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Constructing Crime Online: Representations of Violent Crime, Perpetrators and Victims on a South African News Aggregator: News24

by

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Declaration

I, Frederick Monyepao, hereby declare that this dissertation is entirely my effort except where otherwise acknowledged. I further declare that this work is official and has not been previously submitted for any award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

Signature: _____   Date: _____

Acknowledgements:

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my late father John Ngwako Monyepao. His brilliant mind and love of education has inspired me up until this far. I miss him dearly, but I know he would be proud of me. I desire to be just like my father. "*People are supposed to aspire to become their fathers, not shudder at the thought.*"

Abstract

This study explores the representation of violent crime on an online news environment. The involvement of moral entrepreneurs within the news media in combating crime is also investigated. News media is the main source of information for national and international events. Policies tend to be influenced by what the media report on, so research into the new online platform of news production is important. The research design took on an interpretive paradigm, leading to a qualitative method of research. Discourse and linguistic analysis was used for the interpretation of the data collected from an online news aggregator News24. The data was in the form of online news articles. The literature showed that the commercial motives of news agencies outweigh the information providing services thereof. Profit is guaranteed by focusing on heinous crimes that are sensationalised. Results show the interplay between moral entrepreneurs and news media as unexplored in South Africa, hence the lack of inclusion criminal justice system agencies in news articles except when the journalist is furthering commercial agendas. Victims and perpetrators were clearly stereotyped, more so perpetrators who were portrayed as inherently evil and seeking to only to do harm to moral members of society. Law enforcement and the media can coexist while serving two similar yet different tasks. It is recommended that law enforcement agencies help bridge the gap by being more open to the media. Communication needs to be established between law enforcement agents and news agents in order to have a positive influence on crime policies and combat crime more effectively.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and Outline of Research Problems

We live in a society that depends on information and communication to keep moving and do our daily activities (Bonn, 2010). Through the rise of technology, information has left the pages of hard copy books and libraries and entered the digital sphere. In this age of iPads and smartphones and other mobile gadgets, from pure observation, one can notice that the world is fast digitising everything. We can now accomplish a great deal of tasks without leaving the comforts of our own homes. This also brought the onset of ease of access of information to latest news.

Grabowicz (2013) and his collaborative authors report that there is an increasing number of people turning to the internet for their news. This creates a dilemma for news organisations as they are faced with relocating resources to attract new text based news consumers while still attempting to hold on to their existing print and broadcast audiences. Certain trends are visible among young people. According to the Pew Research Centre for the People & the Press (2012), an increasing number of young people are turning to their web enabled devices for the news. In 2012, 40% of people stated that they receive most of their news about national and international issues online. The Pew Research Centre (2012) also revealed that from the years 2001 to 2008, there has been a sharp increase in internet being the most used source for national and international news. Television remains the highest, but it shows a steady decline along with print newspapers (Pew Research Centre for the People & the Press, 2012).

In the study of mass communication there has been a continuous debate in the past about the more or less powerful effects of news media on society (van Dijk, 1987). Since the late 80s news media has served as a vehicle for the carrying out of agendas from social, political and economic power structures of society (van Dijk, 1987). A couple of examples of such actions could include Germany and South Africa's histories. In Germany, Hitler's alleged propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels had control over a number of media forms, such as radio, press, cinema and theatre (Petropoulos, 1999). Goebbels had complete control over these, and through the control, Hitler's rise to power was substantially aided (Doob, 1950). Clearly Goebbels' aims could have been slow reached without the control of both news media and entertainment media.

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News media has also played a role within the South African context, especially looking at the apartheid era. The apartheid system was grounded on the notions of 'separate, but equal' (Bird & Garda, 1996), meaning that though the people are separated according to race, they are still equal. Needless to say this was untrue, Bird and Garda (1996) state that below the surface of this notion lay the conservation of white supremacy, politically, economically and socially. The role of apartheid propaganda was to continually legitimise and necessitate separation and to hide the inequality with distortions and myths which would aim to satisfy all South Africans.

 In all of this, news media, through print and television, was positioned as a capable voice for persuading the masses, and being the main means through which information was disseminated (Oscar, Paula, & John, 1987). The news media was also in a situation of considerable influence and their reporting was often viewed, correctly or incorrectly, as an indicator of public opinion, both by the apartheid government and the people (Bird & Garda, 1996).

News is quite clearly a constant occurrence. At this very moment people are being born and some are dying of tragic accidents or from acts of violent crime; banks are being robbed, someone is being raped and a child has suddenly gone missing. Every minute of every day, something newsworthy is happening somewhere in the world. It is the task of the news media to report on these newsworthy events in as factual and accurate manner as possible (Pavlik, 2013). Violent crime usually ranks high in terms of news value and this gives it a higher newsworthiness as compared other events occurring in society (Jewkes, 2010; Taylor, 2014). The portrayal of violent crime in news media is focus of this study.

Violent crime is defined by researchers Truman and Langton (2013) as when a person(s) harms, attempts to harm, threatens to harm or even conspires to harm another person(s). Violent crimes involve force or threat of force, such as rape, robbery or homicide. Crime remains a hot topic throughout all social classes, according to Pollak and Kurbin (2007) and it can be argued that it is the common thread that connects all of man from all walks of life. News media are "responsible" for informing the public about the happenings societal concerns, and crime is one such societal concern (Douglas, Burgess, Burgess & Ressler, 2013). News media's portrayal of crime, more so violent crime therefore should be of utmost importance. But before making the argument of media's portrayal of violent crime, we have to paint the backdrop of the context of the research in the country.

Violent crime in contemporary South Africa has its genesis in the country's apartheid era (Schönteich, & Louw, 2001; Shaw & Gastrow, 2001). Under apartheid laws such as the 1950-Act No 41, Group Areas Act, which forced separation between races through the creation of residential areas designated for certain races and the 1953-Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act which prohibited black people to go on strike (Attridge & Jolly, 1998), behaviour considered normal today was criminalised (Blanchard-Fields, Coon, & Mathews, 1986). Politically motivated strikes, the actions of people of one race working, living or playing in areas reserved for people of another race, interracial sex, or, the possession of 'subversive' literature were, at one time or another, a criminal offence (Schönteich & Louw, 2001).The role print media played during the apartheid era was often one of legitimising and centralising the system of apartheid. English and Afrikaans papers, whilst operating differently in this regard, nonetheless did not always sufficiently challenge the workings, policies and activities of the apartheid state (McQuail, 1992).

In later years after the apartheid era, South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) did not discover any new truths about the role of the Afrikaans press during the apartheid era. No attempts were made to cover up the role of media. In fact information on this issue was well-known since it was well-documented. Throughout its history, the Afrikaans press had been open about its support for the National Party (NP) and its apartheid policies (Du Plessis, 1998). With newspapers having a firm support for the NP, one can only assume that the bulk of criminalisation was centred on blacks and representations of this race were negative.

A country's crime rates always find mention in presidential state addresses. Ironically enough, the news media flock to report on addresses, but show no intent in combating and controlling crime.Contemporary society has a need to be both entertained and informed, and unfortunately news media does exactly that (Khouri, 1999). Khouri (1999) reports that these values are propagated both by the increase in different forms of media – especially electronic communication such as satellite television – and the internet. This results in the market for information being extremely competitive (Khouri, 1999). Digital media has made it possible for journalists in the online environment to write pieces that are not restricted to space (Kisor-Madlem, 2012). "In addition to being a good journalist, you have to be a good digital storyteller. And that's very different than being a good print or broadcast storyteller" says Josh Marshall of The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press (cited by Weber & Monge, 2014).

Research in media has shown that the selection, representation and even the construction of what is deemed newsworthy are subject to certain rules and norms. The news value of events and other information determines their marketability (Kury, 2008). For the consumer, news is there to provide not only information but also excitement and entertainment (Schulze, 1992).

A number of studies have indicated that news media form conceptual frameworks through which people construct their views and understandings of crime (Collins & James, 2011; Vasterman, 2005; Scheufele, 1999 & Tewksbury, 2007; Bandura, 2001). The news media has considerable influence since they can shape public opinion on issues, whether their reporting is correct or incorrect (Bird & Garda, 1996).

Stanley Cohen (1980) wrote a dissertation on moral panic. In the dissertation, he made the argument that moral panics are created by particular interest groups using the media as a vehicle (Hunt, 1997). Cohen (1980) defined moral panic in the following terms:

> Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, persons or groups of persons emerge to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media…. (Cohen, 1980).

Cohen laid particular stress on the media itself as the carrier and producer of moral panic. A reading of Cohen's dissertation will provide part of the lens for questioning the extent to which local news media influence society's views and understanding of crime.

News aggregators have gained popularity. Techno savvy news consumers no longer have to remain loyal to a particular brand of newspaper as aggregators aggregate news reports from a number of other newspapers in South Africa and present them at a click (Locke, & Bailey, 2013).

Greer (2010: 8) states that "In multi-mediated worlds, where signs, codes and symbols constantly loop, merge and intertwine in an endless stream of simulations and representations, crime and criminal justice are fundamentally mediatised phenomena." Similarly, to the extent that virtually all-human experience today is inseparable from mediatised experience, Chris Greer (2010: 5) acknowledges that a critical investigation of media and crime "could, in theory, relate to anything and everything in the late modern world," yet he wisely reigns in the field when he critically defines "media criminology" as "the complex and constantly shifting intersections between crime, criminalization and control, on the one hand, and media,

mediatisation and representation on the other." This reigned in territory of critical examination is still enormous and relatively unexplored.

1.2. Rationale for study

South Africa's democracy did not bring a reduction in crime; rather, the incidence of crime is still particularly high in the country (Inman & Rubinfeld, 2013). There was an expectation, particularly from the middle class that violent crime would decrease after 1994, but that expectation did not materialise (Posel, & Hinks, 2013). Levels of recorded crime did however become stable for a one year period between 1995 and 1996, but they have been on the increase since then (Schönteich & Louw, 2001). In fact vviolent crime is a constant topic in the mediated South African public domain. News media such as SABC, Etv, *Mail and Guardian*, *Die Burger*, and *City Press* remain some of the central sites for informing and talking about violent crime. Nowadays, most stories that appear in the print media frequently re-appear on online news aggregators such as IOL news and News24. This study is motivated by the need to find out how selected contemporary South African news media specifically frame/represent violent crime. The intention is to problematise these frames. While studies and reports of actual crime are frequent, systematic studies that reflect on how South African media construct and represent images of violent crime are either few and far between or still emerging. This study is an attempt to fill this gap. Furthermore, integrated crime prevention entails not just preventing crime physically but also understanding how violent crime is framed, constructed and represented. To the extent that News media remains the main informer for the public about national issues such as crime, it is important to investigate how these crimes are represented.

The advantage of analysing news taken from an online news aggregator is that the articles are easily accessed and they are free, as opposed to online newspapers which require a paid subscription. Furthermore, the link between media reporting of crime and studies of crime has interested criminologists due to the power that media possesses (Davis, Lurigio & Herman, 2012). Sociologists like Durkheim and Marx, and feminist theories of communication all associate the workings of mass media with contributing to the maintenance of social conformity, order, and control (Bohm & Walker, 2005). Media can be a tool for crime control if used with that intention.

According to industry studies, 84% of Americans have access to internet (Reuters, 2009). With that being the case, it can safely be assumed that the next ten years could well be the death of print newspapers in America. The U.K.'s *The Guardian* is considering a switch to a digital-only

edition (Kisor-Madlem, 2012). This trend is bound to pick up over the years with more newspapers. South Africa does not begin to shadow these statistics, but the power of media still remains as potent as ever in terms of influence, despite the lack of internet based news in South Africa.

South Africa has a very low percentage of internet users compared to most European countries. This comes as a result of internet access being directly associated with economic access. Even so however, there has been a steady, though not rapid, increase in internet usage. For the year 2000, the Miniwatts Marketing group (2012) indicates that only 5.5 percent of the South African population used the internet. By 2008, this had increased to 10.5 percent. With the estimated population of 47.5-million in the year end of 2012, 8.5-million (18%) are said to use the internet. The older a South African is, the smaller the chance of them ever using or having used the internet. Generation Y (ages 18-32) use the internet the most (Sweeney, 2006).

1.3. Research problems and objectives

1.3.1. Research Question:
How do selected South African news media, as represented on online news aggregators, frame violent crime?

1.3.2. Objectives of study:

- To investigate how violent crime, violent criminals, victims of violent crime and the criminal justice system are represented in news stories aggregated into News24.

- To establish how and why violent crime is represented the way it is.

- To investigate the extent of involvement of moral entrepreneurs in using media to combat violent crime.

1.3.3. Key questions to be asked:

1. How is violent crime portrayed in the news in South Africa?

2. How are violent criminals represented in the news?

3. How are victims of violent crime portrayed in the news?

4. How is the criminal justice system (CJS) represented in news stories about violent crime?

5. Why violent crime is represented the way it is?

1.4. Delimitations

The scope of this research does not reach all forms of violent crime. A violent crime in the context of this research refers to when a person(s) harms another person(s). Violent crimes involve force or threat of force, such as rape, robbery or homicide. Interpersonal violent crimes (e.g., murder, attempted murder, sexual crimes and assault) govern the context of this research. The effects of news media's representation of crime communicated to the public will also be excluded from the research. The reason for this exclusionary delimitation is because such an undertaking would require more time and expertise that the researcher does not have the luxury of. The only focus will be on the "how" news media represents the variable of study and on a literature basis the "why". The element of the "why" will inconsequentially appear in the content, but it is not of key concern.

This research did not attempt to make an explicit claim that news media is solely responsible for causing the somewhat unwarranted fear of crime among the public. All it tries to do is place media into the conceptual framework that influence peoples' perceptions of their worlds. No attempt is made in considering or exploring other factors that contribute to the way and how the public react to violent crime. This is simply due to time constraints.

The focus is also not on the news aggregator selected for collection of data -New24. News24 was merely chosen for its simplicity in use and accessibility. It is the most popular aggregator (by observation) in South Africa however, but it is not under study. The research remains explorative.

1.5. Structure of dissertation

Chapter one of the dissertation covers objectives of the study and provides the background and outline of the research problem. In addition, the ethical considerations and limitations of the study are outlined.

Chapter two provides the literature review and conceptualisation of media and crime.

Chapter three includes the discussion of pertinent theories. These theories provide support for the direction of the research and also support the arguments that the researcher makes.

Chapter four is allotted to the methodology and data collection of the research.

Chapter five focuses on the findings and discussion of the research. This is a detailed format which covers more than the description of the data.

Chapter six is the conclusions of the study, as well as recommendations. International studies that have been done around the topic of media construction of crime will also be mentioned in this chapter and made notice of whether the construction had a positive or negative effect on crime.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

Dowler, Fleming and Mazzatti, (2006:2) argue that analysis of crime, media and popular culture is the most illuminating area for criminological research. The researchers made this argument in their paper: *Constructing crime: media, crime and popular culture.* They claim that crime is central to the production of news. Not only does it serve to be informative, but the entertainment value of it is also noted (Dowler, Fleming & Mazzatti, 2006).

The chapter will focus on current literature on the relationship between media and crime. In particular the construction of crime in the South African context based on news aggregators. The representation of violent crime, perpetrators and victims of violent crime will be analysed in this study. Stanley Cohen, a leading writer on criminology and sociology was a champion of media and crime related studies. He has effectively played a significant role in the area of media and crime and scholars have since shaped their work around his original works on deviance. The work that other scholars and researchers have conducted based on Cohen's work will be presented in the literature, to making a stronger case for the current research. The works of Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clark and Brian Roberts will be especially highlighted. The authors published a book *Policing the Crisis* in 1978. Though the book can be deemed outdated and worthless on academic standards, it was very influential and still has relevance in contemporary society. This book provided analytical tools that allowed the interpretation of how social phenomenon where objectified and transformed into a moral panic. The book is over 35 years old and in the year 2013 it was announced at the Middlesex University in London that it will be republished with a new Foreword, Afterword and Index, thus staking its claim for relevance in today's society. Firstly however, we will look at the formation of moral panics.

2.2. Moral Panics

2.2.1. Presentations Leading to Fear

Koomen, Visser and Stapel (2000) hypothesise that source credibility plays a major role in determining the levels of fear that are aroused in consumers of news. Koomen et al. (2000) draw from a number of sources to form their bbackground.The work of Alderman (1994) was included in their background. Alderman (1994) used mass media to explain why there were variations in fear of crime in France according to seasons. He discovered that during the

summer, there was less political activity and therefore more news events were devoted to crime stories. The increase in crime reportage led to increases in fear of crime being present from June to October. In short, the more the mass media report on crime, the more readers fear it (Alderman, 1994).

Newspapers differ in their levels of crime reportage; therefore fear of crime will vary between the readers of certain newspapers. An example of the way in which this can occur is provided by Williams and Dickinson (1993) who demonstrated differences in the amount of space and prominence given to crime, particularly violent crime, in 10 British newspapers. Consequently, these differences resulted in varying levels of fear amongst readers. When the research team conducted a questionnaire study of the same readers they found that there was a positive relationship between newspaper reportage of crime and fear of crime that appeared to be independent of any demographic factors associated with the readership.

2.2.2. Media's Role in Moral Panics

Moral panic is not the centre of this study; however, it does serve as the departure point because of the interest in 'how' moral panics are formed by media text. Seeing we live in a media saturated culture (Couldry, 2012), where we depend on the media for our understanding of events worldwide and local (Franklin, 2013). It is therefore necessary to understand moral panics and how they are formed as they are paddled by media (Maneri, 2013). Understanding moral panics is also necessary to be able to unearth the social forces that are obscured by portrayals of violent crime (Jewkes, 2010). This research goes one step further back to decompose these portrayals within online news aggregators. Sean Hier (2008) defines moral panic as "an episode often triggered by alarming media stories and reinforced by reactive laws and public policy, of exaggerated or misdirected public concern, anxiety, fear or anger over a perceived threat to social order". In layman's terms, this means any pervasive unease about an issue that is set to tear the very fabric of society. Moral panics often occur around forms of media technology (Thompson, 2013). Stanley Cohen (1972) undertook a deep analysis of moral panic in *Moral Panics and Folk Devils: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*. Cohen's (1972) analysis was on media, public, and state responses to clashes between youth gangs that took place in Clanctan and other resort towns along England's south eastern coast in 1964 (Hier, 2008). Though the concept of moral panic was a novel one, it is interesting to note that Cohen did not arrive at this novel idea from his own cognition. He (1972) was influenced by a term that briefly surfaced from Marshall McLuhan (1994), a Canadian philosopher of

communication theory, in his book: *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. It was McLuhan (1994) who proposed that the media content should be the focus of the study (cited by Grosswiler, 1998). This study follows McLuhan's (1994) proposition.

Moral panic was actually conceived in the early 1800s from the Christian field and has since crossed over into academia through McLuhan (1994) (Thompson, 2006) Moral panic can now be found in cultural studies, media studies, education, sociology, communication studies, religious studies, cultural anthropology, cultural geography, political science, criminology, literal studies, legal studies, and philosophy of science and gender and sexuality studies (Hier, 2008). The media and criminology fields are of primary interests because the study incorporates the use of a criminological element, i.e. violent crime as portrayed in news media. In 1974 Jack Young wrote a chapter in Cohen and Young's (1973) book which 'focused on the phenomenon of deviance amplification". Deviance amplification is when media coverage of deviant behaviour unintentionally increases the deviance instead of restraining it. Young (1974) stated: "The media, then—in a sense—can create social problems, they can present them dramatically and overwhelmingly, and, most important, they can do it suddenly. The media can very quickly and effectively fan public indignation and engineer what one might call 'a moral panic' about a certain type of deviancy".

