly disavow knowledge of social harms which fail to be encompassed within the official rubric of 'crime'. Consequently, and commensurate with the view that not all knowledge is equally fallible (Danermark et al 2002), it is for this reason that critical realists place considerable emphasis upon ascertaining the adequacy of individuals' understanding of their own ideas, beliefs and actions. Additionally, they consider the importance of recognising the possibility that those very ideas, beliefs and actions may contribute towards the reproduction of socio-economic and cultural relations which threaten the interests of the individuals themselves (Iosifides 2011a).

Nevertheless, caution is advisable here. While trying to grasp some discernible understanding of individuals' 'mental' phenomena and the causal powers they exert, one should not needlessly slip into extracting the agent from the wider social structure as an autonomous being. This leads to the unnecessary ontological separation of agency and structure which constitutes the subject of the second caveat. Whilst critical realism generally views both wider socio-structural contexts and individuals' beliefs, meanings and understandings as causally interactive social phenomena (Maxwell 2012), it has not always been successful in retaining this holistic view. Simply put, there is a noted tendency for some forms of critical realism to overemphasise the ontological separation of the agent from the social structure, in such a way as to endow the agent with undue autonomy and command over the self's drives and desires (Brown 2014; Kivinen and Piironen 2006; Hall 2012b).

It is in this respect that the Žižekian synthesis of German idealism and Lacanian psychoanalysis, which has come to be known as transcendental materialism

(Johnston 2008), can arguably help augment the explanatory power of critical realism (Hall and Winlow 2015). Certainly, it undoubtedly yields greater insight into the structure-agency dynamic by explaining more holistically how the agent is temporarily captured by the dominant negative ideology of capitalist realism that underpins the contemporary social structure (Winlow and Hall 2013; Fisher 2009). As alluded to previously, transcendental materialism usefully facilitates the exploration of how individuals are recruited at the emotional and material level, assimilated into the ideological base of the very sociosymbolic order that produces harmful effects to human communities (Winlow and Hall 2013). Before briefly articulating how such assimilation occurs it is worth noting that despite its destructiveness, inequality and perpetual instability (Hall 2012a), the current dominant sociosymbolic order is constituted upon the principles and negative ideology of neoliberal market capitalism and consumer culture (Winlow and Hall 2013). Fisher (2009:2) aptly refers to the ideological entrenchment of this functionally destructive symbiosis as “capitalist realism”.

So how and why does such potentially destructive assimilation occur? Fundamentally, it is argued that in order to avoid the trauma that accompanies the potential re-assimilation into the un-symbolised Lacanian Real, individuals actively solicit their inclusion within the dominant Symbolic Order (Johnston 2008). This in turn provides the requisite socio-cultural symbolic framework, or ideology, necessary to allay the onset of psychic disturbances erupting as a result of an encounter with the obscene Real, as the individual continues to precariously traverse the borders between the orders of the Real and the Symbolic (Winlow and Hall 2013; Myers 2003). At its most basic the argument is that individuals “must belong to a comprehensible sociosymbolic order whose meanings and codes are shared with others who are needed to ensure material and psychic survival in everyday environments” (Winlow and Hall 2013:162). Indeed, as Becker (1975) long since noted, humans are frail and fragile creatures who are so fearful of death, one of the principal evils facing the human organism, that they scurry frantically in search of a means through which they can secure victory over their earthly limitations.

This all-consuming pursuit to retain life at any cost, which in itself often produces new evils in the form of heightened anxiety and constant instability, culminates in the active solicitation for inclusion within a culture or society, or more broadly a sociosymbolic order (Becker 1975; Hall 2012a). Such inclusion serves as an antidote to the terror of mortality by providing a more powerful and durable alter-organism capable of enduring beyond the bodily life endowed by nature (Becker 1975). To be sure, the subject is evidently more than the Symbolic Order's ideology in that residual vestiges of the Real remain in the heart of the subject, precluding the completion of any signifying operation (Žižek 2008a). This essentially bars its comprehensive socialisation, resulting in the subject finding itself in the gaps between symbolic designations which capitalist realism endlessly endeavours to close up (Žižek 2008a; Bjerg 2011). However, inclusion within the sociosymbolic order provides the necessary immortality symbols required to secure some form of indefinite duration and self-perpetuation, ultimately functioning as a standardised system of death denial (Becker 1975, 2011). Therefore, "we are, as it were, part of the [Symbolic] system but more than it at the same time" (Myers 2003:113).

In order to retain some semblance of control over an otherwise overwhelming world, humans immerse themselves completely within the dominant sociosymbolic order and nourish wholeheartedly its ideology. Only such unyielding allegiance will secure the immortality which the socio-cultural symbolic framework alone may confer (Becker 1975). Of course the promise of victory over innate earthly limitations cannot be kept for "death anxiety always lingers under the surface and is never surely and smoothly absorbed in the cultural hero system" (Becker 1975:122). Yet such fear and anxiety remains repressed for the most part, surfacing only occasionally as it forcefully punctures through brief momentary lapses in our collective fetishistic disavowal of our fragility and vulnerability (Becker 1975; Žižek 2011; Winlow and Hall 2013).

Importantly, the dominant sociosymbolic order does not simply offer benign freedom, for it represents both the sanctuary of survival and the cage of entrapment. Indeed, the compelling injunction to grasp for dear life the

immortality symbols offered to us by the sociosymbolic order, which convincingly sells the alluring façade of some indefinite duration, is seized upon by our political leaders. They purchase our obedience to and denial of their self-appraised negative ideology of capitalist realism with the threat of severance from the very immortality symbols which now sustain our material and psychic survival. There exists, they argue, no plausible alternative capable of securing such survival (Becker 1975; Winlow and Hall 2013). Consequently this ideology, as Winlow and Hall (2013:173) note:

... congeals in our neurological circuits to ensure that we encounter and emotionally commit ourselves to the dominant ideology as pure common sense, as a timeless fact of life that must be accepted.

However, it is such emotional commitment combined with the obsessive denial of its harmful effects that inevitably results in social actors inadvertently securing their own domination and degradation. In almost masochistic fashion individuals wilfully and actively collude in, and support the maintenance of, the very sociosymbolic order, complete with its destructive ideology, entities and generative mechanisms, that produces socially harmful events, absences and phenomena within the realm of the actual (Bhaskar 2008a, 2008b). This effects not only the lived realities of those who experience such harms either directly or indirectly in the empirical realm, but also the interests of the wider social body. Therefore, and as shall be explored in more detail in later chapters, the link to criminogenesis is clear. Individuals actively solicit and buy into a negative ideology that constitutes and reproduces cynicism, depoliticisation and potential criminal responses to heightened anxiety, constant instability and insecurity (Hall 2012b). In many respects the effects of such solicitation are particularly acute amongst the impoverished immortality seekers who lash out with more vigour in light of their failure to attain the power of symbolic immortality (Becker 1975).

The position can thus be advanced that transcendental materialism is an independent philosophical tradition that intricately intersects and interacts with the three overlapping ontological domains of reality identified by Bhaskar

(2008a). In fact rather than simply constituting a ‘bolt on’ to the critical realist framework explored so far, it can itself perhaps be viewed as constituting the fourth ontological domain, as depicted in Table 2 below.

Table 2: The Four Ontological Domains of Reality.

	<i>The Transcendental Materialist Domain</i>	<i>Domain of Real</i>	<i>Domain of Actual</i>	<i>Domain of Empirical</i>
<i>Sociosymbolic Order, Drive and Desire</i>	✓			
<i>Mechanisms</i>	✓	✓		
<i>Events</i>	✓	✓	✓	
<i>Experiences</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓

In keeping with the critical realist and transcendental materialist inspired emphasis placed thus far upon the dominant sociosymbolic order and the harmful effects produced in the real, enacted in the actual and experienced in the empirical, this thesis draws upon the concept of social harm, dominion of the new zemiological movement (Hall 2012b). This decision is also in congruence with the acknowledged possibility that such individuals may possess tacit rather than articulable knowledge (Fleetwood 2005), and therefore potentially publicly disavow knowledge of social harms which fail to be encompassed within the ambit of official criminalisation.

Indeed, the social harm perspective is capable of providing individuals with the discursive space to express their lived experiences of harm without the constrictive adherence to the concept of ‘crime’ (Pemberton 2007). By utilising this augmented zemiological approach, the researcher aimed to facilitate research participants’ ability to think beyond the dominant ideology and official terminology, in order to reveal experiences of social harm that remain unnoticed by the statistical quantification of various official institutions. Having delineated the ontological and epistemological framework underpinning this research and articulating the reasons for its utilisation, the thrust of this chapter can now be

directed towards explicating the methodological contours of the research design and methods employed.

Research Design and Methods:

Whilst the overall methodological structure underpinning this research is predicated upon the aforementioned framework, the research design and methods employed were primarily informed by a close reading of the critical realist methods literature. The primary reason for this is that not only is critical realism evidently highly compatible with the other two components of this framework, but it has a relatively more established and better documented methodological focus. This is usefully explicated by numerous scholars including, among others, Sayer (2000, 2010), Maxwell (2012), Iosifides (2011a) and Danermark et al (2002) who outline helpful ways in which research of this nature may proceed.

Essentially, this research is designed around two major components. First and foremost is the exploratory and empirically informed investigation of unreported and unrecorded as well as invisible or overtly ignored forms of crime and social harm within an area referred to in this thesis as 'Lake Town'. Secondly, and less logistically intricate, is the thorough review of the existing literature on international forms of invisible crimes and un-criminalised harms, which will serve to both further illuminate the primary data findings and highlight the connective interaction between the local and global research contexts. Whilst this second component is by no means straightforward, its literature based analytical procedure does not necessitate with commensurate cogency the precise delineation of its intricacies as that associated with the primary empirical component of this research. It is for this reason that the majority of what follows in this chapter is oriented towards the explication of the methodological parameters of this primary empirical component.

Positioned as it is between positivism/objectivism and constructionism/relativism, critical realism is compatible with both quantitative and qualitative research methods (Clark 2008; Krauss 2005; Sayer 2000), or

perhaps more precisely with what a number of critical realists refer to as extensive and intensive research designs (Sayer 2010; Danermark et al 2002; Iosifides 2011a). Similar to but not entirely synonymous with quantitative methods (Iosifides 2011a), extensive research is primarily concerned with the identification of regularities through the sustained observation of variables' quantitative dimensions. Particular emphasis is placed upon identifying their common properties, general patterns and relations in an attempt to reveal how extensive certain phenomena and patterns of events are in a given population (Sayer 2000, 2010). Procedurally, such research is geared towards the collection of quantitative data through, for example, utilising large-scale formal questionnaires or interview surveys aimed at a predetermined and 'representative' sample of individuals from taxonomically defined groups (Danermark et al 2002; Sayer 2010). The focus essentially is upon generating descriptive and inferential statistics and subsequently engaging in complex statistical analysis.

However, it is salient to note that the quantitative identification of statistical relations between observed variables utilising such extensive oriented research does not necessarily facilitate the explication of causal relationships, therefore rendering its explanatory value minimal (Sayer 2000). Consequently, extensive research is considered to be significantly weaker than its intensive counterpart in terms of its ability to excavate causal explanations. Its explanatory power is severely undermined by its embedded successionist theory of causation, evidenced by its dependence and incessant fidelity towards the identification of regularities in punctiform data (Sayer 2010, 2000). Nevertheless, to accept the wholesale rejection of extensive research's methodological efficacy is to risk severe oversimplification for, as Iosifides (2011a) aptly reminds us, its largely quantitative methods are extremely useful for identifying what Lawson (1998) refers to as demi-regularities. According to Lawson (1998:149, original emphasis) a demi-regularity is "a partial event regularity which *prima facie* indicates the occasional, but less than universal, actualization of a mechanism or tendency, over a definite region of time-space". In other words, demi-regularities refer to the identification of rough and ready partial generalities or event regularities that manifest as a result of specific generative causal

mechanisms operating at the empirical level that require further investigation and explanation (Danermark et al 2002; Iosifides 2011a). Consequently, Lawson (1998) argues that the most obvious and useful role for such demi-regularities is that they are capable of providing an important source of directionality to the investigatory remit of social scientific research. That is to say that they provide tentative evidence that certain identifiable mechanisms, which are relatively enduring yet hold imperfectly, have been in play (Lawson 1998; Faulkner 2007).

Importantly, it should be clarified that demi-regularities are not empirical facts or causal explanations that constitute the end point of social scientific research. Rather they are exploratory devices which facilitate researchers' identification of social phenomena ripe for further exploration and potential explanation. This is particularly the case when such demi-regularities point towards the existence of an anomalous inconsistency or disjuncture between a set of prior beliefs and purportedly observed phenomena (Lawson 1998). Fundamentally, they encourage social scientific researchers to delve deeper in what then becomes a predominantly qualitative attempt to elucidate the precise causal factors that produced the identified partial event regularity (Iosifides 2011a). The purported 'international crime decline' arguably represents just such an anomalous disjuncture that is undoubtedly worth exploring further.

Having laid the conceptual foundations it is time to build upon the discussion presented above by articulating the researcher's conceptualisation of what is referred to in this thesis as 'soft positivism'. This term is borrowed from the legal positivist Hart (2012:250), whose original conception of it denoted a commitment towards the inclusion of moral principles or substantive values within the criteria for legal validity (Hart 2012; Kramer 2003; Wacks 2006). However, it is used here to avoid the wholesale rejection of positivist-inspired social scientific research by distinguishing between 'hard' and 'soft' positivism.

'Hard positivism' is synonymous with positivism proper and is thus equally susceptible to all associated criticisms which have been rehearsed in detail elsewhere (Sayer 2010; Maxwell 2012). 'Soft positivism', as it is conceived

here, draws heavily upon Lawson's (1998) notion of demi-regularities. Whilst it perhaps provides no other advancement to this concept than simply orienting its discourse within a vocabulary which clearly demarcates it from the more conventional or 'hard' forms of extensive/positivist social research, the articulation of its parameters is nevertheless pertinent. Fundamentally, it is critical of the wholesale abandonment of quantitative techniques within the social sciences but admits that such techniques should be used with more discrimination (Danermark et al 2002). Moreover, 'soft positivism' acknowledges that quantitative based approaches cannot successfully address questions of causation as they lack sufficient explanatory power (Sayer 2000). They can however be invaluable in their initial ability to identify interesting empirical manifestations of activated mechanisms, otherwise known as demi-regularities. The identification of which may draw social scientists' attention towards the need to illicit qualitative data capable of providing causal explanations (Danermark et al 2002; Sayer 2010).

It could be argued that whilst not expressly articulating it, it is Losifides (2011a:94) who provides perhaps the most succinct yet cogent delineation of this 'soft positivist' approach by noting that:

[W]hen quantitative methods are used and quantitative data and findings are interpreted in a non-positivist manner, they can serve as valuable means in highlighting crucial aspects of social reality. For example, when empirical regularities or — to put it more accurately — demi-regularities (Danermark et al 2002) are not taken to be causal explanations, they may guide and orient researchers towards the postulation of generative mechanisms able to explain these demi-regularities causally.

Therefore, the utilisation of 'soft positivism' as an initial analytical method to identify quantitative demi-regularities should be swiftly followed by a contextually sensitive qualitative investigation of the causal mechanisms responsible for producing such partial event regularities (Losifides 2011a). It is in this regard that the in-depth intensive approach becomes most useful (Danermark et al 2002).

Evidently, these extensive and intensive oriented approaches are complementary rather than antagonistic. There nevertheless remains a methodological hierarchy in as much as where the scholarly emphasis remains upon the detection of causal mechanisms the qualitative-intensive approach remains the most important element (Danermark et al 2002; Iosifides 2011a). It is perhaps worth mentioning that this conceptualisation of 'soft positivism' is a position more in tune with what Danermark et al (2002:152) refer to as "critical methodological pluralism" than the ontological and epistemological pragmatism associated with more conventional mixed methods research (Denscombe 2010). Accordingly, it is in this capacity that it is appropriate to acknowledge that the current research was informed by a 'soft positivist' approach. That is to say the researcher was initially alerted to the purported occurrence of an 'international crime decline' via the presentation of statistical analyses, emanating from the crime decline literature, which must now be explored more appropriately by utilising qualitative-intensive research.

As previously alluded to, the intensive research approach predominantly utilises qualitative methods such as interactive interviews, ethnography and participant observation in order to illicit data which is subsequently subject to structural and causal qualitative analysis (Sayer 2010). Its primary concern is the elucidation of causal processes and generative mechanisms. This is achieved by maintaining a focus predominantly, although not exclusively, trained upon the study of individual agents, their relationships, interpretive meanings, understandings and practices within their wider causal contexts (Sayer 2010, 2000). At its most basic intensive research, which may also be exploratory in nature (Sayer 2010), is oriented towards illuminating the way in which processes work. It aims to generate causal explanations regarding the role of such process in producing certain objects or events within a particular or limited number of cases (Sayer 2010).

Whilst the intensive approach's methodological efficacy has undoubtedly secured its place at the heart of critical realism's "social scientific endeavour towards causally explaining reality" (Iosifides 2011a:132), it must be acknowledged that the vast majority of the issues with which it deals are

extremely complex. This makes their exploration difficult and time-consuming, inevitably resulting in researchers having to limit their investigation to a relatively small number of cases which are studied more intensively (Danermark et al 2002). Consequently, and since “[t]he empirical basis of the intensive design is ‘cases’” (Danermark et al 2002:170), it can be successfully argued that case study research is firmly located within the methodological milieu of the intensive research design (Easton 2010a; Ackroyd 2009).

The methodological literature is replete with chapters and references to the term ‘case study’, however the ways in which this term is delineated are often wide ranging, disparate and at times even contradictory (Christie et al 2000; Easton 2010a; May 2011). Therefore, in order to avoid the dangers of unexpected resonances, surplus meanings and other forms of ‘excess baggage’ that may accompany the use of “a well-worn term like case study” (Robson 2011:135), this research adheres to the often quoted description provided by Yin (2009). This popular case study exponent defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin 2009:18). Utilised primarily as a strategy for the qualitatively in-depth and contextually complex investigation of social phenomena, particularly when the preservation of the phenomenon’s wholeness, unity and integrity is of high importance (Punch 2005), case studies are often capable of uncovering causal relationships between such phenomena and the wider milieu within which they occur (Gray 2009).

For the purpose for which it is to be utilised here, the case study research design provides the scope for the detailed, holistic and intensive examination of one or a small number of instances pertaining to wider processes and phenomena via the employment of qualitative-intensive research methods (Bryman 2012; Iosifides 2011a). It is arguably these features, in conjunction with ‘case’ oriented research maintaining a different ‘logic’ of causality and generalizability than that associated with ‘variable-oriented’ ‘hard positivist’ research, that “makes qualitative case study research highly compatible with the principles of critical realism” (Iosifides 2011a:202). Indeed, a number of critical

realists, including Ackroyd (2009), Easton (2010a, 2010b) and Iosifides (2011a), have identified case studies as being the best strategy for exploring the interaction of events, structures, processes and actions as well as the excavation of causal generative mechanisms (Wynn and Williams 2012). Evidently the standard features of case study research, such as its ability to excavate social actors' negotiated meanings, understandings and discourses as well as investigate the occurrence of specific social processes within their wider socio-economic and politico-cultural context, are of great value to critical realists (Elger 2010).

However, it is perhaps the further ability of case studies to explore and explain the contextually complex interaction of causal powers and generative mechanisms, and the social events and experiences that subsequently occur as a result of their enactment, that makes case study research particularly attractive for critical realists (Elger 2010; Ackroyd 2009). Equally attractive is its explicatory power to illuminate the wider implications of specific cases via a reliance upon explicit theorising, a feature more commonly referred to as analytic or theoretical generalization (Robson 2011). Indeed, critical realist case study research is well-suited to the task of identifying and teasing out the complex interplays of causal generative mechanisms in either one or a limited number of cases, which inevitably reveal implications that extend far beyond the immediate case or cases (Easton 2010b; Iosifides 2011a).

Consequently, and in stark contrast to the 'hard positivist' inspired assumption that one cannot form valid generalizations on the basis of a single case (Flyvbjerg 2011), the position can be advanced that "if a defensible causal explanation has been produced in one case then the constituents of that explanation provide a basis for developing theory beyond that case" (Easton 2010a:127). In other words, case studies are generalizable to theoretical propositions rather than to some predetermined 'representative' sample of the wider population, facilitating the expansion and generalisation of explanatory theories as opposed to the statistical enumeration of frequencies (Yin 2009). This analytical form of generalizing the theoretical framework or propositions established in one study to explain broader events, concepts and situations

residing in the wider social body, yet which remain external to the identified case (Yin 2012), is an important tool in the critical realist repertoire. It provides researchers who operate from within this philosophical tradition the justification for using a single case study in order to causally explain social phenomena and successfully generalise from the insights gained (Easton 2010b; Maxwell 2012). Accordingly, “it is possible that understanding one instance in depth can offer universal understanding that study of millions of cases cannot” (Easton 2010b:13), and it is perhaps in this sense that Easton (2010b:1) is right to argue that “one case study is enough”. This provides considerable credence in support of the researcher’s decision to focus his empirical lens upon the excavation of unreported and unrecorded crimes and invisible forms of social harm in Lake Town alone, whilst simultaneously arguing for the analytical generalizability of the conceptual framework developed and insights gained.

This emphasis upon utilising the detailed and contextually focused study of a single case in order to expose causal processes or mechanisms as well as initiate and build upon explanatory theory are the two main distinguishing features of critical realism’s intensive case study research (Wynn and Williams 2012). It is this intensive case study research that has been lauded as “the dominant approach to critical realist research because this methodology enables researchers to develop detailed context-sensitive causal explanations of specific phenomena” (Wynn and Williams 2012:804).

Consequently, informed by the forgoing discussion and the commensurate delineation by Ackroyd (2009) of extensive and intensive case study research as comprising the two dominant modalities of critical realist case study research design, this thesis ascribes to the latter. In addition to the methodological grounding provided by the adoption of this intensive research design, the researcher has elected to utilise what Stake (1995:3) refers to as an “instrumental case study”. This is in no way anathema to the zemiological oriented critical realist and transcendental materialist positions upon which this research is based. The argument being advanced here is that the motivation behind the intensive study of unreported and unrecorded crime and harm in Lake Town is not simply based upon some *intrinsic* interest in the case itself.

Rather such intensive investigation is *instrumental* towards understanding more than the sum of this case's parts (Stake 1995), to exploring the complex contours of the purported 'international crime decline' by finding the general within the specific (Easton 2010b).

As alluded to above, the utilisation of case study research designated as 'instrumental' is not all that far removed from the realist paradigm. Drawing upon Popper's delineation of three worlds (Magee 1985) Healy and Perry (2000) helpfully connect the dots by explaining that Popper's third world is related to realism. Indeed the third world, which is comprised of highly complex objective structures produced by social actors, "is largely autonomous, though created by us" (Magee 1985: 61). There is no great philosophical leap required here to see how this Popperian view intersects with the critical realist assertion that the world exists independently and irrespective of the ability of the human condition to either know of or identify it (Sayer 2010; Bhaskar 2008a). From here it is suggested that instrumental case study research can be used to investigate and understand such world three phenomena and in turn study a reality beyond immediate perception (Healy and Perry 2000). Accordingly, it is this extrinsic reality that instrumental case study research is interested in illuminating, by critically utilising interviewees' potentially fallible perceptions as a window through which the researcher may begin to study a reality beyond those perceptions rather than the perceptions themselves (Healy and Perry 2000). It is in this capacity that it has been adopted for the purposes of this research.

Moreover it is this instrumental orientation that has facilitated the purposive selection of the case itself, by encouraging the researcher to select a case that explicitly illustrated the main features and processes which this research is endeavouring to illuminate and subsequently extrapolate beyond the analytical borders of the immediate case (Silverman 2013). Such selection criteria is evidently commensurate with the common convention that an appropriate case should be selected based upon its likely ability to illuminate the research questions posed in such a way as to maximise what can be learned (Yin 2009; Stake 1995). One must therefore identify a setting and individuals that both

exhibit the characteristics common to the phenomena under investigation and are conducive to gaining the requisite understanding sought (Maxwell 2012). More specifically however, and commensurate with such wisdom and the aforementioned instrumental orientation, this research adopts, as a rationale congruent with single case research, a *typical* case selection strategy (Yin 2009; Henn et al 2009), or what Bryman (2012:70, original emphasis) refers to as “an *exemplifying case*”.

The guiding principle in selecting an exemplifying case is not because the case itself is of interest in some extreme or unusual way, but rather because it epitomises and/or exemplifies circumstances and conditions thought to inhere within a broader category of similar cases, and provides a suitable context within which the researcher’s questions are more likely to find answers (Bryman 2012). The researcher’s designation of Lake Town as just such a typical or exemplifying case is supported by Lloyd (2013:1), who notes that Lake Town is by no means unique and that its study may facilitate an analysis of wider social trends in as much as it “is representative of many other post-industrial towns and cities with nothing to offer”. Indeed, as stressed in chapter two, Lake Town’s characteristically bleak context is far from unique amongst the globe’s deindustrialised towns and cities scattered across the post-industrial landscape. Having delineated the philosophical and methodological parameters underpinning this research, the remainder of this chapter will focus upon mapping the researcher’s procedural manoeuvres.

Research Process:

With consideration to the qualitative principles guiding the selection of research settings and participants outlined in the critical realist literature (Maxwell 2012), this research has utilised a purposive sampling strategy in order to facilitate the identification and selection of both the research location and the participants recruited from it. Fundamentally, “purposive sampling places the investigator’s research questions at the heart of the sampling considerations” (Bryman 2012:416). That is to say that sampling contexts and units are chosen because they possess particular socio-demographic characteristics or specific

behavioural tendencies, experiences or occupational positions (Ritchie et al 2003). In other words they are thought to be inherently imbued with the relevant knowledge and understanding of the research phenomena, resulting in the solicitation of data pertinent to achieving the objectives of the research (Kumar 2011). Indeed, both the research site and participants were selected based upon their proximity to, and experience of, the harmful effects of the dominant sociosymbolic order's actualised structures and processes.

Congruent with this purposive orientation, and with a particular focus upon the recruitment of hard-to-find participants (Holt and Walker 2009), the researcher enlisted the additional and complimentary aid of a snowball sampling strategy. This strategy involves purposely selecting the initial participants and then, once data has been collected, asking them to recommend other suitable participants thereby establishing access to a new recruitment network (Hessler 1992; Seale 2012). Purposely selecting and snowballing from certain participant networks such as various criminal justice officials, staff from voluntary agencies and local residents, was relatively straight forward. Conversely, finding and accessing active/ex-offenders or those who maintain contact with criminal associates proved to be somewhat more logistically challenging. For instance there were occasional incidents whereby potential participants would, upon receiving a text message from the researcher reminding them of an arranged interview, claim to have never heard of the researcher let alone recall having agreed to be interviewed. Fortunately however, the researcher was lucky enough to have befriended a particularly well positioned 'gatekeeper', who was able to facilitate access to these naturally secretive individuals, and whose contribution in this way undoubtedly played a crucial role in the success of the research's empirical element. Since the primary objective of the empirical element was to uncover not only hidden but evolving forms of crime and harm, the researcher prioritised the recruitment of these secretive individuals as well as local residents of Lake Town.

This recruitment process continued until a point of sufficient saturation was reached (Seidman 2013), which occurred around the 27th-30th interview when the researcher began to hear the same information from subsequent

participants resulting in no new knowledge being obtained. Consequently, and in line with general qualitative sampling guidelines positing 30 as “a bit of a magic number in sampling” (Holt and Walker 2009:30-31), the empirical phase culminated with the researcher having interviewed a sample of 30 participants. The majority of participants were comprised of active/ex-offenders, individuals who maintain contact with criminal associates and local residents, while the remainder were made up of various local criminal justice officials and staff from voluntary sector agencies.