Hier (2008) overtly claims that to a large degree, moral panics are created by the media. Franklin (2013) however states that media does not create moral panics, but rather that there is a process to it and media plays a part in the process. There is a first stage which acts as a triggering event, where there is a mood of public anxiety caused by what Cohen (1973) calls folk devils (a person or group that goes against society's values and norms). The second stage involves the disproportionate representation of the ill to society. The media does not create but exaggerates and amplifies the issue. The process is then completed by legislation, what Franklin (2013) calls legislation by tabloid. Politicians are forced to pacify the complaints of the public and thus completing the process (Franklin, 2013).

Hier (2008) claims that as media focuses on particular stories it rouses public fears and inadvertently helps in constructing the problem. For example when the news media reports on the pandemic of the avian flu, which serves to inform the public of this pandemic, the public becomes anxious and fearful as a result.

Cohen and Young (1973) depict moral panic as a more or less discrete social process (Hier, 2008). They focused on the "overreaction" by the public in the 1960 to the skirmishes between

two youth subcultures, the Mods and the Rockers, for his analysis on moral panic (Critcher, 2008). Central to Cohen and Young's (1973) theorising was the labelling theory of deviance, which dictates that behaviours are deviant only when society labels them as deviant (Wellford, 1975). The labelling process according to Critcher (2008) has an amplifying effect on original deviance. If this theory is correct, then the Mods and Rockers should have seen themselves as warring rival gangs as they were portrayed in the media. Measuring and testing these effects would however prove challenging. Cohen and Young (1973) created a sequential model which provided the key agents in moral panic, called the processual model of moral panics. Cohen and Young's (1973) processual model involves six stages as society goes through a moral panic as identified in the following six points

1. An issue or persons arises to become a threat to society's values and interest;
2. mass media presents the issue or persons is a stereotypical manner;
3. moral entrepreneurs and other authorities come against the threat;
4. 'experts' assess the situation and give solutions;
5. coping mechanisms are developed and transformed;
6. The situations either disappear, submerge or deteriorate, but either way it becomes more apparent to the public.

The panic can be either something new or something that was already there but attention was not brought to it. Sometimes the panic becomes a distant memory, and at other times it has long standing effects. If it has long effects, it could lead to changes in the legal system and social policies. Society's self-perception can also be affected (Cohen & Young, 1973, 9).

Cohen Young's (1973) dissertation contains several influential concepts. The first of these is that moral panic has an object, that is to say it must be about something (Hunt, 1997). Hunt (1997) mentions that the moral panic has its scapegoat, a place where the public fears projected Cohen and Young's argument. Hunt (1997) states that that "rival gangs" where not created by moral panic, but rather they were already in existence with or without moral panic, nor would they have disappeared if they were simply ignored. This is to say that media does not create the problem, but as already mentioned, they exaggerate and amplify it. To simply call every societal problem a moral panic would be detrimental as these problems actually do exist, media exaggerates these above and beyond the real level of concern (Thompson, 2013). The central argument by Cohen (Hunt, 1997) is the manner in which these gangs were dealt with by the public.

"That the British media exercise a uniquely decisive influence on national political life, has been notably demonstrated in recent days", says the Financial Times (1993). In no other country would what has been termed the 'moral panic' over juvenile crime have provided the basis of such a concerted campaign that led to almost instant action on the part of the government. [Financial Times, 1993].

Some academics (Kounadi, Lampoltshammer, Leitner & Heistracher, 2013; Demissie, 2011; Pieri, 2014) deemed this statement to be cause for alarm, but newspaper reporters like Nick Davies (2009) and Alex Needham (2010) of The Guardian newspaper celebrated the press' power to enact moral panic over an issue of public importance. Reporter for the Sunday Times, Martin Jacques (1993) wrote: "…and it is more than likely that the newspapers have been responsible for making it happen: the moral panic over the state of society, economic policy . . . the royal family . . . It is no exaggeration to say that without the press none of these issues would have acquired the importance they have".

Cohen as cited by Hunt (1997) expressly makes the argument that moral panics are formed by the media or particular interest groups. This is another influential concept by Cohen in his dissertation. Cohen and Young (1973) have labelled the particular interest groups 'moral entrepreneurs'. These are they that use the media to promote concerns of these groups and presents them as factual (Hunt, 1997), most commentators (Smith & Carroll, 1984; Pidika Mukuwa, 2013; David, Rohloff, Petley & Hughes, 2011; Thompson, 2013; Clapton, Gree & Smith, 2013; Thompson & Williams, 2013) within the media agree with Cohen that media itself is a generator of moral panics.

Cohen and Young (1973: 17) identified four aspects necessary for the development of moral panic: the mass media, moral entrepreneurs, the control culture and the public (cited by Critcher, 2008). In the early stages of social reaction, the media play the crucial role of producing processed or coded images of deviants and deviance (Critcher, 2008). Critcher (2008) explains that there are three processes involved. The first is exaggeration and distortion; who said what and who did what is distorted. The second is prediction; this involves the projecting of dire consequences of the failure to act. The third is symbolisation, where certain groups or vents or individuals are signifiers of threats (Cohen &Young, 1973).

As a result of exaggerations and distortions by the media, public concern for issues is heightened. The media often present reasons and scapegoats for occurrences of certain events; this in turn diverts attention from more real and bigger problems found in society

(Furedi, 1994). Journalists employ inferential structures which are implicit explanations of what the behaviour is like, who perpetrates it and why it happens. Cohen and Young (1973) call these: orientations, images and causations. The panic effect is primed in society (Critcher, 2008). It is the interest of this research to find out how these exaggerations and distortions are created linguistically.

The moral entrepreneurs form the second group. These are groups and individuals who crusade to combat and eradicate immoral and threatening behaviour. Cohen and Young (1973) was particularly interested in their motivations and tactics. The control culture refers to groups with institutional powers such as the police, courts and politicians as being sensitised to the acclaimed 'evidence' of deviance during a moral panic. Concern is then shifted from a local level to a national one and control measures are put in place (Cohen & Young, 1973). All three aspects mentions are held together by the fourth aspect, the public. Public opinion greatly influences measures taken against societal ills (Critcher, 2008). As a consequence of moral panic, law or its enforcement is changed. In Cohen and Young's (1973) time, the law of drugs, which was already being passed, was strengthened (Hier, 2008).

2.2.3. Moral panics: A Critique

Studying Cohen's original work on moral panic, Ian Marsh and Gaynor Melville (2011) report some of Jewkes (2004) critiques about the model. Firstly it was noted that the very concept was focused on youth subcultures and associated symbolism. There are five defining features of moral panics which will be critiqued. These are postulated by Jewkes (2004:67):

- Media's presentations of events causes moral panics when mundane and ordinary events are presented as extraordinary.
- The media amplifies deviance and the persons viewed as the agents of society's ills are reinforced as just that.
- Moral panics clarify the moral boundaries of the society in which they occur.
- Moral panics occur during periods of rapid social change and anxiety.
- Moral panics target young people as the social deviants. Young people are used as a thermometer to gauge society's health.

There are a number of ambiguities and contention in the definitions of moral panic. The terminologies and applications of the model are also ambiguous (Jewkes, 2004). Marsh and Melville (2011) claim that Cohen's work presents moral panics as short-lived episodes which fade away over a relatively short time, which is contrary to some areas of concern which can

last for far longer than Cohen assumed. For example, concerns over juvenile delinquency have been present for centuries. Moral panic takes into consideration the moral boundaries of deemable and undeemable social behaviours that are not accepted by society. There is also a major assumption that due to rapid social change over the decades, moral panics have increased in frequency, but there is no real evidence of this (Marsh & Melville, 2011).

'Ultimately, perhaps, moral panics should be regarded in the way that Cohen intended- as a means of conceptualising the lines of power in society and the ways in which we are manipulated into taking some things too seriously and other things not seriously enough' (Jewkes, 2004: 85 as cited by Marsh & Melville, 2011). Jewkes (2004) said this when making the case that the moral panic model tends to over emphasis the position of media. The result is that focus shifts from the long term effects of deviance to the media. This dilemma in turn leads to media being analysed superficially as well as causing the media to be focused on more sensationalism and entertainment in terms of reporting, claims Jewkes (2004). It is suggested that moral panics hold the fear narratives for news purposes and are part of the social controls (Marsh and Melville, 2011).

Upon introducing the second edition of *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* in 1980, Cohen admitted that the book was out of date (Marsh & Melville, 2011). Cohen's first book had a rather lib view of things. This was the comment to the first edition:

'More moral panics will be generated and other, as yet nameless folk devils will be created…because our society as present structured will continue to generate problems for some of its members-like working class adolescents-and then condemn whatever solutions these groups find.'

Concurrently with Cohen's study, Jock Young explored the use of a particular drug in the late 1960's. This was printed as a chapter in Cohen's work in 1971 (Marsh & Melville, 2011).

Young continued to scrutinise how the mass media present information about deviant subcultures. He argued our knowledge base of deviants is stereotypical and one-dimensional because of mass media (Jewkes, 2004). The mass media is accused of being the purveyor of stereotypes (Marsh & Melville, 2011). Young, according to Marsh and Melville (2011), further states that this leads to society reacting to fantasies based on stereotypes rather than information based on facts. These 'fantasies' due to increased projections from the mass media, are translated into realities. Both vagrants and law enforcers such as the police begin to react to

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the stereotypes of reality (Marsh & Melville, 2011). Young also clarifies that moral panics are not just a once-off event, but rather it is their continued or reappearing presence that allots them the status of moral disturbance (Jewkes, 2004).

Marsh and Melville (2011) look at the relationship between media and crime. They acknowledge that there are certain crimes that become the leading and most prominent stories that capture interest and mood in a particular time. The two authors state that it is imperative to study the manner of how these crimes are reported in order to understand the relationship between the media, crime and moral panics. Marsh and Melville (2011) focus on what they call 'signal crimes'. These crimes that can cause a social reaction that seems to go well beyond the events themselves. "The response to such crimes overlaps with the notion of moral panics and the way in which the media present key factors as representing a symbolically loaded 'crime problem' which then leads to the wider population, egged on by the media demanding that something be done, typically through widening the 'social control net" (Marsh & Melville, 2011).

2.3. Policing the crisis

In 1978, five scholars (Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clark and Brian Roberts) published Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order. This was a critical examination of a nationwide moral panic over mugging that plagued Britain in 1972-3 (Hall et al, 1978). Britain was experiencing either a new kind of crime or a new label for an old kind, i.e. mugging. In March 1973, these youths from Birmingham were sentenced for a crime they committed 5 months prior. The crime was that of a vicious attack and the sentence unusually long (Critcher, 2008). The first moral panic about mugging lasted 13 months but the impact was immediate and long-lasting (Hall et al, 1978).

The new label "mugging", used by the media fit Cohen's model almost perfectly. Hall et al (1978) made a claim that there had not been a substantial increase in street robberies, statistically. Mugging in itself did not spell out a problem; it rather evoked the public concern for the threat from young black males. These young black males were printed as likely to strike with gratuitous violence at any time (Critcher, 2008). Hall et al (1978) expanded our aspects that the media played a role in, in constructing the mugging panic. The media are depended on official sources for news, so they actually act as secondary describers of events told by the primary describers in most cases (Critcher, 2008), this is the first aspect. Secondly, the media reports the statements of the powerful into something the public easily recognise and assimilates into their daily lives. Thirdly, as the media represents the reactions of primary

describers as though they were public opinion. Lastly, the media overemphasises violence in order to justify the extent of reaction (Critcher, 2008). This result in a closed circle in that mugging is defined as a public issue and as a matter of public concern by the media and primary describers (Hall et al, 1978, p.75).

Hall et al (1978) offer a definition of moral panic in their work which has a great influence among scholars:

> *When the official reaction to a person, groups of persons or series of events is out of all proportion to the actual threat offered, when 'experts', in the form of police chiefs, the judiciary, politicians, and editors perceive the threat in all but identical terms, and appear to talk 'with one voice' of rates, diagnoses, prognoses and solutions, when the media representations universally stress 'sudden and dramatic' increases (in numbers involved or events) and 'novelty', above and beyond that which a sober, realistic appraisal could sustain, then we believe it is appropriate to speak of the beginnings of a moral panic.*

Hall et al (1978) model of moral panic was designed to fill in the holes in Cohen's use of the term. The main goal was to explain where moral panics originated and why they occurred when they did. Cohen believed that moral panics originated in the media (Cohen, 1978). This was done through crime reporting and journalists' own prerogatives of what constitutes a 'good story' (Hunt, 1997). 'The media created the news images which lent the cognitive basis for the panic' (Cohen & Young, 1973). Hall et al (1978) agree that media is the most powerful agent in shaping the consciousness of the public about topical and controversial issues. Hall et al (1978) however saw media as an amplifier of the statements by law officials (the police and the judiciary) and it is from here that moral panics originate. The media does not create the news; it merely reproduces and sustains the salient interpretation of it. It therefore serves as an instrument of state control (Hall et al, 1978). This is called the elite-engineered theory.

2.4. Grassroots' Model

The grassroots model is another theory by Goode and Ben-Yehuda (19994). This theory postulates that "politicians and the media cannot fabricate concern where none existed initially". With that being the case, moral panics are therefore founded on public concern. The media merely reflects or magnifies it (Hunt, 1997). This theory takes on a 'bottom up' rather than 'top down' approach to moral panic. The authors of *Policing the Crisis* however disagree with this approach as they find it difficult to conceive how the public opinion spontaneously emerged.

They argue that it is constructed and transmitted higher up in the chain of communication instead of being created from below (Hall et al, 1978). Realist criminologists such as Trevor Jones, Brian Maclean and Jock Young (1986) support the Grassroots model. Their perspective is that people's perceptions of crime are not merely regurgitations from the media and moral panic effects, rather real experiences from the areas they live in. Nevertheless however the moral hysteria about crime lies in the same source and mass media serve and exaggerate such public fears (Lea and Young, 1993). Though moral panic is greatly mentioned, it is not the endeavour of the research to focus on moral panic. The main purpose for its discussion is to highlight the importance of media and its roles in moral panic and to form a case that warrants the research of the linguistic analysis of media text.

2.5. News Production

> At any given moment billions of simultaneous events occur throughout the world.... All of these occurrences are potentially news. They do not become so until some purveyor of news gives an account of them. The news, in other words, is the account of the event, not something intrinsic in the event itself (MacDougall, 1968, p.12).

This is what MacDougall (1968) said in highlighting the fact that the media does not just simply report events which can be deemed naturally newsworthy in themselves, but there is a process involved which involves systematic sorting and selecting of events and topics according to a socially constructed set of categories. Within newspapers, they are committed to regular types of news, thus newspapers tend to have a routine organisational structure (Hall et al, 1978). There are factors that influence the direction of events and topics covered in newspapers, these include: work-force (example special correspondents and departments, the fostering of institutional contacts, etc.) and the structure of newspapers themselves (example, home news, foreign, political, sports etc.) (Rock, 1973).

There are many contending categories even one item that direct the newspaper in terms of organisation. This creates a problem when selecting the particular news which is felt will be interesting to the reader (Hall et al, 1978). The researcher would wonder whether this is the true problem in contemporary society, where there is a vast selection of newspapers. The battle of today for newspaper companies is vying for readership and attaining readership (Seo, 2013). What is not investigated is the use of the language in attaining readership, that if at all it gains readership. It is the researchers' assumption that words that create shock and awe are used in this endeavour.

The scope of what constitutes 'good news' is broad to say the least. The newsmen's sense of values structures the process of selecting what is deemed 'good news' (Hall et al, 1978). Extraordinary news seems to take priority on the front pages, but what constitutes extraordinary is in itself very large: the dramatic; the sentimental and the somewhat humouristic, could form part of the extraordinary (Rock, 1973). Added to this could be concern of the elite and nations; news which has events that have negative consequences and events which evoke sadness. Hall et al (1978) states:

> *Disasters, dramas, the everyday antics-funny and tragic-of ordinary folk, the lives of the rich and famous and the powerful, and such perennial themes as football and cricket, all find a regular place within the pages of a newspaper. Two things follow from this: the first is that journalists will tend to play up the extraordinary, dramatic, tragic etc., elements in a story in order to enhance its newsworthiness; the second is that events which score high on a number of these news values will have greater news potential than ones that do not.*

Hall et al (1978) states that the two elements mentioned are important in the process of news selection but they are just that, part of a process. A third aspect is considered, namely news construction. The moment of the construction of the news story is considered. The presentation is meant to be comprehensible to its audience. Hall et al (1978) identified that identification and contextualisation are important elements. It is through these elements that events are 'made to mean' by the media. The identification and contextualisation refers to the news event on a backdrop of cultural knowledge. Journalists make crucial assumptions about society's functionalism to create news (Hall et al, 1978).

2.6. Crime as News

> *It may be important to note in this connection that confrontations deviant offenders and the agents of control have always attracted a good deal of public attention. A considerable portion of what we call 'news' is devoted to reports about deviant behaviour and its consequences, and it is no simple matter to explain why these items should be considered newsworthy or why they should command the extraordinary attention they do. Perhaps they appeal to a number of psychological perversities among the mass audience, as commentators have suggested, but at the same time they constitute one of our main sources of information about the normative outlines of our society. In a*

figurative sense, at least, morality and immorality meet at the public scaffold and it is during this meeting that the line between them is drawn. [Erikson, 1966, p.12].

Crime is thus viewed as news because the manner in which it is treated evokes threats to the common agreed upon meaning of morality in society (Hall et al, 1978). The police and the courts are seen by Hall et al (1978) as the guardians of society from certain devils which ought to be thrown out and kept at bay. Crime news does not bear a uniform dramatism across all crimes; however, much of it is routine and brief. Crime is perceived as a permanent and frequent phenomenon; hence the bulk of it is treated by the media as such and thus routinized. Depending on the nature of violence of the crime, the presentation thereof will be affected (Shuttleworth, 1974). Shuttleworth (1974) commented that 'mundane' forms of crimes are given small spaces and are reported in an impersonal and abbreviated manner. In the time Hall et al (1978) did their study, media was restricted in terms of what they are allowed to report concerning crimes. For instance, cases which were still being presented before the courts were not to be reported and assumptions of guilt or innocence were not allowed to be made. With these restrictions, news could merely only serve to note that another 'serious crime had been committed. Despite the restrictions, however, media still remained open and sensitised to crime as a potential news sources (Hall et al, 1978).

Violence in itself is a news value when considering crime news (Hall et al 1978). The more violent the crime, the more it is catapulted into visibility by the media. Still remaining a news value in itself, violence also is the greatest example of the news value 'negative consequences'. "Violence represents a basic violation of the person, the greatest personal crime is murder" says Hall et al. The murder of a law enforcement agent ranks higher however. Murder also represents the ultimate crime against property and against the state, thus it is viewed as representing the fundamental rupture in social order. For this reason, violent laden events are seen as worthy of news attention (Hall et al, 1978). The media are mainly dependant on institutions of crime control (police and courts) for their news stories. Police thus become experts in their roles in media and thus are given authority credence by the reporters (Hall et al, 1978). Crime news rarely comes from a first-hand perspective; crime news is almost entirely from the definitions and perspectives of the crime control institutions according to Hall et al (1978).

2.7. Analysis of Violent Crime

The aim of James and Collins (2011) published study on Media constructions of crime, was to explore how people come to understand crime in specific ways. They noticed that South African citizens were increasingly becoming alarmed about the inevitability of crime occurring to themselves and others. Violent crime is seen by the masses as the pressing issue (James and Collins, 2011) as a result of this vicarious victimisation. James and Collins (2011) take different approach to the study, they explore the news media's contributions to South African citizens' understanding of violent crime.

2.8. Violent Crime in the Media

Vicarious victimisation, cultural positions of violent crime and adopted ideologies by individuals are some of the factors that the constructionist approach takes in order to explain the influence to an individual's perceptions of violent crime (Tillyer, Fisher and Wilcox, 2011). In the contemporary society, the exposure to a variety of media is inevitable. This exposure influences, according to James (2010), the ways vicarious victimisation is experienced by an individual and also perceptions on violent crime. The influence is claimed by James (2010) to be mutually exclusive of other factors (such as mentioned before) and also independent to other factors that impact an individual's perceptions to violent crime. News media in South Africa was the main focus for James (2010) in her study.

News media tends to focus on direct or interpersonal violence as the picture of violent crime. Violent crime is explained as an act where power is gained illegally over another person (James, 2010). This definition excludes property crimes which do not necessarily involve harm inflicted to another person (Brownstein, 2000). Crimes such as arson, burglary and embezzlement are included in property crimes. Justifiable violence by the state is also ignored in this identification (James, 2010). For example violence carried out by police personnel's attempts to apprehend armed robbers. Such violence is legitimate and at times necessary.

James (2010) states that Jewkes (2004) makes a claim that the main purpose of media is to make profit, therefore their definition of criminal violence will be one that allows them to achieve this end. Jewkes (2004) contribution will be further discussed in part of this chapter.

Moral panic is yet again mentioned in James (2010) study and fear of victimisation in South Africans is credited to it. As discussed in length previously, moral panic speaks of "a response to people who are perceived to strengthen the integrity and welfare of a community or society"

(James, 2010). The focus or increase on a particular type of violence in crime fuels this response. James (2010) uses the model of moral panic to highlight why some issues have a higher priority over others. Moral panic is a useful way of conceptualising issues because it examines how the masses are persuaded into collectively experiencing a moral panic. James (2010) does not go into detail as to how moral panic achieves this.

James (2010) makes the claim that the media in South Africa does not necessarily conspire to create moral panics, but this is rather merely a consequence of news media trying to attain their goals of increasing their consumers. "Reporting on criminal violence in the way that the media do, however, affect the form in which information is presented to the public and therefore has implications both for individuals and at a societal level" (James, 2010). Here James (2010) is making the case for representations and that it affects the public's perspective on issues.

Language plays a part in creating and shaping objects in the world, social constructionists argue (James, 2010). James (2010) paraphrases Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) saying that the construction of reality is possible because language possesses meaning that is shared with others, thus making it possible to recognise, identify and understand objects. Language will be the anchor of this current research as it will endeavour to investigate exactly how news media constructs reality with words.

James (2010), collaborating with Anthony Collins (2011), a social psychologist with a keen interest in violence and trauma and consumer culture, argue that events of violent crime are mostly represented by the media with little or no consideration of the context of the events (James and Collins, 2011). The focus remains solely on the events. No framework is given that could offer possible causes or reasons for the occurrence of the incident, "….it becomes 'yet another' instance of meaningless, mindless violence", writes James and Collins (2011). As more and more incidences are reported in this manner, this becomes a brewing pot for moral panic. Moral panic according to James and Collins (2011) has two major ramifications. Firstly, fear levels among the public increases and secondly certain groups of individuals become stigmatised.

In their review on research that was already done, James and Collins (2011) made the discovery that out of over a decade old research, none was conducted in South Africa. The researchers recommended that studies be made in South Africa, seeing especially that levels of fear are increasing despite the reported decreases in many types of violent crimes (CSVR, 2008).

"If the news media are one of the important sources of the framework through which we understand violent crime and how to deal with it, we argue that it is very important to explore the impacts of the news media's representations of violent crime, and how this affects the task of understanding and decreasing violence. As such, we believe that it is important that such research is carried out in South Africa" (James and Collins, 2011).

2.9. News Values

In 1965, media researchers Galtung and Ruge analysed international news stories to find out the common factors among them. Factors that placed certain news events at higher priority to others were also analysed. Galtung and Ruge (1965) came up with a list of news values (also called news criteria). News values are a sort of scoring values that determine which story will be on the front page of the newspaper or appear first in a news bulletin. If a story scores high in each of the news values proposed by Galtung and Ruge (1965), it is sure to be the leading news story. News values are not universal so can vary across different cultures. These news values however are not the only determining factors in calculating 'newsworthiness', experience of journalists and editors of what the audience expect also plays a role (Boyd, 1994). Galtung and Ruge (1965) attempted to show that several factors can be applied across different news organisations.

Galtung and Ruge's (1965) list of news values have since undergone a change to suit the new millennium. Professor of Criminology in Leicester University Yvonne Jewkes (2004) proposed twelve news values that better suit contemporary society. She suggested that society has evolved and consequently the cultural and psychological triggers which affect audience responses. Jewkes (2004) listed twelve news values that shape crime news, namely: threshold, predictability, simplicity, individualism, risk, sex, celebrity or high-status persons, proximity, violence, spectacle or graphic imaginary, children, and conservative ideology and political diversion.

Jewkes (2004) argues that the media's definition of criminal violence is one that makes it easy to report and that will catch and hold the attention of readers. The readers also have to understand the material easily. What easily fits the definition is interpersonal violence (Jewkes, 2004). The main idea behind Jewkes' (2004) work is that media represents a "version of reality" rather than reality itself. Media's version of reality is determined by a number of factors, such as the production process of news production, the structural determinants of news making, and the assumptions that the media make about their audience (Jewkes, 2004).

The news values of violence allows for the safe assumption that all criminal violence stories automatically carry a potential newsworthiness (Jewkes, 2004). The other values then used to determine newsworthiness of the criminal violence story and how the story will be presented. This 'how' is the interest of this current research. According to Jewkes (2004), the news values of a distinct importance is 'simplicity', it creates an easy 'formula' for reporting on criminal violence. The formula includes an innocent victim and a perpetrator that is different from the news consumers. The media desire to present sensational events in the most graphic way possible, and violence allows them to fulfil this desire (Jewkes, 2004). Jewkes (2004) quotes from the book *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order* by Hall et al:

> Any crime can be lifted into news visibility if violence becomes associated with it, since violence is perhaps the supreme example of … 'negative consequences'. Violence represents a basic violation of the person; the greatest personal crime is 'murder', bettered only by the murder of a law enforcement agent, a policeman. Violence is also the ultimate crime against property and against the State. It thus represents a fundamental rupture in the social order. The use of violence marks the distinction between those who are of society and those who are outside it … The State, and the State only has the monopoly of legitimate violence, and this 'violence' is used to safeguard society against 'illegitimate' uses. Violence thus constitutes a critical threshold in society; all acts, especially criminal ones, which transgress that boundary, are, by definition, worthy of news attention. It is often complained that 'the news' is too full of violence; an item can escalate to the top of the news agenda simply because it contains a 'Big Bang'. Those who so complain do not understand what 'the news' is about. It is impossible to define 'news values' in ways which would not rank 'violence' at or near the summit of news attention. [(Hall et al., 1978: 68]

Cultural criminologists, Presdee (2000) claims that violence has been objectified and commodified, and thus desired. This has led to violence being distributed to all forms of media to be consumed pleasurably. Jewkes (2004) states that certain sports and 'Reality TV' shows are evidence that man's lust for pain and humiliation is all around us: Presdee (2000) as quoted by Jewkes (2004) writes:

> The mass of society bare their souls to the media who, in turn, transform them into the commodity of entertainment. Confidentialities are turned against the subject,

transforming them into the object of hurt and humiliation as their social being is commodified ready for consumption. (Presdee, 2000: 75)

Jewkes (2004) claims that this is the reason that media have resorted to the dramatic and vicarious.

Hughes, Lancaster and Spicer (2011), have noted that often news reports made have been criticised for being narrow and sensationalised. The researchers comment that there has been little to research done in the nature of reporting. Based on that comment they sought to conduct research in the identification of dominant media portrayals used to denote illicit drugs in Australian newspapers. Hughes, Lancaster and Spicer (2011) pick up from Cohen (1956, p. 129) to state that media is plays an integral role in the shaping of public opinion and policy making. Cohen is quoted about media stating that "its role is one that is so deeply involved that its elimination would radically and fundamentally alter the very character of that process". Research has shown that media can greatly influence public concern about social ills and their control far more than reported facts and actual accounts of incidents (Beckett, 1994).

Hughes, Lancaster and Spicer (2011) claim that the media reports on drugs highlight these commonalities: sensationalism, biasness and narrow framing. The press have been found to use "alarmist fear imagery and risk frames". Frames such as "epidemics" and "crises" evoke the perception a growing threat posed by drugs and drug users to society (Hughes, Lancaster & Spicer 2011). The use of such frames lead to a moral panic about drugs, or what the researchers call "drug scares". Fan's (1996) research on the news media's framing sets concluded that drugs are the United States' most important problem. The research was conducted for a period of nine years (1985 – 1994). Initially public concern for the problem was under 5% and it increased to over 60%, Fan (1996) states that this increase is allotted to the press describing drugs as a crisis. The press is far from being neutral in their reporting of events (Hughes, Lancaster & Spicer, 2011). Elliot and Chapman (2000) discovered that the press where using frames (forms of representation) such as "scourge" and "an issue of moral decay" to describe heroin users. This result was from analyses of print media of the construction of heroin users in Australia from 1992 – 1997. Drug users are generally vilified all over the world (Hughes, Lancaster & Spicer, 2011).

A number of other studies have been conducted around drugs and media, these include Bell (1985), Blood and McCallum (2005), Teece and Makkai (2000), Watts (2003). These studies discovered that drug issues emerge in relation to other social ills such as crime and deviance.

Drug use is framed as an issue of crime committed by "rebellious people" or "gangs" and these miscreants are befitting of punishment and not help. Watts (2003) argues that media reinforces (whether consciously or unconsciously) the perception of drugs as something laws should be placed to prohibit the use of them. Furthermore, law enforcement agencies, politicians and government reinforce the prime solution to drug use as punishment. This reduces drug use to a narrow range of topics and other causes of drugs use are ignored (Hughes, Lancaster & Spicer, 2011). Hughes, Lancaster and Spicer (2011) question the generalisability of the research done in this area, noting that qualitative research was done. They opted to conduct a quantitative research, where larger samples could be used, thus reducing sampling bias and this could add to the generalisability of the results.

Hughes, Lancaster and Spicer's (2011) quantitative study sampled 4397 articles from 11 major Australian newspapers, both daily and weekend papers. The period for the study was from 2003 to 2008. The two aims of the research were:

1. To identify the dominant media portrayals used to denote illicit drugs in Australian news media in terms of five aspects of media framing: topic; the implied consequence of illicit drugs/use (legal problems, health problems, etc.); the extent to which drugs were portrayed as a crisis or emergency issue; the tone adopted by the journalist (good news, bad news, etc.); and the implied moral evaluation of drugs (risky, "good", etc.); and
2. To compare and contrast the media portrayals by drug type (cannabis, amphetamines, ecstasy, cocaine and heroin).

The findings of the research showed that generally reports on drug issues were less sensationalised, biased and narrowly framed as had previously been discovered. The assumption that drugs were framed as a crisis was noticed to be unfounded. This was concluded after the researchers' (Hughes, Lancaster & Spicer, 2011) analysis showed that there was a predominant use of "neutral" tones which suggested a more balanced reporting than initially anticipated. This is not to say that there were no judgements raised about drug use, in fact journalist were raising moral issues around drug use.

Of particular interest to Hughes, Lancaster and Spicer's (2011) was that not all drugs are framed the same. Almost half of the newspaper reports they analysed portrayed amphetamines in a bad moral evaluation. Cocaine on the other hand received more neutral tones and neutral moral evaluations. Heroin by far was the most narrowly framed. It was almost exclusively

reported as a criminal justice issue with a highlight on legal issues associated with drug use (Hughes, Lancaster & Spicer, 2011). Hughes, Lancaster and Spicer (2011) argue that though this was an Australian based case study, due to its broadness to include everyday patterns of reporting, the central finding that media reporting is less sensationalised, biased and narrowly framed may hold equally true across other locations. This does not mean that sensationalism and bias do not occur, but rather they happen with particular types of drugs or during moral panics.

2.10. Media and its Influence on Policy

Susan Boyd (2002) comments that since the mid-1800, drug traffickers were constructed as outsiders by the media, and that they threaten the moral fabric of white middle-class Protestants. The ideological framework for drug legislation was thus realised early on, drawing from the threats depicted in the media. Since racial minorities were part raged as the menace of society, the white public accepted drug legislation as a justifiable tool for the regulating of populations identified as having a connection to drugs. These populations are usually of the racial minorities (Castro & Alarcón, 2002).

The drug issue has also been studied in the context of entertainment media by Boyd (2002). She focussed on the media constitution of illegal drug users and sellers. Boyd (2002) explored television and movie producer's 'correct' depiction of illegal drugs, users and sellers. Boyd (2002) states that media representations of illegal drug issues are mostly moralistic. They tend to be filled with race, class and gender ideologies and presented as being dangerous, such that it is considered noble for the criminal justice system to intervene in any way possible to control the issue (Boyd, 2002).

Drawing from cultural criminology, "a mode of analysis that embodies sensitivities to image, meaning and representation in the study of deviance, crime and control in films and popular culture" (Ferrell & Web stale, 1999, p.3 as cited by Boyd, 2002). Boyd (2002) focussed primarily on films that portray illegal drugs, trafficking and the consequences thereof in a realistic manner. According to Boyd (2002), movies, both reflect and shape popular culture, the same sentiment is carried by Cohen (1985) in terms of media.

Boyd (2002) concludes that the films depict the western world as having an insatiable appetite for drugs and also failing in the war on drugs. The research also filtered down to showing that Britain's drug policy is one of more practicality, choosing to focus on public health and harm

reduction initiatives, and less moralistic. In comparison, the US's policy is described as a 'disastrous control regime.' Over time however, researchers have noted that drug policy in the UK has made a turn due to Margaret Thatcher's (former prime minister of the United Kingdom, 4 May 1979 - 28 November 1990) 'got tough on crime' mandate (Hughes & Rowe, 2007; Pfeiffer, Windzio & Kleimann, 2005; Newburn, 2007; Stenson, & Edwards, 2004; Jones & Newburn, 2002). Currently the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, along with the Labour Party have led the shift away from public health policy and linked drugs with crime. Blair has been quoted as using language which shows support for war or drugs (Stimson, 2000). Words like menace, threat and scourge are repeatedly uttered by Blair and thus linking drugs with crime and family and community breakdown (Boyd, 2002). Just to reflect, let it be noticed that Boyd (2002) has reached all these conclusions from studying media....

Strömberg (2001) slates that mass media provide most of the information people use in voting, therefore media in relation to policy making, warrants research. Survey respondents regularly cite television and newspapers as their primary source of information on political issues (Caplin, Crampton, Grove & Somin, 2013; Scheingold, 2011; Eslava, 2011; Caplin, 2011). Strömberg's (2001) research analysed the effects of mass media on a number of policy issues since the media do not distribute information uniformly to everyone because they are affected by different factors, such as advertisers and location, in delivering news to different groups.

Mass media influences policy in a number of ways:

- First, mass media may influence electoral competition because it is the channel through which politicians convey campaign promises to a forward-looking electorate;

- Second, mass media may be of importance for policy because it informs backward-looking voters about actions taken by the politicians which are not directly observable, such as budget deficits, or about who is responsible for cuts or increases in programs they care about;

- Finally, media may influence policy by influencing the weight voters put on different issues in their voting choice (Strömberg, 2001).

Researchers have also noted that mass media affects government responsiveness to the people (Sani & Twombly, 2010; Bertot, Jaeger & Hansen, 2012; Klulver, Jankowski, Foot & Schneider, 2014). To quote Besly and Burgess (2001):

It is widely appreciated that the study of the mass media is a relatively neglected area in the social sciences. Viewing the government as a conscious actor, responding to incentives, gives mass media a prominent role in the solution of political agency problems. In particular, it can enhance the responsiveness of government to citizens' needs. This is broadly consistent with data on government responsiveness to shocks in India suggesting that these ideas go beyond their theoretical significance. Understanding what makes governments better servants of the people, and how strengthening institutions supports this role, defines a rich agenda for future work in political economy.

According to Hughes, Lancaster and Spicer (2011) the integral role of media in shaping public opinion and policy making is well known. Beckett (1994) in her research titled *Setting the Public Agenda: "street crimes" and Drug Use in American Politics* states that state actors and mass media have played a crucial role in generating public concern about "street crime" and drug use. This is the conclusion of many other researches done since Cohen (1976) (Rojecki, 2014, Merez, 2011; Hopmann, Elmelund-Præstekær, Albaek, Vliegenhart & de Vreese, 2012; Erbring, Goldenberg & Miller, 1980). It is unfortunate however, that the nature of reporting by the media and how it leads to the affecting policy has not been thoroughly examined in research.

2.11. Analysis of Headlines

Victoria MacRitchie and Mohamed Seedat (2008) from the University of South Africa in the Institute for Social and Health Sciences explored ways in which traffic accidents on South African roads are constructed by the media. The researchers made use of 52 South African newspaper articles that related to traffic accidents during the Easter weekend of 2005, for a discourse analysis. Using the data from the World Health Organisation (2004), MacRitchie and Seedat (2008) state that about 50 million people are injured and 1.2 million people are killed worldwide due to motor vehicle accidents annually. South Africa alone on the other hand is estimated at 500 000 traffic accidents that result in fatalities and severe injuries (Road Traffic Management Corporation, 2005). A number of reasons (e.g. aggression and poor judgement, high speeds, alcohol intoxication etc.) are credited to this high number of traffic related injuries and deaths. As a service to the public, the media emerge as a source of information, opinion making and knowledge about traffic accidents (MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008).

Though there are a number of communication technologies such as radio, television, print journalism and the internet to disseminate information about the roads in South Africa, there appears to be, according to MacRitchie and Seedat (2008), a lack of South Africa studies in this

regard. There is a lack of studies in the branches of psychology and other disciplines that examine media presentations and discourses that relate to traffic safety and incidents on South African roads (MacRitchie &Seedat, 2008). The main focus of many social science disciplines has been on the construction of health issues and violence, the focus still remains on the construction of health issues and violence (Connelly & McLeod, 2003; Meintjes & Bray, 2005; Seedat, 1999). Even within the topic of violence, the focus still remains on the construction and not the representation, thus focus of the current research is on representation in response to this.

MacRitchie and Seedat's (2008) study used traffic accidents as a topic and discourse analysis as a method and interpretive framework to examine the dominant and non-dominant ways in which traffic accidents are portrayed in print media reports. They noted that the relationship between the writer and the reader cannot be ignored therefore they sought to explore the insinuations and implications brought forth by newspaper headlines and texts on traffic accidents. This bears great similarity to the current research.