As one of the dominant data collection tools associated with qualitative critical realist research in general (Sayer 2010; Iosifides 2011a; Smith and Elger 2012) and case study research in particular (Yin 2009; Gray 2009), the researcher elected to utilise semi-structured interviews as the primary means by which to collect empirical data. Such interviews are renowned for their ability to allow the researcher to get closer to both internal and external interview realities, by facilitating the solicitation of individuals’ partial and fallible interpretive understandings and perspectives as well as both their acknowledged and disavowed lived experiences (Iosifides 2011a, 2011b). Essentially, participants are afforded the opportunity to express themselves through their own voices and conceptually mediated language, whilst simultaneously illuminating the culturally embedded normative frames through which they symbolise their experiences (Byrne 2004; Miller and Glassner 2011).

Accordingly, and in line with the zemiological oriented critical realist and transcendental materialist framework underpinning this research, semi-structured interviews have been put to work here in order to elicit individuals’ experiences, tacit perceptions and disavowed knowledge of crime and harm. This was accomplished by providing them with a discursive space that remains uninhibited by the narrow legal concept of ‘crime’, thereby enabling them to reveal experiences of social harm in a way that moves beyond the dominant ideology and official terminology. Indeed, because individuals actively solicit and adopt neoliberal culture and ideology they do not necessarily connect or attribute their experiences of crime and social harm to its genesis in the domain of the real outlined by Bhaskar (2008a). In this respect semi-structured

interviews can help connect the two by excavating tacit knowledge and moving beyond respondents' fetishistic disavowal.

Prior to conducting interviews the researcher constructed several interview guides designed to remind the researcher of the key question topics that needed to be asked during the interview (Hennink et al 2011). The structure of the guides followed a coherent order yet remained relatively loose in order to facilitate the pursuit of tangents that developed naturally as the interviews progressed. This allowed the researcher to capitalise upon the articulation of particularly interesting yet unsolicited comments whilst simultaneously giving the interview more of a conversational feel, thereby contributing to the maintenance of an established rapport. Acknowledging the cyclical nature of qualitative data collection, the researcher refined certain questions and developed new probes where necessary enabling a deeper exploration of the key issues with each subsequent interview (Hennink et al 2011). Instrumental to this reflexive process was the researcher's use of what Flick (2009:298) refers to as "documentation sheets" upon which notes were written directly after each interview. Among the things documented were the use of interview guides, notes on areas of content and the context of the data collection, including any special occurrences which may have arisen during the interview.

For the most part, interviews were conducted in pre-designated interview rooms located in the University's Social Sciences, Business and Law building. These facilities not only provided the participants with a safe and welcoming environment in which to articulate what were in some cases particularly harrowing accounts of social harm, but were conducive to the researcher's practical requirements. Indeed, following the advice to "record whenever possible" (Fielding and Thomas 2008:257), the researcher utilised a digital audio recorder during all interviews rather than the slow and often inaccurate process of having to pause after every few utterances in order to frantically write down the participant's responses (Gray 2009; Fielding and Thomas 2008). In addition to preventing this potentially "stilted and peculiar interaction" (Fielding and Thomas 2008:257), audio recording provides a more accurate account of the interview, which is essential if the analysis phase is not to be made

redundant, by facilitating a thorough and if necessary repeated examination of the data obtained (Yin 2009; Gray 2009; Bryman 2012). Heeding Mason's (2002) cautionary note warning researchers not to become visually and audibly complacent simply because one has an audio recorder switched on, the researcher continued to pay diligent attention to the body language and tone of the participants and noted such information in the above mentioned documentation sheets. Accordingly, through such attentive observation it became evident that whilst the majority of respondents were comfortable talking in the presence of an activated audio recorder, they did not simply forget it was there as many often admitted to being self-consciously reluctant to swear on tape. However, in light of the quality and detail of the data obtained it is felt that the presence of the audio recorder did not greatly diminish the candidness with which individuals spoke.

Immediately following the completion of an interview the audio file was transcribed in order to maximise the researcher's analytical familiarity with the data (Arksey and Knight 1999). Noting the numerous paragraphs of advice contained within the methodological literature as well as considering the limited time and resources available, the researcher utilised a transcription style that incorporated a happy medium between full and partial transcription. This amounted to transcribing the majority of all audio files verbatim whilst simultaneously omitting certain sections of the recordings deemed to be irrelevant (Poland 2008). Indeed, as Bryman (2012:486) cogently notes, "there seems little point in transcribing material that you know is unlikely to be fruitful". Fundamentally, and in light of the scrupulous 'play and read' accuracy checks conducted by the researcher (Arksey and Knight 1999), this balanced transcription style did not preclude the opportunity to identify preliminary analytical themes or establish connections between the data and existing literature. Moreover it was consistent with the requirements of thematic analysis, a procedure undertaken once all the interviews had been transcribed (Grbich 2007), in that this analytical method typically does not require the same level of transcript detail as that associated with conversation or discourse analysis (Robson 2011).

Indeed, the decision to employ the use of thematic analysis within the parameters of this research is well justified. Not only is it regarded as “one of the most common approaches to qualitative data analysis” (Bryman 2012:578), but its theoretical neutrality makes it highly compatible with realism’s admittedly still infantile methodological structure (Robson 2011; Sayer 2010). Thematic analysis entails identifying themes and subthemes via observing commonalities, relationships and differences within and across data sets, by thoroughly reading and rereading the interview transcripts (Bryman 2012; Gibson and Brown 2009) and is essentially “a process for encoding qualitative information” (Boyatzis 1998:4). This process of encoding requires the development of explicit codes which are in essence conceptually codified themes often identified at both the manifest and latent levels of the information contained within the transcripts (Boyatzis 1998).

These codes, like the themes they represent, were both identified apriori via reviewed literature and generated empirically directly from the raw data itself and simply referred to “categories of data that represent[ed] a thematic concern” (Gibson and Brown 2009:133). Ultimately they were judged according to their ability to capture adequately and consistently the richness of the phenomenon to which they referred (Boyatzis 1998). Procedurally, this entailed the researcher steering clear of the latest computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software, replete with its technological discrepancies (Bryman 2012; Gray 2009), in favour of utilising a Microsoft Word facilitated copy and paste technique. This involved the creation of new Word documents for each manually codified theme identified, all of which were subsequently collated and printed out into a thematically organised sourcebook. This technique is similar to what Grbich (2007:32) refers to as “a block and file approach” and has the advantage of retaining intact large and contextually detailed segments of transcript material facilitating a richer final interpretation of the data.

Throughout the research process the researcher remained aware of the need to ensure both the validity and reliability of the study in general and the collection and analysis of the data in particular. Acknowledging the point that “the quality of scientific research done within a paradigm has to be judged by its own

paradigm's terms" (Healy and Perry 2000:120-121), this research drew predominantly, although not exclusively, upon the work of those positioned within the paradigms of realism and critical realism to make these vital assessments. Indeed, with regards to validity the researcher first and foremost ensured that all of the questions posed related directly to the research objectives and therefore explicated or illuminated what they were intended to (Gray 2009; Mason 2002).

Additionally, and in keeping with a critical realist approach to validity that relies upon multiple perceptions (Healy and Perry 2000), a form of data source triangulation was employed, a process considered to be a powerful means by which to counter threats to validity (Robson 2011). Essentially, this involved not only drawing upon what were often converging lines of evidence from numerous and varied interview participants (Yin 2012), but from a range of additional sources including both published and unpublished literature as well as publicly available government and local council documents (Rothbauer 2008). It is also perhaps worth mentioning that both within and across interviews the researcher utilised member-checking and cross-checking techniques respectively. This facilitated the covert interrogation of the intricate details of participants' accounts and by extension served to indicate whether or not the data obtained could be regarded as valid (Antonopoulos 2008).

Moreover, whilst of contested relevance for qualitative research (Bryman 2012), the position can be advanced that this research is externally valid in that it can, via a process of analytical generalizability, produce what Mason (2002:1, original emphasis) refers to as "*cross-contextual generalities*". Indeed, as previously mentioned, and in accordance with Healy and Perry's (2000) fifth criterion for judging the quality of realist research, the process of analytical generalizability adopted within this thesis facilitated the development of the study's theoretical frameworks as well as their subsequent expansion beyond the borders of their immediate empirical focus (Yin 2009, 2012).

To a large extent this entire chapter has been geared towards ensuring the reliability — or what Healy and Perry (2000:125) in their fourth criterion refer to

as “methodological trustworthiness” — of this study by lucidly and intricately explicating its philosophical underpinnings, methodological foundations and procedural manoeuvres. Indeed, similar to but not synonymous with the conventional reading of reliability (Bryman 2012), the emphasis here has been on ensuring that an adequate degree of transparency has been maintained throughout the research process. This is a technique often employed by those more concerned with safeguarding the replicability of the procedures used rather than the results obtained (Hiles 2008). Fundamentally, the researcher took care to ensure that philosophical assumptions, rationales supporting the selection of the research design, methods and data analysis as well as the operationalization of findings — aided by the presentation of quoted sections of transcript material — were delineated with sufficient transparency in order to ensure the overall reliability, credibility and trustworthiness of the study (Hiles 2008; Healy and Perry 2000).

It is acknowledged that the nature of qualitative research produces ethical challenges that are far more pronounced than those associated with other forms of social scientific research, due primarily to its investigation of what are often sensitive topics, such as harmful activities in this instance (Hennink et al 2011; Gray 2009). For this reason the researcher took all necessary precautions in order to secure the safety of all those involved, including the researcher, and ensure the overall ethical integrity of the research. Consequently, the ethical considerations of informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, data protection and the minimisation of harm were taken seriously throughout the research.

Prior to the initiation of any interview, and in accordance with Teesside University’s guidelines for conducting ethical research (Teesside University Research Governance 2012), the researcher sought to gain participants’ informed consent. First and foremost this involved informing the participants as clearly and as fully as possible about the nature and purpose of the research as well as the intent to disseminate the results via publication. Details were then offered regarding the methods used, their rights as a research participant, including their right to withdraw from the research, and what their involvement

would realistically entail, including the possibility of enduring emotional distress, discomfort and/or inconvenience. In addition to explicating this verbally, the participants were asked to read an information sheet which covered these details in more depth, and accordingly asked to sign a consent form to acknowledge that they were willing to take part in the research.

Due to the sensitive nature of the research topic under investigation, considerable effort was directed towards ensuring the maintenance of participants' confidentiality and anonymity. In addition to ascribing pseudonyms to both the research location and the participants, the researcher removed from the data records and the written thesis any additional features that could be used to identify participating individuals. Furthermore, any personal contact information obtained from participants has been stored securely and separate from the data records, which have also been stored securely at all times in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. At the heart of these ethical considerations lies the fundamental concern to minimise the physical, psychological and emotional harm done to participants whilst trying to do some good through research (Gomm 2008).

Although "any interview about any topic can trigger distress occasionally" (Gomm 2008:383), it is acknowledged that the particularly sensitive nature of the research questions had a greater potential to cause participants emotional distress or discomfort, as they revisited potentially painful or unsettling memories about their experiences of crime and harm (Hennink et al 2011). In an attempt to minimise the effects of this potential risk the researcher equipped himself with knowledge of various local services to which participants could be signposted. However, not only did such preparatory work thankfully prove to be unnecessary, but many participants actively acknowledged that they rather enjoyed the interaction of the interview and the opportunity to air their own views on the research topic (Hennink et al 2011). Indeed, one participant in particular joyfully remarked after the interview, "I enjoyed that". In this way the balance between the researcher and the researched may not be as unbalanced as perhaps it first appears. Whilst the scales are by no means equal participants

may indeed find the research experience cathartic and perhaps even personally empowering (Arksey and Knight 1999).

One would be remiss however for not acknowledging that there are always two sides to every story. Whilst the potential for participant benefit and the emancipatory effects of participating in social scientific research have been well documented (Hennink et al 2011; Arksey and Knight 1999; Sayer 2000), less has been written regarding the potentially demoralising and disheartening sense of dejection that participants may experience following the conclusion of an interview. It should be noted that one is not simply alluding to the psychological distress that may accompany a participant's articulation of traumatic events (Hennink et al 2011), but rather the sense of futility that individuals may feel having participated in criminological research. Indeed, the possible occurrence of what could be termed *post-interview dejection* remained largely unaccounted for by the researcher until it was illuminated vocally by one participant.

The individual to whom the researcher refers ardently queried both the usefulness of his narrative and general participation as well as that of the research project as a whole. Despite the researcher enthusiastically reasserting the importance of the participant's involvement in research that is hoped to yield some social contribution he remained sceptically unconvinced. The participant's evident post-interview dejection, highlighted further by the gesticulation of disappointment as the interview came to a close despite not having said all that much, served to forcefully puncture the researcher's insulated view of having 'done ethics' as the actualities of 'benefit' were thrown into sharp relief. Whilst this undoubtedly highlights the importance of frequently reiterating the valuable contribution made by research participants, the inherently unethical 'use' of participants for what inevitably seems to be uneven benefit is something that remains unresolved in this research, and perhaps even within empirical criminological research in general.

Nevertheless, there is evidently an emancipatory function within critical realist qualitative research (Sayer 2000). Certainly, it has the potential to benefit not only those directly involved but the wider social body, by highlighting

suppressed voices and illuminating societal issues (Hennink et al 2011). Despite the presence of what can only be described as an unclear balance of benefit, it is hoped that this research will go some way towards contributing to the actualisation of this emancipatory function. Having intricately delineated the methodological contours of this research, the next substantive chapter will be directed towards revealing the empirical insights gained from the data collection phase.

Chapter Five:

Research Findings.

“*Crime decline? What? Where?*” This remark from Sarah, a member of Lake Town’s Crime Reduction Initiative team, captures the predominant reaction of many participants towards the idea of a ‘crime decline’. Accordingly, what this research appears to have uncovered are expressed glimpses of experiential lived realities of crime and harm that do not fit the idyllic image painted by some scholars of a more reasoned, empathetic and less violent world that is currently experiencing ‘universally’ declining rates of crime (Pinker 2011, 2012; De Wolf 2012; van Kesteren et al 2014). Indeed, many participants recounted deleterious yet all too common experiences of crime, un-criminalised harm and victimisation that occur as familiar constituents of everyday life as they endeavour to survive amongst the criminal predation, systemic and subjective violence, insecurity and precarity that now characterise their locale and others like it (Winlow 2001). Certainly as mentioned in the previous chapter, it can be argued that Lake Town is but part of a constellation of nuanced yet fundamentally similar locales whose residents comparably share such deleterious experiences (Lloyd 2013; Hobbs 2013, 1998; Davies 1997).

The present chapter offers a window through which to view the stark reality of life as it exists beneath the veneer of the ‘crime decline’ discourse’s intricately woven statistical quilt. This will be achieved by presenting first-hand accounts of experiential lifeworlds steeped in crime, un-criminalised harms and almost perpetual cycles of victimisation experienced by those who find themselves in uncomfortable proximity to the worst effects of the dominant sociosymbolic order’s actualised structures and processes. However, although the broad positionality of those offering these accounts may be revealed, it is pertinent to clarify that detailed biographical specificity must by necessity remain absent so as not to breach the researcher’s ethical requirements. Moreover, whilst it must be acknowledged that such accounts are anecdotal and hyperbolic, it has long been established that they nevertheless contain kernels of truth which deserve

to be taken seriously (Young 1975). This empirical excavation endeavours to position at the forefront of our view that which the 'crime decline' discourse has so successfully forced to the periphery. That is, despite *statistical* reductions in crime everyday life for many in areas such as Lake Town continues to be blighted by socio-economic impoverishment, uncertainty, fear and a raft of unreported and unrecorded harms and illegalities (Hall et al 2008).

'You Should Have Called it Skid Row':

As alluded to in chapter two, Lake Town suffered from the socio-economic fallout of widespread deindustrialisation and has subsequently struggled to come to terms with and recover from its deleterious effects (Lloyd 2013; Shildrick et al 2012). Accordingly the area has very little to offer its residents and retains a broad range of overlapping issues among which high levels of crime and unemployment continue to feature heavily (Lloyd 2013; Bounds 2013). Consequently, many participants expressed unfavourable views towards living in Lake Town. For instance when asked 'what is it like to live there?' Laura, a local unemployed resident with a history of substance misuse, quickly replied "*terrible, absolutely terrible*". She explained that:

It's just all the kids and that and all the crime and everything it's just absolutely terrible, there's always pinched cars or motorbikes going past, you can't even let your kids out on the front because of the cars and all the crime.

When asked what types of crime she was referring to Laura remarked "*drug dealing, car crime, burglaries, robberies, you name it, it gets done in Lake Town*".

Similarly, as a local resident and ex-offender who possesses an 'accomplished' criminal record, Paul revealed that where he used to live "*was hectic with drugs, alcohol, prostitution, there was robberies all the time; then I moved up to [***] and that was full of alcoholics and drug addicts as well*". He added "*I had to get away from Lake Town because I was constantly getting robbed, and I was getting hassled all the time*". Reece, an active offender who until recently has been homeless since the age of fifteen, paints a particularly vivid picture of life

in Lake Town. After having been told that the research location was given a pseudonym in order to ensure participants' anonymity, he remarked "*you should have called it skid row; its ruthless round here you know, it's hard to live*". However, perhaps the most cogent articulation of the daily turmoil experienced by residents comes from Craig, an ex-offender and inhabitant of Lake Town since childhood, who explained that:

Lake Town is a rough place to live for different reasons. Whether you want to say the night life, the crime, the crack cocaine, the working girls and all that, your gambling, your drugs, and your alcohol you know what I mean, it's all day long. I used to get in on a night and it's going on till 4 o'clock in the morning, you can't get your head down on a night because you can hear it going on outside, hear someone just getting beaten up or you can hear the working girls kicking off with the dealer or punter or whatever. It's absolutely madness down there, you can walk around there on a night and see some stuff that's like 'wow this is really insane living' you know what I mean.

Alongside such overt displays of disorder however lies the far more subtle yet no less pervasive act of systemic violence often benignly referred to as unemployment (Ward 2004; Dorling 2010; Wilkinson and Pickett 2010). This systemically induced ailment and its many dangerous side effects continues to be "*one of the biggest issues facing Lake Town at the moment*", according to Safer Lake Town Partnership representative Luke. Jeremy, a local volunteer and ex-offender in his late twenties, captures particularly well the daily toil of searching for jobs of which there is less than there are residents (ONS 2016a):

People are looking for jobs, my brother is especially. I mean he's out every day looking for jobs and there's nothing out there, and if he says that to a member of staff in the Job Centre they just say 'keep looking we've got jobs on the board', but when he says he's not qualified they just shrug their shoulders you know what I mean. There's only so many jobs in Lake Town and that's what the concern is about that's where the anger comes from, look back on what I've applied for there's nothing else in Lake Town for me.

The general strains associated with "jobseeking-as-career" are accompanied by potentially debilitating feelings of stress and anxiety that form a daily

background presence as life becomes ever more precarious (Southwood 2011:58). For some the only escape is to descend into the soft narcosis of anhedonic nihilism (Fisher 2009). No one conveyed this late capitalist malaise better than a local resident named Doug who exclaimed:

The fact that I'm unemployed makes me anxious to be honest. It's crazy you've got to make like £10 last you three days you know and it makes me very anxious that if I wanted to buy a bottle of pop I've got to think about it five times before I make that decision, and then that decision would be 'well no you can't afford it'. I can feel myself getting a bit down and depressed and having no motivation or energy to the point where you think 'well what's the point' you know. I don't have a job to get up to at the minute so I just spend most of my time indoors you know. I look for a job a few times a week, I'll go on the internet job hunting for a few hours but apart from that there doesn't seem to be a lot in my life to do you know, there doesn't seem to be a job out there for me. So when I get down and I'd say a bit depressed about it then I just spend most of my day doing nothing, you know, daydreaming. It's crazy really. I think a lot of people in Lake Town are the same as well, I know there'll be a lot of people out there the same as me that don't wanna get up or just lounge about on the sofa watching T.V all day because they don't know what else to do.

The excessive consumption of alcohol and the self-administration of psychopharmacological treatments, counterfeit or otherwise, have become normalised responses to such feelings of despair (Dorling 2010; Taylor 2013). Indeed, a number of participants relayed either having consumed such substances or conveyed knowledge of others who had. Jeremy for instance revealed that:

I was taking zimmers and diazy's which basically zombie you out. I was just buying them off the street and I was taking five-ten a day just to help me relax and sleep, I was actually waking up and taking them and they were easy to get.

Similarly Zane, an active offender with a number of previous convictions for theft and other illegalities, told the researcher that “a lot of people are taking sleeping tablets and Diazepam during the day as a coping mechanism”. Although having consumed such substances in the act of self-medication Zane

was by no means unaware of the dangers associated with buying what he suspects were counterfeit pharmaceuticals:

Last week a lad was selling some and a few of the lads bought some but they were 10mg white, you don't get 10mg white Diazepam, but people were taking them and crashing out, sleeping for a day and half and I thought 'that's not right', Diazepam's are supposed to just chill you out, you know take the edge off when you're anxious or nervous you know what I mean. But this year three people who I know have died from taking them.

Nevertheless, despite the apparent dangers “people are willing to buy them because they're just looking for anything to block out the misery” according to Gavin; a man with quite a serious criminal record who appears well acquainted with the intricacies of the counterfeit pharmaceuticals market. And as a local community volunteer and resident named Eddy suggests, “if people can't get their drugs they'll get alcohol instead”. Evidently, not only do many residents of Lake Town experience a range of codified illegalities but they suffer from systemically induced, and thus un-criminalised, social harms that appear to be seamlessly woven into the fabric of everyday life. Yet despite their damaging consequences these systemically induced harms do not register in the statistical framework of the ‘crime decline’ discourse. Indeed, whilst governments and scholars alike prematurely praise themselves for a job well done, few considerations are reserved for what life ‘on the ground’ is really like for residents such as Nick, who captures particularly well the unquantified reality of life on the margins:

The crime to me is the state of some of the streets in Lake Town you know, like it's a bit abstract what I'm talking about but you can walk down there and you can just feel the darkness. It's just got crime all over the place, and that's the biggest crime that it should be like that.

Unfortunately however, recent government austerity measures and welfare benefit reforms have made life even harder and more miserable for many of those who reside in Lake Town by producing more instability and insecurity at every turn (Lloyd 2013). For many participants the end result of these short-sighted manoeuvres is obvious. Catherine for instance, who works as an

offender manager, feels that “*we’re seeing a big rise in offences because of these cuts and I think we’re yet to see more*”. In a similar vein a local community volunteer named Owen mentioned that:

They’ve cut access to life enhancing services like libraries and community centres and things like that. There are so many dimensions to these cuts as well, I know a lot of people who have been sanctioned very easily from their Job Seekers Allowance, which is just forcing them into immediate poverty and that can obviously lead to more crime because people ultimately have to survive.

Indeed according to Robert, who now works for a local substance misuse support service having desisted from crime, “*benefit reforms are pushing people into crime*” because, as Gavin explains:

When you leave someone with no money so they can’t eat or look after themselves they’re gonna find other ways to make money and they’re gonna do it in any way they can and its gonna be quick and generally it’s gonna be brutal you know.

Additionally, Laura noted that half of the people she knows “*just don’t even bother signing on anymore, they’re just ‘criming’ it instead*” (See also Griggs and Evans 2010). The stark reality of the current situation is brought sharply into focus by Reece who exclaimed:

If you sanction someone’s benefits for three years how are they going to support themselves other than by committing crime? They can’t get a job, they’re already trying to get a job, they’re on benefits because they’re trying to get a job it’s a job seeker’s allowance and if you give someone a three year sanction what are they going to do to actually support themselves? I mean the only thing you can do is commit crime.

These cogent exasperations are supported by evidence which suggests that benefit sanctions do in fact have unfavourable impacts upon crime rates (Griggs and Evans 2010). Evidently, as the available facilities for managing life rapidly diminish (Taylor 2013) it becomes increasingly difficult for those on the margins to survive by legitimate means alone. In such circumstances the enticement to become involved in various forms of crime is seductive as they often compare favourably to the otherwise bleak reality of life in deindustrialised Lake Town

(Winlow 2001). Indeed as discussed in chapter two, whilst inevitably corrosive certain forms of crime may serve to reintroduce some adulterated sense of stability, by offering those excluded from the highly competitive legitimate economy a revived opportunity for economic participation and commodity consumption (Hall 2012b). Craig and an opportunistic offender named Jake, who is certainly no stranger to crime, respectively drive the point home particularly well:

You look over there right at this guy's expensive car and it's like he grew up where I grew up but this man's selling drugs, now I'm a single father and I've been told that I can get a couple of hundred quid a week just by stashing a few keys of his stuff in my loft. I don't even have to see it but I get a couple of hundred quid and you know what my daughter is wearing the same shoes as her up the road you know what I mean. It's like you can either be nothing and nobody or you can join in with what goes on in the estate.

The lad who's just dropped me off, he sells coke and he's like 'so what you doing for money?' I said to him 'nowt', he said 'well can I leave this [drugs] in your flat?' So as from today I'm the little knob-head at the end of it you know what I mean but its £100 in my pocket come Friday.

When probed further Jake revealed that “*I'll have six kilos of Benzocaine and about two kilos of cocaine. I don't touch it though; all I'll do is run it down the stairs at the most*”. These accounts perhaps provide some credence to Robert's claim that “*it's easier to do crime than it is to get a job in Lake Town*”, or certainly to utilise illicit means to attain otherwise unaffordable commodities. As Doug explains:

It's getting near impossible for anybody to have little luxuries in life you know, but that doesn't necessarily mean that people stop wanting them so ultimately they will source what they want in some way shape or form.

Such as for example, according to Zane, by “*asking shoplifters to get them toys, clothes, perfume, aftershave, chocolates. Especially during Christmas you get a lot of people asking for these types of things*”.

What the above perhaps begins to illustrate is the somewhat doxic nature and 'social' functionality of certain forms of crime which have to some extent become 'tolerated illegalities' (Foucault 1991). However, as the next section will show, these pervasive illegalities are often accompanied by and intertwined with more violent and brutal forms of crime, creating a thinly delineated border between the 'social' and 'asocial' criminality that surrounds the daily lives of many of Lake Town's residents, which they must carefully navigate.

'The Frontline is All-Around':

For many of Lake Town's residents there appears to be no shelter from the pervasive yet relatively inured experiences of crime and harm that surround their daily lives. For instance Aaron, a young man in his early twenties, recounted that "*you see crime every day, you see it everywhere round Lake Town, you get drug dealing going on constantly throughout the day and violent acts occur all the time*". Similarly, Gavin stated that:

Given the environment that I live in, I hear stories every day of people getting knives pulled on them, or people running into people's rooms and beating them up, like that's a day-to-day thing now.

Providing perhaps one of the most vivid accounts of what appears to be the omnipresent nature of crime in Lake Town, Laura describes how:

You get robberies happening all the time, like phone snatching and things like that, you'd be on your phone and the next minute somebody will be riding off with it on a bike. You get people knocking at your door trying to sell you drugs all the time, or people putting your windows through or putting glue inside your locks so you have to get your locks changed, you can't go out or do anything because once you leave they'll be straight in your house. That happens quite a lot, my windows have been put through twice and my locks got done in October.

Representing perhaps the most doxic form of crime experienced or perpetrated by participants is the solicitation to become involved in or actively participate in the selling and purchasing of stolen and/or counterfeit goods. Indeed it is not uncommon, as another local resident named Mark explains, "*to be asked if I*

want to buy things like bikes, laptops, tablets, cameras or clothes". Similarly Conner, a resident of Lake Town since birth, told the researcher that:

It was getting to the point at work where it was like a couple of times a day that different people would come in saying 'I've got some cheap Polo shirts', or this other guy last week tried to sell me deodorant and watches.

According to Catherine buying and selling stolen and/or counterfeit goods is:

... really, really big in Lake Town, anything goes. Food, clothes, someone can go into Asda and fill up a trolley with goods worth £300 and go to the pub across the road and sell the stuff. But they also have customers, they go in with shopping lists that people have posted through the door and they sell the items for less than half the retail price.

Reference to this 'shopping list' style of acquiring goods was made and corroborated by many participants. Jake, for instance, noted that:

People don't do it like before where they'd go burgle a shed and turn up and go 'here do you want to buy this drill for a fiver'. Now they just turn up with whatever you want so it's sort of a bit more organised.