MacRitchie and Seedat (2008) considered the underlying messages in headlines and articles as they claimed that newspapers make use of different ideological perspectives and emotive technologies to influence the reader to respond in particular ways. Newspapers are seen as a form of public discourse (MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). Discourses are understood to be a set of regulated statements which construct an object under investigation (e.g. violent crime). Discourses emerge in text; are about objects and subjects; are coherent system of meanings; refer to other discourses; reflect their own way of speaking; are historically located; support institutions; reproduce power relations; and have ideological effects (Parker, 1992). Burr (1995) states that "discourses as a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories and statements produce particular versions of events. With these definitions in mind, it can be suggested that discourses give truth claims, ways to interpret the world, versions of reality, and opinions to adopt. Discourses also allow for the enabling of constructions of topics in certain ways.

Cohen (1963: 13) as already quoted saying: 'The media may not be successful in telling readers what to think, but its [sic] stunningly successful in telling readers what to think about'. Journalists use certain spokespersons for institutions as sources for locating and reporting events (MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008). 'These types of sources, employed as marketing communications by their institutions may engage in spin doctoring and image building' (MacRitchie &Seedat,

2008). Symbols and specific forms of language are used to promote a sense of common vision and public consensus around specific issues and events (Lyn & Savage-Rumbaugh, 2012; Pattee, 2012).

MacRitchie and Seedat (2008) state that headlines paint the Easter and festive season's road activities as death zones. The headlines are said to be of a dramatic tone, bold and eye catching (e.g. 'Easter marred by road carriage'; 'Deadly start to holidays: Dozens killed on road at weekend'). Alarming and calamitous terms such as 'hell run', 'horror' and 'carnage' are used. MacRitchie and Seedat (2008) also report that the headlines they investigated made use of spoken voice and the language and tone of tragedy (e.g. 'I saw my parents die: Woman watches in horror as mom and dad perish in bus crash'). Such texts evoke feelings of profound sadness, loss and helplessness and possibly leaving the reader to insinuate that danger is a very present thing everywhere (MacRitchie &Seedat, 2008). The researchers continue to state that sense of horror and loss is further amplified by articles that place the focus on lives lost, costs to the economy, and emotional trauma.

Science is also used to confer legitimacy. MacRitchie and Seedat (2008) claim that headlines make use of words which may give the impression that data that was empirically produced by research and higher education institutions, was consulted (e.g. 'Road death tolls cost SA billions'; 'Transport is the main cause of non-natural death in the city'). Such headlines and articles seem to represent a 'true' reflection of reality when in fact they only give a narrow range of discourse concerning the truth on road accidents.

Print media, according to MacRitchie and Seedat (2008) make use of 'well crafted' headlines to maintain being ahead of the competition.

> Headlines are the newspapers' tools to attract prospective buyers and imprint their individuality on what is otherwise a mass-produced product. Newspapers make use of certain linguistic features such as puns and emotive vocabulary within headlines in an attempt to imprint certain key messages and perspectives on the readers' mind. Headlines, which provide an indication of how an article may portray an accident, are used to convey the first and sometimes the most significant message to the news reading public. [MacRitchie and Seedat, 2008:3]

2.12. Conclusion

Dowler, Fleming and Mazzatti (2006) state that crime news has had a great influence in law and order campaigns. The increase in social control and interaction into civil rights was also, due to the influence of crime news. This then begs the question: Why do policies in social control in South Africa not contain a media element in crime prevention as noted in the Integrated Social Crime Prevention Strategy of 2011 (Tilley, 2013).

Through the decades of studies done around media and crime (Chibnall, 1977; Cohen, 1971, 1972; Cohen & Young, 1973; Roshnier, 1973), it is clear that the media have a great affinity for particular heinous crimes.

> Crime as entertainment/information has significant audience appeal, since some viewers accept crime drama as crime reality. Ray Surette (2007) argues that these portrayals can be best described as "infotainment", a highly stylised, edited, and formatted form of entertainment that is disguised as informative or realistic. Thus the portrayal of crime and justice is blurred, especially within news content, in which the most serious and violent crimes are given an entertainment angle and presented as hard news even though the facts are often distorted or misrepresented. [Dowler, Fleming & Muzzatti, 2006:2].

What was found lacking in the literature was how news text is used to solve the purposes of media, mainly maintaining readership and evoking certain responses from the public (Jewkes, 2004). One study - that of MacRitchie and Seedat (2008) - has successfully explained how language is used by newspapers to achieve their goals. MacRitchie and Seedat's (2008) study does not however focus of violent crime, but rather on traffic accidents. It however carries the same tenet as the current study, and therefore will be followed in guiding the study.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Introduction

Theory is seen as a tool that allows research to be thought about more academically (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000). As a tool, it is a response to the research problem and it places the problem in the field in which it is situated such as communications, philosophy, criminology, media etc. theory also allows us to read the empirical data of the research by looking at concepts and models of the theory. It sort of serves as lens through which we have to see the data (Parse, 2001).

Without theory, we would not be able to frame the conclusions of the research (Neuman, 1997). This is to say that in terms of moving from ideas and certain conclusions that research shows to expressing that in language and turning that into a clear concise conclusion that summarises the research, theory is required (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000). The theoretical framework section is not a presentation of the definitive account of the theory, but rather a presentation of the theory to the extent that it responds to the research problem (Keagan, 1993). The argument for how and why the selected theories are used will be made within the particular write out of the theories themselves. The relevance of the theories will also be presented.

Different theories have different consequences and shortcomings. These consequences affect the data and ultimately the conclusions drawn. The researcher is well aware of the consequences of individual theories and that is the primary reason as to why more than one theory was selected to undertake the research problem (Floyd, 2011). Namely the theories selected for this research are the representation theory, framing theory and social construction theory. These theories do well to fill in the missing gaps of each other so as to attain a more well-rounded approach as opposed to if only one theory was selected. Within the individual theories however, more definite concepts are selected and expounded upon as befitting to the research. The variables within the selected theories speak to the linguistic field of research as the research is unfortunately placed heavily within the media linguistics field. It is unfortunate because the researcher is a criminology student and it would have been preferred that the variables speak to a more criminological field, but due to the research problem, this could not be achieved.

Since causality is of little consequence to the core of the research problem, the selected theories do not address their concept (Floyd, 2011). These theories attempt to understand and explain the world of new media instead.

3.2. Representation Theory

The word 'represent' means to image and to offer a depiction of something else (Dictionary, O. E., 1989). The word alludes to an offering of observation, examination or consideration.

Representation refers to the idea that everything we see or hear in the media has been constructed (O'shaughnessy & Stadler, 2012). Representations take on s number of forms such as radio segments, newspaper articles, photographs, films, etc. and every day we are inundated with representations of people, events and ideas (Boykoff, 2007). While some media representations like newspaper articles and television news reports may seem realistic, we should be aware that they are just constructions. Media can only form representations of reality at best. What we see on television screens or read in newspapers is someone else's interpretation of reality (Lundby, 2008). This can be said about everything in the media. Whenever we see a politician or celebrity or crime in the newspaper, we are seeing a constructed image of that person or event, not the real thing. When thinking about media, it is often interesting to consider how events, ideas and people have been represented. Deconstructing media texts in this way is useful because we begin to understand how meaning is created in media texts (Kellner, 2003). .

Representation in itself has a kind of double meaning. It carries with it the notion that something was there already and through the media has been represented (Hall, 2012). Representation also carries with it the notion of something standing in for or taking the place of, for example political leaders standing in the place for people. These political leaders serve as representatives, where we cannot be, they can be, they stand in for the people. Both the ideas of something imaging and depicting that which stands for something are brought together in the notion of representation (Hall, 2012).

Pink (2001) states that in the practice of media when representing topics, representing types of people, representing events and situations, this indicates that the notion of representation is the idea of giving meaning. Representation is the way in which meaning is given to the things depicted (Hall, 2012), be it images or words on a page which stand for what we deem to be talking about Corner & Pels, 2003). If one thinks that the meaning given is somehow distorted

from what it really means, the work on representation would be a measuring of the gap between the true meaning of an event or object and how it is represented in the media (Hall, 2012).

Representation is the production of meaning through language. Representation forms the link between concepts and language which enables us to refer to either the real world or imaginary world of fictional objects, people or events (Hall, 1997). "The way an object is displayed to the audience is the essence of representation". For the audiences to interpret the world meaningfully, a set of concepts have to be present in the mind, these concepts can be referred to as mental representations (Hall, 1997). It suffices to say that when these concepts are not present on the mind, interpretation would prove to be impossible (Durham & Kellner, 2009). The formation of concepts for real objects (like books, cars and computers) is simple enough to perceive and understand, but formation of abstract things like love or chaos or fear and panic is also possible. These abstract things cannot even be felt or touched (Hall, 1996). Meaning depends on the relationship between things in the world and conceptual system which operates as mental representations of them. The correlation of objects, people and events to a set of concepts or mental representation forms one of the two systems of representation (Storey, 2006).

It is possible for two people to carry around differing mental representations in their heads. Hall (1996) claims that though we all interpret the world in a unique and individual way, we share broadly the same conceptual maps that allow communication between individuals and interpretation of the world in roughly similar ways. This forms the notion of culture, were meanings and conceptual maps are shared (Bennett, Curran, & Woollacott, 1982).

Conceptual map sharing is however not enough in itself (Hall, 1996), another system is required, namely language. Language allows for the conceptual maps to be communicated through the common language (Buckingham, 1990). The written word, spoken sounds or visual images are correlated to certain concepts and ideas and in turn represent the concepts in people's minds. Language can thus be roughly defined as any sound, word, image or object which functions to represent concepts (signs). Furthermore these sings carry out meaning (Hall, 1996).

Signs come in three forms, the iconic, symbolic and indexical. The iconic refers to visual signs that are much simpler to interpret since they bear resemblance to the object, person or event (Hall, 1996). For example, a statue or painting of former president Mandela bears a great resemblance to the actual man Mandela. The square with the picture icon of a trash can on your

computer screen is an icon for deleted files. A white upside down triangle with the red border represents "yield" to motorists.

In the symbolic signs, words are used as symbols (Port, 2000). Words are not simple in any way and their make-up is often arbitrary. Symbolic signs allow for the comprehending of words without depending on a correlation in space and time between the sound of the word and its meaning.

The indexical is defined by same sensory features (Port, 2000). It can either be directly visible, audible, smellable etc. These signs are not simple to interpret because of the obvious fact that they do not look like the object, person or event they are referring to. For example, the letters CRIME do not look or sound anything like crime of any sort. Another example could be a frown on the face is an index of disapproval or displeasure; a dark cloud in the sky is indicative if impending rain and a student raising their hand could signal the need for attention from the lecturer.

The collection and piercing together of the letters is completely arbitrary (Hall, 1996). This is to say that RCIEM would still serve the same function as CRIME. This is exemplified by the fact that in the English language, the concept of the word CRIME is represented in other languages like Afrikaans and Latin as MISDAAD and SCELERIS respectively. This perspective shows that words by themselves do not have meaning unless agreed upon by the particular culture.

However, words have a strong association with other words (Port, 2000). Words are activated whenever certain words are said. Activate in this sense means one is more likely to think or say certain words after hearing another word/words. Example, the word "school" could conjure up with other words like teachers, classes, principal, recess; learners, etc. the word school in this example could be seen as hierarchy word. Words are in a hierarchy of subordinate category words (Port, 2000). Subordinate category subtype words are more closely attached to the word. Example, the word crime could activate the following subtypes: violent crime, pretty crime, crime of passion etc.

Arguments and discussions will be based on the premise of symbolic signs. As already mentioned, words by themselves do not having meaning unless there is an agreed upon meaning within the culture (Hall, 1996). Hall (1996) states that meaning does not lie in the word, the object, person or event, rather it is we who fix the meaning to the extent that is can be seen as natural and taken for granted. Codes are what allow the meaning to be constructed and

fixed. This sets up the correlation between conceptual system and the language system. This makes it possible that whenever a word is thought of, the code informs us that in our culture that word means a particular thing the letters, of the word are arranged in a fixed arbitrary sequence (Hall, 1996).

Representation is not fixed to one particular culture, in fact it attempts to give a general explanation of the phenomenon of language which can be applied to all other cultures. Culture is central to this model. Representation has three approaches, namely the reflective, intentional and the constructionist approaches (Port, 2000). The reflective approach states that language merely functions as a mirror of a true reflection of the real world. Meaning lies in the object, person, idea or event (Hall, 1997). This approach is lacking when looked at in respect to what was mentioned above, that is to say, the need for coding. The intentional approach argues the opposite of this. The approach holds that it is the speaker or author who gives meaning to objects, people and events through language (Hall, 1997). This perspective is also weak in attempting to explain communication. It does not consider the fact that the essence of communication is shared meaning in language.

The constructionist approach addresses the weaknesses of both the reflective and the intentional approaches. Meaning is said to be constructed as opposed to a thing bearing meaning or the author or speaker impeding their meaning on something (Hall, 1997). The world is made meaning of through concepts of signs. The reflective and intentional approach ignores the ability of individuals to make up their own minds on what certain signs could mean (Baker, 2007). Any representation is a mixture of four elements. Firstly, the thing itself; secondly, the opinions of the people doing the representation; thirdly the reaction of individuals to the representation and lastly the context of the society in which the representation is taking place (Baker, 2007).

This is an example of how this works. If one has ever seen a movie about serial killers having a menacing demeanour and wielding a knife like a butcher, they would either be aghast or nonchalant about the matter…assumedly so that is. If we consider the different parts of the constructionist approach, to representation, they would work like this: Firstly, the producers of the movie would have encountered a serial killer either in real life or other media texts (most likely the latter more than the former). Secondly, they formed an opinion of serial killers that they were mincing, butcher knife wielding individuals and used that as a basis of their representation. Thirdly, as an individual watching the movie, one can choose whether to believe the

representation or not. Lastly in doing this, one would have been influenced by the fact that they are a criminology student who knows about the appearance of serial killers. A lay man watching the film would have probably reached a different conclusion.

Representation cannot be conceived without looking at linguistics.in fact, representation owes its work to the Swiss linguist and semiotician Ferdinand de Saussure (Hall, 1997). De Saussure was born in Geneva in 1857 into a family of well-known scientists (Kemmer, 2009). According to his biography, de Saussure's work in linguistics was far-reaching. His fresh ideas were constant with those of the pioneer of the new field of sociology, Emile Durkheim (Kemmer, 2009). De Saussure died in 1913, but his work lives on and it still exerts a lot of intellectual force in cultural studies (Harris, 1987). De Saussure has influenced the constructionist approach to represent a great deal.

To look at de Saussure's contribution to representation, let us draw back to semiotics. Representation cannot be talked about without looking at semiotics. Semiotics will also inform this study in the analysis section. The heart of semiotics is the meaningful use of signs. Anything can be a sign as long as people interpret it as meaning something (Chandler, 2013). De Saussure offered a two part model of the sign, these parts were called 'a signifier' and 'the signified'. Semiology was birthed by de Saussure were the main purpose as to study life of signs in society (Hall, 1997). A signifier refers to the form the sign takes and the signified is referred to as the signification and the association between the two components as already alluded to, resist as a sign (Chandler, 2013). An example of this is the word 'closed'. If one encounters the word stuck to the door of a shop, this would be a sign. The signifier would be the word 'closed' and the signified concept would be that the shop is closed for business.

A sign must be a recognisable combination of signifier and signified (Saussure, 1983). The same signifier given in the example above could have a totally different signified in another context. The same word 'closed' was encountered on another door with the phrase "keep closed" a fixed, the signified would be that the door be kept closed after entering. A different sign is attained with every signifier and signified pairing (Chandler, 2013). Saussure's concepts of sings were mainly focused on words. For Saussure, the signifier and signified were purely psychological, both were form rather than substance (Chandler, 2013). Nowadays however, Saussure's model has turned more materialistic, that is to say that the signifier is commonly interpreted as the physical form of the sign. The signifier is now something we can see, hear, touch, smell or taste (Chandler, 2013).

Saussure's focus was on linguistic signs such as words, primarily the spoken word (Saussure, 1983). Writing was seen as a secondary sign system, thus to Saussure, writing relates to any distinction between written and the spoken word. For the signified, commentators who use the model, still see it as a mental construction even though references to real world things can be made (Chandler, 2013). Saussure's original model of the sign excluded references to real world objects.

Roland Gérard Barthes, also a semiotician like Saussure, developed Saussure's model of the sign to show how signs work ideologically (Hawkes & Hawkes, 2003). Barthes (1957) saw Saussure's model of the sign as focusing on denotation at the expense of connotation. Barthes considered connotation to be an important dimension of meaning. Denotation is the literal or common sense meaning of the sign. In linguistic signs, the dictionary provides the denotative meaning of the word (Panofsky, 1970). The term connotation is used to refer to the socio-cultural and personal associations (the ideological, emotional etc.) of the sign (Chandler, 2013). The interpreter's class, age, gender, ethnicity and other demographics, play a role in this (Barthes, 1957). Signs are more open to interpretation in their connotation (Hawkes & Hawkes, 2003). Denotation and connotation is sometimes referred to as digital code and analogue code respectively.

Barthes arranges Saussure's model of signs into levels. The first level is the denotative, the second is the connotative and the third level is the mythic (Hawkes & Hawkes, 2003). The mythic refers to the broader values of a society. To illustrate this, one can look at photographs of the streets and slums of Hillbrow in Johannesburg. This would be the first level of the sign (i.e. the literal meaning of the sign). The second level entails the connotative and the new signified emerges, that is Hillbrow is an unsafe slum filled with hooligans and thugs. The mythic level would suggest that Johannesburg is completely unsafe and police are not concerned about the safety of citizens there.

Structuralism also emerged form Saussure's work (2004). Structuralism is not concerned with meaning, rather how meaning is formed. At the center of this is a power struggle for meaning. Often meanings are viewed on two opposite sides and a consensus is attempted to be reached (Hawkes & Hawkes, 2003). Notably then, it is the dominant power structures that dictate the meaning of things.

Finally within the field of semiology is Charles Pierce (1839-1914) who added a typology to Saussure's model of the sign. He identified three typologies which have already been discussed in this section. These are the three modes that Pierce suggested, the symbolic, iconic and the indexical modes. Pierce and Saussure used the term 'symbol' differently. Saussure avoided referring to linguistic signs as symbols because certain symbols (what he saw as everyday items) were not completely arbitrary. Example of this is the South African coat of arms. It does not have an arbitrary meaning. Semiotics is looked at critical practice rather than a fully-fledged analytical method or theory. This practice is criticised for being a pretentious form of literary criticism that is applied beyond the bounds of literature and is entirely subjective in interpretation and it has grand assertions. Some theorists abandoned semiotics altogether while others merge it with new perspectives.

Semiotics is criticised for being imperialistic. It does not limit itself but rather trespasses into other academic disciplines (Sturrock, 1989). Sturrock (1989:89) made the following comment: "dramatic extension of the semiotic field, to include the whole culture, is looked on by those suspicious of it as a kind of intellectual terrorism, overfilling our lives with meanings". Chandler (2013) adds that sometimes semiotics present their analyses as if they were purely objective scientific accounts rather than subjective interpretations.