He went on to reveal that:

*This lad will go to a big warehouse in [***] and pick up £1,000 worth of stuff that's been ordered. He gets all the tablets like the fake Viagra and Ephagine, I just got a big tub of weight protein for £12.50. But yeah they sell anything you want, anything you want you can order and they will just go get it for you.*

However, as Zane attests, there is still a market for going out and stealing or otherwise acquiring common necessities and luxuries that people can ill afford; "you always get people trying to sell you jars of coffee and things like that, what they tend to go for is stuff that they can sell easily". When asked if he had ever purchased such goods he said:

Oh yeah, the other day I bought a Lynx set and some clothes. I needed a coat and if someone had one and I had the money I'd have bought it,

or if I didn't have enough I'd give them a percentage and I'll owe them the rest and they know I'm good for it. Because word gets around fast if you're a good payer or not you know what I mean so there's like a bit of a pecking order.

Gavin also nonchalantly revealed that:

You get approached most days by people trying to sell you stuff, I've just recently bought clothes and a Mach 3 razor. If I've got the money and I need whatever's being sold I'm quite happy to buy it.

Such accounts perhaps provide credence to the suggestion made by Lewis, a recently retired police officer, that buying and selling stolen and/or counterfeit goods “*is a way of life for many in Lake Town*”. Indeed, Eddy exclaimed that “*it's part of everyday life now; they're saying we're coming out of the recession but I can't see it and a lot of people on the breadline can't either*”. Certainly, for many of those interviewed the ability to either buy or sell stolen and/or counterfeit goods constitutes a valuable lifeline, as Zane elucidates:

*I needed some money, I needed to buy food and put a bit of electric on so on Thursday I went into Iceland on [***] Road and pinched £25 worth of chocolate and sold it for £10, and then later on I went and got six jars of Nescafé Gold Blend and sold them for £15 because I had no money, I didn't know what to do.*

Evidently, its seemingly doxic nature as a suitable means of ‘getting by’ has conferred upon it a status of “*de facto decriminalisation*” (Lammy 2015:6) whereby “*it's not regarded as criminal activity, it's just what you do*” and “*half the shops now just let you go they don't even bother phoning the police round our area*” according to Ethan, an actively serving police officer, and Laura respectively. Underneath the somewhat ‘social’ veneer of such seemingly ‘tolerated illegalities’ lies the ever present potential for severe harm. Indeed, those who participate in the hidden economy flirt dangerously with sanctionable illegality and risk associating with or engaging in more harmful and organised forms of criminality (Henry 1978; Lea 1999, 2002). For instance Sean, an ex-drug dealer turned recovering addict, noted how the selling and purchasing of

stolen and/or counterfeit goods is often intimately connected with the drug trade:

You go to buy knock off or stolen gear and end up buying drugs as well because some dealers sell hot goods to make up for the money lost when they can't sell enough coke or whatever.

Indeed, recent evidence suggests that some criminal networks are increasingly turning their attention towards the acquisition of such 'hot goods' in order to either replace or augment high-risk activities such as drug dealing (Lammy 2015).

Nevertheless, as intimated above, the traditionally high levels of drug activity in Lake Town continue to feature as common constituents of everyday life for many residents (Lloyd 2013). Nick, for example, expressed that "*where I live I've got drugs all around me, like in the flats above me and that*"; and according to Zane "*people just come up to you offering to sell you weed, sleeping tablets, crack cocaine, heroin, MKAT, seriously anything and everything*". As a frequent recreational user of drugs Jake knew all too well the rhythms and routines of the dealers on his estate. He noted that:

There must be a good six or seven cocaine dealers on the estate and then all the kids, they all sell the 'green' and from about 3 o'clock they'll just be dropping 'green' off left right and centre, just constantly here there and everywhere, but they sell heroin as well you know what I mean. And its blatant, it's right in your face. Like people walk about smoking joints and all that and like no one says nowt about it.

However, as Zane alluded to previously, the sale, purchase and consumption of drugs in Lake Town is not simply restricted to the well documented and more conventional forms of illicit substances, but include a plethora of pharmaceuticals counterfeit or otherwise. Indeed, Doug told the researcher that "*Lake Town is rife with drugs, I see people every day selling heroin, cocaine and now they're even selling prescription drugs on the streets*". According to Reece this is primarily due to the fact that drugs such as heroin are "*being cut*

that much now that people are ‘topping up’ on pharmaceuticals to get the same effect’. Adding additional weight to this finding Gavin revealed that:

You get a lot of prescription drugs being sold especially Pre-Gabs, so strong pain killers or Codeine-based tablets and that. Like people get them on prescription off the doctors and sell them to each other, and Subutex and things like that, that’s quite common.

In keeping with recent research regarding the online sale of counterfeit pharmaceuticals (Dégardin et al 2014; Hall and Antonopoulos 2015), Reece articulated what many had intimated, that:

Some people are actually buying these tablets off the internet and one tablet might not be as strong as the next you know what I mean. So they’re buying like Diazepam but it’s not like how we’d get it, it’s more dangerous and people have died from taking them.

Indeed Jade, a local expert on the online trade in counterfeit medicine, told the researcher that according to recent estimates “*as much as 50% of the medicines bought online by UK consumers are fake and up to one million people die globally each year after consuming counterfeits*”. Accordingly, both the scale and scope of harm is significant yet completely ignored by the ‘crime decline’ discourse.

Moreover alongside the harmful side-effects of ingesting such substances, threats or physical acts of violence are often directed towards those who possess the desired product. For instance, Reece has personally experienced being “*robbed for my prescription drugs*”. Considering the relatively well-documented link between drugs and violent crime (Wincup 2005; Bean 2008), it is perhaps unsurprising to reveal that a number of participants have experienced, or know of others who have experienced, drug related violence or personal threats and intimidation. Jake and Laura respectively conveyed that:

There’s a lot of intimidation, I know a couple of lads who threatened a women because her son owed them. They went round to where she works and said ‘look that’s £600 tomorrow or your son’s getting it and you’re getting it’. So in the end she just gave them the money, it’s just

easier than phoning the police because they know where she lives and they'll go round the house.

Drug dealers get taxed all the time. Drug users who are 'game' you know what I mean, who carry knives, will order drugs and when the dealer turns up they'll just pull their blades out and take the drugs off him and then start selling them, and it just goes round like that all the time.

However, it appears that the act of 'taxing' is not simply reserved for the drug trade but is also used to expropriate a range of goods that others have illegally acquired. As Jake explains:

If someone knew that you pinched a scooter and stashed it in the bush they'd go and get it and take it off you because you can't fucking say nowt, you're not gonna be able to go to the police so they just take it.

Evidently, and contrary to the 'delusions of peace' (Gray 2011) embedded within the 'crime decline' discourse, crime and harm continue to form a pervasive presence for many of Lake Town's residents. So pervasive in fact that if participants had neither perpetrated nor been a victim of crime themselves many knew of others who had. Indeed, after posing the question 'do you know anyone currently involved in crime?' participants would almost habitually laugh as though the answer was an obvious one before articulating what became the customary initial response, "yeah, of course I do". Upon further probing, participants such as Paul revealed that "I know people who deal drugs, shoplift, commit robberies, burglaries, you name it they're into it". Similarly, Eddy replied "I know quite a few people involved in burglary, shoplifting, assault, drug dealing, and dealing in stolen and counterfeit goods".

Congruently, experience or knowledge of those who experience often unreported victimisation was prevalent among participants. Reece, for example, recounted that "in January I was attacked, I got my head smashed off a sink and I was nearly killed". He further explained that "they knocked the shit out of me and then turned me onto my stomach and started booting on my neck trying to break it". Additionally, Jake expressed that:

There was a Polish lad who moved on the estate and he didn't last two minutes, one lad hit him, another hit him with a bottle and the rest jumped all over his head, and that was just because he was Polish, but that's quite normal.

Rather than representing exceptional incidents of scarcity such experiences form an ever-present and frightening reality for many individuals who inhabit areas such as Lake Town (Young 1999). Doug and Paul respectively portray this reality vividly:

You see people walking about with guns and machetes and stuff and it really scares me, it's quite worrying seeing it openly you know. You're scared to even walk the streets and I don't like to feel like that.

There's a lass I know who won't even walk out of her front door unless there's a taxi coming to get her. She won't go anywhere on her own because of what's happened to her you know so she's basically imprisoned in her own home.

Importantly, such fear is neither irrational nor unfounded but is, as research tends to suggest, based upon real risks and present dangers (Hollway and Jefferson 2013; Jackson and Gray 2010). Indeed, grounded in experience “there is nothing unreal about the embeddedness of social knowledge about crime” (Sparks 1992:131).

Accordingly, it is possible that rather than being ‘out of sync with reality’ (Warr cited in University of Texas 2008) many participants’ perceptions of crime trends are perhaps accurately informed by lived experiences of crime and harm, and can therefore often tell us more about the reality of crime and its trends than the official research instruments used to ‘measure’ crime (Presdee 2004b; Muncie 2001). Craig drives the point home well when stating that “*thing is I'm out there on the streets seeing the crime, there's no way on this planet that it's dropping, certainly not in Lake Town*”. Additionally, Sean proclaimed “*I think crime is going up from the things I see in my area*”. Further claims of increased crime in Lake Town come from Doug and Gavin respectively who assert that “*crime has risen; I'm just witnessing through my own eyes an increase. I see something going on where crime's concerned everyday*”. “*I've lived in Lake*

Town for the past ten years and I'd definitely say that there's been an increase, especially in violent crime". These experiential wisdoms stand in stark contrast to the official view of SLTP representative Luke who ardently claimed that:

Crime, and now I'm talking about police recorded crime, has come down massively in the last ten years to such a degree that I would feel confident in saying that there's less crime now, even taking into account the unrecorded crime and all that, than what there has been in the past. There's significantly, in fact hugely less crime now I'm absolutely convinced of that.

Such optimism is however unfounded, particularly in light of the fact that in early January 2014 the decision was made by the UK Statistics Authority to remove the 'National Statistic' designation from police recorded crime data (Lammy 2015). Interestingly Ethan, who continues to serve as a police officer, does not share Luke's optimistic appraisal but rather corroborates many of the resident's' views expressed above. He noted that:

In my opinion crime has gone up but there's less reporting of crime now for various reasons. I quite often speak to people that don't report that their bike's been stolen, don't report that their car's been broken into, even house burglaries and street robberies go unreported because what is the point? So if I'm being honest I think people report less crime but I don't think there's less crime happening.

Consequently, there is evidence to suggest that a range of both 'low-level' and serious crimes form a persistent and seemingly relentless undercurrent to the already turbulent lives of many in Lake Town. Yet, as remains the case in many other economically marginalised locales, such illegalities often flow beneath the statistical radar as common constituents of everyday life remaining largely unreported, unrecorded and unpublicised (Hall et al 2008).

'Well That's Just Normal Now':

Indeed, despite its corrosive effects much of the crime experienced by participants has become a relatively normalised and doxic part of everyday life, and as such is often not reported to the police or any other proxy resembling

officialdom. This particular, yet all too common, barrier towards the reporting of crime is vividly illustrated by Gavin who explained that:

You become numb to crime, you get desensitised to it all you know what once might have been a strange experience becomes commonplace. That's just through like the longer you live here the more and more extreme circumstances seem to become normality because it's just the way it is, it becomes part of your life. What maybe five or ten years ago you would have reported you just think 'well that's just normal now'. If you're on the outside looking in you see a totally different story but when you're deep in it you know it's just your world isn't it.

Echoing this familiar viewpoint Aaron admitted that:

You become accustomed to it, you put your blinkers on essentially. If you see something going on, unless it's something that you really don't agree with, you don't really take notice of it, and like you don't notice things that go on under your nose anyway.

This tacit intimation towards the presence of differentiated normalisation (Shildrick 2002) is made explicit when Aaron declared that:

If I saw somebody dealing smack or crack or anything like that I'd be like 'nah its wrong', I would report that but anything else I'm a bit like each to their own type thing and I think other people are kind of like that, especially round here.

This research tends to suggest that the concept of differentiated normalisation extends beyond the realm of drug use as it appears evident throughout many participants' feelings towards crime in general. For instance, when commenting upon why no one intervened in a particularly brutal incident witnessed by the researcher during the fieldwork — whereby a man was physically assaulted by another attending the soup kitchen — James, a frequent user of this service, explained that “*it's because he wasn't injured that badly, he didn't have any injuries so there was no real need to ring the police, and besides that's normal round here*”. Evidently, it appears that even extreme physical violence needs to

exceed a certain 'threshold of normality' before it is deemed appropriate to intervene or inform the authorities. This is supported by Reece who noted that:

If you see something enough you do become a little bit numb to it and you don't want to get involved unless it goes over the top because you'll likely get battered yourself.

For some however, a differentiated normalised view towards crime is mediated by the degree to which they actively benefit from its committal. For instance, Jake notes how he doesn't "agree with anyone burgling, mooching around someone's house while they're in bed going through their draws and stuff, but I agree with buying a £50 watch for a tenner". Indeed, as alluded to in chapter three, community beneficiaries of criminal entrepreneurship often view it as a necessary and valuable service (Antonopoulos et al 2011; Wiltshire et al 2001), and thus have no interest in furnishing the authorities with information likely to result in the disruption of its 'social' function (Lea 2002). Craig illustrates the point well:

It's a service being provided, I'm not gonna report the dodgy coffee because I need dodgy coffee you know what I mean, it ain't going on in the areas where people don't need this stuff.

He further explains that:

I can't afford the other jar of coffee, its dodgy coffee or no coffee, Bic razors that cut your face when you shave or a Mach 3 with loads of blades, it's the same aftershave as he's got up the road or no aftershave at all, it's a tracksuit for your daughter this Christmas or no tracksuit at all, you know what I mean.

The police are by no means unaware of this common barrier towards reporting as Lewis makes clear:

Because you have so much deprivation in Lake Town people rely on being able to buy stolen and counterfeit goods and if they can get them cheaper then why are they going to tell us?

There is however a more ominous reason why many residents do not report even the most serious and deleterious forms of crime, and that is the strict adherence to the 'code of the street' and its powerful normative injunction to avoid 'grassing' at all costs (Anderson 2000; Rosenfeld et al 2003). Jake and Gavin respectively articulate how the 'code of the street' precludes the reporting of crime:

I know a law's a law but there's also the other law that you don't go to the police, you just get on with it and that's how it is. No one's got trust in them, no one believes in them round here.

You just don't go to the police on each other, I mean I've known people who have ended up with fractured jaws and broken noses and they just go to the hospital and get patched up. Because they don't trust the police and it's kind of like a culture thing that you don't go around blowing each other up to the police you know what I mean, because that's just gonna bring more and more repercussions.

The stark reality of both the need to resolutely adhere to the normative prohibition against 'grassing' and the disastrous consequences that befall those who breach this sacred taboo (Ancrum 2014) was articulated by many participants. Laura, for instance, told the researcher that "*if the police are seen at your house you'll be called a grass and you'll have all your windows put through, so you just keep your mouth shut*". Similarly, Catherine explained that:

If you see something you don't say anything, even if your life is at risk because you'll be called a grass and if people think you're a grass they'll make your life impossible. To be called a grass is the worst thing ever; you really don't want to be called a grass in Lake Town.

Indeed, according to Gavin "*If you put that label on someone it's just death to them*", and as Jake attests this threat is literal rather than figurative:

I saw this one lad talking to the police and I phoned my mate and said 'your mate's sat outside my house talking to a copper' so they went round and set his house on fire.

Consequently, and perhaps unsurprisingly, Doug notes that *“if somebody sees something it’s best not to say anything, if it comes back on you there’s more trouble. So there’s that wall of silence, a wall of fear”*. Accordingly, many residents inevitably secure their self-preservation by ensuring that that they ‘see but don’t see’ (Anderson 2000) as they retain an almost habituated fetishistic disavowal of the persistent perpetration of crime and harm. Gavin captures well this necessary blindness when noting that:

Nobody wants to get involved you know nobody wants the hassle, so as long as it’s not affecting them they’re happy to be ignorant to it. And you need to be, you need to have a certain degree of ignorance you know for your own safety.

Similarly, Craig explained that *“it’s just easier to not see things, you can avoid that uncomfortable feeling and avoid having to do anything about it by not seeing it in the first place”*.

Further precluding the reporting of crime is the strong belief among a number of participants that authorities have simply given up on the area and seemingly tolerate or turn a blind eye to much of the crime and harm they routinely experience. For example Natasha, who is relatively new to the area, expressed that:

No one ever cleans up or fixes the damage, like there’s been broken windows down my street that have been that way for months and it just feels like if something else happens no one’s gonna do anything, the council doesn’t seem to care.

Likewise, Craig exclaimed that his area *“isn’t cared about, it’s not looked after. It’s one of the worst areas and you’ll see the least police driving round”*. According to Jake:

The police don’t bother with crime in my area, you rarely see them. You just see one big van going round every now and again, they just go in one big loop round the main roads and back out and that’s about it.

Zane also noted how *“they see little bits of the seedy side when they’re driving round but they just turn their face away from it, they don’t want to know”*. Comparable feelings of police inaction were expressed by Laura and Eddy respectively who noted that *“the police just turn a blind eye half the time”*, *“they know it happens but they’re not bothered, they’d rather be stood at a sandwich bar eating a bacon sandwich or something”*. Inevitably, such experiential wisdoms foster a general sense of disbelief in the efficacy of the police which serves to militate against the reporting of crime (van Dijk and Groenhuijsen 2011). Remarkably, although an actively serving police officer, Ethan expressed cogently what appears to be a consensual apathy towards reporting crime or, as he puts it, *“needlessly participating in an exercise in futility”*:

I used to phone the police when I was off-duty if I saw something going on but I don’t bother anymore because I know nobody will come. There’s no point phoning in I just don’t see the point, it’s not worth the phone call to be fair and I think a lot of people feel that way.

Indeed, as Jeremy attests *“when you need the police they don’t come but when you don’t need them they’re just there. That’s a motto, especially round here”*. Consequently, in lieu of what are often episodic and fleeting incursions by the police, many estates in areas such as Lake Town tend to be largely self-policed in accordance with the ‘code of the street’ and ‘street justice’ is meted out with brutal impunity (Lea 2002; Evans et al 1996). As Jake explains:

The estate’s policed itself basically, it’s got its own law you know what I mean. If you did have a big problem you could go to someone and they’d go sort it out for you rather than getting in with the police. You don’t get no second chances, cause any trouble and you’ll be gone within a matter of minutes.

The fundamental upshot is that due to strong communal support for what are perceived to be ‘social’ crimes and a necessarily strict adherence to the ‘no-grassing’ rule and the overarching ‘code of the street’, there remains a great reluctance among participants to report crime to the police (Lea 1999; Evans et al 1996). Accordingly, since approximately “80% of crime known to the police comes to their attention as a result of information from the public” (Tierney

2010:29), the argument can be advanced that Lake Town perhaps constitutes part of a vast constellation of vortices where only a small proportion of the total volume of illegalities registers on the statistical radar (Hall and Winlow 2015; Pearson 1983). Indeed, Zane makes the point well by noting that “*because you only see a certain level of crime doesn’t mean to say that there’s not more lurking underneath, which there is and I know there is*”. Carl, a struggling desister who evidently still identifies and associates heavily with his old criminal fraternity, makes a similar argument when articulating that “*unrecorded crime is, oh God, its tip of the iceberg stuff you know the rest of it is underneath totally under the radar*”. Evidently, a persistent and significant disjuncture continues to exist between recorded crime and the sum total of crime committed (Quinney and Wildeman 1977; Watts et al 2008).

‘You’ve Got Like Police Recorded Crime and Then You Have Crime’:

Whilst this disparity is often acknowledged by officialdom it appears that its true effects are frequently denied to such a degree that there is no “desire to apprehend what might be the totality of real crime” (Taylor et al 1975:40). Rather, what seems to persist amongst many in positions of authority is an unyielding fidelity towards the efficacy of police recording systems and practices and the belief that whilst not all crime is reported or recorded at least “*what gets reported is recorded accurately*” as Luke contends; as if, despite evidence to the contrary, this constitutes some reliable illustrative guide to trends in crime (Reiner 1996). Indeed, despite cautioning the researcher that “*you’ve got to consider what crime is because you’ve got like police recorded crime and then you have crime*”, Luke went on to exclaim that crime has declined significantly in Lake Town. Similarly, having forwarded the familiar caveats, Lewis noted that “*reported crime has gone down, statistically*” before declaring that “*I personally think it’s a real decline, statistics support me in that*”.

Nevertheless Lewis admitted that “*you can only measure what you’ve got in front of you and the information that you’re given*”. He went on to explain how the police:

... tend to respond to things, if people don't bring it to our attention, unless it's picked up in some other way shape or form through intelligence, then we tend not to deal with it. It sounds awful but one of the things we do is something called 'fire brigade' policing, we respond to things, we deal with the there and what's happening now.

Evidently, effective policing continues to be dependent upon receiving a high volume of information from the community (Lea and Young 1993). However as Rowe (2013) explains, this 'fire brigade' style of policing has been complicit in isolating frontline officers from the rhythms of community life, resulting in diminished public confidence and limited information flows. Moreover, it appears that even when crime is reported it is often not dealt with appropriately or recorded correctly, due primarily to a politically motivated target-driven culture that is still very much a part of contemporary policing (Guilfoyle 2013; Patrick 2013). Indeed, Ethan recalled personal experiences of continuously being forced to adhere to an institutionalised culture which ensured that he was complicit in a myriad of unscrupulous policing practices designed to drive crime figures down, admitting that *"it's a team expectation that you will do as you're told"*. This often involved having to persistently and deliberately downgrade reported crime, aggressively persuade victims not to make complaints and ultimately physically manipulate police recorded crime figures as the following interview exchange between Ethan and the researcher demonstrates:

We used to work out of what was called 'the Crime Management Unit' seven or eight years ago, the CMU everybody in the police called it the crime manipulation unit, openly.

So they would manipulate the figures?

Yeah, to whatever the government wanted. If the government want knife crime down then we would drive knife crime down by fixing the stats.

Does that still happen now?

Yeah! If we want to reduce burglary then we'll just be very tough on people that report burglary. Really the only burglary that the government are bothered about is burglary dwelling, so we would do our hardest to try and record burglary non-dwelling. You can be very

creative about the way that you record crime, like if someone's broken into a house that they've been into before as a guest or broke in and come in as a trespasser it could be classed as a theft, because theft from a dwelling is not a burglary. So there's lots of ways to get crime down. And we still do it now, we occasionally snigger at the log where we see 'male has phone snatched from hand, theft from person', it's not a street robbery because violence wasn't offered, or at least that's how it was recorded.

He added that “we are conforming to what we are expected to conform to, we use the figures constructively in order to work within our parameters. Who wouldn't when you're under scrutiny?” Such trenchant testimony undoubtedly resonates with that of other frontline officers who have been forced to “play the numbers game” (Eterno and Silverman 2012:xxvii). Patrick (2013) for instance, notes that the target culture has become so corrosively engrained that the prevention and detection of crimes have become subordinate to the ongoing manipulation of the number and type of offences recorded. This same culture has fostered a working environment within which non-target-meeting work has become irrelevant, already limited resources are diverted towards satisfying constantly shifting performance indicators and morale has almost dissipated entirely as officers are continuously pushed beyond their limits (Metropolitan Police Federation 2014; Patrick 2013). Ethan captures particularly well the stark reality of this current landscape:

We've been told that we have to work smarter and harder because there's just not enough resources. We quite often can't get to crime events because we don't have the resources, we just don't have the cars anymore and we won't pay the fuel costs, so the most simplest of things become very, very difficult. People often ask 'is morale low in the police?' No, morale isn't low at all because there is no morale anymore. It was low a year ago and now everyone's just given up, the whole police service is now in disarray behind the scenes and that's an honest thing to say. Every police officer in my department is saying the same thing 'how can I get out and when can I get out?'

Evidently, it appears that participants' previously expressed disbelief in the efficacy of the police and their concomitant trepidation and reluctance to report crime is well founded. Indeed, evidence suggests that residents' needs are

often ignored or rated second-order considerations as priorities are directed towards playing well the crime numbers game (Eterno and Silverman 2012). Essentially the solidification of a corrosive, and more recently austerity-driven, targets culture has fostered an institutionalised tendency to simultaneously ignore persistent everyday experiences of harassment and thuggery whilst focusing upon 'target friendly' arrests and detections (Eterno and Silverman 2012; Guilfoyle 2013). Furthermore, potentially problematic, technologically complex and resource intensive investigations are frequently and deliberately avoided in favour of pursuing 'target rich' volume crimes (Guilfoyle 2013; Neyroud and Disley 2007). However, this tunnel vision is extremely problematic, particularly in light of the fact that many of the conventional volume crimes the police tend to focus upon have begun to enter stages of obsolescence (Farrell et al 2010). Yet those of the calibre they actively seek to avoid have increasingly assumed positions of dominance throughout the criminal landscape, as crime continues to mutate as it moves through innovation-to-obsolescence cycles (McQuade 2006).

'Crime's Changing, it's Evolving':

Perhaps one of the most pertinent findings to emerge from this research is corroborating evidence to further support the assertion made in chapter one, that rather than simply 'declining' certain forms of crime are rapidly mutating beyond our current indicators' field of vision whilst others are becoming largely obsolescent (McQuade 2006). This co-evolutionary process has changed both the nature and broad landscape of crime in a myriad different ways as numerous participants attested (Maxfield et al 2007). For instance, according to Jake:

Crime's not declining it's just a different wave of crime you know what I mean, it's moving on. Crime's changing, it's evolving, like a couple of years ago there was no MKAT and even that's changing all the time.

Explaining how technological advances such as the internet and concomitant developments such as Facebook have transformed the practicalities of criminality and facilitated its committal, Craig and Reece respectively noted that:

You used to have to be a bit connected you know what I mean now you don't, you just switch your Facebook on and you can get drugs or whatever you want, it's easy. You don't have to hit the darkest streets anymore to get messed up and buy dodgy stuff, the internet provides that now.

I think crime has changed especially with the internet, people have found new ways to make money illegally. Now you don't have to go to the bloke round the corner because you can order it yourself off the internet, especially pharmaceuticals.

Reece further noted that:

It's not the same crimes being committed, it used to be car thefts you know what I mean joy riders and stuff like that, but now cars are that well protected that you can't pinch a car anymore.

Congruently, Luke explained that “*there used to be a huge number of vehicles stolen but because of the industry standards now it's harder to steal cars so theft of vehicles has massively reduced*”. Whilst these latter accounts undoubtedly lend some support to the security hypothesis alluded to in chapter one (Farrell et al 2011), their evidentiary credence cuts both ways for they also provide cogent examples of a crime, upon which we still focus our statistical lens, that is becoming obsolescent (Farrell et al 2010). However, whereas the security hypothesis perhaps too readily assumes a successful, immediate and complete cessation of such activity, an obsolescence based perspective provides a more nuanced view. It accepts not only that such security inspired ‘success’ may not be total, but that it may have unwittingly played a part in prompting the creation of opportunity loopholes that stimulate adaptive and new forms of crime (Walsh 1994; McQuade 2006). Illustratively, in reference to his earlier comment regarding reduced car crime Luke remarked:

But then you get some incidents now where because you can't break into a car and steal the car, you break into the house and steal the keys and then steal the car so there's some other crime types that have increased, so you do get some displacement type crime.

Certainly the acceleration of innovatory criminal momentum stimulated by the simultaneous technological negation and creation of criminal opportunities has inevitably resulted in many offenders becoming, as Carl suggests, “*an awful lot more technical and analytical in the way they approach crime*”. Indeed, for some this amounts to circumnavigating installed security measures utilising rudimentary items, innovative tools and a little know how. According to Paul this can be as simple as using a large magnet to magnetically force security tags off clothes, or dismantling dye tag alarms without ruining valuable merchandise using nothing more than a lighter:

You just grab hold of the alarm and use a lighter to burn off the stump and there's a little pin inside with a round metal piece with a spring, that'll pop off and the alarm falls apart that's how simple it is.

For others however, the technologically facilitated complete or partial transcendence of their terrestrial boundaries (Brenner 2007) has proven to be “*a natural progression*” as Lewis puts it. He further clarified how he thinks that:

It's because of the reliance on IT systems that people have naturally migrated across to it and also because you don't have that face-to-face contact all the time so you can be anonymous just about.