William Leiss (1990:214) states that the major disadvantage of semiotics is that it relies heavily on the skills of the individual analyst. The concepts of signifier and signified are also criticised. The social factor has also been widely ignored by semiotics Dominic Strinati (2004) notes:

> How can we know that a bunch of roses signifies passion unless we also know the intention of the sender and the reaction of the receiver, and the kind of relationship they are involved in? If they are lovers and accept the conventions of giving and receiving flowers as an aspect of romantic, sexual love, then we might accept.... But if we do this, we do so on the basis, not of the sign, but of the social relationships in which we can locate the sign... The roses may also be sent as a joke, an insult, a sign of gratitude, and so on. They may indicate passion on the part of the sender but repulsion on the part of the receiver; they may signify family relations between grandparents and grandchildren rather than relations between lovers, and so on. They might even connote sexual harassment.

Strinati (2004) was merely emphasising that context is important in interpreting signs.

Chandler (2013) argues that semiotics is not, never has been and unlikely ever to be an academic discipline in its own right. He does however acknowledge that it is regarded as primarily as one mode of analysis amongst others, rather than a science of cultural forms.

3.3. Framing Theory

Framing theory essentially suggests that the way something is represented (the frame) will influence the choices the receiver of the frame makes. Framing theory is opposed to the rational choice theory (Clarke, 1997). This theory has found its way into disciplines such as economics, political science, sociology and philosophy and criminology where it originates from (Clarke, 1997: 10). In economics rational choice theory is a principle that assumes that individuals always make wise and logical decisions that provide them with the greatest benefit (Sen, 2008). This gives the assumption that people will always make the same decision when given the same data. This assumption however is flawed as proven by Kahneman and Tvesky (1982). The two conducted an experiment with undergraduate students that revealed something else in relation to the assumption. The experiment comprised two groups of students who were given the same decision. One group the decision was phrased in positive terms as a choice between a sure gain and an uncertain gamble. Most of the students in this group chose the sure gain option. This tendency is called "risk aversion". For the other group, the same choices were phrased in negative terms as a sure loss and risky gamble. In this case, the majority chose the risky gamble option. This tendency is called risk seeking. The way the decisions were presented or "framed" affected the choice people made.

Kahneman and Tvesky (1982) developed their prospect theory (a theory mainly used in the economics field) by testing 152 and 155 people. The test constituted Problem 1 and Problem 2. The same scenario was proposed in each test. The scenario was this:

"PROBLEM 1 (tested on 152 people):

Imagine that the US is preparing for the outbreak of an unusual Asian disease, which is expected to kill 600 people. Two alternative programs to combat the disease have been proposed. Assume that the exact scientific estimates of the consequences of the programs are as follows.

Program A: If Program A is adopted, 200 people will be saved [72%].

Program B: If Program B is adopted, there is 1/3 probability that

600 people will be saved, and 2/3 probability that no people will be saved [28%].

Which of the two programs would you favour? Kahneman and Tvesky (1982) found that the majority choice in this problem was risk averse: the prospect of saving 200 lives with certainty was more promising than the probability of a one-in-three chance of saving 600 lives. This risky prospect B was of equal expected value as the first prospect A.

A second group of respondents were given the same story of the Asian disease problem, but were provided with different program options.

"PROBLEM 2 (tested on 155 people):

Program C: If Program C is adopted 400 people will die [22%].

Program D: If Program D is adopted there is 1/3 probability that nobody will die, and 2/3 probability that 600 people will die [78%].

Which of the two programs would you favour?

"The majority of respondents in the second problem chose risk taking: the certain death of 400 people is less acceptable than the two-in-three chance that 600 people will die.

In criminology, rational choice theory is based on the fundamental tenets of classical criminology. These tenets elude to men being a reasoning actor who weighs means and ends and costs and benefits and from that makes a rational choice (Barr & Pease, 1990). Central to this decision making is the avoidance of pain and the pursuit of pleasure (Bayley, 1994). The assumption made by this theory is that crime is a personal choice and no other factors influence the choice of whether to commit or not commit crime. The other major assumption of the theory is on the decision-making process and behavioural motivations. The premise is that people commit crime after careful consideration of the costs and benefits. Both personal factors which may include a need for money, revenge or entertainment, and situational factors such as vulnerability of the target or victim and the presence of witnesses or guidance (Bayle, 1994). This is a rather over simplified view of decision-making as it excludes other factors such as external influences and to some degree, the presentation of morals and values concerning crime in contemporary society. It is also to this reason that the rational choice theory was to give a subsidiary, namely the routine activities approach.

The routine activities theory, developed by Cohen and Felson (1980), states that these elements need to be present for crime to occur. These elements are: a motivated offender with criminal intentions and the ability to act on these indications, a suitable victim or target, and the absence of a capable guardian who can prevent the crime from happening (Cohen & Felson, 1980). All three elements must be present for a crime to occur. The two theories (rational choice and routine activities approach) have been briefly mentioned not as a divergent, but rather to draw a parallel between the framing and them. The framing theory almost seems an amalgamation of the rational choice theory and the routine activity approach, except is has been adapted to media research.

As already stated framing theory finds itself in a number of disciplines and it is applied with different perspectives across the disciplines. This is due to the fact that concept has been modified and extended by researchers as alluded to by Ferris and Jolly (2008). In psychology, when framing effects are examined, they generally refer to the relationship between context and information as it determines meaning. Minky (1975) defines a frame as template or data structure that organises various pieces of information. Research on the other hand approaches framing from a constructivist position. This position is favoured by sociologists and other communication researchers (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987). Framing is also seen as involving the organisation of information in this approach, but also focuses on the way frames present or select a theme of events or issues. Gamson and Modigliani (1987, p.143) hold that frames are the central organising idea or story line that provides meaning. These two (1989, p.57) researchers essentially state that a frame is an ever-present discursive device that channels the audience as it constructs the meaning of particular communicative acts.

The most comprehensive definition is given by Nelson, Clawson and Oxley (1997). They see framing as "the process by which a source defines the essential problem underlying a particular social or political issue" (p. 222). At the heart of framing is the construction of political issues. In the construction, it is taken for granted that in framing an issue, there are certain associations. To say a message constructs an issues is to say that it has particular built-in associations between concepts (Nelson et al., 1997). Framing analyses is thus a careful examination of the way concepts are associated within discourse (Wang, 1996).

"Public opinion often depends on how elites choose to frame issues. For example, citizens' opinions about a Ku Klux Klan (an organisation in the United States, which have advocated extremist reactionary currents such as white supremacy, white nationalism and anti-immigration

(CITATION), may depend on whether elites frame the extent as a free speech issue or a public safety issue" (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Entman states that framing is "a scattered conceptualization" where previous studies lacked clear conceptual definitions. According to Entman (1993), framing cannot be considered as a paradigm. The failure to develop into a paradigm lies in the inconsistencies of meaning in the core terms, namely "frame", "framing" and "framework'. Other researchers (Semetkoz Valkenburg, 2000, D'Angelo, 2002) seem not to agree with Entman's (1993) view of framing theory. Instead of developing a theory with a clear paradigm that bears distinct definitions and the ability to be generalised.

To illustrate this, in 1999, the Brooklyn Museum of Art opened an exhibit called "Sensation". According to news coverage (PBS NewsHour, 1999; BBC News, 1999, Washington Post, 1999), the New York mayor, Rudolph Giuliani called the exhibit "sick stuff". The exhibit included the work of a young British artist. On display was a self-replica of the artists bust made from over four and a quarter litres of the artists own frozen blood, a sculpture that incorporated a dead animal in formaldehyde and a pointing of a black Madonna decorated with a resin-covered lump of elephant dung. The figure was also surrounded by small collaged images of female genetalia form pornographic magazines. Giuliani declared the painting as a desecration of somebody else's religion (anti-Catholic) (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Giuliani took a step further to withdraw funding form the museum ($7 million a year) and attempted to evict the museum form the city-owned building it occupied. According to Giuliani, the government had authority to regulate the distribution of taxpayer dollars for cultural events.

As news continued to cover Giuliani's plight, the representations of the museum and the general art community were "silent". For an entire week, the news only covered one side of the story and thus giving one frame (Chong & Druckman, 2007). It is only when the museum filled a lawsuit defending its First Amendment right to free expression did the news being to give another frame to the issue. Two competing frames where now constructed, the artists free-speech right versus the right of government to control public finances and tax dollars. The case was settled outside the court nearly six months later with the museum retaining its funding and building (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

The Giuliani/sensation exhibit serves to illustrate that almost all public debates involve competition between competing parties to establish the meaning and interpretation of issues. When engaging with issues, the public must deal with opposing frames that are intended by opinion leaders to influence public preferences (Chong & Druckman, 2007). In studies on

framing however, Chong & Druckman (2007) make the argument that they it is uncertain of which of the many frame will shape public opinion. The two authors further state that studies on framing (Snider & Theriault, 2004:141-142) have neglected the fact that frames themselves are contestable. Those studies have only made mention of the position of the citizens only being exposed to one dimension of issues (Entman, 1993; Riker, 1995; Wittman, 1995). The competitive arena of mass communication has been neglected in this regard (Chong & Druckman, 2007). This issue will be further exposed in the chapter.

It is agreed upon by researchers (Entman, 1991; Fiske &Taylor, 1991; Gamson, 1992; Endelman, 1993; Zaller, 1992) that there is no single definition of news frame or framing. These definitions however share similar characteristics. These characteristics are given by a number of researchers as follows: News frames are conceptual tools which media and individuals rely on to convey, interpret and evaluate information (Newman et al., 1992:60). Gitlin (1980) offers a characteristic saying that frames are persistent selection, emphasis and exclusion. They set the parameters in which citizens discuss public events (Tuchman, 1978). Entman (1993:53) states that framing is selecting some aspects of perceived reality to enhance their salience in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation. Goffman (1974:21) adds that frames are to help audiences locate, perceive, identify and label the flow of information around them. Lastly, Tuchman (1978:156) adds to Goffman (1974) by saying that it also allows citizens to narrow the available political alternatives.

Framing is unfortunately an unavoidable part of human communication. It is found in media as events are presented in a certain way; we find it in politics as politicians present information in one way or the other in order to persuade the masses; we also see it in negotiations as one side tries to sway another side towards a desired outcome. Concerning media however, McCombs and Shaw (1972) state that mass media deals with two distinct features-priming and framing. They claim that media power is not so much about telling people what to think, which is framing, but rather what to think about, which is priming.

3.3.1. Priming

Priming is a psychological term which refers to a: 'technique of recalling information by having been exposed to related information at an earlier time' (Feldman, 1996). Priming can work in absent of the original source of information. This is due to the associative models of memory (Tulving & Schacter, 1990). These models argue that semantic memory models of associations between mental representations and various pieces of information. Figure 3.1 shows an example of the relationship in memory relating to "crime".
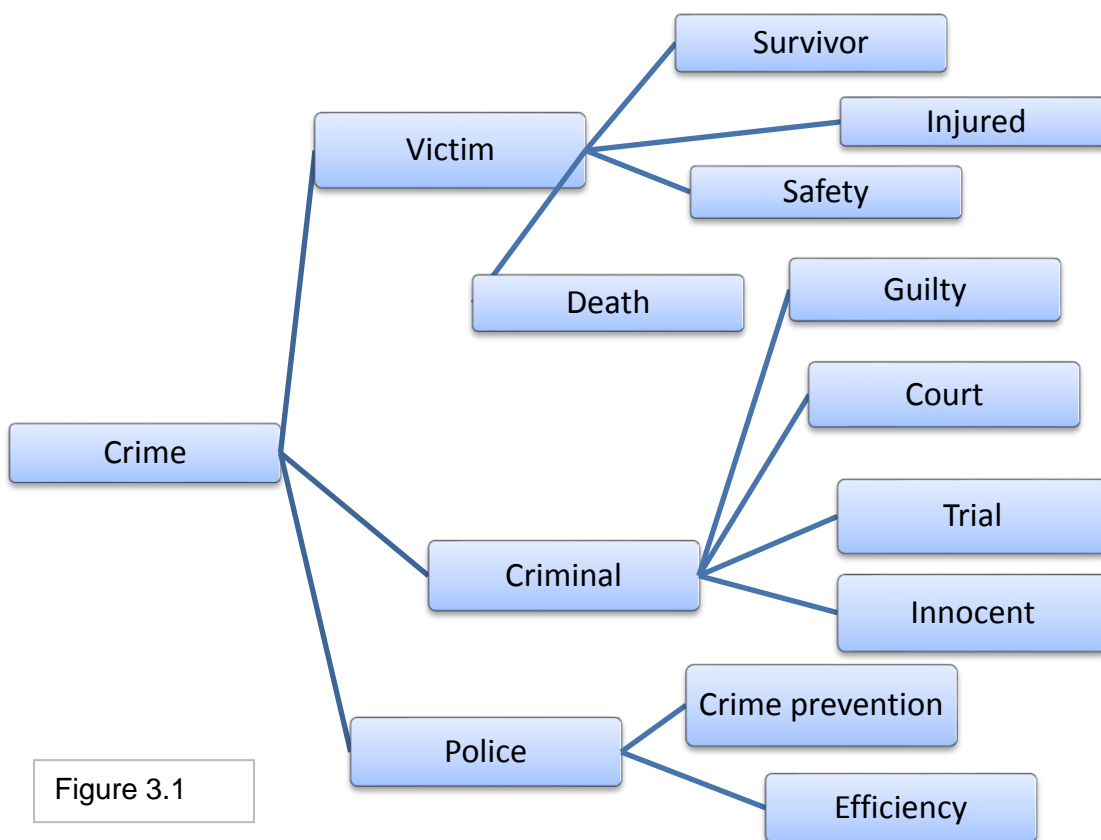
Figure 3.1

The basic idea behind associative models is that when you think about a particular concept, the mind (semantic memory) activates to recall related concepts (Feldman, 1996). This can be applied to losing and object or item like the car keys. To try and recall to memory exactly where one lost the keys would prove to be impossible, but if one recalls to memory what they were doing with the key before losing them, they would be able to find them. This is commonly known as retracing your steps. Associations are made in the mind that allows related terms and events

to arise, thus yielding the desired information. In such instances, related information helps prime us to recall information that we are otherwise unable to recollect (Feldman, 1996).

To illustrate priming, subjects were presented with a stimulus such as a word, an object or drawing. The second phase of the experiment was held after a period ranging from several seconds to months later. At that point, subjects were exposed to incomplete perceptual information that was related to the first stimulus and asked whether they recognised it. For example, subjects were showed a part of a drawing or the first letter of the word of the original stimulus. If subjects are able to identify the stimuli from being shown part of it. It can be said that priming has occurred (Tulving &Schacter, 1990). Even when subjects report no conscious awareness of having been exposed to a stimulus, it can still be said that priming has occurred (Feldman, 1996).

3.3.2. Schemas & Stereotypes.

To gain a deeper understanding on priming, schemas and stereotypes have to be mentioned. Stereotypes simplify the process of thinking about the social world (Feldman, 1986). Instead of keeping information about individuals and events are placed into groups. When information is needed about an individual or event (especially new situations), information will also be retrieved from the information that has already been grouped (Zimbardo, 1992). In instances where gaps of information have to be filled about the new situation, that information will also be retrieved from the grouped information (Feldman, 1996). William James, as quoted by Zimbardo (1992) had this positive to say about stereotypes, "stereotypes clarify the one great, blooming, buzzing confusion". Walter Lippman said, "For the most part we do not first see, and then define; we define first, and then see". Though these great positives, stereotyping has great negatives.

Robert L. Heilbroner (Zimbardo, 1992) summarised the negative aspects of stereotyping as follows:

- Stereotypes may be based on inaccurate information-e.g. racial/ethnic stereotypes–

- "The danger of stereotypes lies not in their existence, but in the fact that they become for all people some of the time, and for some people all of the time, substitutes for observation."

- When stereotypes are believed to be true, they are not revised even in the face of contradictory evidence. "The exception proves the rule." (i.e., the exceptions wouldn't stand out so much if it were not true).

- They impoverish our perception of the world and ourselves.

- We can become slaves to the stereotypes we hold for our own group and incapable of individual action.

There are many common stereotypes that already exist concerning individuals and groups. For example *Asians have high IQ, Black people can dance and white people cannot; Most criminals are black males; Afrikaners are racist, etc.* stereotypes can be both positive and negative and they lead to the formation of schemas (Murphy, 2007).

Schemas are a concept first put forward by Sir Frederic Bartlett (1932), a British psychologist. He proposed that people tend to remember information in terms of schemes. Schemes are general themes that contain relatively little specific details (Feldman, 1996). Memory is reconstructed from previous experiences and exposures to situations, as unimportant details are taken out (Zimbardo, 1992). Schemas are not only based on the exposure or experiences but also on understanding the situation, expectations about the situation and awareness of the motivation underlying the behaviour of others (Bartlett, 1932). Once formed, schemas exert a powerful influence on the way an individual predicts what objects are likely to be present in a given context (Zimbardo, 1992).

Much of what we know is stored as schemas. According to Zimbardo (1992) story title give us schemas that help us make sense of elements in the plot and enable us to remember relevant sections of the story. When elements don't fit with the title, reconstructive memory has trouble. When trying to recall information that is not consistent with a schema formed about certain individuals or situations, the memory may distort the input to make it more schema-consistent (Bartlett, 1932).

To demonstrate the operation of schemas, researchers employed a process known as serial reproduction. The process involves information from memory being passed sequentially from one person to another (Feldman, 1996). For example briefly look at Figure 3.2 adapted from Allport and Postman (1958), and then try to describe it without looking at it again. Then ask that person to describe it to another person and repeat the process with one more person. If you listen to the last man's report of the contents of the drawing, you are most likely to find that it

differs in important respects from the drawing itself. According to Allport and Postman (1958), many people recall the drawing as showing the knife in the black man's hand; clearly this is an incorrect recollection.

Figure 3.2: Allport and Postman's illustration of the role in expectation in memory

This example illustrates the role of expectations in memory. The migration of the knife from the white person's hand to the black man's hand in memory depicts that expectations about the world have an impact on how events are recalled (Allport & Postman, 1958). The expectation in this case is that black males are more violent than whites and thus more apt to be holding the knife. This unfortunately is an unwarranted prejudice. The merits of this theory will be further explored in the Conclusion and Recommendations chapter.

The phenomenon of people having memories about which they are unaware is an important one. It had led to the discovery that two forms of memory may exist side by side, namely the explicit and the implicit memories (Garf & Masson, 1993). Explicit memory refers to intentional or conscious recollection of information. When trying to remember a name or a location, we are

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using explicit memory. Implicit memory on the other hand refers to memories of which people are not consciously aware, but they can affect subsequent performance and behaviour (Feldman, 1996). When our behaviour is affected by something we are unable to recall, implicit memory is at work. For example, a serial killer who kills women of a particular age group might have experienced something in childhood that makes them commit these types of killings. Though they are unable to recall the experience, their behaviour is affected nonetheless. The reason for mentioning priming is to try to speculate and elucidate to the potential effects that newspaper reports have on their audiences. Though priming is fundamentally psychological, framing cannot be understood without it.