Such ‘natural progressive migration’ from the real-world into cyberspace and the perceived anonymity that has accompanied it (Brenner 2007; Sutton 2007), is particularly well illustrated by the growing participation in the adaptive crimes of trading in fake medicines and other stolen and/or counterfeit goods online (Hall and Antonopoulos 2015; Treadwell 2011). Indeed, Jade told the researcher how:

The demand has always been there but the internet has facilitated the illegitimate supply of pharmaceutical products. So what you have is a crime that already existed but the internet has facilitated and increased and expanded the trade.

She went on to note that:

People have moved into it because of the high profit and low risk involved, I mean I've seen social networking sites where you can view product and price lists for anything and everything imaginable and you pay directly into someone's bank account. But in terms of risk you're more likely to encounter fraudulent sellers than police interception.

Jade certainly drives this point home well:

The UK's got one of the better reputations across Europe for the enforcement of counterfeit medicines, but that doesn't mean to say that it's a big team of a hundred people, there's two people working on illegal online pharmacy shutdowns. And I'm not being funny, but if you close a website down it just opens up somewhere else and it's a huge trade so it's very hard to detect.

Evidently the internet, and social networking sites in particular, has transformed the traditional criminal marketplace by providing a new, relatively easy to navigate and largely unpoliced, terrain upon which innovative means of exercising entrepreneurial instincts can be harnessed for low risk profitable gain (Treadwell 2011). Amongst the most prevalent uses of this new terrain uncovered during the fieldwork was the online trade in stolen and/or counterfeit goods via Facebook. Jake, for instance, vividly described its attractive allure:

You can go on Facebook and there's loads of stuff for sale like tracksuits, bikes, drugs, and it's easy to get at because it's just one private inbox message, so it's easy to order it's cheaper and it's dropped off to your door you know what I mean.

However, as with the online sale in fake medicines, the authorities have seemingly struggled to get to grips with this adaptive form of crime despite its comparatively 'low-grade' complexity, as Lewis and Ethan respectively acknowledged:

From a policing perspective we've been slow on the uptake, but I think that's because we didn't understand it and you've got kids sort of ten or thirteen years old that probably have a much better understanding of IT systems than most police officers do and I think that's been the issue.

It's very, very difficult to enforce because although their names are on there to actually get that person identified correctly is very difficult. I would have to ask them on my own personal time on my own identified

Facebook page 'what's your address' and it's gonna be very difficult to trace them down, and the thing is no one can monitor that it's just too busy and its everywhere. No way shape or form would you be allowed to monitor that, you just won't be able to.

Consequently, it certainly seems as though many amongst the criminal fraternity, who undoubtedly remain more flexible and technologically adroit than their policing and security counterparts (Thachuk 2007), have taken a comfortable lead in the highly competitive, dynamic and co-evolving civilian arms race (McQuade 2006). Indeed, with regards to the internet being utilised as a criminal facilitator Lewis admitted that:

Because it's moving at such a fast pace it's always a catching up game from a policing point of view, as something new will happen we've gotta then get up to that point by which time they've moved onto something else and in a different way.

Similarly according to Carl, who retains “one foot in their [offenders] camp” as he puts it:

The police need to catch up and keep up with their pace because they are so advanced they really are, trust me it's absolutely fucking board room level some of this stuff it really is.

Yet despite the importance of maintaining a current understanding and knowledge of emerging criminal markets and evolving forms of crime (McQuade 2006), it appears that to a large extent the police, like many of their victimisation surveying counterparts (Kirchhoff 2010), preserve a static view of crime and the techniques of its committal (Williams 2012; Brenner 2007). Despite acknowledging the rapidity and fluidity of technologically adaptive crime, Lewis maintained that “at the end of the day the crimes being committed are the crimes that were being committed thirty years ago. Things may have changed slightly but not significantly”. Perhaps one reason for this stagnant view — aside from the political and organisational utility of statistically separating ‘conventional’ from ‘non-conventional’ forms of crime and focusing upon measuring the dispersed obsolescence of the former (Lomell 2010) — is the

expressed difficulty of policing technologically adaptive and new forms of crime. Indeed, according to Lewis:

There are certain areas, you're looking at your cybercrime as one of them, where people are suddenly realising that we aren't as effective in that because we don't have the people trained, we don't have the equipment to deal with it because it's an expensive investigation.

More to the point, Ethan explained that:

It's difficult for an officer to find the resources and time to deal with it because if I went back to the office now as a normal response officer I have no way of checking eBay or Facebook for people selling things or doing transactions. I know officers that do more effective investigations on their own personal mobile phone because at work you can't do it, you don't have the tools and you don't have the authority you know. It becomes a logistical nightmare to the point where officers don't really want to get involved because it will take up so much of their time and resources and it just becomes another exercise in futility.

Accordingly, the partial or complete assimilation by many amongst the criminal fraternity to the new, easy to navigate and difficult to police cyber-terrain has stimulated the mutation of crime and concomitant criminal innovation-to-obsolescence cycles (McQuade 2006). As criminals adopt and adapt perpetual technological innovations to facilitate the committal of adaptive or new forms of crime, older variations and techniques become increasingly obsolescent.

However, whilst the traditional criminal marketplace is being rapidly transformed by this co-evolutionary process (Treadwell 2011), it appears that both the police and victimisation surveyors alike continue to focus their statistical lens primarily upon those forms of crime beginning to enter stages of obsolescence. This is perhaps in part due to the tendency to maintain an analytically myopic tunnel vision whereby only that which can be easily measured and quantified is explored as figure 1 in chapter one demonstrates (Lomell 2010). As figure 2 illustrates, this concentration upon the narrow range of relatively well-measured forms of crime at the expense of poorly-measured adaptive and new forms of

crime gives the statistical impression that crime is declining. However, as Ethan explains:

We're not experiencing a crime decline we're just seeing a shift towards more diverse forms of crime. The people at the lower end of the spectrum are still committing street crime, and the people who are committing the higher end of crime are getting away with it better because they can't be detected because it's so difficult. There's only the people in the middle that are being caught you know; only the people in the middle are fair game.

Essentially, the fundamental upshot is that crime may not have simply declined overall but has perhaps rather mutated in ways that current indicators, replete with their well-known inability to chart all the contours of crime and harm (Francis et al 2014), have not adequately captured (Farrell et al 2010).

'People Believe What They Want to Believe':

Whilst many participants perhaps unsurprisingly articulated feelings of disdain towards the idea of a 'crime decline', others seemingly accepted such an assertion only when presented with 'credible evidence'. Conversely however, some appeared to accept wholeheartedly the 'crime decline' discourse despite the presence of much countervailing evidence. The position being forwarded is that such disparity is perhaps indicative of participants' range of assimilation within modernity's '*dream myth*'. Accordingly, the purpose of this section is to foreground and tentatively 'typologise' such disparate assimilation, ultimately beginning to lay the empirical foundation upon which the researcher's theory of the *dream myth* will subsequently be built in chapter seven.

For many, their close proximity to the deleterious effects of the dominant sociosymbolic order's actualised structures and processes foreclose their assimilation into modernity's dream myth. Consequently, this group of '*unassimilated*' participants vociferously denounced the notion of a 'crime decline', and the government statistics on which it is thought to have been based, as such a seemingly absurd assertion did not align with their lived reality of crime and harm in Lake Town. Indeed, as Robert and Sarah respectively

note “*there’s definitely no crime decline, the government are magicians when it comes to crime figures*”, “*It’s very naïve to accept the perception of a crime decline*”. Responding more indignantly to the question ‘what would you say if I told you that some criminologists think that crime has declined over the last two decades?’ Gavin and Zane respectively exclaimed:

I’d say I’d find it hard to believe, definitely. Especially seeing what I see on a day-to-day basis there’s no way that crime in Lake Town is declining. I’d say listen, come walk in my shoes for 28 days and you tell me that crime’s declining, fair enough you might be able to get them figures because people are more reluctant to report it you know, but crime’s not declining.

You don’t see it, I mean they’re just going off their figures they’re not out there on the frontline seeing it, they’re not seeing what’s going on behind their figures. But if they came to Lake Town and went undercover they’d see a lot of things and I tell you what their figures would go up a bit you know what I mean. And I think the police hide beyond a lot of it, they just put a brave face on, and then whoever does the numbers says ‘oh everything’s under control’ because then there’s like no panic in the public and it’s all like ‘oh our forces are doing well, the figures have dropped so they must be doing something, we feel safer’ when actually we’re not because it’s getting worse and it should be highlighted you know what I mean.

Zane appears to be alluding to the role the statistical quilt plays for many in maintaining access to the fundamental fantasy-construction of the dream myth, which ultimately serves as an artificial vista from which to view the world providing an appealing frame that guarantees uninhibited access to their ‘sense of reality’ (Myers 2003; Žižek 1999).

This was certainly evident amongst the second group of ‘*partially assimilated*’ or ‘*episodically resistant*’ participants. Despite the cogency with which they denounced the efficacy of official statistics and articulated knowledge or experience of crime and harm, these individuals seemingly accepted the ‘crime decline’ discourse once presented with ‘evidence’ of its ostensible longevity. For instance, in response to the same question posed to Gavin and Zane above Aaron, although having previously expressed his disbelief of the purported

'crime decline', declared "*I'd agree, like people are more civilised I'd like to say now, although they're not but I would say its dropping like on a public scale*". Congruently, following similar utterances of scepticism such as "*that's just print, that's just percentage but where's the proof to say that that's happening*" and "*I don't believe the figures, I think everything's gone up*", Jeremy and Doug respectively replied:

I'd say that's probably true. Especially when you mention two decades because when I was younger there was crime everywhere and now that I'm older you don't see it as much as what you used to.

Yeah, I could quite believe that there's a decline in crime at the minute with the amount of people locked up, but if the prisons weren't full then I couldn't believe that.

Accordingly, this group of participants demonstrated a rather schizoid view of the 'crime decline' as experiential and normative wisdoms were seemingly overridden by the presentation of 'statistical evidence'. This is perhaps in part due to their proximity to the actualised experiences of crime and harm, independent of their 'event knowledge', being somewhat more intermittent than that experienced by the 'unassimilated' group above (Bhaskar 2008a).

Conversely, on the other end of the spectrum lies a third group of '*fully assimilated*' participants who's limited proximity to crime and harm allows them to overcome statistical scepticism and accept the 'crime decline' discourse and concomitant liberal progressive expressions of a more peaceful society (Pinker 2012). For instance, Natasha noted that "*statistics are whatever you want, it's a number isn't it so you just make it fit in with what you want to believe really*"; yet when questioned about the 'crime decline' statistics she maintained "*I think they're accurate because people are in a better state now than they were two decades ago, so there's just not as much desire to commit crime*".

Evidently, as discussed in chapter three, the ability to fetishistically disavow the presence of crime and harm is mediated by the degree to which one is able to physically and mentally distance oneself from their deleterious effects (Žižek

2011; Pemberton 2004). Importantly, this mediated fetishistic disavowal is further strengthened via the presentation of ‘statistical evidence’ affirming the idyllic fantasy vision of the ‘crime decline’ (Žižek 2008a), yet is seemingly unhindered by countervailing evidence as Natasha explains, “*If you wanna see its declining then you’ll take the figures and if you don’t believe it you’ll say ‘aw it’s just stats’*”. Indeed as David, an ex-offender who now works at a local substance misuse support service, elucidates:

People believe what they want to believe, not just in relation to crime but in relation to everything. If it doesn’t fit in with their inherent beliefs then they ignore it, choosing instead to have preference to tabloid nonsense to support their own personal beliefs. If it fits people will choose to believe it and vice versa.

Alluding to the function a retention of such beliefs and our ‘sense of reality’ serves in maintaining the internalised ideological rituals of capitalist life (Myers 2003), Mark notes how news of a crime decline would:

... make me feel safer, it would make me feel more secure in where I was living, it would make me feel happier in my area, so yeah I would like to hear that; because it would continue to let me go to work and keep earning my wage in a happy sort of mood.

According to Nick such reassurance undoubtedly allows individuals “*to continue as they are in their comfort zone*”, because it is far easier as Craig suggests “*to just not see things, it’s comfortable isn’t it, it’s that sort of blissful ignorance stuff where your asleep, your completely asleep you know what I mean*”. Echoing such views Reece and Gavin respectively stated that “*there’s a general like ostrich effect you know like if we pretend that its true then it is. Bury our heads in the sand and then it’s not happening*”. “*You can just blind yourself and you can be like ‘oh well crime’s falling and there’s a government statistic to prove it so it must be true’, you know*”. This well-orchestrated and reassuring statistical quilt and its concomitant gift of being able to “*go about the everyday and not know*” (Morrison 2014:193) “*definitely just paints a picture for people that want to believe that it’s declining*” as local resident Rachel puts it. Stated differently, it is a carefully constructed dream designed to enable a prolonged sleep so as to

avoid awakening into reality and face deconstructing the comfortable myth of the 'crime decline', which serves to obfuscate the hiatus that exists between the imagined ideal and reality (Žižek 2008a; Box 1981).

It is here that a strong fidelity towards the efficacy of the 'hard' and 'soft' machines' ability to maintain order becomes useful for the preservation of this 'dream myth', as they are apparently seen to ensure that no 'loss of reality' is experienced (Žižek 1999). Illustrating this point well, Rachel revealed that:

I wouldn't be happy knowing that you could just be walking down the street and like there could be ten criminals just walking down the same street as you. I definitely wouldn't feel safe if I didn't know that there was a system to punish people.

Indeed, when presented with a radical scenario involving the loss of the control system's 'hard' machine it was not uncommon for participants to articulate dystopian views almost inadvertently akin to their present situations. For instance, Mark and Laura respectively expressed that "*it would be chaos absolute chaos, people would become crazy*", "*it would be hectic; it would just be non-stop crime I think, you'd have people walking into shops and taking whatever they wanted*". Similarly, James and Jeremy respectively stated that:

There would be anarchy and chaos. You'd get a lot of people thinking 'who cares, there's nobody looking after me so why should I look after or care about anybody else'. But hopefully that situation should never arise, it's unthinkable isn't it.

It would be horrible, it's not even worth thinking about you know what I mean. The country would be ruined if that was the case, I'd brick it, I'd be terrified, it's just not worth thinking about.

When probed as to what he would do in such an extreme scenario Doug told the researcher that:

I'd probably run away and hide, you know get what I need and then go hibernate. I think I'd be quite scared, you know I see half of these types of people on the streets now and if there was no law enforcement at all it would just be crazy. You could never imagine could you what it would

be like, but it would be crazy because people would just go and take what they wanted and nobody would stop them you know.

It could be argued that despite its visible discrepancies the simple abstract presence of the ‘hard’ machine appears sufficient to offset the otherwise inevitable dystopic calamity of life as it already exists for many in Lake Town. For some, this comforting presence is further augmented by the construction of an intricately woven statistical quilt designed to reaffirm the efficacy of those deemed to be the custodians of order. Collectively, these provide the ‘credible’ foundation upon which the dream myth is reciprocally formed, sustained and perpetuated, creating an enticing cultural sleep intended to “*escape you from the world your living in*” as Craig puts it.

This cultural sleep and its comfortable dream are maintained by a sociosymbolic resistance to the ‘full visibility’ of society’s behavioural conduct (Merton 1968). This is secured by retaining publicly persuasive narratives of ‘crime’ and a narrowly focused ‘crime decline’ tunnel of vision which preserve only a “functionally optimum degree of visibility” (Merton 1968:398; Pemberton 2007). So successful has this induced myopia been that it was not uncommon for participants to demonstrate great difficulty in thinking beyond the discourse of ‘crime’. For instance, in response to the question ‘what do you consider to be harmful to the community that isn’t classified as a crime?’ Catherine stated that “*most of the things that are quite harmful are already considered as crime*”. Likewise, Rachel and Lewis respectively replied “*I’d say a lot of the things that cause harm are probably already crimes really*”, “*I honestly can’t think of something*”. Concomitantly, such myopia also serves to cultivate a narrow conceptualisation of victimhood (Elias 1986) as even Gavin and James who experience a great deal of socio-economic marginalisation and systemic violence respectively profess to having “*not really been a victim of crime*” or “*wouldn’t class unemployment as being harmed*”.

The fundamental upshot is that the partial or complete assimilation into modernity’s ‘*dream myth*’, complete with its comforting statistical quilt, facilitates the perpetual obsessive denial of the reality of crime and harm. Moreover, with

the aid of its custodians of order who guard against the 'loss of reality' by ensuring the preservation of the fundamental fantasy, it enables uninterrupted access to a 'sense of reality' that allows one to continue in the capitalist rituals of conspicuous consumption and competitive accumulation as the global capitalist system nears its apocalyptic zero-point (Žižek 1999, 2011). It is this drive to retain a fantasised state of complete immersion within the dominant sociosymbolic order that the philosophical tradition of transcendental materialism and the theory of the 'pseudo-pacification process' help expound, and to which the developing theory of the '*dream myth*' adds additional explanatory weight. Accordingly, it is to the delineation of these positions that the remainder of this thesis directs its attention.

Chapter Six:

Paradigmatic Dominance and Eyes Wide Shut: Beyond Positivism and Constructionism.

Before the above-mentioned positions are elucidated it is worth commenting briefly upon the current condition of contemporary criminology. On both sides of the Atlantic the mainstream criminological canon appears to be characterised by aetiological entropy, the marginalisation of intellectual curiosity and the institutionally celebrated production of ‘so what? criminology’ (Hall and Winlow 2012; DeKeseredy 2012; Matthews 2009). What this effectively boils down to is a general intellectual standstill at the core of the criminological enterprise, precipitated in part by the rapid expansion of ‘market positivism’ and its attendant culture of selective research prevention (Winlow and Atkinson 2013; Squires 2013). Facilitating the marginalisation of penetrative critical and qualitative research, the solidification of this research prevention culture has resulted in the diminishment of criminology’s intellectual vitality (Squires 2013; Hall and Winlow 2012). Indeed, recent research has revealed a paucity of qualitative and theoretical studies amongst the voluminous output of prominent American, British and European criminology journals (Travers 2013; Smith 2014).

It is undoubtedly clear that positivism — particularly in its marketised or ‘hard/strong’ form, with its obsessive fidelity towards quantification and the production of ‘suitable’ statistical facts (DiCristina 1995; Kvale and Brinkmann 2009; Presdee 2004b) — constitutes the *dominant* paradigmatic force shaping and constraining contemporary criminology. However there is a *subdominant* paradigmatic force often referred to as social constructionism that exists in long-running tension with the dominance of positivist empiricism (Hall and Winlow 2012). Often advanced as the only serious challenger to positivism’s paradigmatic dominance (Hall and Winlow 2015), social constructionism, particularly in its ‘hard’ or ‘strong’ form, nevertheless exerts its own constraining presence on the ‘criminological imagination’ (Matthews 2009; Young 2011).

Certainly, denial of the conceptual comprehensibility of acts such as abuse, exploitation or oppression, by invoking the view that the harm endured only exists in the mind of the beholder since our susceptibilities to these acts are voluntarily constructed, undeniably inhibits any meaningful analysis of their aetiological complexity (Matthews 2009).

Consequently, the constraining presence of these dominant and subdominant paradigms, and the intellectual coma they have induced, has effectively marooned the discipline in an undialectical bind between crude positivism and equally crude social constructionism (Hall 2012b). Since the success of a paradigm is determined largely by its *promise* of success rather than pure analytical efficacy (Kuhn 1996), the dominance of these paradigms is not the result of their ability to uncover or possess a monopoly over truth, but rather their ability to “exercise power and sustain dominance as ‘dogma’” (Jones 2003:149). In such circumstances the acceptance of alternative positions developed in the interstices of a discipline deeply resistant to new ideas or explanations seems improbable, yet nevertheless perhaps represents the greatest chance of traversing this paradigmatic impasse (Hall and Winlow 2012; Sumner 2015).

As a result, the need to rethink currently dominant philosophical and theoretical positions whilst stimulating the cultivation of new intellectual directions in criminology is of vital importance (Hall and Winlow 2012). Not least of all because the resolute adherence to the aforementioned dominant and subdominant paradigmatic forces continues to impede the criminological investigation of pertinent social issues and phenomena (DeKeseredy 2012; Matthews 2009; Squires 2013). The failure of criminology to as of yet “develop persuasive and theoretically nuanced accounts of the crime drop” (Winlow 2014b:169) is a case in point. Such failure is due in large part to mainstream criminology’s over-reliance upon dated theoretical positions and unsuitable means of examination (Francis et al 2014). Indeed, any cursory glance over the voluminous ‘crime decline’ literature will reveal that its theoretical and empirical oeuvre is heavily informed and constrained by the dominant positivist paradigm and its attendant fidelity towards the “fetishism of numbers” (Young 2011:44).

Shored up by a dizzying array of statistical techniques designed to re-assuredly affirm an air of scientificity and a plethora of intra-scholarly cross-references which offer 'proof by assertion' (Aebi and Linde 2012b), the fragile house of cards built upon this paradigmatic dominance remains unshaken (Young 2011). Moreover, having not even really entered the 'crime decline' debate the 'strong' version of social constructionism, with its widely adopted view that crime is nothing more than a fictional and arbitrary construct (Matthews 2009), has offered little of value to those committed to shaking the fragile foundations upon which the 'crime decline' discourse has been built.

Consequently it can be argued that the paucity of rigorous research capable of peering beneath the statistical quilt of the 'crime decline' discourse is a reflection of the theoretical and empirical poverty cultivated by the empirical imprecision and theoretical inertia of criminology's *dominant* and *subdominant* paradigms. Accordingly, the purpose of this chapter is to move beyond these dominant and subdominant forces and begin to explore alternative positions capable of facilitating a more accurate and holistic examination of the purported 'crime decline'. It is however instructive at this point to offer a very brief yet more concentrated reiteration of the broad contours and well known criticisms of criminology's *dominant* and *subdominant* paradigmatic forces.

Positivism and Constructionism:

Positivism, according to Silverman (2011:11), "is a very slippery and emotive term" but can however perhaps be broadly characterised as an approach to social science concerned with a number of distinct assumptions (Benton and Craib 2011). Primarily and broadly conceived, this approach assumes that methods derived from the natural sciences can be successfully applied to the investigation of human affairs (Hollis 2002). More specifically it accepts the empiricist view of science and its attendant doctrines, among which is the assertion that genuine knowledge-claims can be obtained and rendered testable only via direct experience or observation (Benton and Craib 2011; Robson 2011). Consequently, knowledge-claims regarding unobservable entities are strongly rejected as unscientific, as it is thought that only observable

facts provide a reliable basis for the development of sound propositions, testable hypotheses and causal relations identified by empirical regularities or constant conjunctions (Robson 2011; Sayer 2010).

Displaying a constant tendency to limit our acquaintance with the world and our basic statements about it to the 'brute facts' of experiential knowledge, derived by reducing objects of study to their empirical grounds, positivism essentially remains trapped in the empirical domain (Hollis 2002; Bhaskar 1998, 2008a). Accordingly, this dominant paradigmatic force can tell us nothing of that which exists unperceived and thus provides only a very partial view of 'open' social systems (Hollis 2002; Bhaskar 1998). The criminological consequences of committing oneself to this 'hard' form of positivism, with its 'common sense' reliance upon the scientific method and simplistic 'operationalisation' of concepts artificially rendered amenable to statistical measurement and analysis, have been well rehearsed (Watts et al 2008). Nevertheless, such commitment remains prevalent within criminology and throughout the social sciences more broadly (Matthews 2010).

"Typically light in theory and heavy on statistical manipulation" (Matthews 2010:131), the voluminous 'crime decline' literature perhaps proves to be an excellent case in point. Indeed much of the 'orthodox' survey research, and the crude empiricism of the ICVS in particular (Matthews 2010), informing this seemingly persuasive discourse has wielded the positivist mysticism of 'voodoo criminology' to devastating effect (DeKeseredy forthcoming 2016; Young 2004). Certainly, the misleading notion of an 'international crime decline' is the result of successfully presenting the findings of a-theoretical quantitative research "trapped in the empirical realm of one-dimensional legally constructed definitions of crime that ignore a huge dark figure of ill-defined, systematically ignored, misperceived, non-criminalised, unreported and unrecorded harms" (Hall and Winlow 2015:1; DeKeseredy 2012).

At this juncture it may be salient to recall that in chapter four the important distinction was made between 'hard' and 'soft' positivism in an attempt to avoid the wholesale rejection of positivist inspired social scientific research. Indeed it

was argued that the proper utilisation of positivism in its *'soft'* form, as an initial analytical method of identifying demi-regularities to be investigated more thoroughly by contextually sensitive qualitative research, offers a potential avenue of significant promise (Danermark 2002). However, it is perhaps unsurprising to note that despite such potential promise mainstream criminology, and social science more broadly, continues to be dominated by positivism's *'hard'* variant and its attendant concern only for the empirical (Matthews 2010; Yar 2004).

Counterposed to this dominance, social constructionism operates from a distinctly different set of ontological and epistemological assumptions than its positivist counterpart (Houston 2001). Ontologically social constructionists focus primarily upon the conscious construction of reality (Lindgren 2005). Simply stated, they propose that rather than an objective reality existing independently from the imaginative subject, the social world is manufactured via human interaction and language (Quinney 1975; Houston 2001). Correspondingly, they tend to emphasise the epistemologically contingent and perspectival nature of knowledge, choosing to concentrate upon the world of pluralistic meanings created by social actors through a process of communicative interaction (Houston 2001; Quinney 1975). It is salient to note however, that social constructionists do not dogmatically deny the existence of an external reality, but contest the possibility of acquiring *'truthful'* or objective knowledge of such a reality (Flick 2009; Burr 1998; Nightingale and Cromby 2002).

Accordingly, social constructionists have often been charged with abandoning discussions of the real for those concerned with our knowledge of it and the claims we make about it (Baert et al 2011). Indeed it appears that they are content to confine their intellectual operations to the domain of the actual, concerned only with the phenomenology of events and subjective experiences (Bhaskar 2008a; Hall and Winlow 2015). Moreover, in their polemics against materialism constructionists often display the tendency to reduce everything to mental processes, including the creation of socially real entities (Lindgren 2005), thereby slipping needlessly into what Fleetwood (2005:206) calls "ontological exaggeration". In addition to suffering from what Nightingale and

Cromby (2002:710) refer to as “ontological muteness” — after acknowledging that ‘things’ exist we are hastily reminded that their nature remains unknowable since their demarcation is purportedly nothing more than mere social convention — social constructionism has a tendency to de-centre the human subject from analysis as ‘agency’ becomes little more than a language game (Houston 2001; Burr 1998).

However it is pertinent to note that like positivism, social constructionism contains ‘hard/strong’ and ‘soft/weak’ variants (Sayer 2000; Iosifides 2011a). Whilst much of the above is perhaps more indicative of the former, a significant proportion of crucial elements undoubtedly still apply in varying degrees to the latter. For instance, ‘soft’ social constructionism maintains that factual accounts of the real are socially constructed and that such knowledge is contingent upon its social origins (Sayer 2000). Yet for its ‘hard’ variant this means that since the objects or referents of such knowledge are nothing more than social constructions, they cannot “adequately refer to and describe external circumstances which are either not social constructions or are the constructions of others” (Sayer 2000:62).

Unfortunately many criminologists have adopted this ‘hard’ constructionist logic, applying it in extreme form in the claim that “crime is an arbitrary and fictional construct” (Matthews 2009:345). Whilst few would argue with the claim that the *category of ‘crime’* is a socio-legal construction, such an assertion must be tempered with the acknowledgment that the harm it causes is very real (Henry and Milovanovic 1996). Yet without any of this moderation the simplistic articulation that crime is merely a social construction continues to pervade constructionist criminology, precluding its investigation of pertinent contemporary issues (Hall and Winlow 2015). Indeed social constructionism, particularly in its ‘hard’ variant, remains confined to the domain of the actual and is reluctant to venture beyond engaging in discussions regarding ‘crime’s’ socially constructed nature to consider the lived reality of crime and harm. Accordingly, it fares little better than its positivist counterpart as an adequate position from which to analyse the purported ‘crime decline’.

Evidently, both the dominant and subdominant paradigmatic forces that currently monopolise the mainstream criminological canon offer very little utility for a thorough analysis of the 'crime decline's' multifaceted complexity. Nevertheless, it remains customary within social science to contrast positivism with constructionism as if these two positions exhaust all possible alternatives (Benton and Craib 2011). This tendency continues to persist despite the existence of alternative positions capable of facilitating an initial move beyond the correlationism that forms a common feature of both contemporary positivism and social constructionism (Iosifides 2011b), such as critical realism.

Critical Realism; Beyond Positivism and Constructionism:

As alluded to above, despite being largely neglected within mainstream philosophical and criminological circles (Baert 2005; Sumner 2015), the philosophical doctrine of critical realism is capable of moving our intellectual faculties beyond the confines of the aforementioned dominant and subdominant paradigms. Indeed it retains the ability to expose positivism and constructionism's correlationist core (Iosifides 2011b). At the centre of this core resides the tendency to permanently dismiss any discussion of 'reality' as it exists independently of human access (Gratton 2014), in favour of maintaining instead that "knowledge of a reality independent of thought is untenable" (Bryant et al 2011:4). Facilitating, at least initially, the intellectual transcendence of the obsessive concern with correlations between thinking and being, critical realism maintains the tenability of capturing a glimpse of the real as it exists independently of our conceptions of it (Hall and Winlow 2015). Furthermore, it argues that we can attain some potentially fallible and always revisable knowledge of the real's complex and not always directly observable structures, processes and generative mechanisms (Sayer 2000; Benton and Craib 2011).

Although chapter four provided a detailed exposition of critical realism's basic premises, it is perhaps instructive to offer here a very brief reiteration of its main principles in order to help convey with more precision the progressive intellectual space critical realism opens up. In the first instance it should be recalled that critical realism, or what is also referred to as transcendental

realism, essentially revolves around a number of key claims regarding the nature of reality and our knowledge of it (Benton and Craib 2011; Outhwaite 1987). First and foremost, critical realism's initial point of departure is the premise that the world exists independently of human consciousness, and that the nature of its reality is not easily apprehensible or conceivable to the human subject who therefore only experiences a portion of it (Sayer 2000; Danermark et al 2002; Wynn and Williams 2012). Accordingly, our knowledge of the world and its complex nature is necessarily partial, incomplete and fallible (Sayer 2000; Maxwell 2012). This is of course not to suggest that we can have no valid knowledge about the world as it exists independently of us, but rather that social reality is complex and multidimensional and as such a great proportion of it remains hidden, operating beyond the partial experience social actors may obtain in the empirical domain (Losifides 2011a).

Therefore rather than remaining fixated upon regarding experiential observations in the domain of the empirical as constituting the ultimate objects of knowledge as positivism does, or focusing solely upon the differential interpretation of events in the domain of the actual as constructionism has a tendency to do, critical realism takes full cognisance of all three domains of reality (Bhaskar 2008a; Easton 2010a; see also Table 1 above). Recognition of this ontological depth enables critical realists to explore underlying relations, structures and tendencies that, under certain conditions, have the potential to generate causal changes or *absences* in the actual domain which social actors may experience either directly or indirectly in the empirical realm (Sayer 2000; Clark 2008; Bhaskar 2008b). Such exploration is particularly salient as it is argued that the acquisition of usable knowledge is dependent upon some understanding of the generative mechanisms that produce both observable and unobservable events and/or processes of absencing (Danermark et al 2002; Outhwaite 1987; Bhaskar 2008b).

Accordingly, for critical realist inspired criminology the task is to elucidate the generative structures and mediating conditions of crime (Sumner 2015). Therefore, it is concerned not only with accurately describing and explaining criminal events and corresponding surface patterns, but with revealing the

underlying generative powers and forces that produce such patterns of events and their very real consequences (Sumner 2015; Hall and Winlow 2015). It is perhaps for this reason that critical realism has the potential to inform more penetrative criminological investigations of contemporary anomalies, such as the purported 'international crime decline', than its dominant and subdominant counterparts. Indeed, rather than getting bogged down in positivist accounts of descriptive correlations or constructionist analyses of the interpretation of constructed meanings, critical realist criminology recognises that crime possesses a reality and objectivity independent of human experience and consciousness (Hall and Winlow 2015; Matthews 2009). It retains a complexity that cannot be captured via simplistic analyses of its surface patterns nor explained away as a product of mental processes.

It can thus be argued that a *thoroughly developed* critical realist approach to the study of crime and harm is capable not only of facilitating theoretically rich and penetrative research into contemporary social issues, but of transcending existing forms of 'so what? criminology' (Matthews 2009). However, it is pertinent to reiterate that some forms of critical realism nevertheless retain a debilitating tendency to analytically and ontologically separate structure and agency (Kivinen and Piironen 2006). Whilst this dualism of structure and agency is not always immediately obvious nor is it a necessary feature of all forms of critical realism, it is explicit in the traditional Bhaskarian (1998) and subsequent Archerian (1995) variants (King 2007).

For Bhaskar (1998:37) "there is an ontological hiatus between society and people". Rather than constituting a purely heuristic device used for analytical convenience, the above division is thought to be a purposive statement regarding the reality of the social world (King 1999b). It is intended to denote that neither structure nor agency is reducible to the other since both are real entities in themselves (Cruickshank 2004). Yet with the accompanying qualification that social structures are activity and concept dependent we are met with what King (1999b:270) refers to as "the first antinomy of structure". This antinomy, expressed as "society is dependent on individuals: society is also independent of individuals" (King 1999b: 269), is apparently resolved via

recourse to the concept of emergence. That is to say that accumulated agentic activities and conceptions produce a wider social context that is simultaneously dependent upon yet irreducible to individual agents (Cruickshank 2010).

However, for King (1999b) this entails a relapse into sociological reification in that structures are treated akin to a supra-individual moving force asserting in the last instance that society is independent of individuals (Cruickshank 2004). By postulating that social structure is “always *already made*” (Bhaskar 1998:33, original emphasis) and that individuals recreate this pre-existing social context rather than create it *ex nihilo*, Bhaskar perhaps absolves human beings of responsibility for their destructive creations (Cruickshank 2003; Hall and Winlow 2015). This is arguably achieved by adopting a narrow conception of emergence and ontologising previous agentic interactions into an autonomous structure, seemingly irreducible to any individuals when viewed only in relation to those who reside in the present (King 1999b). Consequently, Bhaskar (1998) occupies a compromised position “committed to a dualistic social ontology of individuals and structure” (King 1999b:274).

Whilst Bhaskar (2008b) later appears to make a tactical retreat from the ontological hiatus between structure and agency, which he so vehemently insisted upon within his Transformational Model of Social Activity (Dean et al 2005), Archer (1995, 1998) maintains a hard-line approach towards the aforementioned analytical and ontological dualism (Porpora 2007). Indeed, perhaps no one more than Archer has provided the most sustained attack upon elisionist approaches that conflate structure and agency (Porpora 2007; Benton and Craib 2011). Although remarkably similar, Archer’s morphogenetic social theory perhaps introduces a more explicit and analytically deeper temporal dimension than that associated with Bhaskar’s original formulation of TMSA (Jessop 2005). Underpinning the morphogenetic approach is the claim that social structure necessarily pre-dates the actions of individuals who in turn contribute towards either its reproduction or transformation (Archer 1995). Any claim to the activity dependency of structures is thus tenable only in the past tense. That is to say, structures may arise as emergent consequences of the past with distinct properties which are irreducible to the people of the present,

yet nonetheless influence and condition rather than determine their agency (Cruickshank 2004; Kivinen and Piironen 2006).

Although initially maintaining that such a temporal divide is merely an analytic or artificially imposed methodological distinction (Kivinen and Piironen 2006), Archer (1995:63-64) later articulates this dualism in a strong ontological sense by claiming that structure and agency are “indeed different entities with different properties and powers”. Rather than being two sides of the same coin structure and agency, and their attendant emergent properties, are expressed as being “*distinct* from each other and *irreducible* to one another” (Archer 1995:14, original emphasis). Whilst particular emphasis is placed upon prioritising the temporality of structure, which is thought to necessarily render it autonomous of subsequent agency, King (1999a:211) argues that this is merely a conversion of “the temporal priority of other people’s actions into the ontological priority and autonomy of structure”. Ultimately, it can certainly be suggested that in solidifying the independence of structures from agents Archer appears to commit to philosophical dualism (King 1999a; Cruickshank 2004).

Archer further widens the gap between structure and agency by advancing the position that the human self autonomously pre-exists the social self (Archer 1995). Rather than one’s sense of self emerging from exposure to and interaction with the social, it is argued that the self-conscious individual is a *natural* product of embodied and practical relations with the non-social environment (Kivinen and Piironen 2006). Indeed it is noted that the very location of the self in a pre-social living body, which is necessary for our identification as persons, necessarily precludes “our humanity being construed as a gift of society” (Archer 1995:286). Essentially, what this appears to imply is that the pre-social, autonomous yet somehow self-conscious agent is engaged in a “direct and culturally unmediated relationship with a primordial nature” (King 1999a:218). Moreover, it is suggested that this non-social experience of the natural world is essential for fostering the propensities, capacities and aversions that inevitably frame social experience and the social identity we subsequently assume (King 1999a; Archer 1995).

However, the practice of illicitly cleaving agents from social structures and the tendency to separate out subjectivity as the *naturally* self-conscious and creative agent, are crucial mistakes of considerable importance that reside at the heart of Bhaskarian and Archerian critical realism (Brown 2014; Hall and Winlow 2015). Indeed the tendency to overemphasise the ontological separation of structure and agency, in such a way as to endow the agent with undue autonomy and command over the self's drives and desires, pays little regard to the complex interplay between the agent's traumatic exposure to the Real primordial natural world and his/her active solicitation of the Symbolic Order (Kivinen and Piironen 2006; Winlow and Hall 2012). Failure to take cognisance of this subjectivization process perhaps implies a concomitant failure to adequately acknowledge and explore the cultivation of criminogenic subjectivities, which is of vital importance for analysing not only crime in general but the purported 'crime decline' in particular (Kotzé and Temple 2014).

Thus, despite the additional insight provided by critical realism's move beyond the correlationism of the dominant and subdominant paradigmatic forces, it remains unable in its '*stock form*' to provide a holistic account of harmful subjectivities and the aetiological complexities of crime and harm, or indeed the supposed 'crime decline'. Accordingly, we are in need of a more robust philosophico-theoretical framework capable of augmenting the critical realist paradigm. Together, the philosophical tradition of transcendental materialism and the theory of the pseudo-pacification process, which constitute crucial ingredients of the new *ultra-realist* position (Hall and Winlow 2015), provide such a framework and it is to their delineation that this chapter now turns.

The Turn to Speculative Realism and Transcendental Materialism:

In a similar fashion to critical realism, the contemporary philosophy of speculative realism is committed to giving the real its due, by contending that not only can we know there is an external reality but that we can at the very least speculate about it (Gratton 2014). It rejects the idea that the real can only be thought through its phenomenal representations and correlations, accepting that although we cannot describe its totality we can nevertheless think through

the noumenal real (Gratton 2014; Hall and Winlow 2015). What is more, such thinking can be done without being constrained by the long shadow cast by liberalism's catastrophist doctrine (Burns and Smith 2011; Hall 2012c). In essence then, speculative realism is encouraging us to return to what Meillassoux (2009:7, original emphasis) refers to as "the *great outdoors*", to the reality that lies beneath the correlationist surface (Gratton 2014).

Although critical of certain aspects of speculative realism and thus by no means a strict advocate of the movement, Adrian Johnston is a prominent fellow-traveller whose recently developed transcendental materialism can perhaps be said to be broadly compatible with this new area of philosophy (Burns and Smith 2011; Johnston 2014). At the very least it could be suggested that transcendental materialism can be conceived as being in the speculative realist stable, as the stall that deals specifically with the reality of biology and its relation to ideology by drawing upon the latest developments in contemporary neuroscience (Johnston 2013a, 2014). As briefly mentioned in chapter four, transcendental materialism explains how ideology congeals in the body's malleable neurological circuits, structuring our consciousness and fashioning our emotional commitment to the dominant ideology that is then accepted as a timeless fact of life (Winlow and Hall 2013). However, in its current configuration the dominant ideology to which we are emotionally encouraged to commit is characterised by capitalist realism, where a functionally destructive subjectivity oriented towards egoistic individualism and special liberty is forged and reproduced (Hall 2015, 2012c). In essence then, where critical realism fails, in its persistent separation of structure and agency, to adequately explore the cultivation of this subjectivity so susceptible to criminogenesis, transcendental materialism succeeds with explanatory precision.

Its initial point of departure is the radical reversal of traditional philosophy's foundational view of the relation between the material and the ideal (Winlow and Hall 2013). Rather than viewing the material as fixed and the ideological sociosymbolic system as flexible, transcendental materialism views the human subject's material neurological system as permanently malleable and the ideal-symbolic as rigid and durable (Winlow and Hall 2013). Indeed, it is argued that

although the human body is essentially a hard-wired mechanism, it is hard-wired specifically for a certain dysfunctionality and plasticity (Johnston 2008). This neural plasticity is an essential evolutionary trait that has enabled the fragile human organism to survive in multiple environments by utilising its pre-programmed ability to redesign its nature to shape and reshape itself in relation to worldly experiences, which help form and modify neural connections (Johnston 2008; Malabou 2013).

Conversely, the sociosymbolic system has evolved to fulfil the purpose of providing social groups with the rigid communicative comprehensibility required to allay the trauma of pre-symbolic life (Hall 2015). Because our ontogenetic starting point is characterised by a terrifying and anxiety-suffused state of prolonged pre-maturational helplessness, we are compelled to actively solicit inclusion within a comprehensible memosphere; or what Lacan refers to as the Symbolic Order (Johnston 2008). Incorporation into this sociocultural organising system, complete with its cohabitants and widely shared symbols, codes, practices and meanings, is absolutely essential for both psychic and material survival (Winlow and Hall 2013). This need to seek symbolic comfort and psychic security in a condition of homeostasis is illustrative of Spinoza's theory of the *conatus* (Hall 2012a). Briefly stated, the *conatus* is an ontological tendency of both the mind and the body to continuously endeavour to persist in their own being (Malabou 2013). Put simply, it is the simple drive of the human organism to ensure its own survival.

According to transcendental materialism this survival is secured via a natural process of "denaturalising our physical selves into dematerialised forms of subjectivity" (Hall 2012b:206). This naturally determined process essentially entails a passage from a raw *state of nature* to a recognisable *state of culture* (Winlow and Hall 2013). That is to say from the lone expanse of the Lacanian Real where raw impulses, forces and events surround us and forcefully erupt upon our senses with complete incomprehensibility, to a comprehensible symbolic order from within which we can begin to make sense of our terrifying pre-symbolic perceptions of a monstrous and self-distorting external nature (Winlow and Hall 2012; Johnston 2014). Importantly, without this self-

denaturalising nature human subjectivity could not arise (Johnston 2013b), for it is only through this natural self-sundering that one can proceed through the process of subjectivization to the subsequent genesis of subjectivity (Johnston 2014; Winlow and Hall 2012).

Since the incessant pressure exerted by the Real can only be offset by the structured subjectivity of an operative symbolic order, individuals must actively solicit the dominant sociosymbolic order and successfully assimilate its attendant values and norms in order to become de-naturalised social subjects (Johnston 2008; Hall 2015). Once incorporated the subject naturally resists re-assimilation back into the obscene Real of our pre-symbolic biological being. Failure to do so would result in the loss of 'our reality' and an inevitable confrontation with the horror of our own nonbeing, as we are forced to once again inhabit a terrifying world devoid of any comprehensible meaning (Winlow and Hall 2013). Accordingly, it can be argued that the subject is not created by being forcefully coerced into an operative symbolic system by some external authority, but rather the subject purposively solicits, for the sake of its own material and psychic survival, inclusion within the dominant sociosymbolic order (Winlow and Hall 2013).

However, rather than constituting some liberating mecca of freedom the current dominant sociosymbolic order to which we so eagerly commit ourselves is characterised by symbolic inefficiency — the general loss of elements of social knowledge that carry with them a certainty of truth having been endorsed by the Big Other — and *deaptation* (Winlow and Hall 2012; Johnston 2008). According to Johnston (2008:175) *deaptation* refers to “an initially adaptive memetic strategy [that] later becomes useless or even counter-productive”. This descent into redundant dysfunctionality occurs when systems of memes, or ideologies, continue to persist long after the disappearance of the original material conditions that spurred their genesis and within which they were functional (Hall 2012a). What we are then left with is a stubbornly inert memetic material, a rigid supra-material system that remains detached from its precipitative conditions but yet continues to exert its influence over living beings whose interests are detrimentally displaced by it (Hall 2012b; Johnston 2008). Evidently, and in

accordance with transcendental materialism's great reversal of the normal relation between the material and the ideal, it is within the ideal-symbolic that rigid ideologies are reproduced despite drastic changes in the underlying social conditions (Winlow and Hall 2013).

Permanently insulated from major shifts in socio-material conditions and brimming with reproductive independence, the deapted hegemonic negative ideology of capitalist realism remains the memetic strategy underpinning the current dominant sociosymbolic order to which we are committed (Hall 2012b). This order and its attendant values, norms and practices are temporarily re-naturalised in the neurological circuitry of those recruited at the deep psychosocial level as they attempt to escape the primary trauma of the un-symbolised Real (Hall 2015). However, it is worth emphasising that this recruitment is far from contingent upon some catalogue of alternative choices, but is instead a primal imperative, a deaptive trap that *must* be solicited and within which one must become completely assimilated (Winlow and Hall 2013; Hall 2012a).

It is from here that we can perhaps begin to see and explicate the link to criminogenesis. Firstly, it is perhaps now apparent that the self-conscious subject does not miraculously emerge out of nature as a *natural product* of some essential organic tutelage from a nurturing primordial nature as Archer (1995) seems to imply. Rather, it is only by frantically *retreating* from this monstrous and self-distorting nature into a denaturalised subjectivity, via soliciting incorporation into the organising framework of the dominant sociosymbolic order, that the subject truly begins to emerge (Johnston 2014; Winlow and Hall 2012). Once incorporated, the hegemonic negative ideology of capitalist realism becomes part of the subject's neurological circuitry. This co-optation of the neuronal system facilitates the formation of a very specific set of drives, desires and fears that influence and restrict behaviour in accordance with the interests of liberal-capitalism (Hall 2012a). In particular, individuals are compelled to solicit and buy into a deapted negative ideology that purposively cultivates cynicism, competitive individualism, depoliticisation, anxiety, inequality, and socio-economic instability and insecurity which often foster

criminal responses in either ameliorative or hyper-conformist capacities (Hall 2012b).

The upshot is that the emergent subject is fundamentally a subject of a criminogenic ideology, an ideology that, in some strange counter-trajectory from deaptation to exaptation, remains functional to an inherently criminogenic system (Johnston 2008; Hall 2015). That is to say that, as will soon be explicated when we explore the pseudo-pacification process, the consequences of deaptation become constituent parts of a form of '*economic exaptation*' in so far as they serve to foster the ideological tenets necessary to stimulate economic expansion (Hall 2012c). The emergent subject thus becomes precisely that which is preferred by liberal-capitalism's desire for ideal-type subjects, who are capable of driving economic expansion by wilfully inflicting harm onto others in the pursuit of commodified self-interest (Winlow and Hall 2013; Hall 2015). Accordingly, it can be argued that crime committed for personal gain or non-political reasons constitutes a transgression of liberal-capitalism's prohibitive norms and technical laws rather than of its *Symbolic Law* (Hall and Winlow 2015). Indeed such crimes and the harms they cause are not mere aberrations of the liberal-capitalist system, but are rather constitutively embedded within its operational core and attendant culture and subjectivity (Hall 2012b).

More specifically, they are the result of a purposively cultivated *dissociated* subjectivity that enjoins individuals to "*simply act* in accordance with drives and desires oriented to success in the socio-symbolic competition" (Hall 2015:134, original emphasis). By facilitating a psychological by-pass that effectively disconnects the individual from their relation to collective individuation, this scalar mode of dissociation serves to engender an affinity towards short-termism, desublimation, social irresponsibility and other toxic behaviours (Stiegler 2010). It allows individuals to perceive themselves in possession of special liberty, a self-affirmed fantasised state of exception that grants the beholder the freedom to act with exploitative impunity, whilst inflicting a multitude of harms upon the social body in pursuance of enacting with devastating precision the competitive logic of the market (Hall 2015, 2012b).

Consequently, in our frantic effort to escape the primary trauma of the obscene Real experienced by our pre-symbolic selves, we are wilfully recruited at the emotional and material level into a sociosymbolic order that produces and inflicts severe harms upon its subjects (Winlow and Hall 2013). In a cruel sense of irony the subject's solicitation of the alluring trap, which promised to alleviate its anxiety-suffused state of pre-maturational helplessness, has served only to repackage such anxiety in objectless form to be repeatedly delivered by a deapted and symbolically inefficient memetic system (Hall 2012a). Moreover, temporary relief from this unhappiness can now only be secured by obtaining fleeting pleasurable sensations found in the realm of capitalist consumerism (Winlow and Hall 2013). As demonstrated by numerous participants in chapter five, whether they are fake, illegal, genuine or legal, the need to experience these temporary ameliorative sensations becomes a potent source of desire, driving the active social subject ever deeper into the sociosymbolic competition for identity and distinction (Hall 2015; Winlow and Hall 2013). Thus, the 'conatic' drive to ensure survival by escaping the terror of pre-symbolic being has unintentionally thrown us into a sociosymbolic order that cultivates and feeds off anxiety, intensifies social atomisation and encourages hyper-competitive individualism in such a way as to create a latently criminogenic society of enemies (Hall and Winlow 2015; Hall 2012d).

In light of the above, the position advanced by Pinker (2011, 2012), that historical rates of violent crime have declined due to some greater engagement of the 'better angels of our nature', seems particularly untenable. Indeed, our continued immersion within a sociosymbolic order that purposively and unrelentingly cultivates subjectivities highly susceptible to criminogenesis, casts even more doubt upon this and other 'crime decline' discourses' incautious optimism (Hall and Winlow 2015). Similarly, as previously explicated, the inability of criminology's current dominant and subdominant paradigms, along with critical realism in its 'stock form', to adequately connect structure and agency renders their ability to explain the aetiology and purported trajectory of crime and harm moot at best (Hall 2015). Conversely, transcendental materialism enables us to analyse the interaction between structure and agency and helps us to understand the formation of criminogenic subjectivities. It

therefore offers us a convincing new framework from within which we can begin to explore the complexities of crime and harm with greater explanatory precision (Winlow 2014b).

A transcendental materialist inspired criminology therefore involves a concern for analysing the orientation of human energy, and understanding the connections between harm and actively stimulated yet loosely controlled drives and desires without attempting to naturalise or trans-historicise them (Hall and Winlow 2015; Hall 2015). In doing so it helps to explain how “capitalism has temporarily captured the majority of Western individuals at the deep psychological level of drive and desire as subjects of its ideology” (Hall 2015:133). According to Hall (2015), the purpose of this capture is to simultaneously stimulate and sublimate the subject’s drives in order to solidify a culture of consumption and drive economic expansion. Recognising the potential economic value in cultivating a state of permanent dissociation and its attendant anxious energy, the market-capitalist system has simultaneously stimulated and harnessed this energy from individuals who find themselves vulnerable and isolated within a competitive market society, in order to promote aggressive socioeconomic competition (Hall and Winlow 2015; Hall 2015; Hall and Winlow 2004). Indeed, in their ‘conatic’ drive to secure their tenure within the sociocultural organising system supplied by the dominant sociosymbolic order, individuals are compelled to assimilate its competitive orientation and employ with ruthless zeal the special liberty associated with their solicited dissociated subjectivity.

The successfully dissociated subject is thus encouraged to become ruthlessly competitive in order to stimulate the market economy, yet is suitably pacified so as to secure the optimum sociocultural environment within which the market can remain fully functional (Hall 2015). As alluded to earlier, it is in this respect that the consequences of deaptation — symbolic inefficiency, heightened anxiety, and hyper-competitive individualism — can be seen as forming constituent parts of what can be termed ‘economic exaptation’. That is, an initially maladaptive economic alteration which quickly becomes exploitable for liberal-capitalism, by harnessing the derivatives of deaptation that serve to foster the ideological

tenets that drive contemporary economic expansion. This complex state of what Hall and Winlow (2015:118, original emphasis) refer to as “*permanent managed deaptation*” is precisely what constitutes the *intended* function of the pseudo-pacification process. By exploring the developing theory behind this cultural-historical practice, we can begin to understand the long-term historical process by which the logic of capitalist realism, and its attendant cultural drives, is established as a practical norm that intrudes upon individuals’ emergent subjectivity.

Managed Deaptation through the Pseudo-Pacification Process:

As intimated above, the capitalist project has from its very inception never been concerned with ‘liberating’ social subjects, but has instead focused upon harnessing “the inexhaustible reservoir of thymotic human energy to advance its circulation and establish itself as the dominant global socioeconomic system” (Winlow 2014b:173). However, the incessant stimulation of such energy requires strict cultural-legal regulation so as to ensure that its subsequent competitive human relations remain socially acceptable and economically functional (Hall 2012b). This inevitably creates a dynamic tension between the simultaneous stimulation and repression of human energy, and it is this tension between these two poles that constitutes the pseudo-pacification process.

Originally cultivated by the nascent European bourgeoisie, the fundamental purpose of this process was twofold. Firstly, it served to evacuate from civil society as much physical violence as possible, in order to protect property rights and lubricate the arteries and nodes of trade and exploitative business practices. Secondly, it was intended to foster, energise and diffuse throughout the social body an affinity towards the non-violent sociosymbolic competition and culture of consumption required by the early market economy (Horsley et al 2015). However it should be noted that the evacuation of violent energy did not result in its actual diminution, for instead of simply dissipating it was converted into a more pacified and expansive form of aggressive libidinal energy (Hall 2014b). This energy was then redirected in order to fuel aggressive competition in the socioeconomic field of market-capitalism (Hall 2014b). Forming a

reciprocal relationship then, these two interactive functions continuously feedback upon each other. They serve to both create and maintain a relatively safe trading environment, by attenuating physical violence which is then sublimated into an economically functional competitive driving force that further contributes towards the expansion of trading activity (Hall and Winlow 2015).

Consequently as capitalism developed, the high levels of murder and interpersonal violence that formed constituent parts of everyday pre-modern European life began to decline (Hall 2007; Winlow 2014b). This decline however was not accompanied by a general drop in crime, but rather by an increase in the rates of non-violent crime and a proclivity towards new and systematised forms of symbolic violence (Horsley et al 2015; Winlow 2014b). This more durable and socio-politically powerful dimension of the dimorphic nature of violence (Hall 2000), is a product of the conversion process alluded to above. Indeed, the ability to harness the socioeconomic potential of symbolic violence is predicated upon the fervent repression of physical violence (Hall 2007). The consequence of elevating this dimension of the dimorphic form was the inexorable expansion of competitive individualism as an effective economic driver (Hall 2007; Hall et al 2008).

Accordingly the entitlement to symbolic violence was, throughout the history of the capitalist project, democratised in precise concomitance with the state's monopolisation of the entitlement to physical violence and its subsequent restriction in the realm of civil society (Hall et al 2008). Essentially, it was recognised by the proto-capitalists that a market economy cannot flourish in conditions of extreme and brutal arbitrary physical violence (Hall and Winlow 2015). Therefore if trading commodities and money were to be circulated effectively it was necessary to protect property rights by controlling, or at least attenuating, theft and violent brigandage (Winlow 2014b). However, they also realised that social conditions structured and driven by ethico-legal regulation and institutionalised altruism severely hampered market economies (Hall 2015; Horsley et al 2015). Consequently the truncation of these two polar extremes, for the socioeconomically functional purpose of cultivating within the populous

diffused domestication and suitably pacified yet highly competitive drives, was an essential function of the pseudo-pacification process (Hall 2014b, 2012b).