3.3.3. Framing Effects

There have been significant changes in paradigms of framing in the past decades (Scheufele, 1999). These changes can be separated into four stages in the history of research on media effects. The first stage is from the turn of the 20th century to the late 1930s. It was dominated by an experience with strategic propaganda during World War I. the result of the dominance led to an increasing fear of the influence of media messages on attitudes (McQuali, 1987). McQuali (1987) adds that the second stage revised the paradigm of strong media effects. The main contributor to attitude change was attributed to personal influence. Klapper (1960) as cited by Scheufele (1999) summed up the findings as follows: "Campaigns do not influence people their major effect is the reinforcement of existing attitudes". Even those who change their minds, the effects are minimal. The second stage ended in the late 1960s.

The third stage began in the 1970s and was dominated by the search for new strong, media effects (Neumann, 1973 as cited by Scheufele, 1999). The focus was no longer attitude change, but rather the more cognitive effects of mass media. The fourth and present stage, according to Scheufele (1999), started in the early 1980s. Stage four is characterised by social constructivism. Both elements of strong and limited effects of mass media are combined to describe media, and recipients (Scheufele, 1999). Media have a strong impact by constructing social reality, that is, by framing images of reality in a predictable and patterned way as stated by McQuail (1994, p.331). On the other hand however there is a limitation by the interaction between mass media and recipients (Scheufele, 1999). Social constructivism is what is used in the sphere of political communication (Tuckman, 1978). Framing has to be defined and operationalized on this basis.

Framing effects have been formed to be robust, but do vary across situational tasks. Most researchers agree that the reversal of choice due to the way a question is framed could lead to innumerable discrepancies (Adelman, Gualtieri &Standford, 1995; Fagley, 1993; Pease, Bieser & Tubbs, 1993; Reyna & Lloyd, 1997). Thus research on framing effects has continued to be conducted on a variety of situational tasks and on different populations.

There is great difficulty in trying to counteract a frame. These are four models to consider in counteracting a frame (Lakoff, 2008).

Moral 1. Every word evokes a frame.
Moral 2: Words defined within a frame evoke the frame.
The word "trunk" as in the sentence Sam picked up the peanut with his trunk evokes the Elephant Frame and suggests that "Sam" is the name of an elephant.

Moral 3: Negating a frame evokes the frame.

Moral 4: Evoking a frame reinforces that frame.
Every frame is realized in the brain by neural circuitry. Every time a neural circuit is activated, it is strengthened.

To illustrate, Lakoff (2008) gives the following directive: "Don't think of an elephant!" This is an impossible directive to follow. To not think of an elephant, one has to think of an elephant. Following Moral 1, a frame is a conceptual structure used in thinking. The word elephant evokes a frame with an image of an elephant and certain knowledge: an elephant is a large animal (a mammal) with large floppy ears, a trunk that functions both like a nose and a hand, large stump-like legs, and so on. From the prospect theory, we learn that the way text is framed and presented will also affect how it is received and interpreted.

3.4. Social Construction Theory

Social construction is a theory found in sociology and communications. The theory dictates that understanding and meaning are not developed separately within an individual, but in connection with other individuals and groups (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009). It is concerned with the ways we think about and use categories to structure our experiences and analysis of the world (Searle, 1995). The social construction framework was derived from Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1991).

In 1991 Berger and Luckmann published a book titled "The Social Construction of Reality" stemming from the field of sociology. Their work was greatly influenced by Alfred Schultz. Schultz was born in Austria and was in fact the sociology teacher of both Berger and Luckmann when he moved to America (Schutz, 1970). According to Berstein (1976), Schutz endeavoured to study subjective meaning. His goal was to obtain organised knowledge of the everyday world inclusive of the 'life' it contained. This was opposed to the common place empirical world of the naturalistic approach that takes for granted the reality of the life-world. Knowledge of the way of the life-world is constituted and maintained by human activity, this world also being intersubjective, i.e. how actors in their common sense thinking interpret their own actions and the actions of others (Bernstein, 1976).

Social reality is defined as "the sum total of objects and occurrences within the social cultural world as experienced by the common sense thinking of men living their daily lives among their fellow-men, connected with them in manifold relations into which we are all born...From the outset, we the actors on the social scene, experience the world we live in as both nature and culture, not as a private, but an intersubjective one, that is as world common to all of us, either actually given or potentially accessible to everyone and this involves inter-communication and language (Schutz, 1970).

Schutz saw human awareness as being constituted by human subjects who practice mundane subjectivity (Schutz, 1970). Beinstein (1970) elaborates on this mundane subjectivity as being an everyday navigation of the everyday mundane world. "…to understand human action we must not take the position of an outside observer who sees only the physical manifestation of these acts; rather we must develop categories for understanding what the actor - from his own point of view - means in his actions" (Beinstein, 1970).

Schutz (1963) indicates that the social world comprises multiple realties. He proposed that the way we interpret our understanding of experiences are social and intersubjective, not strictly personal and subjective. He could not however describe how this comes about. His dilemma was a result of the uncertainty he faced of whether the social world was the product of actions where in the subjective intentions of actors played a role, or whether the social world shaped people's goals and intentions. Nevertheless, Schutz (1963) stated that we do not naively accept the social world and its current idealizations and formations as ready-made and meaningful beyond all question.

To sum up, this was Schutz (1964):

The observational field of the social scientist..., namely the social reality, has a specific meaning and relevance structure for the human beings living, acting, and thinking therein. By a series of common-sense constructs they have pre-selected and pre-interpreted this world which they experience as the reality of their daily lives. It is these thought objects of theirs which determine their behavior by motivating it. The thought objects of the social scientist, in order to grasp this social reality, have to be founded upon the thought-objects constructed by the common-sense thinking of men, living their daily life within their social world. Thus, the constructs of the social sciences are, so to speak, constructs of the second degree, namely constructs of the constructs made by the actors on the social scene, whose behavior the social scientist has to observe and to explain in accordance with the procedural rules of his science. Thus, the exploration of the general principles according to which man in daily life organizes his experiences, and especially those of the social world, is the first task of the methodology of the social sciences.

There were many problems with Schutz's inquiries. Firstly he was of the belief that for genuine knowledge to arise out of the social science, it must be neutral. He saw understanding as a work of reason that climbed to a general level and not a matter of understanding another person in their uniqueness or their specific situation. He was still on the search for universal structures (Beinstein, 1976). Despite these difficulties however, Schutz contributed more pieces to the puzzle of how to study social phenomena. He necessitated the referring of descriptions of actions and of the social world tot eh subjective meaning of that action; he postulated that the way any study of the social world is to deal in "second level constructs", i.e. interpretations of interpretations. He also highlighted the fact that the world of everyday life is a world of routine, and that meaning becomes apparent only retrospectively (Beinstein, 1976).

As already stated, Schutz's (1964) work had a tremendous influence on Berger and Luckman (1967). The two sociologists argued that reality is socially constructed and that sociology of knowledge must analyse the process in which this occurs (Berger & Luckman, 1967). Like Schutz, the term reality did not refer to the reality described either by the natural science or the social sciences as their common practice, but rather the reality of everyday life as experienced in the common sense of ordinary members of society (Beinstein, 1976)."Reality" is defined a quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognise as being independent of our own volition, i.e. something that cannot be wished away (Berger &Luckman, 1967). "Knowledge" is then defined by them as the certainty that phenomenon are real and that they possess specific

characteristics. Berger and Luckman (1967) saw "reality" as a matter of knowledge, however everything that did pass as knowledge in society was included. Customs, common interpretation, institutions, shared routines, habitualisations, the who-is-who and who-does-what in social processes and the division of labour constitute a much larger part of knowledge in society (Burr, 1995).

Everyday life is dominated by practical motives and recipe knowledge, i.e. knowledge limited to practical competence in routine performances. This is prominent in the social stock of knowledge (Berger & Luckman, 1967). The social or common stock of knowledge refers to logic and common sense of human nature (Bannister & Mair, 1968). In essence, this is "background information" that helps us to understand the things that are new to us. It is not enough to know facts, one needs to learn how to integrate that information into a total body of knowledge and extract from it what is needed at that moment.

To illustrate, let us say an English man visits Paris and he does not speak a word of French. His wife saw a sweat shirt that she liked, but was hesitant to buy it because she didn't know what the writing on it meant. He looked at it, and told her. The shirt read: Laissez bon temps roullez. As he does not understand French, how could he possibly understand the writing on the shirt? Well, he remembered learning about an economic policy called LAISSEZ FAIRE, and he was told that it meant "let it be as it is."0 We've all heard the expression, "Bon voyage!" Literally, "Good voyage!" In high school, he took courses in Latin. In my third year, they had to read Cicero. It begins with, "O tempore, O mores." This means, "Oh, time. Oh, customs."

At home, he and his wife played a game called Mille Borne with my son. It is a French game, played on a board with dice and markers. If you draw the card that says "Roullez" it means to roll the dice again. So, he put these things that I'd learned from different sources together. Laissez (Let), bon (good), temps (from Latin, "times"), roullez (roll). He tells her, and later learned correctly, that the shirt said "Let the good times roll!" Hirch (1987) says that he cannot function well in a society if he does not know the culture or/and the environment.

People's knowledge in everyday life is structured in terms of relevancies (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). It is irrelevant for a husband to know how his wife goes about cooking his favourite meal as long as it turns out the way he likes it. Relevance structures intersect with other people's relevance structures at many points (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). Simply put, what is relevant to one individual, will not necessarily be relevant to another. This however makes for interesting

conversations. Knowledge is socially distributed an important part to the social stock of knowledge, is how the knowledge is distributed (Berger & Luckmann, 1967).

For Berger and Luckmann (1967), the central necessity for attempting to understand and study the social world, lies in understanding the construction of social reality. The term social construction was introduced into the social sciences by their work. The central concept of Social Construction of Reality is that persons and groups interacting in a social system create, over time, concepts or mental representations of each other's actions, and that these concepts eventually become habituated into reciprocal roles played by the actors in relation to each other (Scott, 1987). When these roles are made available to other members of society to enter into and play out, the reciprocal interactions are said to be institutionalised. Meaning is embedded in society through the process of intitutionalisation (Goode, & Ben-Yehuda, 2010).. Knowledge and people's conception (and belief) of what reality is, becomes embedded in the institutional fabric of society. Reality is therefore said to be socially constructed (Wendt, 1992). This theory has found its applications in the psychology and communications fields (Gergen, 2009).

Social construction is seen by Surette (2007) as a mechanism or method that shapes one's perceptions of society and reality. There are three types of reality, these include experienced reality, symbolic reality and socially constructed reality. Experienced reality refers to the events that have been directly experienced by an individual. Surette (2007) argues that though this form of experience is limited, it may have a powerful impact on one's constructed reality. Symbolic experience refers to experiences not directly experienced by an individual but they are believed to be true by the individual as facts were gathered from indirect sources. Socially constructed reality is a combination of both experienced and symbolic reality (Surette, 2007). Truth is about the determined world and validated by using direct and indirect experiences. Surette (2007) states that individuals who are close in proximity to one another share more similar socially constructed realities than individuals living in completely separated parts of the world. More of Surette's (2007) views will be discussed in the literature review section.

Many scholars and researchers have made use of the social construction theory in their fields to endeavour such as research, book writing, making counter defences to other researches, etc (Wendt, 1992; Pinch & Bijker, 1987; Gergen, 1999; Goode &Ben-Yehuda, 2010). Of interest to the researcher is Gamson, Goteau, Hoynes and Sasson's (1988) work, Media images and the Social Construction of Reality. They argue that media construct reality in such a way that it

garners apathy, cynicism and inactivity from society. They conclude to say the bad news is that there is "more and more messages, from fewer and bigger producers, saying less and less".

There are criticisms of the social construction theory. For one it has been criticised for its failure to distinguish content from process (Jenkins et al., 1999). Since the bed rock of social construction is naturalism and relies on empiricism, critics charge it as being fallible since empiricism has been stripped of its claim of complete accuracy (Willig, 1997). Despite these criticisms, social construction is still valuable in this research as it will serve as an arguing point on the effects of media reports and how they influence news consumers. Though that is not the main focus of the research, it will be mentioned so as to gain a more holistic approach to the research.

3.5. Conclusion

This section of the dissertation looked at relevant theories for the research project. The theories presented were the representation theory, framing theory and the grand theory social construction. The representation theory focuses on the production of meaning through language (Hall, 1997). The linguistic field was then presented to explain how language is constructed to form meaning and that different signs connote or denote different meanings depending on the culture. The concept of structuralism is of importance to this research as it is concerned with how meaning is formed. Semiotics was also merged into the theory as it is needed for explaining certain symbols in news reports in articles.

The framing theory proposed that what is presented in new reports is formed by the elite and they dictate what the public is informed about. The framing of an issue will ultimately affect how the issue is interpreted, therefore it is important how to knowhow issues are formed and even more so which issues are formed. The concepts of priming and stereotyping are pivotal to this research as they serve to address the question of how issues are framed and embedded into the public. The concept of serial reproduction where information is recalled from memory and passed to another is employed in the research as it explains how information can be easily altered. It can be taken for granted that reports use people who may display serial reproduction according to their particular schemas.

Social construction is a grand theory that will not be the main focus of the research. It postulates that reality is a socially constructed "thing". With this theory, the argument for how news are represented and framed could potentially affect individuals' perspectives of reality.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

Any academic study or research conducted requires a methodology. Beneitio-Montagut (2011) defines methodology to be the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods used in a field of study. The research methodology provides a detailed map for the researcher to follow in the research work, and it gives credibility to work (Babbie, 2012). This chapter will focus on the methodology employed to collect and analyse the data, ethical issues, limitations of the study and methodology as well as a personal reflection on the research process. A clear cut idea of the methods and processes carried out to achieve the research objectives of the study will be given. Carefully chosen research methods are imperative in advancing the research in the right direction.

It needs to be clarified what this study intends to accomplish and what it is not trying to do. It is not trying to define violence or erect boundaries to isolate what constitutes violent crime. It is also not in the scope of the study to measure levels of, or determine the extent of victimisation. Neither is there an interest in explaining why violent crime occurs. The main interest still remains the exploration of portrayals of violent crime and its constituents.

4.2. Research Design

Violence in South Africa has been studied at length, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The study of violence has not been limited only to the criminological field, but it has spread across a number of other disciplines such as psychology, anthropology, media studies and sociology to name a few. The research field of violence depicted by the news media on an online environment however, is a fairly new one. This study in particular is interested and limited to how the news media portray violence in written texts online. The endeavour is to discover the themes that image and the discourses news media uses online. This study seeks to locate and explain the themes, words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas or any message that can be communicated that online news aggregators present. Different methods require different research methods (Punch, 2013). This study therefore takes on an interpretivism paradigm.

Interpretivists assert that reality consists of people's subjective experiences of the world (Webber, 2004), therefore they believe that reality is socially constructed (Kelliher, 2011). There is also the assertion that there is no single correct way of arriving at knowledge. Correct or incorrect theorising is not part of the interpreting tradition (Willis, 1995). Judgement is based on

then interest of the researcher along with others in the same field. Constructs are derived from in-depth examinations of the subject of interest in the field of study (Jost, Mumma & Willis, 1999). In interpretivism, access to reality can only be achieved through social constructs like language and shared meanings (Webber, 2004). Observation and interpretation underpin interpretivism, where interpretation alludes to making meaning of information (Williams, 2000).

This paradigm dictates that analysis is meant to be put within the context. Meaning is used, as opposed to measurement orientated methods found in positivism. Dependent and independent variables are not predefined but rather the focus is on process of sense making by humans as the situation unfolds (Allard-Poes, 2005). Here we attempt to explain the reasons and meanings -that are subjective- behind the social action. Hermeneutics (the science of text interpretation), being a brunch of interpretivism, is a mode of analysis which attempts to make meaning of textual data (Hay, 2011). Modern hermeneutics encompasses not only text, but verbal and non-verbal forms of communication (Lavoie, 2011).

The key words of interpretivism according to Henning, van Rensburg and Smit are participation, collaboration and engagement (Marais & Van Wyk, 2014). The authors mean to say that the researcher is not meant stand outside their research subjects and merely observe, but to participate while observing. Interpretivism therefore directs this study into the qualitative approach. Qualitative research allows us to gain a deeper understanding of specific organisations or event, rather than a surface description of a large sample of a population. It aims to provide an explicit rendering of the structure, order, and broad patterns found in the research data (Neuman, 1997). The advantages to using the qualitative approach are as follows:

- Depth and detail can be attained from examined issues,
- As new information emerges from the research, the research framework can be revised,
- Subtle and complex research aspects which can go unnoticed due to positivistic forms of enquiry, can be discovered, and
- It can determine how participants interpret constructs (Babbie, 2012).

Qualitative research unfortunately does also have drawbacks which cannot be avoided. The disadvantages that could affect this study as listed as follows:

- Generalisability of findings is not possible,

- It Is not as readily accepted as quantitative research, therefore suffers lower credibility with some administrators,
- Data analysis is time consuming, as well as interpreting of the data,
- Subject to researcher's bias and idiosyncrasies,
- Quality of research is dependent on researcher's skills,
- Consistency in illustrating details is difficult,
- Anonymity is jeopardised when presenting findings,
- The visual presentation of the characteristics of findings is more difficult to do and time consuming to characterize (Creswell, 2012).

Being even slightly aware of these disadvantages makes it possible to attempt avoiding some of them to the best of the researcher's ability.

Semiotics will also be applied to the study. Semiotics is the study of the way signs and symbols construct meaning in a text (Neuman, 1997). Semiology provides the analyst with a conceptual toolkit for approaching sign systems in order to discover how they produce meaning (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000). The main criticism of semiology is that it is only capable of offering impressionistic insights into the construction of meaning and that different analysts will produce similar accounts (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000).

4.3. Sampling

Purposive sampling was used in the research because there is a specific purpose in mind. This purpose pertains to articles that speak of perpetrators of violent crime. Purposive sampling is appropriate for the Intentions of this research because it allows the researcher to select unique cases that are especially informative (Ray, 2012). Since purposive sampling is a subset of a larger population, it is non-representative. It serves specific needs and purposes. There is a specific data set in mind for the study and purposive sampling allows the researcher to zero in on the specific data (Babbie, 2012).

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method (Neuman, 1997). Such samples are not representative and therefore less desirable than probability sampling methods (Babbie, 2012). But since this study does not aim to make its findings generalisable, this method is suitable. Non-probability samples suffer from lack of validity, but this can be overcome by trying to avoid bias as much as possible.

4.4. Researcher as Instrument

Norman Denzin (2012), a qualitative methodologist, describes the social sciences as the "art of interpretation." In this perspective the researcher becomes the most important tool in the practice of this art. Qualitative methods do not rely on standardised instruments (Denzin, 2012). The researcher plays a very important role throughout the entire research as he/she experiences the raw data (Rossman & Rallis, 2011). This is not to diminish the importance of the researcher in quantitative research, but simply to emphasise that qualitative researchers do not have the luxury of simply putting data into an instrument and results come out (Denzin, 2014).

With the researcher as the instrument, the collected data could be influenced by the researcher's characteristics, especially in the coding process (Barret, 2007). Reflexivity becomes a necessity in this case. Self-identification of the researcher helps in this regard. The Identification of the qualitative researcher reveals several lenses and degrees of sensitivity that influence how the data was collected, viewed, analysed and reported on (Rossman & Rallis, 2011). This dilemma however is even more evident where interviews were used to collect the research data. No interviews were used in this study, therefore the problems that arise from the 'researcher as instrument' are minimal and can be avoided by acknowledging positions of the researcher (Chenail, 2011). The reflexivity section covers these.