Subsequently oscillating between these two poles the social order and its subjects were, and continue to be, forced to occupy a third space of 'orderly disorder' (Horsley et al 2015). Within this pseudo-pacified space physically violent aggression was sublimated into economically charged sociosymbolic competition, whilst institutionalised altruism dissolved into abstract sentimentalism (Hall 2012b). The fundamental purpose of unlocking this third space was, and still is, to systematically tap into and harness the dynamic force generated by the tension between stimulation and pacification, in order ultimately to forge a culture of entrepreneurial individualism at the heart of a pseudo-pacified socioeconomic competition (Horsley et al 2015; Hall and Wilson 2014).

Crucial in abetting this central objective were the political adjustments made to Medieval cultural customs and laws. For instance, laws that attempted to institutionalise altruism, facilitate the growth of a Distributivist economy and insert within everyday economic practice a modicum of social justice were repealed (Hall and Winlow 2015). The simple reason for such rescindment is that these practices were dysfunctional to a burgeoning capitalist market economy dependent upon the extraction of surplus value and diffusing throughout the sociosymbolic field the culture of non-violent competitive individualism (Horsley et al 2015). In their place emerged new laws and customs intended to simultaneously remove the economically inhibiting presence of both physical violence and the relatively altruistic codes that had hitherto governed socioeconomic transactions (Hall and Winlow 2015). Among the most important of these was the introduction during the twelfth century of the laws of primogeniture and entail (Hall 2014b).

The law of primogeniture governed inheritance in the case of intestacy, stipulating that the eldest son be the successor to all real property to the exclusion of all others, including the widow and any siblings (Jamoussi 2011). Operating within a legally enforceable framework known as an entail (Jamoussi

2011), the law of primogeniture effectively served to stimulate an aggressive social deracination of familial and communal units (Hall 2013). Forcefully ejected from these hitherto defensive entities, atomised individuals were thrown into an economically and socio-symbolically hostile milieu of unforgiving socioeconomic competition where the symbolically unsuccessful ceased to exist (Hall 2013). This intentionally instigated form of social mitosis served to expand libidinal drives by fostering an anxiety-driven affinity towards participation in non-violent competition for the 'death defying' sociosymbolic status obtained only via successful involvement in the capitalist market (Horsley et al 2015; Hall and Wilson 2014; Becker 1975). As Hall (2014b:19) figuratively explains:

The psychosocial process was analogous to biological cell-splitting and growth, creating a sort of socioeconomic tumour as anxious individuals were cast out into competitive markets to seek wealth and establish their own domains.

During this process a libidinal void was carved into the expelled subject, a well susceptible to the flow of a new capitalist ideology and the emergence of an insecure and competitive subjectivity innately functional to the developing market economy (Hall 2013, 2014b). Imbued with the attendant ideals of this economically functional subjectivity, new generations of anxious proto-entrepreneurs were dispersed outwards throughout the social structure (Horsley et al 2015). With the exploitative stimulation of their primary pre-maturation anxiety and the incessant incitement of their libidinal drives such individuals have, throughout the history of the capitalist project, constituted its psychosocial fuel (Hall 2013). Indeed, the potent mix of anxiety, competitive individualism and ruthless ambition now congealed in the psychic core of each individual was, and continues to be, simultaneously stimulated, harnessed and mollified so as to encourage highly competitive, non-violent social action capable of driving economic growth (Hall 2012b, 2013). Therefore, behind the ostensible face of pacified civility lay the foundations of an aggressive instrumentalism stimulated and harnessed for the central purpose of expanding the capitalist market economy (Winlow 2014b; Hall 2002).

Accordingly, it is argued that rather than constituting some blind teleological civilising force responsible for spurring a benevolent historical reduction in violent crime as Elias (2000), Pinker (2012), De Wolf (2012) and others seem to suggest, capitalism has throughout its history been a *pseudo-pacification process* (Hall 2015; Hall et al 2008). This process has subsequently been widely diffused, permeating all regions of the world that operate within a capitalist market economy (Hall and Winlow 2015). Countless individuals are thus captured within a dynamic tension between the economically functional overstimulation of libidinal energy and the tenuous internalisation of pacifying codes enforced by external systems of control (Hall 2012b). Encouraged to regard communal ties as outmoded sites of competitive hostility akin to some contemporary manifestation of primogeniture, or as little more than instrumental ports from which to temporarily advance personal endeavours, individuals are licenced to compete with greater intensity (Hall and Winlow 2005a, 2015). Brutally unleashed within the fragile spillway of rule-bound sociosymbolic competition, this intensity is relentlessly stoked by harnessing the envy and insecurity that consumer society inevitably cultivates within the subject (Hall and Winlow 2004; Hall et al 2008).

The capitalist subject is therefore caught in a double-bind between the compulsion to succumb to the fervently overstimulated drives and desires required by consumer capitalism, and the socially acceptable pacified forms by which one is expected to gratify them (Hall 2013). This double-bind generates an immense amount of pressure, an undialectical tension that resides right at the heart of the pseudo-pacification process between the overstimulation of obscene drives and desires harnessed to the market economy, and the necessary degree of sublimation and pacification required to ensure that they remain economically functional (Hall 2014b, 2012d). However, it should be acknowledged that the pseudo-pacification process does not stimulate, sublimate and pacify drive and desire in “equally intense measures” (Hall 2012b:231). Rather, in order to successfully energise and drive the capitalist economy, the process on balance has a tendency to lean more towards stimulation than pacification (Horsley et al 2015). As a result the whole process is prone to breakdown as deviant, yet often economically functional activity,

inevitably spills over its insulating boundaries (Horsley et al 2015; Hall et al 2008). Indeed, as Hall (2014a:409) notes:

The dynamic tension operates at such a pitch that spillage is inevitable throughout the social order. Controlled deviance overheats and breaks through the control system at its weakest points to appear as plural forms of uncontrolled deviance.

This is not to suggest that deviance is entirely anathema to the pseudo-pacification process. The market dynamics it helped generate in fact thrive in conditions of moral transgression and corresponding measures of control, as long as such practices remain embedded within the circuitry of capitalism's market logic (Lippens 2012). Rather, what is being argued is that today's neoliberal system and its attendant culture of consumption, with its requisitely high levels of aggressive competition and instrumentalism, has strained the pseudo-pacification process beyond its limits and ability to pacify, insulate and redirect the noxious residual energy generated towards socially acceptable activities (Hall and Winlow 2004, 2015). The overheated libidinal energy generated by the unstable pseudo-pacification process has begun to seep through the system's proverbial radiation shielding, once held relatively firmly in place by the internalisation of inhibiting cultural codes and the restraint of the super-ego (Hall 2013, 2014b; Hall and Winlow 2005a). Indeed, this highly criminogenic energy can no longer be held in check by a super-ego fundamentally reorganised to enjoin pleasure rather than demand restraint (Hall 2013; Hall and Winlow 2005b). Consequently, we are now over-reliant upon external mechanisms and systems of control to help contain the criminogenic libidinal economy that consumer culture both organises and reproduces (Hall 2015, 2013).

However, as evidenced in the last chapter, the current external systems of social control are largely inadequate for this task. Geared towards providing only partial restraint in the libidinal culture as the threadbare insulating pole of the pseudo-pacification process, such systems have for the most part failed to control the deapted visceral habitus still fervently reproduced throughout many anelpic micro-communities (Hall 2013; Hall and Winlow 2004; Hall et al 2005).

Lake Town is but one of many examples where commitment to such an unrestrained and de-sublimated habitus continues to generate visibly hostile and destructive forms of crime and harm (Hall and Winlow 2004). Evidently the pseudo-pacification process is collapsing into a state of disrepair, stimulating more aggressive libidinal energy than it is capable of sublimating and pacifying (Hall and Winlow 2005b). Accordingly, despite endeavouring to operate at peak efficiency in order to try and contain this explosion of energy (Hall and Winlow 2015), it could be argued that the pseudo-pacification process is *not* a form of 'permanently' managed deaptation for it often falters in this regard. Its inability to continuously mollify and insulate itself from enduring forms of economically dysfunctional criminality, whilst attempting to appropriate the consequences of deaptation as functional components of economic exaptation, is perhaps evidence of this (Hall 2012b).

In its current configuration it may be more accurate to refer to the pseudo-pacification process as a systematised attempt to appropriate the consequences of deaptation for the continued development of economic exaptation; an attempt that episodically succeeds in pacifying and containing the residual energy generated by this process. In light of the pseudo-pacification process' contemporary descent into disrepair the latter function of this dual process is evidently failing to operate at peak efficiency. The upshot of this failure is the unrestrained dispersal throughout the social structure of dissociated subjects, imbued with a self-affirmed sense of special liberty and willing to do extreme harm to others in the process of acting out their overstimulated drives and desires (Hall 2015). Occupying a multitude of spaces across the globe from anelpic micro-communities to corporate boardrooms, these 'criminal undertakers' operate with impunity to advance self-interests and elevate the self above the herd of socioeconomic 'losers' (Hall 2012b; Hall et al 2008). This is the reality of the criminogenic milieu we now inhabit and within which the purported 'crime decline' is said to have occurred (Hall and Winlow 2015).

Moving beyond the aforementioned inadequacies of the discipline's dominant and subdominant paradigmatic forces, as well as the 'stock form' of critical

realism, the ultra-realist amalgamation of transcendental materialism and the theory of the pseudo-pacification process is capable of painting a more accurate picture of our current landscape. It affords us detailed insights into the purposive formation of a latently criminogenic subjectivity, whilst explicating the way in which social subjects actively solicit and employ the ideals of a dominant sociosymbolic order that attempts to stimulate and pacify intense libidinal energy to be harnessed to the market economy. These insights provide us with a more holistic understanding of the condition of our contemporary socioeconomic terrain. Accordingly, such acumens have been put to work in this chapter to form the basis of a robust theoretical antidote to the administration of the prematurely triumphant ‘crime decline’ discourse. Together, the theoretical components that comprise the unique framework employed by this research serve to both frame and contextualise the relationship between the empirical data and its foundational work in developing the theory of the dream myth presented in the next chapter. Moreover, such theoretical contextualisation clearly demonstrates the absurdity of celebrating an imagined peaceableness.

At the very least these theoretical insights certainly reveal quite clearly that the criminogenic and zemiogenic state of our current social condition is anything but conducive to an ‘international crime decline’. If anything, the more frequent display of deep lacerations in the pseudo-pacification process’s tattered veneer of pacified control serves to cogently demonstrate that all is not well in liberal-capitalist society (Hall and Winlow 2005b). Nevertheless, despite the existence of copious amounts of evidence to suggest that “*we cannot go on as we are*” (Winlow 2013:32, original emphasis), it appears that many of those who occupy the political, criminological and communal spheres of both the liberal left and conservative right are unwilling to accept this. Driven towards interpassivity and the tendency to fetishistically disavow our anthropocentric complicity in the criminogenic conditions we inhabit, they demonstrate a remarkable ability to simply ignore the visible consequences of a deapted social system disintegrating before their very eyes (Winlow 2013).

It is not that the vast majority of us do not know that this is happening, but rather it is the fact that we *do know* that allows us to continue in the fantasised rituals of everyday life, confident in the knowledge that we have not been conned by the system (Winlow and Hall 2012). However, despite not being ideological dupes, we retain a tendency to repress into our unconscious that which we know but do not want to know (Hall and Winlow 2015). Thus, in acknowledgment of our impending socioeconomic disintegration and the concomitant rise in levels of public displays of violence, expressive aggressiveness, fear and insecurity (Fletcher 1997), we must continue to act as *if* the pseudo-pacification process can permanently manage deaptation. Shorn of its actual capacity to do so however, this placatory task is aided by the carefully crafted *dream myth* and its intricately woven statistical quilt, which, as alluded to previously, has been fabricated by the imposition of a strict tunnel vision that limits ‘full visibility’ and thus preserves only a “functionally optimum degree of visibility” (Merton 1968:398). The dream myth thus effectively utilises a significant degree of *understatement* as a suitable means of upholding the ostensible validity of liberal-capitalism and the ‘crime decline’ discourse (Hall 2002).

Indeed, it is in the broad sense systematised counter-alarmism *par excellence*. Rather than constituting an additional strand to the already strained pseudo-pacification process, the dream myth should be understood more as an ancillary mechanism that is both aided by and reciprocally helps to legitimise the external control system. In terms of the latter in particular, it functions to credit this system with fabricated forms of success in the shape of the ‘crime decline’. Such accreditation serves to reaffirm the system’s credibility whilst simultaneously obfuscating its inefficiency as a suitable means of insulating the overstimulated drives and desires that continue to propel capitalism forward. In essence then, as will be explicated in the next and last substantive chapter, the dream myth is integral to the maintenance of both the pseudo-pacification process and Žižekian bio-politics; that is to the politics of the efficient management of human life (Žižek 2005, 2009a).

Chapter Seven:

Dreaming Comfortably: Theorising the 'Crime Decline' and Modernity's Dream Myth.

Within the dispiriting academic milieu alluded to in the previous chapter, in which the mainstream criminological canon not only continues to discourage intellectual curiosity but remains hostile to new ways of thinking, to risk presenting a genuinely new idea is an incredibly disconcerting prospect (Hall and Winlow 2012; Sumner 2015). It is however a necessary risk if we are to explore and explain with more accuracy and vigour the complexities of the purported 'international crime decline'. To this end the purpose of this chapter is to begin to apply the new theoretical lens of the *dream myth* to what has become a rather mired if not altogether stale 'crime decline' discourse.

Perhaps one of criminology's most enduring lessons is that one cannot divorce crime and harm from the wider politico-cultural and socio-economic contexts within which they occur. Nor is it possible to explore and explain such social phenomena and the responses they invoke in isolation from these wider variables (Whitehead 2010). Nevertheless, a sterile politico-cultural and socio-economically detached view of 'crime' is precisely what the 'crime decline' and cognate liberal progressive discourses have managed to so successfully articulate. Indeed, despite continuous eruptions of social discontent and copious other examples of the rapid unravelling of our fragile sociosymbolic order, as the global capitalist system approaches its apocalyptic zero-point (Žižek 2012, 2011), the message conveyed is one of incautious and unqualified optimism.

It has already been suggested that perhaps one reason for such ardent articulations of declining rates of crime (Pinker 2011; De Wolf 2012) and similar expressions of "systemic stupidity" from "those with buried heads" (Stiegler 2010:5), is the need to secure for the capitalist economy a retention of the consumer confidence required to ensure its smooth operation (Wood 2012; Winlow and Hall 2012). Certainly the ever-greater priority accorded to the

interests of capital has ensured that post-political governance is reduced to little more than providing a secure environment for market forces, whilst maintaining for the populous only a minimum standard of protection from some forms of crime (Bell 2011; Winlow and Hall 2012; Chan 2005). Crucial in this respect is the role played by the narrow 'crime decline tunnel of vision' and the intricately woven statistical quilt in helping to maintain the 'idyllic' image of liberal-capitalism and Western civilisation, by placing limits upon full visibility as a form of insulation from the burden of 'excessive knowledge' (Žižek 2008a; Merton 1968). However, rather than serving to merely mask the true state of things like some ideological illusion, such insulation retains a functional character precisely because many individuals know very well the reality of crime and harm but must act as *if* they do not know in order to deny the consequences of this knowledge (Žižek 1994a, 2009a).

Posed at the end of chapter one was the question of whether this seemingly collective state of fetishistic disavowal, bolstered by the above mentioned insulators from full visibility, is a symptom of our inclusion within modernity's *dream myth*. Finally, having laid numerous pages of contextual and empirical groundwork this question can, with some important qualifications, be answered in the affirmative. However whilst a number of key theoretical and empirical elements of the dream myth have already been articulated in previous chapters, such an answer must necessarily prompt a detailed and thorough analysis of its fundamental premise and constituent components. Accordingly, it is to the undertaking of this analysis that this chapter will now turn.

Analysing Modernity's Dream Myth:

Stripped down to its essential premise, the dream myth can simply be understood as the dream that sustains the myth of perpetual incremental liberal progressivism in general and the 'crime decline' in particular. These two separate yet interrelated myths form a reciprocal relationship, in that the 'crime decline' is purported to be both the result of and affirmatory evidence for a form of 'Long Peace' to which we are encouraged to credit liberal progress (Pinker 2012; De Wolf 2012). These reciprocal delusions of peace are maintained by

the complex inner workings of the dream myth which, aided by the statistical quilt and concomitant insulators from full visibility, ultimately serve as an artificial vista from which to view the world not as it is but as some imagine it to be (Žižek 1999). Crucially, what is guaranteed as one enters into the fundamental fantasy-construction of the dream myth is uninterrupted access not to reality as such, but to a 'sense of reality' that allows one to continue in the capitalist rituals of everyday life whilst the anthropocentric reality of crime and harm remains fetishistically disavowed (Myers 2003). As previously stated, passage into this fantasy-construction is akin to entering an enticing cultural sleep maintained by a carefully constructed dream. Specifically designed to sustain the comfortable myth of liberal progressivism and declining rates of crime, this dream serves to preclude one encountering the hiatus that exists between these imagined ideals and reality (Žižek 2008a; Box 1981).

In an excerpt from which the researcher drew much inspiration for the creation of the dream myth theory, Box (1981:157) neatly captures its basic shape whilst arguing that:

As dreamers, we imagine ideals which because of their very nature (and ours!) are difficult to realise; but, not wanting to confront our shortcomings directly, we frequently bridge the gap between ideal and reality by constructing a comforting myth that the hiatus does not exist.

Not only does the above passage roughly sketch out the dream myth's basic premise and essential function, but in doing so it explicitly draws attention to the two fundamental components which comprise the theory's name. Rather than merely serving some linguistic convenience it must be noted that the use of the terms dream(s) and myth serve an important practical function. That is to say that they offer precise, if analogous, explanatory value and therefore need to be dealt with in sufficient detail.

In the first instance it is perhaps instructive to note that there is in some respects a similarity between dreams and myths (Arlow 1961). Early psychoanalysts such as Abraham (1913 [2012]) identified within both dreams and myths an analogue tendency towards wish fulfilment. Similarly, for both

Freud and Jung parallels could be drawn between these two components in respect of their shared genesis from the unconscious and their ostensible proneness to symbolic interpretation (Segal 1999). Congruently, other scholars have drawn attention to the somewhat dream-like appearance of myths (Flood 2013) and have noted how myths have been widely interpreted as collective dreams (Lévi-Strauss 1963) or as a “day-dream of the race” (Malinowski 1971:16). Although one is free to take as much or as little from such analogies as deemed appropriate, it must be acknowledged that to suggest a direct correspondence between dreams and myths is to risk severe oversimplification for there are significant differences (Segal 1999; Tudor 1972). Indeed for many contemporary psychoanalysts myths are quite unlike dreams, for whilst the utterances of the latter are private those of the former are pre-eminently public (Segal 2015; Tudor 1972). True as this may be, the possibility of some form of relationship between dreams and myths cannot be easily dismissed for the simple fact remains that when we dream we are essentially telling ourselves myths about ourselves and our surroundings (Hobson 2005).

The Myth-Sustaining Dream:

For Freud, perhaps considered to be the best known dream investigator, analysis of the surreal and indeed mythopoeic content of dreams promised to yield exciting insights into the unconscious (Hobson 2005; Segal 1999). Although unable to stand the test of time, having succumbed to fierce and penetrating criticism, elements of Freud’s theory of dreams remain influential and certainly retain some analytical utility apropos the dream myth theory (Storr 2001; McCarley and Hobson 1977). Of particular interest is Freud’s notion that dreams are essentially realisations of wishes and that this holds true for both children and adults (Freud 2001). However, whilst the dreams of children are arguably direct wish fulfilments of desires unsatisfied in waking life, those of adults are more complex in that they are thought to be the disguised fulfilment of repressed desires or wishes (Stafford-Clark 1992). The basic premise of this wish fulfilment-disguise theory is that dreaming is a reactive process that occurs following the release of unconscious wishes during sleep deemed unacceptable to consciousness (Hobson and McCarley 1977). These ‘unacceptable wishes’

are defensively modified and rendered less disturbing by the 'dream work' process, which transforms the distressing latent dream content into an adequately censored manifestation in the interests of preserving sleep (Storr 2001; Freud 2001). Herein lies what Freud held to be the essential function of dreams, that is their capacity to act as the guardians of sleep, securing a psychical release for otherwise suppressed wishes by presenting them as fulfilled (Freud 1997, 2001).

Such an analysis undoubtedly offers valuable insights from which the dream myth theory can draw. It can certainly be suggested that the dream that sustains the myth of the 'crime decline' can be viewed as an expression of an unfulfilled desire or wish for a secure socioeconomic order. Indeed, prevented from realising such an ideal in waking life we fashion this comforting dream that gifts to us the feelings of security and serenity we so desperately desire, and in so doing secures the preservation of a cultural sleep that precludes our awakening into the reality of our times (Becker 2011; Freud 2001). Whilst caution must be exercised when extrapolating in this way from such heavily criticised Freudian insights, one is justified in doing so provided that sufficient distance is maintained from their original form. For instance, it must be acknowledged that although not all dreams are concerned with the fulfilment of wishes or desires some certainly are (Storr 2001). Similarly, it can be conceded, without doing irreparable damage to the overall premise upon which the dream myth theory draws, that rather than serving as a guardian of sleep at the psychological level, a dream serves this function by virtue of "having a sleep maintenance mechanism built into its physiological substrate" (Hobson and McCarley 1977:1338).

Accordingly the theory of the dream myth can, in modified form, safely draw upon a number of key components from Freud's theory of dreams. However, as intimated above, despite the analytical utility already derived from Freud the empirically grounded insights yielded by cellular and molecular neuroscience and psychophysiological dream science in particular, arguably provide firmer ground upon which to build and enunciate the theory of the dream myth (Hobson 1999, 1988). Concerned more with the formal features of dreams than

with their content, contemporary psychophysiological dream science represents a discernible break from earlier forms of the science (Hobson 2005, 1988). Of specific importance in this regard is the dream theory referred to as the *activation-synthesis hypothesis* (Hobson and McCarley 1977; Hobson 1988). Faithful to the notion of mind-body isomorphism, this hypothesis “postulates close parallels between characteristic psychological features of dreams and the characteristic physiological events in the brain during REM [Rapid Eye Movement] sleep” (McCarley and Hoffman 1981:904). What is of particular interest is the precise delineation of the cardinal characteristics of dreaming, some of which include vivid hallucinoid imagery; bizarre spatiotemporal distortions; the delusional acceptance of such phenomena as real; and a reduction in logical reasoning and critical thinking (Hobson and McCarley 1977; Hobson 1988, 2005). The cause of these ‘dream features’ lies in the dramatic changes in the chemical state of the brain-mind accompanying the alteration in neuromodulation that differentiates waking from REM sleep (Hobson 1999, 2005, 2001).

Despite the intense incongruities of dream bizarreness — resulting from the relative absence of norepinephrine and serotonin which impede the functioning of the cerebral cortex and hippocampus (Hobson 2001) — we remain hopelessly delusional during dreams, readily accepting as real the powerful hallucinoid experiences (Hobson 2005, 1988). This delusional acceptance of such experiences, despite their extreme improbability, is aided by the suppression or loss of critical perspective and thought due to the production of less norepinephrine, and the exclusion of external stimuli via the phasic presynaptic inhibition of sensory-input (Hobson 1988, 1999). In many respects then, dreaming not only resembles a form of psychosis but *is* in fact a psychotic state (Hobson 2005). More specifically dreaming is akin to the organic mental syndrome known as delirium (Hobson 1999). Indeed, the common features of dreaming closely mirror those of delirium and are both caused by a dramatic shift in the balance of brain chemistry (Hobson 1999).

The *analogical* efficacy of this brief psychophysiological look at the formal features of dreams is significant for the delineation of the dream myth theory.

The reason for this is that it serves to explain precisely how the 'dream' into which we have entered to varying degrees sustains the myth of the 'crime decline'. Indeed, within this analogous dream state we are so enthralled by the strong hallucinoid world view painted by liberal progressive discourse that we retain a delusional acceptance of the bizarre articulations of declining rates of crime as experiential reality (Hobson 1988). Since critical perspective and thought have been successfully repressed and external intrusions of increasingly visible social dislocations continue to be excluded from public consideration, both the illusions of the dream and the cultural sleep are maintained (Hobson 1988). Accordingly, whilst the disjuncture that exists between the ideal of declining rates of crime and the experiential reality of crime is insurmountable in 'waking' life, such discrepancy is bypassed in the dream state by the strength of conviction we retain in the hallucinoid effects that emanate from the elaborate discourse, which we readily accept despite its bizarre incongruities (Hobson 1999, 2005). Consequently, no matter how bizarre or incongruent the utterances of the 'crime decline' discourse, they are nonetheless maintained by the formal features of the 'convenient' dream state we have to varying degrees entered into.

Retaining many of the hallmarks that lead to the equation of dreaming as delirium (Hobson 1999), incorporation into this myth-sustaining dream state can perhaps, in congruent analogous fashion, be conceived as an ailment of liberal-postmodern capitalism. However rather than resembling anosognosic patients (Malabou 2013), those who enter this dream state are not unaware that they have succumb to liberal progressivism's hallucinoid projections, or that their delusional acceptance of its absurdity is a façade that must be maintained if they are to retain access to their 'sense of reality' (Myers 2003). For all intents and purposes they have entered into and accepted what could perhaps be regarded as a mass 'consensual' hallucination (Taylor 2013).

In this regard the dream that sustains the myth of the 'crime decline' is a lucid one (Green and McCreery 1994). That is to say that whilst those who experience the dream remain enthralled by it, they are nonetheless aware that they are dreaming and that what they are encountering is simply a hallucination

(Hobson 1999; McCarley and Hoffman 1981). Remarkably, despite exhibiting certain deficiencies in cognitive abilities when compared to waking life and an occasional failure to fully appreciate the illusory status of the dream, the lucid dreamer is nevertheless intellectually present (Green and McCreery 1994). It is perhaps because of this that lucid dreams are, generally speaking, devoid of unpleasant elements and easier than their 'ordinary' counterparts to regard as the product of the desire for wish fulfilment (Green and McCreery 1994). Accordingly, rather than constituting a fully veiled deception or mystification the characteristically lucid dream that sustains the myth of the 'crime decline' can be properly conceived as a state of make-believe, that is a wilful and convenient self-deception (Tudor 1972).

Essentially this lucid dream state functions, for those who experience it, akin to fetishistic disavowal. Indeed they know very well that, in their mental activity, they are following an illusion but still they proceed precisely because such commitment allows them to retain access to their fundamental fantasy-constructions and their 'sense of reality' (Žižek 1994a, 1999). This phantasmatically constituted reality is one in which the sociosymbolic inconsistencies and antagonisms produced by the Real of capitalism are successfully repressed (Wood 2012). Plastering over these otherwise manifest discrepancies, the fantasy-constructions that support our 'sense of reality' provide an air of completeness and closure which effectively serves to shield us from the trauma of capitalism's obscene Real (Wood 2012). Carrying the analogy through to its conclusion, it is being argued that the formal features of the lucid dream state sustain the myth of the 'crime decline' by ultimately facilitating access to one's phantasmatically constituted 'sense of reality', and thereby preserving the cultural sleep induced by liberal progressive discourse.

However, this assertion is seemingly at odds with Lacan's contention that it is actually within the dream itself that we approach the hard kernel of the Real (Žižek 2008a). As Žižek (1994a) explains, having constructed the dream in the interests of preserving sleep and to avoid awakening into external reality, we are confronted with the terrifying Real of our desire which announces itself in the dream. Consequently, in order to allay the impending psychic trauma we

awake from the dream, escaping into so-called 'reality' so as to continue sleeping and avoid confronting the obscene Real (Žižek 1994a). That is to say that the fragile reality into which we awaken is in fact an illusory one that depends upon the successful repression of the Real encountered in the dream (Žižek 1992). Yet instead of departing from this ostensibly antagonistic Lacanian view, the theory of the dream myth incorporates and extends it.

The position being advanced is that having been confronted with the obscene Real that announces itself in the initial dream we awake into *another* dream, that is into the analogous lucid dream state of the dream myth, so as to continue sleeping. What we experience then can perhaps be best described as something akin to a false awakening (Green and McCreery 1994). It is through this false awakening into the lucid dream state that we maintain access to our 'sense of reality', a phantasmatically constituted social reality within which 'all is well' with liberal-capitalist society as demonstrated by 'internationally declining' rates of crime. Accordingly, the fundamental upshot is that via this lucid dream state, complete with its aforementioned formal features, individuals can avoid confronting the reality of crime and harm and other inconvenient truths as they retain uninhibited access to the protective fantasy-construction that is 'their reality' (Žižek 1994a). Crucially, the comfortable myth of liberal progressivism and declining rates of crime is sustained by this lucid dream state and it is perhaps in this regard that one can analogously suggest, as Jung does, that we "dream the myth onwards" (cited in Segal 1999:73). As the next section will demonstrate, the concerted perpetuation of this myth allows those who believe in it to feel more at home in the world by offsetting the sickness-by-truth that inevitably befalls those unable to buy into the falsehoods that sustain everyday life (Segal 1999; Jeffery 2011).

The Myth of the 'Crime Decline':

Despite considerable variance in the usage of the term myth (Eliade 1964; Tudor 1972), it is widely held that myths both originate and function to satisfy a particular need (Segal 1999, 2015). In this regard it could be suggested that the myth of perpetual liberal progress and its attendant 'international crime decline'

serve to disconnect those who adhere to it from the reality of the external world's dark heart (Segal 1999; Davies 1997). In other words it fulfils the need of the human subject to both imagine and believe in the possibility of living in a 'second' reality or better world than the one currently occupied (Becker 2011). This inescapably conciliatory function can in many ways be viewed as being politically charged (Segal 2015). In fact the very notion of a 'crime decline' should be considered a political myth (Tudor 1972; Flood 2013). Indeed, in accordance with the definitions of political myth laid down by Tudor (1972) and Flood (2013), the enunciation of the 'crime decline' is a politically charged and ideologically marked narrative purported to be an unadorned account of events, articulated in an intelligible and meaningful manner for the purpose of promoting and sustaining a liberal progressive world view.

However, it is salient to note that the success of this particular myth is not necessarily predicated upon the faithful belief of its intended audience. Rather, as will be explicated in more detail later, its efficacy is secured by a combination of fetishistic disavowal and a habitual following of the 'rituals of belief' (Žižek 1999). In other words, belief in the myth is to some extent retroactively attained only by those who act *as if* they already believe, that is by those who exhibit a *belief before belief* (Žižek 1994a; Myers 2003). Accordingly the myth of the 'crime decline' constitutes a miraculous pseudo-event visible only to those who believe or desire to see it (Anderson 1990; Žižek 2012). Interestingly, such belief or desire to see even the smallest grain of truth in politicised utterances of a 'crime decline' is often maintained despite acknowledgment that we now live "in a post-truth political environment" (Osborne 2005:6). Nor does the fact that mythmaking constitutes both a normal and persistent feature of political life (Flood 2013; Tudor 1972), seamlessly woven into the script of political theatre (Anderson 1990), appear to diminish the validity of this particular political myth for those who adhere to it.

Quite the contrary, in fact in many respects the transcendental materialist subject actively solicits from its political leaders the untruths required to mitigate the raw experiential burden of seeing the world as it really is (Becker 2011; Osborne 2005). Unimbued with a natural defence against the horrors of full

visibility, assurance of equanimity can only be achieved by artificially closing off or limiting subjects' perception of the world (Becker 2011). It is for this reason that individuals tend to gravitate towards "discourses and practices which appear to offer the hope of order and control" (Hollway and Jefferson 1997:260). This air of serene security is precisely what the myth of the 'crime decline' offers, by way of maintaining a "functionally optimum degree of visibility" (Merton 1968:398) via limiting its adherents' view of crime to those 'conventional' forms contained within the 'crime decline tunnel of vision'. In essence, it works 'creatively' with the dark figure of crime and harm to maintain a blissful state of ignorance by illuminating only politically useful forms of 'conventional' crime purported to be in persistent statistical decline, whilst omitting the plethora of 'non-conventional' forms of crime and 'non-ideal' victims that would necessarily disturb the myth (Fattah 1997; Spalek 2006). In this way the politically charged myth is capable of both defining the threats and portraying their well-orchestrated resolution in order ultimately to maintain a conciliated "mood of optimism and political pragmatism" (Hall and Winlow 2015:127; Elias 1986).

Essential in achieving this placation is the constant dissemination of officiated data streams that persistently 'define down' crime and harm, and downplay the underlying criminogenic and zemiogenic conditions from which they emanate (Hall and Winlow 2015). These carefully crafted data streams both facilitate the generation of the myth and function as its index (May 2011; Flood 2013). Importantly, as Arlow (1961:379) reminds us, "only the shadow of a real event is necessary on which to build the structure of [a] myth". For the myth of the 'crime decline', the persistent overgeneralisation of ostensible reductions in certain volume crimes in a geographically limited number of Western countries to reductions in *all* types of crime *everywhere* constitutes just such a shadowy catalyst (Aebi and Linde 2012b). Subsequently the flimsy structure upon which the myth has been built has been shored up simply by its attainment of 'proof by assertion' (Aebi and Linde 2012b). Whether this particular political myth is true or not is inconsequential to its perpetuation; all that is required for the myth to function effectively is that its adherents 'believe', or at least act *as if* they believe, it to be true (Segal 2015; Tudor 1972).

Crucially, such belief is capable of affecting people's view of reality and influencing how they act within it (Becker 2011). Herein lies the very function of political myths in general and that of the 'crime decline' in particular (Tudor 1972). Its primary purpose is a placatory one designed to facilitate the constant repression of reality to ensure the citizenry continue to remain functionally operative in the rituals of capitalist life (Jeffery 2011). The myth of the 'crime decline' provides a convenient, if not entirely convincing, diversion from having to directly confront and deal with the unceasing miseries of contemporary existence, thereby offering its adherents the requisite dosage of oblivion needed to retain psychic health (Jeffery 2011). Consequently, not only is it a convenient myth to believe in but in many respects it is a necessary one for it serves to conceal from everyday view the inconsistencies produced by the Real of capitalism; or at least makes it easier for them to be fetishistically disavowed (Tudor 1972; Wood 2012). Moreover, in doing so the myth of the 'crime decline' serves to re-legitimise the authority of governments and the efficacy of their 'hard' and 'soft' agents of control (Tudor 1972).

Accordingly, it may by now be evident that the myth of the 'crime decline' can be thought of as a form of ideological discourse (Flood 2013). Certainly the concepts of myth and ideology are considered to be intimately related, often carrying with them connotations of deceit which emanate both from within and outside the subject (Halpern 1961). However, the ideological discourse permeating the 'crime decline' myth has nothing to do with illusion or mystification in the sense commonly associated with the concept of ideology (Žižek 1994b). Instead, its lexicon is oriented towards the propagation of fetishistic disavowal in accordance with the cynicism that now constitutes the prevailing form of ideology (Žižek 1994a). Cynical subjects are by no means unaware of the discrepancies contained within the 'official' version of reality, or that their own understanding of reality is distorted, but nevertheless do not reject the falsehoods on offer (Myers 2003). On the contrary, they insist upon retaining the flawed view and all that accompanies it whilst maintaining a cynical distance (Žižek 1994a). That is to say that "they know very well what they are doing, but still, they are doing it" (Žižek 2008a:30).

For some this demonstration of cynical reason is evidence that we now live in a post-ideological society. This assertion would hold true if ideology were to be solely located in what we purport to know, but as it happens it is located in the reality of our own and others activity (Myers 2003; Žižek 2008a). Accordingly, we can simultaneously retain a cynical distance from the ideologically marked myth of the 'crime decline' whilst continuing to participate in the rituals of belief, precisely because we know that in our activity we are following an illusion (Žižek 2008a; Winlow and Hall 2012). We can, in other words, privately think whatever we want whilst demonstrably believing (Žižek 2008a). Consequently, the cynic is not free from ideology but is in fact considered to be a pure subject of ideology so deeply immersed within its fantasies, which both constitute and preserve symbolic reality, that he/she believes in its attendant myths now more than ever; even if such belief is to a large extent 'externalised' (Wood 2012).

One must not make the mistake of thinking that such belief is irrational, for as already mentioned there are a number of placatory benefits for those who believe in the myth of the 'crime decline'; or at the very least believe that someone else believes on their behalf (Flood 2013; Wood 2012). Certainly, to renounce the conciliatory gift offered by the myth is to risk a confrontation with the obscene Real of capitalism and enter a rapid descent into depressive realism (Jeffery 2011). This is the inevitable trauma that awaits those who are unable to remain immersed within the lucid dream state that sustains the myth, and guarantees access to the phantasmatically constituted 'sense of reality' secured by its prolongation.

To recapitulate, by way of recoupling the constituent components of the dream myth theory, the 'crime decline' myth is sustained by the formal features of the lucid dream state experienced by its adherents. The extreme improbability of declining rates of crime is readily accepted as reality by those who lucidly remain enthralled by the hallucinoid picture of a more peaceable society, whilst desperately occluding the sensory-input of inconvenient truths that would undoubtedly disturb the dream and undermine the myth (Hobson 1988, 2005). Put simply, this is how the core components of the dream myth work in collaboration in order ultimately to maintain, for those partially or fully

assimilated, uninhibited access to their 'sense of reality' (Myers 2003). Essentially this is the primary function of the dream myth, but towards this end it is worth noting that the dream myth also helps to perform a number of reciprocal and interrelated functions.

A Multipurpose Dream Myth:

Perhaps chief amongst them is its integral role in facilitating the maintenance of the pseudo-pacification process. As mentioned at the end of the previous chapter, the dream myth helps to maintain the impression that the pseudo-pacification process can permanently manage the consequences of deadaptation. Crucially, it does not function to recover the breakdown of the pseudo-pacification process but simply helps to mask the extent of this faltering. This is achieved by crediting this process's insulating capabilities and cognate systems of external control with fabricated forms of success such as the 'crime decline', thereby making it look as though its pacifying function is still operating at optimum proficiency (Hall and Winlow 2015). With such success demonstrably stitched into the intricately woven statistical quilt carefully fabricated by the imposition of a strict 'crime decline tunnel of vision', there is seemingly little risk of experiencing a loss of 'our reality' that would inevitably accompany the shattering of our fundamental fantasy (Žižek 1999).

Accordingly, those who are assimilated into the dream myth to varying degrees can comfortably continue sleepwalking to disaster as they habitually perform the rituals of capitalism content that all is well in liberal-capitalist society (Hall 2012b). Again, rather than constituting the outcome of some 'top down' imposition of a mystifying veil masking the true state of things, such oblivion is self-imposed, it is a necessary self-deception, a product of their entrance into a convenient state of make-believe precisely *because* they know all too well the reality of our times (Tudor 1972; Winlow and Hall 2012). It is the very nature of our anxiety-suffused lives that compels us to both construct and enter the dream that sustains the comforting myth of the 'crime decline' (Hobson 2005). Whilst not everyone can enter the dream myth, for reasons to be discussed later, those who are partially or fully assimilated within it obtain the necessary

ideological symbolism required to repress the terrifying raw state of the world as it really is (Becker 2011). By limiting full visibility via custom fitting both the form and scope of crime and harm to the systematised solutions on offer, the dream myth supports the vital lie we have fashioned about ourselves and our surroundings, which functions to preserve the imagined infallibility of the world around us (Hall 2015; Becker 2011).

Essentially, the dream myth makes expedient use of understatement by engineering a false split between real knowledge and symbolic belief (Žižek 1992). That is to say between our knowledge of the fact that the experiential realities of crime and harm extend well beyond the 'conventional' forms purportedly in statistical decline, and our reluctance to believe that which we already know to be true (Žižek 1992). Thus, as capitalism approaches its apocalyptic zero-point whilst social dislocations widen and the stockpile of wasted lives rapidly increases, those who enter the dream myth can go on acting as though the neat bundle of carefully selected illegalities are all that ails the world (Žižek 2011; Bauman 2004; Winlow 2013). Moreover, news of their miraculous decline makes for comforting reading and further endorses widespread delusions of a more peaceable society imbued with a new morality scathing of uncivilised behaviour (Ellis 2015; Gray 2011).

In what equates to systematised counter-alarmism *par excellence*, the dream myth gifts to its adherents the symbolic means to fetishistically disavow with more ardency the obscene Real of capitalism and their anthropocentric complicity in criminogenesis. In doing so the dream myth serves to further solidify its adherents' assimilation into the dominant sociosymbolic order and its attendant negative ideology of capitalist realism (Fisher 2009). More deeply embedded, these individuals enjoy uninhibited access to the protective fantasy-construction that is 'their reality' (Žižek 1994a). Perhaps more to the point, such solidification ensures that they avoid re-assimilation back into the traumatic milieu of pre-symbolic life (Winlow and Hall 2013).

In many ways the dream myth can be understood as an 'end of history' discourse (Fukuyama 1992). That is as a systematised declaration assuring its

believers that the future will remain faithful to the current placatory image of the present (Flood 2013). The embedded message is deceptively alluring, offering us precisely what we want to hear; that crime is declining internationally and will continue to do so in the future due primarily to the greater engagement of the 'better angels of our nature' and the inherent benevolence of 'gentle commerce' (Pinker 2011; De Wolf 2012). What is more, all we need do in order to secure such a future is carry on as normal, or more specifically continue participating in the capitalist rituals of everyday life (Hall and Winlow 2015). In essence then, what the dream myth helps to provide is "*the appearance of change so that nothing has to change*" (Winlow and Hall 2012:402, original emphasis). Therefore not only are we systematically mobilised against change but we remain actively complicit in the perpetuation and reproduction of the dominant and less than benign sociosymbolic order (Southwood 2011).

Consequently, the dream myth is geared towards maintaining the predominant mode of politics that has currently taken the form of post-political bio-politics (Žižek 2009a). Indeed in congruence with the overt goal of state bio-politics, the dream myth functions to promote and preserve, if only ostensibly, individual happiness, serenity and security by occluding traumatic shocks that would necessarily disturb or otherwise undermine one's 'sense of reality' (Žižek 2009b). Since external reality is what constitutes the real misery, inundated as it is with a relentless barrage of traumatic shocks such as financial recession, poverty and climate change, it must be successfully repressed in order for us to function properly for liberal-capitalism (Becker 2011; Jeffery 2011). Therefore, we tend to grant precedence to the unreal over that which is real as a comforting diversion from the omnipresent misery of the latter, with such precedence acting as a balm soothing the otherwise intolerable discomfort of life in the 'real world' (Becker 2011; Jeffery 2011).

It is in this respect that the dream myth can perhaps be understood as a palliative 'opium of the people' keeping those who are partially or fully assimilated within it dreaming comfortably (Jeffery 2011). Undisturbed by the traumatic shocks kept beneath the thin veil of the diaphanous statistical quilt, these adherents can retain uninhibited access to their phantasmatically

constituted 'sense of reality'. It is precisely because the dream myth facilitates such access, by providing the symbolism required to fetishistically disavow the obscene Real of capitalism more effectively, that individuals variably adhere to it. As mentioned previously, not everyone can enter the dream myth and bask in the comfort of its mediated fetishistic disavowal of crime and harm. For this reason it is perhaps inaccurate to speak of an all-encompassing "state of collective fetishistic disavowal" (Žižek 2011:x) when discussing modernity's dream myth. Instead, it is arguably more accurate to refer to the fetishistic disavowal of certain collectives. Rather than constituting a meaningless exercise in linguistic refabrication, this is an important clarification that draws attention to pertinent differentials in the scope of the dream myth and prompts a delineation of its range or degrees of assimilation.

Degrees of Assimilation:

In chapter five it was suggested that the disparity in participants' belief in or acceptance of the 'crime decline' discourse is indicative of their degree of assimilation within modernity's dream myth. Moreover, it was intimated that such assimilation is mediated by what can be described as a range of proximity/situation, epistemological and communication effects (Boudon 1989). As previously alluded to, full assimilation into the dream myth is facilitated in part by maintaining a limited proximity to the deleterious effects of crime and harm. By retaining a physical and mental distance from the reality of crime and harm the ability to fetishistically disavow their existence remains inviolate (Žižek 2011; Pemberton 2004). Indeed such situation effects of those who attain this status allow them to interpret external reality in a distorted or incomplete way, thereby legitimising ascription to dubious notions of internationally declining rates of crime (Boudon 1989).

Strengthening this ascription is the way in which the 'crime decline' discourse is communicated. Supported by scores of complex statistical analyses emanating from ostensibly credible data sources, the discourse is delivered to this receptive audience by scholars, reporters and political figures who possess the appropriate persuasive status necessary to grant authority to what is being

articulated (Flood 2013). Moreover, the passage of time stamps its own authoritative mark both in terms of the purported longevity of the statistical decline and the sustained circulation of the discourse, which in turn secures its proof via repeated assertion (Flood 2013; Aebi and Linde 2012b). The symbolic power extolled by those who utter the ‘crime decline’ discourse is granted to them by the very audience in willing receipt of this comforting message, for they often lack the inclination or knowledge required to interrogate its validity (Flood 2013). Thus the belief before belief exhibited by the fully assimilated results not only from their desire to see declining rates of crime but from the monopoly over ‘truth’ possessed by the dominant voices behind the ‘crime decline’ discourse (Žižek 1994a; Boudon 1989).

Indeed, the fine aetiological intricacies of the purported ‘crime decline’ are perhaps considered to be the purview of esoteric knowledge to which the fully assimilated are not privy (Boudon 1989). Accordingly — unimbued with sufficient statistical ‘pre-knowledge’, reflected in the high levels of innumeracy amongst the ‘average’ consumers of crime statistics (Sacco 2005) — it is perfectly rational for those who comprise the fully assimilated to rely upon what appear to be authoritative accounts and accept repeated assertions of statistical certainty (Boudon 1989; Dorling and Simpson 1999). As demonstrated by Natasha in chapter five, this reliance upon ‘expert’ knowledge, in conjunction with the subjective desire to believe it, serves to offset any lingering residue of statistical scepticism (Boudon 1989). Evidently, the combined effects of seemingly legitimate and authoritative communications of the ‘crime decline’ discourse, and the maintenance of a limited proximity to the realities of crime and harm, can to a large extent account for the belief the fully assimilated exhibit in what has been shown to be a false notion (Boudon 1989; Flood 2013).

Whilst such effects are pertinent to understanding *how* the fully assimilated come to believe the dubious claims of declining rates of crime, it should not be forgotten that the reason *why* they believe is grounded in a pragmatic choice to do so (Winlow and Hall 2013). Indeed they “believe what, at that moment, they find it convenient or necessary to believe” (Tudor 1972:123). Recall, for instance, Mark’s comments in chapter five regarding the expediency of

believing in the 'crime decline' and how it both functions to preserve a comforting 'sense of reality' and maintain inviolate participation in the rituals of capitalist life. Similar expressions of the efficacy of what amounts to belief before belief were documented in chapter five, perhaps demonstrating the proneness to self-deceit exhibited by the fully assimilated (Osborne 2005). By effectively choosing to be deceived they make themselves 'willing dupes', enthralled in a state of make-believe that secures for them the ability to "go about the everyday and not know" (Morrison 2014:193), or at least fetishistically disavow that they know (Tudor 1972). This is the blissful gift that only those who are assimilated within the dream myth are able to receive.

Serving as the crucial protective and decorative 'gift wrapping' is the ostensible efficacy of the 'hard' machine's maintenance of order. Indeed, as mentioned previously, it appears evident that for the fully assimilated the mere abstract presence of the 'hard' machine and its agents of control is sufficient to ensure that no 'loss of reality' is experienced (Žižek 1999). With their apparent success neatly stitched into the intricately woven statistical quilt, there is seemingly no need for panic, and certainly no need to disturb the comfort and complacency that accompanies entrance into the dream myth with thoughts to the contrary (Hall 2012d). Thus, devoid of having to confront capitalism's obscene Real, the fully assimilated can continue dreaming comfortably, confident in the longevity of their 'sense of reality' and content with fetishistically disavowing the reality of crime and harm, as they habitually perform the rituals of a capitalist system in denial of its problems (Stiegler 2010).

Things are, however, not so straightforward for the partially assimilated or episodically resistant. Indeed for this group of individuals, entrance into the dream myth is initially precluded by their relatively rich 'event knowledge' of, and closer proximity to, the experiential reality of crime and harm. Such negative situation and relevant epistemological effects serve in the first instance to guard against accepting broad-based suppositions of declining rates of crime (Flood 2013; Boudon 1989). Essentially, suppositions of this kind are difficult to immediately reconcile with informed perceptions of day-to-day life in areas such as Lake Town (Boudon 1989). It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that the

partially assimilated/episodically resistant's initial reaction to what must appear as an absurd claim is often one of intense scepticism.

However, perceptions often contain a certain degree of plasticity and are thus susceptible to distortion, modification and even relative supersession by the effects of cogent communication (Krauss 2005; Boudon 1989). As a result it was not uncommon to find amongst members of this group that experiential and normative wisdoms regarding crime and harm can be *seemingly* overridden by presenting countervailing statistical evidence 'substantiating' the 'crime decline' discourse. Of course, as with the fully assimilated, insufficient statistical pre-knowledge and inadequate shares in the monopoly over 'truth' has an important role to play in this. The tentative acceptance of this information deemed to be of a higher order in the hierarchy of knowledge, since it emanates from authoritative 'experts' who have drawn upon 'credible' sources of data, appears to facilitate the partial internalisation of the articulated discourse despite the presence of seemingly insurmountable experiential contradictions (Flood 2013).

This is not to suggest that *all* previous encounters with or experiences of crime and harm are evacuated from cognisance as if they had been completely cajoled by the discourse, for there always remains a residual awareness of the realities of crime and harm due to their relatively close proximity to their deleterious effects. Rather, participants in this group begin to simultaneously hold mutually contradictory views of crime and harm, therefore demonstrating a rather schizoid view of the 'crime decline' (Flood 2013). That is to say they retain residual cognitive schemata of the deleterious effects of the dominant sociosymbolic order's actualised structures and processes whilst demonstrably 'believing' that crime has declined. In other words, this is the point at which *partial assimilation* into the dream myth is achieved.

Evidently, entrance into modernity's dream myth is secured for the partially assimilated/episodically resistant only once the negative situation effects, that derive from a relatively close proximity to crime and harm, have been sufficiently diluted via the authoritative communication of a 'crime decline' supported by 'higher order' statistical knowledge. Crucial in this regard is the

tendency, despite retaining a certain degree of scepticism, to be more accepting of “numbers that seem to support what we’d like to think” (Best 2005:211). Again, this tends to suggest that when confronted with contradictory perspectives individuals often ‘believe’ what seems most desirable rather than what is objectively valid (Boudon 1989). In this regard even partial assimilation within the dream myth can be seen as offering the requisite pseudo-explanations necessary to fetishistically disavow observed discrepancies between the liberal progressive discourse of the ‘crime decline’ and external reality (Johnston 2013a).

Perhaps to a greater degree than their fully assimilated counterparts, the partially assimilated/episodically resistant represent typical postmodern subjects in that they demonstrate an “apparently contradictory coupling of cynicism and belief” (Myers 2003:57). Indeed, due to their retention of a relatively close proximity to crime and harm these individuals know full well the experiential reality of their deleterious effects and that the ‘official’ version of events is significantly distorted (Myers 2003; Žižek 1994a). Nevertheless, they do not readily seek to dispense with this distorted view having been presented with it but rather insist upon it, openly welcoming the dilutive effects of cogently communicated accounts of declining rates of crime (Myers 2003; Žižek 1994a).

What this essentially amounts to is cynical reasoning at work, whereby the distance between reality and the distorted version of it is recognised and taken into account in advance of reasons being forged to accept the distortion (Žižek 1994a). The result is not naïve surrender to ideological mystification but the emergence of a self-deceiving cynical distance between the articulated discourse and their lived reality. Ironically, it is precisely the maintenance of this cynical distance that allows the partially assimilated/episodically resistant to ‘believe’ for more than just a fleeting moment in the ‘crime decline’ discourse, since participation in the rituals of belief can be justified simply by not taking the discourse too seriously (Žižek 1994a). In other words, as long as they can tell themselves that they don’t take it all that seriously, it’s okay to stay tuned into the ‘crime decline’ discourse (Jeffery 2011).

It can therefore perhaps be argued that the partially assimilated/episodically resistant accept the 'crime decline' discourse not because the effects of its cogent communication function to *completely* override experiential and normative wisdoms, but rather because no complete overruling of this kind takes place. Therefore the partially assimilated/episodically resistant can superficially internalise the articulated discourse precisely because a cynical distance is maintained between what is being communicated and their experiential contradictions, and thus between their social action and their 'event knowledge' (Winlow and Hall 2012). They can, in other words, participate in the rituals of belief by demonstrably acting *as if* they believe whilst retaining detailed, if diluted, schemata of crime and harm continuously informed by maintaining a relatively close proximity to their deleterious effects.

Of course this does not preclude the fact that whilst participating in the rituals of belief the partially assimilated/episodically resistant's relatively close proximity to crime and harm, and thus with inconsistencies indicative of an encounter with capitalism's obscene Real, will precipitate episodic spells of resistance to the 'crime decline' discourse (Wood 2012). When these eruptions of close encounters with capitalism's obscene Real occur, the subjects' cynical distance and partial assimilation is momentarily threatened as external stimuli bombard the senses with inconvenient truths. However, this only endures until the appropriate distance can be recovered via re-immersion within the requisite placatory discourse that serves to dilute, but never dispel, the traumatic kernel of capitalism's Real.

In dream myth parlance, these individuals can be analogously thought of as sleepwalkers. They ostensibly 'believe' the myth of the 'crime decline' enough to remain partially encompassed within the culturally induced sleep sustained by the lucid dream state, whilst still retaining the experientially informed scepticism necessary to maintain some capacity for resistant movement or thought (Hobson 2005). In this sense they are hybrids exhibiting features of both waking knowledge and sleeping belief as if the split between the two were intermittently rekindled (Hobson 2005; Žižek 1992).

Congruent with their fully assimilated counterparts, the reason for these individuals' adherence, partial as it may be, to modernity's dream myth is grounded in a pragmatic choice to become enthralled in a state of make-believe (Winlow and Hall 2013; Tudor 1972). By making themselves 'willing dupes' they are able to secure a 'sense of reality' far more secure and serene than the one they necessarily occupy (Becker 2011). Crucially, it is this 'sense of reality' that facilitates the repression of sociosymbolic inconsistencies and antagonisms produced by the Real of capitalism, to which prolonged over-proximity would result in the disintegration of their symbolic reality, propelling them into the realm of the unassimilated (Wood 2012).

For those who constitute the unassimilated, their over-proximity to the deleterious effects of crime and harm serves to completely foreclose their entrance into modernity's dream myth. Indeed, because prolonged over-proximity to the obscene Real of capitalism results in the total disintegration of symbolic reality (Wood 2012), no access to the comforting 'sense of reality' secured by the myth-sustaining dream can be attained. In other words, constant exposure to crime and harm makes it impossible to experience the phantasmatically constituted social reality that modernity's dream myth helps to maintain. Fundamentally the unassimilated both see and know 'too much' to be enthralled by the dream myth, as manifest discrepancies and antagonisms produced by the Real of capitalism constantly erupt upon their senses (Žižek 1992; Wood 2012). Bereft of any shielding provided by fantasies of consistent wholeness that cover over traumatic cracks in the sociosymbolic framework, the unassimilated are confronted with the terrifying full visibility of the world as it really is (Wood 2012; Becker 2011).

Whilst the comparatively intermittent exposure to the realities of crime and harm experienced by the partially assimilated can to some extent be mitigated by the dilutive effects of authoritative and cogent communication of the 'crime decline' discourse, no degree of communication effects can nullify the sheer magnitude of negative situation effects encountered by the unassimilated (Boudon 1989). Indeed, not only does the possession of rich 'event knowledge' serve to undermine the validity and legitimacy of the 'crime decline' discourse, but the

prolonged exposure to such negative situation effects often ensures that the unassimilated consider themselves to be suitably placed to make more informed judgements about trends in crime (Flood 2013).