4.5. Data Collection

Data was collected from the news aggregator News24. News24 is described as Southern Africa and Africa's premier online news resource, with round-the-clock coverage for local and international news (Mnguni, 2010). It prides itself in "bringing you news as it happens" (Alfreds, 2010). From this aggregator, 52 articles that relate to violent crime were collected and coded for analysis. The data collected fits the working definition of the study. To ensure that articles comply with the working definition of violence, the Key words 'murder', 'rape' and 'killings' and 'assault' were used to search for the relevant articles. The search capability of the aggregator was used also to filter the specified years.

A specific number of articles were selected for each type of crime within the defined years to give a total of 52 articles. A grid delineating the chosen variables is provided below in Table 4.1. The headlines for the selected articles are presented in Table 4.2. Let it be noted that all of the articles, save one, are from the month of December. This outcome was peculiar and not

intentional. The search results scared by the News24 site search were all inexplicably from December even after specifying the months in the search criteria. Like MacRitchie and Seedat - as mentioned in the literature review section - the steps used for searching for the data for this research were followed.

Table 4.1: Grid delineating chosen variables

	Year		
	2010	2011	2012
Type of crime	Number of articles (52)		
Rape	6	6	6
Murder	6	6	6
Assault	5	5	6

Table 4.2: Headlines of Articles

2010

Rape

Date   Time   Headline

December 22 17:22   Girl raped by friend's boyfriend

December 21 14:35   Eastern Cape man rapes 2 women

December 09 8:27   Man gets life for rape, assault

December 20 13:02   Gauteng teen raped by 7 men

December 14 9:47   Sharpeville residents beat up rapists

December 21 14:38   Mandela son-in-law back to court in Feb

Murder

December 29 14:39   Sugarcane killer to be sentenced in Jan

December 27 14:41   Man kills drinking buddy

December 30 18:25 Seven held over 'witchcraft' murder

December 28 11:18 20 killed in Eastern Cape over weekend

December 26 22:39 Anni Dewani murder - 'no sign of struggle'

December 26 7:35 Teen found murdered

Assault

December 22 16:02 Boys, 14, held for setting man alight

December 27 12:17 Gran dies after brutal farm assault

December 14 9:47 Arrest warrants for ex-Helpmekaar boys

December 28 21:29 Robbers hide guns in pram, shoot 3

December 24 12:00 Assaulted granny in critical condition

2011

Rape

Date   Time   Headline

December 12 15:57 Breakthrough in 'holiday' rape case

December 16 16:22 Pastor overpowers girl, then rapes her

December 22 13:01 Limpopo boy kidnapped, raped

December 29 10:05 KZN nurse arrested for raping patient

December 27 20:05 Man arrested for raping stepdaughter

December 27 13:21 Teen gang-raped by 5 men

Murder

December 24 21:18 Woman held for boyfriend's murder

December 26 16:14 North West teen arrested for murder

December 28 20:00   KZN couple arrested for cop's death

December 21 0:57   3 appear for Tongaat couple's murder

December 28 13:35   Man arrested for killing woman, 55

December 29 2:57   3 arrested for killing KZN couple

Assault

December 12 18:00   Murder accused also 'assaulted' farm workers

December 07 19:03   Blue light assault case drags on

December 15 14:42   Initiate dies trying to escape school

December 21 14:44   ANCYL man's assault case postponed

December 20 13:22   ANCYL man to appear for journalist assault

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2012

Rape

Date   Time   Headline

December 30 22:10   North West dad held for daughter's rape

December 31 16:00   Spate of child rapes in Limpopo

December 30 12:01   Man held for rape of granddaughter, 10

December 31 8:03   Grandfather in court for rape

December 31 10:48   Man held for attempted child rape

October 28   14:39   Man held for raping 6 girls, 2 boys

Murder

December 24 20:01   Man held for attempted murder

December 27 20:18   Two seen after train driver's murder

December 31 12:13   Pensioner to appear for murder

December 29 22:47 Teen held for murder in Eastern Cape

December 31 9:20   Metro cop held for double murder

December 30 16:10 3 Eastern Cape teens held for murder

Assault

December 12 14:14 Bloemfontein prison hostage-takers in court

December 04 16:37 Soweto pastor granted bail

December 21 10:24 PE man gets damages from cops

December 05 14:39 Karate coach gets correctional supervision

December 16 17:47 Cop held for North West kidnapping

December 22 21:36 Balotelli's brother arrested

4.5.1. Corpus

The data corpus consisted of online news articles of violent crimes. Forty English articles pertaining to South Africa were used. To ensure relevance to the study, articles had to contain any of the words *rape, assault* or *murder.* The time interval for the data to be collected is from 2010 to the year end of 2012. The reason for the choice of this interval is because online news readership has gained popularity over the past couple of years. It is also important to define the period for the research so the distinction between what counts as violent crime and what does not. Perpetrators of violent crime are understood within a particular historical context. The lack of a defined research period in this case would cause the error of presentism in the study (Seixas & Peck, 2004). It was also important to place 'violence' within a contemporary timeframe because scholars speculate that high levels of violent crime are more readily reported by media (Kaminski, 2013).

Sacco (1995) suggests that media outlets which once would not dare report on crimes of a sexual or violent nature began to do so because of public discourses around such crimes

(Sacco, 1995). Throughout time, the definition violence became broader and broader (Mucchielli, 2010). The analysis must therefore take account of both of these possible effects in its selection of data in the present. There are no statistics that speak to violent crime to draw comparisons from history, but it can be subjectively analysed that violent crimes are increasing in terms of reporting.

4.6. Data Analysis

The method of data analysis should suit the paradigms that shape the study. Social constructionism was already discussed in detail in the previous chapter, but it is worth mentioning that it draws on a number of different data analysis methods which explore how we construct reality. Discourse analysis was therefore selected for this study since it falls under the social constructionism epistemology. Discourse analysis is a procedure for identifying and studying the underlying "voices" or "ways of speaking" in a text or conversation (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). The reason for choosing discourse analysis is because of the functionality of this method. Discourse analysis allows the researcher to show how discourses are used in create certain effects within particular contexts (Coulthard, 2014). As such, it allowed the researcher to show how the discourses of violent crime were reported within the context of media.

Discourse analysis is also apt since the interest of the study is to understand how journalists ideas are pieced together to form versions of reality of the world around them. Furthermore, it helps in discovering why people use different versions of discourse in differing son texts (Fairclough, 1992). The powerful discourse of how violent crime is constructed and normalised can also be thoroughly explored using discourse analysis. The basic tenets of discourse analysis are construction, function and variation, seeing that discourses are constructed as people try to make sense of themselves, others and the world around them (Potter & Wetherell, 2004).

There are a number of disadvantages to using discourse analysis however. The main disadvantage is that extrapolating findings becomes difficult because of the data (Phillips, 2002). This is because the researcher is the instrument, as discussed above. The collection of naturally occurring data can also be problematic in certain situations as it can be unethical to do so. This however was not a problem in this study. The collection, transcribing and analysing of data is laborious and time consuming, hence researchers like Kinash, Brand and Mathew (2012) advice that this method be not undertaken alone. Due to lack of resources and

availability of more coders, analysis had to be done alone. Despite these drawbacks however, discourse analysis presents a number of advantages. A range of topics can be explored without limitations. The researcher also has complete control of the research material and therefore can focus on their topic of interest (Edley, 2001).

Discourse analysis also bears linguistic abilities to analysis since it is rooted in linguistic philosophy (Potter & Wetherell, 2004). The articles chosen were approached from different syntactic and semantic perspectives. Subjectivity could not be avoided in linguistic analysis because the type of issues dealt with here cannot reach definitive truths (Thompson, Gray & Kim, 2014). Analysts tend to disagree on what words signify bias or violence or other lexical effects (Westberry & Franken, 2013). Nevertheless, objectivity was strived for in the analysis process.

4.6.1. Data Analysis Process

What the researcher found as interesting in the articles was highlighted and considered for analysis. The program Nvivo 10 for Windows was used in this process. Nvivo 10 is a platform for analysing all forms of unstructured date. With this tool, data was quickly interrogated using the search, query and visualisation tools embedded in the program. Though the program is a time saver, the researcher is still in charge of manually coding, analysing and interpreting the data. The program merely serves as an elaborate and modern organisational tool. Articles had to be reread a number of times to ensure familiarity with the data and to ensure that nothing of value be missed.

Themes were then coded in the program. The themes were drawn from the research questions to form three main themes *perpetrators, victims* and *criminal justice system.* The information that went under these themes was then painstakingly gleaned from the articles, as well as other themes that were of interest. Parker (2008) states that discourse is not just a collection of observable statements but it rather operates through words and imagery which communicates what is not communicated everywhere else. Discourse then becomes the 'language' use for communicating social practices from certain viewpoints. With that in mind, words and imagery that could be coded as discourse were identified and classified as either main discourse or sub-discourse. Once the themes and discourses were categorised they were then analysed.

After reading the text to get a general overview of how violent crime is portrayed, the steps for discourse analysis proposed by Ian Parker (1992) were followed. Table 4.3 presents these

steps. These are the same steps that were followed by McRitchie and Seedat (2008) in their analysis. The same steps were followed because of the similarities between the current study and that of the two researchers.

Each article was individually analysed and the subjects (e.g., he, she, they, suspect, victim, police, etc.), objects (e.g., guns, neighbours, mother, girl, corpse, etc.) and institutions (courts, police) were identified. Both dominant and non-dominant discourses were identified and recorded. To identify these discourses, terminologies and phrases as well as headline messages were noted. What did not appear in the data was also noted to identify missing discourses. After giving a general picture of violent crime as presented by the identified discourses, illustrative texts of the discourses were highlighted. The final step included the integration of the identified discourses and illustrative texts into a critically oriented interpretive framework that factored in the news values proposed by Jewkes (2010). The headlines of the articles were also analysed for key messages.

Table 4.3: Steps for Discourse Analysis (Parker (1992) as cited by McRitchie & Seedat, 2008)

A discourse is realised in texts:

1. Treating the objects of study as texts which are described, put into words.
2. Exploring connotations through some sort of free association.

A discourse is about objects:

3. Asking what objects are referred to, and describing them, (i.e. itemise the objects).
4. Talking about the talk as if it were an object, a discourse.

A discourse contains subjects:

5. Specifying what types of person are talked about in this discourse, some of which may already have been identified as objects, (i.e. itemising the subject).
6. Speculating about what they can say in the discourse, what you could say if you identified with them (what rights to speak in that way of speaking). What they might say within the framework of rules presupposed by the next.

A discourse is a coherent system of meanings:

7. Mapping a picture of the world this discourse presents.
8. Working out how a text using this discourse would deal with objections to the terminology.

A discourse refers to other discourses:

9. Setting contrasting ways of speaking, discourses, against each other and looking at the different objects they constitute.

10. Identifying points where they overlap, where they constitute what look like the same objects in different ways.

A discourse reflects on its own way of speaking:

11. Referring to other texts to elaborate the discourse as it occurs, perhaps implicitly, and address different audiences. How these ways of seeing or speaking address different audiences.

12. Reflecting on the term used to describe the discourse, a matter which involves moral/political choices on the part of the analyst. Labeling the discourse.

A discourse is historically located:

13. Looking at how and where the discourses emerged.

14. Describing how they have changed, and told a story, usually about how they refer to things which were always there to be discovered.

Discourses support institutions:

15. Identifying institutions which are reinforced when this or that discourse is used. Institutions which are supported by the discourse.

16. Identifying institutions that are attacked or subverted when this or that discourse appears.

Discourses reproduce power relations:

17. Looking at which categories of person gain and lose from the employment of the discourse. Who are the beneficiaries?

18. Looking at who would want to promote and who would want to dissolve the discourse.

Discourses have ideological effects:

19. Showing how a discourse connects with other discourses which sanction oppression.

20. Showing how the discourses allow dominant groups to tell their narratives about the past in order to justify the present, and prevent those who use subjugated discourses from making history.

4.7. Validation of Research Findings

Due to the nature of the research, and the researcher being used as a tool for analysis and interpretation of the data, there are no rigorous rules and calculations that could be done for validity and reliability. Interpretivist research usually does not have set methods to validate findings and ensure that analysis and conclusions not be skewed by bias (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). In attempting to test validity, the findings were given to a fellow masters student who read through them to see if there is any consensus between them and researched aspects. This compelled certain issues to be redressed so findings could support conclusions. It is however acknowledged that the finding themselves are constructions.

4.8. Ethical Considerations

As this study involves analysing texts, and does not include any human subjects, no pertinent ethical issues arouse. The data was freely available in the public domain on News24. News24 is accessible on the following link: www.news24.com/

Access to this site is free. News24 has terms and conditions that have to be upheld in terms of use of the content on the website however. These terms and conditions are under section 2 (License) and they state. They were strictly upheld throughout the study.

> *2.1 We hereby authorise you to view, copy, download to a local drive, print and distribute the content of the Website, or any part thereof, provided that:*
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>
> *2.4.1 does not copy or provide the whole article, as it appears on the Website, but only provide a short summary of the contents of the article;*
>
> *2.4.2 acknowledges us as the source of the content;*

2.4.3 provides a correct and working hyperlink to the source of the content or article on the Website;

2.4.4 acknowledges writers, journalists, photographers and third party agencies as they are acknowledged on the Website; and

2.4.5 includes the date upon which the content was sourced from the Website in the summary of the content.

2.5 The caching of the Website shall only be allowed if:

2.5.1 the purpose of the caching is to make the onward transmission of the content from the Website more efficient;

2.5.2 the cached content is not modified in any manner whatsoever;

2.5.3 the cached content is updated at least every 12 (twelve) hours; and

2.5.4 the cached content is removed or updated when so required by us.

2.6 If you use content from the Website in breach of the provisions detailed herein:

2.6.1 we reserve the right to claim damages from you; and

2.6.2 we will not be liable, in any manner whatsoever, for any damage, loss or liability that resulted from the use of such content by you or any third party.

2.7 Hyperlinks to the Website from any other source shall be directed at the home page of the Website. We will not be liable, in any manner whatsoever, for any damage, loss or liability that resulted from the use of content from the Website, if such content was accessed through a hyperlink not directed at the home page of the Website. Should you wish to link to content beyond the home page of the Website, you will do so at your own risk and you agree to indemnify us against any loss, liability or damage that 8may result from content on the Website, if such content was accessed through a hyperlink not directed at the home page of the Website. The exclusion of our liability for deep linking is based on the fact that deep links bypass these Terms.

2.8 You may quote small and reasonable amounts of content available from the Website only if such quote is placed in inverted commas, the author is acknowledged and a hyperlink to the quoted content is provided as a footnote to such quote.

2.9 Apart from bona-fide search engine operators and use of the search facility provided on the Website by you, you may not use or attempt to use any technology or applications (including web crawlers or web spiders) to search or copy content from the Website for any purposes, without our prior written consent.

2.10 All licenses and/or permissions granted in terms of this clause 2 are provided on a non-exclusive and non-transferable basis and may be terminated or cancelled by us at any time without giving reasons therefore.

4.9. Reflexivity

Reflexivity in this study, being of a qualitative nature, is important. Reflexivity focuses on the questions: "how does who I am, who I have been, who I think I am, and how I feel affect data collection and analysis?" (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). Reflexivity allows the researcher to take a step back and take critical look at their position as researcher. Though this practice is often done for interview based research, it is still worth including in this research because of the deficiencies of the researcher.

One would suppose that there is a level of deception that the practice of reflexivity presents as some critics (Peterson, 2012; Forrest, 2013; Lee, 2011) state. The question posed by these critics is: "Does self-reflexivity produce better research?" The answer to that would be a resounding no, but illuminating on the researcher's knowledge and how they came to know what they know cannot be neglected (Hertz, 1997 as cited in Guillemin & Gillam, 2004).

With that said, as a researcher I feel it would be important to mention that this research was quite challenging because of its media and linguistics orientation. I am a criminology student and have never had any training in media studies or linguistics. How I came about such knowledge bases was mainly through self-teaching and asking those that know, i.e. Professors, lecturers and students of these two disciplines. I have no doubt that these deficiencies could have hampered the analysis process. To add to that, because of the strenuous process of coding and interpretation, fatigue could have caused some valuable information from the data to slip through the cracks, especially having done this process alone. Cognisance of deficiencies was also advantageous however, in the sense that I was constantly alert and extra careful with the data.

4.10. Conclusion

This chapter considered the methodology that was employed in this study by discussing interpretivism as a framework for the study, purposive sampling as a method for collecting the data, and discourse analysis as it was used to analyse the data. The drawbacks of the study in terms of analysis were also discussed and the steps taken to overcome them were presented.

Having provided the reader with an explanation of the methodological considerations of the study, in the following chapter a detailed and thorough account of the findings and analysis of the data will be presented.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

This section presents some of the ways in which news reports are constructed in terms of violent crime. General themes and narratives about the selected types of violent crime will be discussed, and the manner of reporting examined. The portrayal of the perpetrators, alleged or otherwise, victims and the presentation of the crime itself will be discussed. The narratives of rape will be especially analysed seeing that the relationship between the victim and perpetrator is important, it will also be analysed. This relationship determined how journalists reported on the crime of rape. Stranger rape and acquaintance rape are the narratives to be discussed. This analysis will also attempt to illuminate the details and writing styles that frequently found in articles of violent crime.

This study indicates that the media constructs a form of senseless violence that is unavoidable. Consequently the public fears the apparent randomness of crime and violence, as it seemingly rampant and out-of-control giving rise to the concern that no-one is safe. This fear is often articulated through moral panics. In a manner of speaking an attempt will be made to try and show how moral panics are created through simple news reporting.

Tuchman (1976, p. 97) referred to the news as "a constructed reality," while Cohen and Young (1973, p. 97) suggested that the news is "manufactured by journalists," and Schudson (1989, p. 265) pointed out that "news items are not simply selected but constructed." Rather than objectively reporting events and facts, newsmakers engage in a highly subjective and selective process of news production based on socially and culturally constructed criteria (Fowler 1991; Jewkes 2004; Zelizer 2005). Innes (2004, pp.16–17)) states:

The manufacture of a signal crime via mass mediated communication involves a crime incident being constructed by journalists through their use of particular representational and rhetorical techniques, and interpreted by audiences, as an index of the state of society and social order.

5.2. Structure of articles

5.2.1. The Sketch of a Typical Article

Several narratives appeared in the articles under study. There was no typical narrative about rape or murder or assault that emerged. These narratives will be discussed below. It is worth

mentioning however that the commonality among the articles was that they were thinly dispersed and the information contained in them was quite insufficient.

What victims had to deal with after the crime was not mentioned. Consequences of emotional trauma from the violent crime were completely ignored. It was also rare to find articles where sympathy was openly expressed for victims. Motives for the crime were not presented in the majority of the articles. Only one article made an attempt to mention motives. The article where a 79-year-old woman died due to a farm attack, the motive was awarded to labour disputes.

> *"The man had had a confrontation with his boss, who refused to pay him and fellow workers their monthly wages. The worker threatened to do something terrible if he was not paid. The farmer reconsidered and paid the man his salary, but also fired him on the spot. Angered by this, the 22-year-old farm worker returned to the farm in De Deur in the company of another farm worker and found the woman at home. The two assaulted her until her grandson returned to the house. One of the two men, in possession of a shotgun, fired one shot at the farmer. He returned fire, killing both of them instantly."*
> [December 27, 12:17, 2010]

There is usually no mention of the relationship between perpetrator and victim. The short length of the articles may not have allowed this. The average word count of a typical article was 169 words. Rape cases hardly had more than 100 words except in high profile cases. Tragically, some rape cases had far less than 80 words.