Consequently, as demonstrated in chapter five, it was not uncommon to find amongst individuals of this group ardent and indignant denouncements of both the 'crime decline' discourse and the statistical evidence upon which it was thought to have been based. Instead of scepticism, this absurd assertion, deemed out of sync with their lived reality of crime and harm, was met with disdain and was thought to be, like so many other political myths, an intentionally misleading narrative articulated by untrustworthy and politically biased individuals (Flood 2013). Therefore, rather than the effects of a cogently communicated 'crime decline' discourse serving some placatory or mitigating function, for the unassimilated they achieve little more than to reaffirm that which they already know. That the 'truth' of the so called 'crime decline' is, to somewhat de-contextually borrow from Wood (2012:308), "located in the experiences of those who are systematically excluded and made abject by the hegemonic ideology". It is only from their unassimilated position that the concrete universal truth of crime and harm is accessible, for they represent the return of the repressed Real, intruding upon the 'sense of reality' maintained by the dream myth by revealing its inherent inconsistencies (Wood 2012).

The fundamental upshot is that the degree of assimilation into modernity's dream myth is predicated upon the variable interplay between a range of proximity/situation, epistemological and communication effects (Boudon 1989). That is between one's proximity to, and 'event knowledge' of, the negative effects of the dominant sociosymbolic order's actualised structures and processes, and the amount of stock placed in the authoritative communication of the liberal progressive 'crime decline' discourse. Whilst there are no definitive boundaries permanently separating the three groups it is impossible for any one individual to fall within more than one group at any one moment in time. In a similar way to which Žižek (2002) notes, in relation to liberal-democratic ideology, that one individual cannot combine the features of conviction of belief,

intelligence, and honesty so is it the case that one cannot simultaneously be unassimilated, partially assimilated and assimilated to modernity's dream myth.

Essentially, what the theory of the dream myth helps to explain is how, why and to what extent individuals choose to act as *if* they believe in the demonstrably incorrect 'crime decline' discourse. To briefly recapitulate, partial or full assimilation into the dream myth serves to help maintain a comforting 'sense of reality' within which the deleterious effects and anthropocentric dimensions of crime and harm can be fetishistically disavowed, whilst participation in the rituals of a capitalist system in denial of its problems remains inviolate (Žižek 2011; Stiegler 2010). Indeed, insulated from the burden of 'excessive knowledge' and full visibility of capitalism's obscene Real, those who adhere to the dream myth can continue dreaming comfortably, confident in the ostensible longevity of their 'sense of reality' and the imagined infallibility of the world around them as they sleepwalk to disaster (Merton 1968; Becker 2011; Hall 2012b).

It is however time to wake up from the myth-sustaining dream. Traumatic as it may be, we must take a good look through unveiled eyes at the world as it really is and begin to confront the reality of our times. Certainly, as Thomas Hardy eloquently noted, "if a way to the better there be, it lies in taking a full look at the worst" (cited in Becker 1975:xi). Accordingly the task we must set ourselves is to stay awake to the reality of the world without descending into despair (Jeffery 2011). To succeed in this task it is essential that discourses laden with incautious and unqualified optimism that edit out "the parts of living no one wants to hear about" are dispensed with (Jeffery 2011:90). It is within this vacated space that the 'truth' about crime and harm can be approached from the unassimilated position of those excluded and made abject by the dominant negative ideology of capitalist realism (Wood 2012; Fisher 2009).

By openly approaching this 'truth' it is possible to participate in a gesture of refusal to enjoy the comforting liberal progressive myth of the 'crime decline' and perform a more honest appraisal of our current condition (Wood 2012; Žižek 2009b). It is precisely such a gesture of refusal that this thesis has sought

to mobilise by offering the reader a more accurate account of the purported 'international crime decline' and the traumatic experiences endured by those who encounter the neatly omitted dimensions of crime and harm. Perhaps all that remains for this thesis is to conclude by recapitulating the most salient points of this more accurate account, and offering a view as to why its potential to ignite a gesture of refusal to enjoy the 'crime decline' is so important.

Conclusion:

In contrast to the dubious claims of ‘universally declining’ rates of crime and other ‘delusions of peace’ articulated by those with buried heads (van Kesteren et al 2014; Gray 2011; Stiegler 2010), this thesis has argued that crime may not have miraculously declined but has perhaps instead mutated in ways that current indicators have been unable to adequately capture (Farrell et al 2010). Indeed, the development and innovative application of technological advances has facilitated the creation of both *adaptive* and *new* forms of crime, as well as having stimulated the waning into obsolescence of some forms of *ordinary* crime and certain adaptations (McQuade 2006; Sacco 2005). This co-evolutionary process of technologically driven criminal innovation, mutation and obsolescence has changed both the nature and broad landscape of crime resulting in the rapid transformation of the traditional criminal marketplace (McQuade 2006; Treadwell 2011). So profound have these developments been that conventional categories of crime and criminality are to a large extent now completely inadequate (Sandywell 2010). As this criminal terrain evolves a process of *technology-mediated criminal transference* occurs, whereby individuals become increasingly involved in adaptive and new forms of crime which are poorly, if at all, measured. This ‘mass migration’ towards forms of crime that fall outside the narrowly focused ‘crime decline tunnel of vision’ creates the statistical illusion of declining rates of crime (See figures 1 and 2).

Unable or unwilling to chart the fluidity and rapidity with which crime and the terrain upon which it is perpetrated changes, the ‘crime decline’ discourse’s methodological champion, the ICVS, has resigned itself to the measurement of criminal obsolescence. Committed to an incessant drive for standardisation (Walklate 2008), the ICVS maintains a static and non-dynamic definition of crime and victimisation, concerning itself only with ‘ideal’ victims who have experienced one or more of a limited number of ‘*conventional*’ crimes (Kirchhoff 2010; van Dijk 2011). This has resulted in an analytically myopic tunnel vision whereby only that which can be easily measured and quantified is explored at the expense of any meaningful investigation of ‘non-conventional’ crimes and

non-ideal victims (Lomell 2010; van Dijk and Shaw 2009; Carrabine et al 2009). Accordingly rather than having identified a 'universal' downward trajectory in crime trends, the ICVS has simply captured the waning into obsolescence of those crimes upon which it disproportionately focuses, whilst omitting from its view those which have mutated and transcended their terrestrial boundaries.

The fundamental upshot is that, marred by methodological naivety and positivistic oversimplification (Young 2003; Heidensohn 2008), the ICVS and its embedded congregation of scholars, who now constitute the dominant voices in the 'international crime decline' discourse, have produced and enunciated an absurd assertion based upon insufficient data. Certainly there is little doubt that, as conceded by van Dijk and Mayhew (1992:53), "sceptics have room for argument about the quality of data from the IC[V]S, and these cannot be readily dismissed". In short their attempts to extrapolate from a limited number of countries overgeneralised assertions of declining rates of crime, in an effort to paint a better picture of the 'universal' by excluding the 'global', serve only to play down the world's "true crime story" (Zvekić 1996:15).

Indeed, little regard is paid to the incessant mass production of 'wasted humans' by a global socio-economic system that requires only a mere twenty percent of the world's population to perform all necessary work (Bauman 2004; Žižek 2011). Within such a precarious milieu large masses uncomfortably oscillate between states of unemployment and underemployment as they become embroiled in an endless battle to secure even the most tenuous scraps of work (Shildrick et al 2012; Southwood 2011). Whilst the 'winners' of this competitive race to the bottom receive only temporary economic relief, the so called 'losers' are reduced to nothing more than an excessive redundancy devoid of recognition and condemned to poverty, insecurity, victimisation and vagabondage (Southwood 2011; Bauman 2004). Yet in the face of this pervasive precarity and systemic violence we are repeatedly told that we now enjoy an era of unprecedented peace demonstrated by 'universally' declining rates of crime (Pinker 2012; van Kesteren et al 2014).

As this thesis has demonstrated, however, this utopic sketching of the world is far from representative of external reality. Indeed, the current research has uncovered glimpses of experiential lived realities of crime and harm far removed from the idyllic image painted by these baseless discourses. The reality is that we now occupy a latently criminogenic socio-cultural milieu within which fragile and differentiated pseudo-pacified normative strategies, geared more towards stimulating rather than attenuating the worst excesses of capitalism, have been purposefully cultivated (Hall et al 2008; Horsley et al 2015). In this socially atomised and hyper-competitive society of enemies there is an abundance of opportunities created by the globalisation process for illicit conduct, to which enormous populations have become equally susceptible for criminal recruitment and/or victimisation (Hall 2012d; Passas 2000).

Certainly, it is undeniable that the criminal fraternity have been among the major beneficiaries of this process (Shelley 2011). They have consistently proven themselves to be considerably adroit in assimilating the schematic knowledge required to successfully navigate the technologically sophisticated contours of a globalising world (Thachuk 2007; Williams and Baudin-O'Hayon 2002). Imbued with technologically augmented entrepreneurial instincts and an increasingly porous terrain upon which to operate, criminal undertakers ply their trade beneath the statistical radar more ruthlessly and effectively than ever before as authorities struggle to keep up (Hall 2012b; Williams and Baudin-O'Hayon 2002; Viano 1999).

Often manifesting itself in precarious 'glocal nodes' such as Lake Town, such deviant entrepreneurship simultaneously serves as both the patchwork and cause of further lacerations in an already tattered social fabric (Hall 2012b; Lea 2002). In many ways glocalised forms of crime serve as adulterated means of re-energizing local and regional opportunities for economic activity in deindustrialised wastelands languishing in a state of permanent recession (Hall 2012b; Hall et al 2008). Yet at the same time this ostensibly 'social' activity constitutes nothing less than dangerous parasitic practices that feed off those who already find themselves at the bottom of the socio-economic hierarchy (Matthews 2009). Involvement in *deviant glocalization* is shot through with

dangers and social harms for both criminal entrepreneurs and their community beneficiaries, who are all forced to acquire their modicum of symbolic recognition via illicit means. However, for many of those who occupy the remains of communities hollowed out by the processes of neoliberal globalisation, such involvement is often necessary for survival (Lea 1999, 2002).

It is within a precarious milieu such as this that the majority of those who participated in this research find themselves. Battling to sustain lives deemed unworthy of recognition and actionable positive rights (Bauman 2004; Fredman 2008; Halstead 2008), these individuals endure numerous forms of crime and harm unamenable to the rigid counting frame of reference adhered to by the survey methodology informing the prematurely triumphal 'crime decline' discourse (Genn 1988; van Dijk 2007a). Despite optimistic claims of statistical reductions in crime, everyday life for many of those with whom the researcher spoke continues to be blighted by socio-economic impoverishment, fear and a raft of unreported and unrecorded harms and illegalities. Indeed, not only has the methodological champion of this discourse helped to maintain the invisibility of many serious global crimes and harms by granting them a state of exception via the designation '*non-conventional*' (van Dijk and Shaw 2009; van Dijk 2007a), but it has failed to adequately plumb the depths of the hidden landscape of 'conventional' everyday crime.

The ICVS's itemised counting frame of reference is a relatively well-known hindrance to the solicitation of information pertaining to experiences of crime and harm that form persistent and largely 'normalised' undercurrents beneath many individuals' daily lives (Genn 1988; Spalek 2006). The 'numbing' effect of constant exposure to such turbulent undercurrents and their deleterious consequences, experienced by a number of those with whom the researcher spoke, undoubtedly served to preclude them from reporting such happenings to anyone or anything resembling officialdom. Moreover, a necessarily strict adherence to the 'no-grassing rule' and the overarching 'code of the street' ensure that residents 'see but don't see' (Anderson 2000). Again, the methodological naivety of the ICVS is striking, for not many would risk the

consequences of breaking this sacred taboo to answer the probing questions of a stranger on the other end of an unsolicited telephone call.

Serious doubt must therefore be cast over the validity of the 'crime decline' discourse, when one considers that large sections of the population most at risk of being victims of crime and harm lie beyond the sampling boundaries of its methodological champion. Indeed as discussed in chapter three, most serious crime is perpetrated against non-ideal victims, such as the homeless and those involved in various forms of crime, who despite often being victimised disproportionately remain shadowy silhouettes conveniently situated just beyond the range of the ICVS's statistical radar (Topalli et al 2002; Rosenfeld et al 2003; Lee and Schreck 2005). Additionally, for those who have little choice but to offset their socio-economic redundancy by becoming complicit beneficiaries of burgeoning criminal markets, there is no benefit to furnishing those resembling officialdom with information likely to disrupt the vestigial 'social' functionality of such activity (Lea 2002).

What has been made strikingly clear is that the 'crime decline' discourse and the data that underpins it have very little understanding of the reality of life in high crime areas such as Lake Town and others like it around the world. There appears to be no consideration for the relentless toil of having to routinely navigate with constant vigilance the thinly delineated border between 'social' and 'asocial' activity (Lea 1999, 2002). Nor is there anything like a clear conception of the plethora of dangers, harms, misfortunes and risks that form constituent components of everyday life for those who reside in these areas (Muncie 2000). Accordingly, there is undoubtedly a need to look beyond the narrow conceptualisation of 'crime' and 'victimisation' to which the ICVS and the assertions it helps support resolutely adhere. Indeed, it is clear that such a blinkered view omits a great many serious harms that cause considerable damage to the wider social body, and in so doing produces a distorted and misleading indication of the extent and nature of crime and other socially injurious events people endure (Hillyard and Tombs 2004, 2007).

This proclamation certainly resonates with those who have trumpeted a call to move entirely beyond the legalistic conceptualisation of 'crime' and the discipline of criminology towards the harm perspective of the new zemiological movement (Hillyard et al 2004). However, as this thesis has demonstrated we must remain cautious regarding the imposition of such dualistic false alternatives (Žižek 2000a). Although the harm perspective is capable of exploring wider aetiologies of harm production than its legalistically defined counterpart, and of taking full cognisance of a wide range of socio-structurally induced harms which remain otherwise opaque to the mainstream criminological canon (Pemberton 2007; Hillyard and Tombs 2007), one cannot naively assume that the category of 'crime' merely consists of 'petty' events and should therefore be dispensed with (Hillyard and Tombs 2004). Such an assertion pays no regard to the burdensome experiential reality of life for those who occupy locales blighted by a plethora of social issues among which 'crime' retains a salient position (Hall et al 2008). Nor does it acknowledge that 'petty' criminal offences co-exist alongside issues of socio-economic marginalisation, often intertwining with acts of violence and intimidation to form harmful and corrosive flows of under-reported and under-recorded crime and harm, frequently perpetrated by and against the powerless (Hall 2012b).

The simple fact of the matter is that we cannot simply separate crime and harm as if the two were isolated problems, for their multifaceted complexities are intimately connected, as the findings from this research have demonstrated. Moreover, the true endeavour of the zemiological movement is not to promote the abandonment of criminology but to remove the constraining brackets surrounding the latter's legitimate field of study (Muncie 2000; Hopkins Burke 2014). In doing so the task has always been to help re-engage criminology's dialectical energy in order to facilitate a more holistic exploration of *both* 'crime' and 'harm' (Hall and Winlow 2015). However, in order to be successful in this regard the rather nebulous concept of harm must be cleared of its ambiguities and lack of specificity and provided with a firm ontological anchorage grounded in reality (Yar 2012; Hall and Winlow 2015).

Whilst Yar (2012) has made strides towards this end by attempting to ground the concept of harm in the denial of recognition, it must be acknowledged that the simple restoration of inter-subjective recognition is insufficient to alleviate social harm (Hall 2012b). Rather, this thesis has advanced the position that the restoration of social recognition must be accompanied by a reinvigorated application of positive rights. In other words, renewed emphasis must be directed towards providing the requisite socio-structural conditions within which social recognition can be attained, actualised and exercised in meaningful ways. As discussed in chapter three, this exacts a combined implementation of *transformative economic distribution*, via the fundamental restructuring of the existing relations of production, and *transformative recognition* which will in turn restructure the current differentiation of social recognition (Fraser 1995). Essentially, this is the dual position upon which a revitalised and ontologically grounded social harm perspective can be established, from which we may begin to demarcate the consensual core of harm with more precision. It is however salient to note that this is but an initial intellectual ripple. Further work is required if the harm perspective is to generate the new waves necessary to fully re-engage criminology's dialectical energy.

Likewise, if we are to gain a more holistic understanding of crime and harm we must transcend the restrictive boundaries of the dominant and subdominant paradigmatic forces currently constraining the discipline of criminology. Their constraining presence has effectively marooned the discipline in an undialectical bind between crude positivism and equally crude social constructionism (Hall 2012b). This has precipitated a general intellectual standstill at the core of the criminological enterprise which effectively precludes penetrative research into important social issues (Winlow and Atkinson 2013). Indeed, within chapter six it was argued that both positivism and constructionism, particularly in their 'hard/strong' form, are inadequate positions from which to analyse the multifaceted complexities of crime and its purported decline. Nevertheless, any cursory glance over the voluminous 'crime decline' literature will reveal that its theoretical and empirical oeuvre is heavily informed and constrained by the dominant positivist paradigm and its attendant fidelity towards the fetishism of numbers (Young 2011).

Conversely, this research has approached the anomalous 'international crime decline' from a position unrestrained by the dominant and subdominant paradigmatic forces currently occluding criminology's intellectual vitality. In addition to having articulated the potential promise of properly utilising what has been referred to in this thesis as '*soft positivism*', one of the unique contributions of this research is that it constitutes the first study to explore in depth the purported 'crime decline', utilising cutting edge criminological theory and an innovative melding of zemiology, critical realism and transcendental materialism. As already demonstrated, this unique methodological and analytical framework facilitates a more accurate and holistic examination of the alleged 'crime decline'.

In addition to the aforementioned benefits of drawing upon an ontologically grounded harm perspective, the use of critical realism helps open up progressive intellectual space within which one can make an initial break from the correlationism that resides at the heart of both positivism and constructionism (Iosifides 2011b). Rather than simply dismissing any discussion of 'reality' as it exists independently of human access, critical realism maintains the tenability of capturing a glimpse of the real as it exists independently of our conceptions of it (Hall and Winlow 2015). However it is worth reiterating that if the tendency to separate structure and agency, that so often accompanies critical realism in its 'stock form', is not surmounted it remains unable to facilitate a holistic examination of the aetiological complexities of crime and harm or indeed the alleged 'crime decline'.

It is for this reason that this research opted to employ the use of a more robust philosophico-theoretical framework capable of augmenting the critical realist paradigm. Comprising the philosophical tradition of transcendental materialism and the theory of the pseudo-pacification process, this framework helps to explain how and why criminogenic subjectivities are cultivated and perpetuated (Hall and Winlow 2015). Indeed, it thoroughly unravels the creative stitching that binds liberal progressive assertions of a more peaceable society experiencing unprecedented reductions in crime by cogently conveying a simple yet uncomfortable truth. That is that we are fundamentally subjects of a

criminogenic negative ideology that purposively cultivates cynicism, competitive individualism, depoliticisation, anxiety, inequality, and socio-economic instability and insecurity which often foster criminal responses in either ameliorative or hyper-conformist capacities (Hall 2012b). Against this bleak yet accurate backdrop the claims of prolonged peace and internationally declining rates of crime are without doubt entirely untenable.

What is more, the insulating capabilities of capitalism's historical pseudo-pacification process have all but been eroded. The process itself is collapsing into a state of disrepair as it stimulates more aggressive libidinal energy than it is capable of sublimating and pacifying (Hall and Winlow 2005b). Consequently, there has been an unrestrained dispersal throughout the social structure of dissociated subjects, imbued with a self-affirmed sense of special liberty and a willingness to do extreme harm to others in the process of acting out their overstimulated drives and desires (Hall 2015). This is the reality of our times and the shape of the criminogenic milieu we now inhabit, yet within which claims of a long peace and internationally declining rates of crime are emphatically trumpeted in an attempt to exude some semblance of security and serenity.

Shorn of its actual ability to secure a serene reality by permanently managing the consequences of deaptation, the pseudo-pacification process must at least retain the appearance of success in this regard. It is with this placatory task that the carefully crafted *dream myth* and its intricately woven statistical quilt is of significant help. As alluded to at the end of chapter six, the dream myth functions in part to reaffirm the credibility of the pseudo-pacification process's external systems of control, by crediting them with fabricated forms of success in the shape of the 'crime decline'. At the same time it serves to obfuscate the processes' inefficiency as a suitable means of insulating the overstimulated drives and desires that continue to propel capitalism forward.

There is little doubt that we are in need of a clearer understanding of the multifaceted and overlapping complexities of crime and harm (Ellis 2015). Yet such an understanding will continue to elude us as long as we remain wedded

to the dominant and subdominant paradigmatic forces that currently constrain the discipline and marginalise the creative development of alternative positions (Hall and Winlow 2012; Sumner 2015). Rather than seeking to understand the stark realities of crime and harm, the mainstream criminological canon remains committed to re-producing quantitative accounts of certain forms of 'crime', as if the partial counting of such activity is somehow the inevitable step towards understanding the phenomenon in all its guises (Presdee 2004b; Pakes 2012). It is perhaps for this reason that the discipline of criminology has so far been unable to develop an empirically persuasive and theoretically nuanced explanation of the alleged 'crime decline' (Winlow 2014b).

Developing both a clearer understanding of crime and harm and a more accurate and theoretically robust analysis of the 'crime decline' is precisely what this thesis has endeavoured to achieve. Certainly it has made a number of unique contributions towards this end, of which one of the most salient is the developing theory of the *dream myth*. Enunciated in detail in chapter seven, the theory of the dream myth helps to explain how, why and to what extent individuals choose to act as *if* they believe in the demonstrably erroneous 'crime decline' discourse. Perhaps best understood as a kind of palliative 'opium of the people' the dream myth keeps those who are partially or fully assimilated within it dreaming comfortably (Jeffery 2011). Indeed, it gifts to its adherents the symbolic means to fetishistically disavow with more ardency the obscene Real of capitalism and their anthropocentric complicity in criminogenesis.

Embroiled in the formal features of a lucid dream state these individuals can retain uninhibited access to the protective fantasy construction that is 'their reality' and avoid confronting the reality of crime, harm and other inconvenient truths (Žižek 1994a). Crucially it is this lucid dream state, complete with its formal features, that sustains the comfortable myth of liberal progressivism and internationally declining rates of crime. Spared from encountering the hiatus that exists between these imagined ideals and reality (Žižek 2008a; Box 1981), the fully and partially assimilated can continue to participate in the capitalist rituals of everyday life (Myers 2003). Indeed, insulated from the burden of 'excessive knowledge' and full visibility of capitalism's obscene Real, adherents of the

dream myth can remain confident in the ostensible longevity of their 'sense of reality' and the imagined infallibility of the world around them as they sleepwalk to disaster (Merton 1968; Becker 2011; Hall 2012b).

However, if we are to stand any chance of ushering in true socio-economic transformation we must awake from the utopian dream that sustains the comforting myths and convenient 'truths' we so desperately cling to (Winlow and Hall 2013; Wood 2012). Certainly, before any attempt can be made to refashion the sociosymbolic and politico-economic structure in favour of securing for all the necessary actionable *positive rights* required to exercise one's social recognition, we must take a full look at the worst. It is time for us to confront the reality of our times and acknowledge our anthropocentric complicity in fostering the zemiogenic and criminogenic state of our current social condition. Only by looking through unveiled eyes at the world as it really is can we hope to garner a greater understanding of all that ails it and its inhabitants. Traumatic as this may be, it is essential if we are to achieve more than the periodic implementation of minor policy tweaks and tokenistic gestures of charitable humanitarianism, which do little more than to postpone the inevitable crisis of the capitalist system by serving to conceal the perpetuation of economic exploitation and human suffering (Hall 2015; Žižek 2011, 2009a).

Ultimately what is required of us is our participation in a gesture of refusal to enjoy immersing ourselves in discourses that promote baseless and incautious optimism by editing out the unsavoury facts of life that disturb our daily rhythms (Jeffery 2011; Winlow and Hall 2013). That is, to reject the comforting myths that help rationalise our fetishistic disavowal of the stark reality of the world as it is and our complicity in shaping its current configuration. Indeed, we must refuse to revel in and take undue comfort from the interrelated mythical proclamations of perpetual incremental liberal progressivism and 'internationally declining' rates of crime. Instead, we should begin to approach the truth about crime and harm from the unassimilated position of those excluded and made abject by the dominant negative ideology of capitalist realism (Wood 2012; Fisher 2009). Only by working our way from a state of denial to one of acceptance can we hope to break out of the convenient lie we are living and

fully live the traumatic truth required to stimulate genuine emancipatory enthusiasm and human flourishing (Wood 2012; Žižek 2011).

This is not to suggest that we needlessly enter a state of unrestrained melancholy, or tread the dangerous path to alarmism and the *state of exception* (Agamben 2005), but to simply look at the world *as it is* without descending into debilitating despair (Jeffery 2011). Rather than recoiling behind carefully constructed statistical data that tells us precisely what we want to hear and enjoins us to celebrate the alleged reduction of a neat bundle of specially selected illegalities, a more honest appraisal of the extent and nature of crime and harm in our world today must be performed. Such an appraisal is precisely what this thesis has endeavoured to provide. It has sought to offer a more accurate and holistic account of the so-called 'crime decline', revealing that when stripped of its unintelligible assertions and selective caveats the enigma can be quite easily unravelled. Unsheathed from its protective statistical husk, the raw kernel of the 'crime decline' discourse has been laid bare displaying the naked truth of its essential being. That is, little more than misleading overgeneralised assertions based upon insufficient data articulated in a re-assuredly 'scientific' manner complete with intra-scholarly cross-references which serve only to offer 'proof by assertion' (Aebi and Linde 2012b).

Having interrogated the 'international crime decline' discourse, it is hoped that this thesis can facilitate participation in a gesture of refusal to enjoy the myth of the 'crime decline' and concomitant liberal progressive assertions. Only by taking this initial step can we hope to dispel the fetishistic disavowal and interpassivity that relieves us from having to take action to radically re-imagine and transform the coordinates of our deapted social system (Winlow 2013; Wood 2012). Fundamentally there is "no blueprint for the future" on offer here (Wood 2012:313), only a limited sketching of the actualised effects of liberal-capitalism's worst excesses informed by those made abject by them. There is undoubtedly a need for further research oriented towards adding layers of detail to this preliminary rough outlining. Indeed, whilst the findings of this research are analytically generalizable it would be beneficial for it to be replicated within similar locales and regions so as to facilitate a more comprehensive

examination of the extent and nature of crime and harm. Particular emphasis should be placed upon investigating those forms of crime and harm which remain unamenable to the rigid counting frames of reference and poorly conceptualised statistical counts favoured by the mainstream criminological canon (Hall and Winlow 2015).

Future research should therefore be directed towards further illuminating the reality of crime and harm experienced by the 'silent majority' in an age of 'declining *rates* of crime', and in doing so contribute towards furnishing us with a more honest appraisal of the reality of our times. There is scope for additional work to be done in order to help reframe and place the 'international crime decline' in context and thereby aid in the removal of the decorative and misleading trimmings currently surrounding the discourse (Krivo 2014). There is still undeniably a great deal of work to be done in an effort to develop a clearer understanding of the 'crime decline' phenomenon and the broader complexities of mutating forms of crime, stages of obsolescence and the emergence of new and technologically sophisticated criminal markets which, alongside overlapping social harms, should occupy a salient position as the focus of future research (Ellis 2015). In addition to such work, it would perhaps be beneficial to further develop and begin to apply the theoretical lens of the dream myth to the investigation and analysis of discourses that help sustain other salient social issues such as inequality and climate change.

Essentially, the task we must set for ourselves as social scientists is clear; before embarking upon ambitious endeavours to reshape our socio-economic and politico-cultural landscape for the better, we must begin to open up progressive intellectual space within which new lines of thought can emerge and operate. Congruently, we must refocus our view of the world and recapture with clarity the uncomfortable truths hitherto pushed towards the periphery of our vision. Rather than seeking to mask the profound socio-economic turbulence we are currently living through with incautious optimism and baseless claims of unprecedented peace and internationally declining rates of crime, let us take a good look at the worst, take stock with honesty and adequately prepare for the future.

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Appendix 2: World map showing European countries that have participated in the ICVS at least once between 1989 and 2010.



Appendix 3: World map showing available ICVS trend data from countries that have participated in at least three sweeps of the ICVS between 1989 and 2010.