High profile cases always receive a lengthy coverage. They can go as long as over 400 words. More details are added to these types of cases, as in the case of Mandela's son in law (December 05, 14:39, 2010):

> *Isaac Amuah, the son-in-law of former president Nelson Mandela, will return to the Randburg Magistrate's Court in February for the start of the process of extraditing him to the US to face rape charges, South African police said on Tuesday.*

Questions are raised after establishing that not all cases are awarded the same attention. The main question being 'what significant difference is there between short and long articles? Why do some cases receive more attention than others?' Certain types of cases are clearly big news. Examples of these are: serial rapes and sexual assaults committed in upper middle class dwellings. Other narratives were considered less newsworthy, such as sexual assaults by stepfathers or grandfathers (acquaintance rape, or attempted rapes of adult women.

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In some cases certain narratives were not mentioned. With the matter of acquaintance rape, narratives of rape of adult males and spousal and partner rape were completely absent. High profile cases were also covered differently from those that had one piece written about them. The perpetrator was the main focus in high profile cases and they were berated while the victim received more sympathetic expressions. The perpetrator in high profile cases was more likely to be dehumanised since the articles were longer. The language used in these article was also most likely to evoke fear in readers.

5.3. Intent of Headlines

News report headlines capture an audience considerably wider than those that end up reading the actual articles, seeing that all those who buy the paper will take a quick glance at the headlines. Even more so, headlines have a wider impact on those that do not buy the newspaper since headlines are often sprawled all over town on traffic lights and street lamps and displayed on posters and billboards. If one was to jump into their car and drive down the street, they would be bombarded with bold black or white block letters on red, blue and white backgrounds that make the headline more appealing. The casual observer can conclude on particular issues whose importance has been brought about this way. Certain linguistic features give headlines the ability to be more memorable and effective and increase their overall impact on readers. Impact is intentional and achieved through the use of: puns, alliteration, the choice of emotive vocabulary and other rhetorical devices. We will discuss some of these linguistic features in more detail later. A few examples from the articles analysed are as follows:

Blue light assault case drags on (December 07, 19:03, 2011).

Sugarcane killer to be sentenced in Jan (December 29, 14:39, 2010)

Anni Dewani murder- 'no sign of struggle' (December 26, 22:39, 2010)*,*

Man held for rape of granddaughter, 10 (December 30, 12:01, 2012)*.*

To come back to the modern world however, were one does not need to jump into their car to observe these bold "letters", but simply browse the net on their mobile devices. The same strategies of pinning headlines on street lamp and traffic lights can be observed. Surfing the web is down the "down the street "of this age. Pop up advertisements of headlines are the street lamps and traffic lights. Headlines are important to news publishers since they play a particular role called 'perspective'.

Perspective refers to the role played by headlines in orienting the reader's interpretation of subsequent 'facts' contained in the article (White & Herrera, 2009). Headlines do not only encapsulate the content, but they also serve as a form of a lens that the journalist requires the reader to look through when approaching the article. The headline *"Initiate dies trying to escape school"* not only informs the reader that an initiate has died (content), but also requests the reader to view the article with the understanding that initiation rituals are cultural phenomenon and should be treated as such.

Headlines also seem to serve as an advertising tool. Drawing from Jewkes' (2010) argument (discussed in the Literature Review section) that news agencies are simply trying turn a profit and that news production is a competitive arena, headlines become the agencies' way of stamping its individuality on what is otherwise a mass-produced product. Traditional print newspaper headlines are laid out in the newspaper in such a way that they impose a hierarchy of importance of news in the "world". Hierarchy is established from top to bottom of the page and according to size and font of headlines; and in order of appearance through the newspaper from front to back. Online based news reports are not however restricted by positioning and space. The online environment is entirely dependent on the reader's interest in the topic and/or field (politics, technology, international affairs, crime, sport, etc.). The headline thus becomes of extreme importance that it captures the attention of the reader.

Headlines would prove to be ineffective if there was no common or social stock of knowledge as social construction theory dictates (discussed in length in the Theoretical Framework section). Discourse analysis also states that for us to understand each other, we have to have shared interpretations and ways of meaning-making which allow communication to be possible, in other words, cultural knowledge. Again, to understand the headline:

> *Initiate dies trying to escape school* (December 15, 14:42, 2011),

can only be understood in the context of the South African culture of boys being sent to initiation school in order to become men. Also the headline

> *Seven held over 'witchcraft' murder* (December 30, 18:25, 2010)

would prove to be difficult to understand for a Westerner who only knows occult related murders, since he has a limited cultural knowledge about South Africa.

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Headlines then become steeped in cultural references. They appear alone without explanation or definition; they depend entirely on the reader's ability to recognise instantly the field, indirect references, issues, and cultural references necessary for the reader to understand, even identify with the content of the article. In this regard, headlines are impeccably powerful. Just to reiterate, the reading of the article is completely dependent on how captivating the headline is and the choice of words and their order and if the reader will be able to infer meaning from the words. Thus they rely on vast amounts social stocks of knowledge, representations and cultural knowledge.

Common abbreviations in headlines such as ANCYL, as seen in the headline

> *ANCYL man to appear for journalist assault* (December 20, 13:22, 2011),

supposes not only a certain minimum knowledge of political parties and general knowledge, but also help to position the readers within a criminal justice framework, since they must assume that the *'ANCYL'* referred to is African National Congress Youth League and the *"appear"* refers to a court proceeding of sorts. A couple of headlines use "appear*"* to allude to court proceedings:

> *3 appear for Tongaat couple's murder.*

Several more headlines use '*held'* to refer to suspects of crimes being held in prison cells awaiting trial:

> *Man held for attempted murder* (December 24, 20:01, 2012)*;*
>
> *Cop held for North West kidnapping* (December 16, 17:47, 2012)*;*
>
> *Boys, 14, held for setting man alight* (December 22, 16:02, 2010);
>
> *Man held for attempted child rape* (December 31, 10:48, 2012);
>
> *Woman held for boyfriends murder* (December 24, 21:18, 2011).

Headlines also contain a great deal of a play on words. Again cultural knowledge and general knowledge is needed for the reader to understand the puns and double meanings. This form of wordplay is usually not evident in the content of the articles but is found in the headlines. It takes several forms:

- Double meaning :

  PE man gets damages from cops (December 21, 2012, 10:24)

  Blue light assault case drags on (December 7, 19:03)

- Hyperboles

  Spate of child rapes in Limpopo (December 31, 16:00, 2012)

- Oxymoron
  Metro cop held for double murder (December 31, 09:20, 2012)

It was observed however that this play on words was far less frequent within the analysed articles. They, according to my own perspective, lacked imagination and vocabulary prowess as compared to traditional print newspapers. The reason for this, I suppose, is because the online environment is quite different from hard copies. As already mentioned, space and placing of articles is not a problem to be considered, and news that is of particular interest to the reader can be searched using the search bar of the aggregator and thereby avoiding reading headlines that are not of interest to the reader. For example, I do a search for rape related news, the hits of headlines that come up will already be in the topic of my interest, and the necessity of wordplay on headlines proves redundant.

Researchers have wondered whether similar wordplay features can be found in the press across all cultures and languages (Leppihalme, 1996; Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2002; Reece, Van den Bergh & Li, 1994). Unfortunately the studies that had been done do not cover a wide enough range of countries to draw any conclusion According to Kniffka, quoted in Bell (1989: 189), headline structures appear to be very regular across languages, but his analysis involved only German and American English texts. Other studies analyse headlines from only one country: Allan Bell (1991) analyses the 'distinctive telegraphic syntax' of English newspaper headlines.

Ingrid Mardh (1980) offers an exhaustive study of the characteristic features of the headlines of a range of English newspapers. She identifies the following linguistic features as typical of headlines in English newspapers: the omission of articles; the omission of verbs and of auxiliaries (the verb 'to be' for example); nominalisations; the frequent use of complex noun phrases in subject position (in theme position); adverbial headlines, with the omission of both

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verb and subject; the use of short words ('bid' instead of 'attempt'); the widespread use of puns, word play and alliteration; the importance of word order, with the most important items placed first, even, in some cases, a verb; and independent constructions not linked to a main clause. All these aspects are evident in this study, although not to the same degree.

5.4. Linguistic presupposition

A presupposition is the condition of believing something without any proof. Assumptions are used in linguistic presuppositions and information, or rather the lack thereof, is a taken for granted notion (Rochemont, 2014). Linguistic presupposition can be derived from two places, namely from syntactic structure and cataphoric or anaphoric use. Syntactic structure refers to: "a constituent in a sentence belongs to a certain syntactic category means that it can be replaced in that sentence by any other string of words that belongs to that category, as long as the two strings have the same morphosyntactic properties" (Gutiérrez-Bravo, 2013).

In the headline:
　　Two seen after train driver's murder (December 27, 20:18, 2012)
the structure of the sentence presupposes that the two seen, are possibly the murderers. The only thing to be considered is their guilt if apprehended. Similar examples include:

　　North West dad held for daughter's rape (December 30, 22:10, 2012),
which again presupposes guilt.

　　Man kills drinking buddy (December 27, 14:41, 2010)
presupposes the two were friends. Presuppositions in headlines could lead people to assume and conclude on matters without any definitive proof.

Cataphoric reference means that a word in a text refers to another later in the text and you need to look forward to understand. It can be compared with anaphoric reference, which means a word refers back to another word for its meaning (Azarizad & Tohidian, 2012). Deriving from cataphoric/anaphoric use, which means a word in a sentence, receives its meaning later in the sentence (Gutiérrez-Bravo, 2013). For example, in the simple sentence, 'When <u>he</u> pulled out his gun, the farmer shot himself'. To understand the word 'he', we have to look forward in the sentence to note 'the farmer'.

　　Sugarcane killer to be sentenced in Jan (December 29, 14:39, 2010)

serves as an example of anaphoric, since the reader has to go back to past articles to understand who the sugarcane killer is. The presupposition here is that the reader already knows the sugarcane killer.

>   *3 arrested for killing KZN couple*:

'three what?' is the question raised. The reader has to interpret the reference to give to the noun.

Headlines also possess pragmatic presuppositions where the reader could feel pressure to act on something as opposed to just being informed about an issue.

>   *Two seen after train driver's murder* (December 27, 20:18, 2012)

seems to serve not only as informative, but also to implore the reader to seek or watch out for 'the two'. The power of all forms of presuppositions is derived from the fact that they remove what is presupposed from direct argument. Through the journalist's 'sleight of hand' a presupposition is established as fact. Presuppositions seem to go unchallenged.

The analysed headlines also seem to create an all-round picture, an all-encompassing view of persons and locations. Phrases such as 'North West dad'; 'teens'; 'Sharpeville residences'; 'Woman held'; 'Pastor', etc., seem to give a general view of things and almost paint a singular view of certain groups or people.

As already discussed, shared cultural, political and general knowledge give headlines some of their power to attract. Headlines require 'decoding' and readers receive intellectual satisfaction after successfully doing so. The sense of belonging to a community can be reinforced through this process (Devereux, Haynes, & Power, 2011). To serve their noble purpose in society, news agencies should value accuracy over stylistic or pragmatic concerns. More recommendations will be reserved for the last chapter.

5.4.1. Quoting for Authenticity

The articles studied contain vast amounts of direct and indirect speech. Articles tend to put strongly-worded statements in quotation marks and milder statements are in reported speech. Statements said by police seem to be the ones mainly placed in quotations. Almost all the articles analysed have a police official quoted and not merely reported as in the following excerpts:

"The suspect is presently out on bail and is expected to appear in the same court on 11 February for extradition proceedings," said Colonel Tammi Shai in a statement. [December 21, 14:38, 2010]

"The man was arrested at his house in the Osindisweni area on Wednesday," Lieutenant Colonel Vincent Mdunge said. [December 29, 10:05, 2011]

"The MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo said on Wednesday the man should consider himself fired. We have already sent him a suspension letter." [December 29, 10:05, 2011]

"The suspects might be linked to more cases. This arrest is the culmination of extensive police work and collaboration between various units within the SAPS," said Ferreira. [December 23, 15:57, 2011]

"The boyfriend allegedly fled, the victim was then dragged to the bushes and raped by the five suspects," he (Lieutenant Colonel Mohale Ramatseba) *said.* [December 27, 13:21, 2011]

"A 17-year-old became very ill and succumed to his wounds whilst the other [teenager] was assaulted by workers at the school after attempting to escape, and died of his injuries," Sergeant Karen Tredoux said in a statement. [December 15, 14:42, 2011]

Using quotations serves two functions, firstly to create the feeling of objectivity from the reporter. Reporters are merely reporting other people's statements and comments while seemingly with doling their own opinions. Quotations are not seen bias because reporters are 'obliged' to tell readers what has been said by officials at press conferences and interviews. The second reason is to confer legitimacy (Patriotta, Gond & Schultz, 2011). By quoting police officials and other agents of justice, the articles seem to gain more authenticity and credibility. Quoting an official figure carries more weight compared to simply reporting.

Reported speech does not use the exact words said by someone unlike quotations, but it is a reconstruction of what was said:

A policeman said to have punched a motorist for not making way for a presidential convoy had his case postpone by the Thembisa Magistrates Court on Wednesday. [December 7, 19:03, 2011]

In an editorial published on Wednesday, the Sowetan newspaper compared the attack to attacks on journalists during apartheid. [December 21, 14:44, 2011]

He allegedly raped the 12-year-old girl and sexually assaulted two others aged 13 and 15. The 12-year-old told her teachers at school, who alerted the police. A month earlier, she told her mother she had been raped, but her mother did not believe her. The other two girls came forward after the 12-year-old reported the matter, said Makhubela. [December 4, 16:37, 2012]

The journalist chooses to use indirect speech instead of direct. This affords him/her an opportunity to use their own words. The choice of words can influence the reading of the article as different words carry different shades of meaning. Certain statements can be withdrawn and more coverage given to others. The use quotations or indirect speech does not prove objectivity since it is still the journalist that chooses what to quote and where and how to place it in the article. The main agenda of the journalist remains as gaining readership as discussed in the literature review section.

To truly assess whether the reporter was being objective or not, we would need to have access to the full transcripts of interviews conducted to compare what was reported and what was withheld. Alternatively a comparison can be made between other articles of the same incident and try to arrive at the full picture. That endeavour unfortunately is beyond the scope of this study.

5.4.2. The Choice of Words

The tone of an article can be changed by a simple word, ergo the choice of words is very important. By the choice of one word instead of another, a whole different connotation can be made by the reader and affects the impression the article gives the reader.

The serial killer who murdered 13 women and dumped their bodies in sugarcane fields will be sentenced in January, the KwaZulu Natal High Court heard on Wednesday. (December 29, 14:39, 2010)

Spate of child rapes in Limpopo (December 31, 16:00, 2010)

NTV said the attackers waited outside the commercial bank, one of them holding a pram where two Kalashnikov assault rifles where hidden. When the guards got out of their armoured truck and walked toward the bank with bags full of cash, the two assailants

sprayed them with automatic gunfire, killing both on the spot. (December, 28, 21:29, 2010)

The 62-year-old was released on bail of R6 000 and the matter was postponed, said Warrant Officer Kay… (December 4, 16:37, 2012).

I expected to find a lot of biased words or at least words that create shock and awe, but the majority of the articles were quite neutral in their reporting. The reporting verbs used were of a neutral nature. Neutral reporting verbs are neutral in meaning and usually show how indifferent the speaker is towards the reported clause (Yamashita, 1999). When using neutral reporting verbs, the reporter avoids using giving their own opinion about the matter. The reporter is detached from the report and a sort of objectivity is achieved. One could argue that this is how reporting should be done since the main objective is to convey information. I must comment that it makes for very uninteresting reading.

Evident in the articles is also the use of positive reporting verbs. These verbs reflect a positive attitude to what the speaker said and is perceived to be as true (Thompson and Ye, 1991). When positive reporting verbs are used, it indicates that the reporter affirms the position of the speaker. This further carries the notion of authenticity (Maxwell & Clanfield, 2000).

He said the complainant initially claimed he had sexually harassed her... (December 21, 14:38, 2010).

He said they tied her up with the man they were assaulting... (December 20, 13:02, 2010).

She said Taki took advantage of the victims by promising them jobs and then took the little that they had. (December 29, 14:39, 2010)

He said no arrests had been made yet but police were following several leads. (December 27, 20:18, 2012)

None of the crimes were linked but all the suspect are known to police and many arrests have been made, he said (December 28, 11:18, 2010).

He said two men stormed out of the shop, grabbed his camera and destroyed his memory card before chasing him. He then went to a police station to open a case a case against his attackers (December 21, 14:44, 2011).

5.5. How Paragraphs are Used

How the information in a news article is laid out is important in The order of information flow affects how the text will be absorbed. Ultimately the interpretation of the text will be affected by the order of, and the nature of the information within, the paragraphs. Generally articles have an inverted pyramid manner of reporting. The headline carries the topic of the content followed by the lead paragraph. The lead paragraph contains the who, what, when, where, why and how of the article. More important information pertaining to the topic is then added, and then less essential details are added at the bottom (Maxwell & Clanfield, 2000). The short article below exemplifies the pyramid structure (December 5, 14:39, 2012).

> **Karate coach gets correctional supervision**
> Gauteng karate coach who sexually assaulted students was sentenced to three years of correctional supervision by the Alexandra Magistrate's Court on Wednesday.
>
> Peter Foyn, 69, of Douglasdale, would be placed under house arrest and participate in community services for sexually assaulting 11 of his students.
>
> He had pleaded guilty to all counts.
>
> Magistrate Syta Prinsloo said that in determining a suitable sentence, she had considered the man's age and the fact that he was a first offender.

5.6. Constructions of Perpetrators and Victims

5.6.1. The Painting of a Criminal

In the collection of analysed articles, the perpetrators of violent crimes are presented as the same, stereotyped group who exhibit similar, and ultimately 'evil', characteristics. Research done by MacLin and Herrera (2006) has discovered that stereotypes arise from the blaming of others, i.e. the outsider. When those outside the community are blamed, loyalty is built, which strengthens social cohesion (Holloway & Jefferson, 1997). Literature supports the notion that individuals hold stereotypical images of what a criminal looks and behaves like (Pereira, Álvaro, Garrido, Machado, Dantas, Modesto, ... & Canario-Gomes, 2013; Park & Park, 2011; Bryant, 2014).

There is consensus regarding both criminal and non-criminal portrayals, and matching faces to crimes (MacLin & Herrera, 2006). The stereotypical description of a criminal include inhuman, psychologically maladjusted, strangers to victims, attacking randomly in the streets, violent predators, dangerous, male, out of control, black, poor, big, immoral, cruel, undeserving, irrational, violent, evil, insane, murderers and sexual criminals (MacLin & Herrera, 2006).

These descriptions are very general as compared to analysed articles where the perpetrators or alleged perpetrators are portrayed as more evil and inhuman. This is clear in the following examples by looking at the terms used to describe the alleged perpetrators.

> *...serial killer who murdered 13 women and dumped their bodies in sugarcane fields [...] The accused has not shown any remorse.... When the victims' families where crying, he saw it as a joke, said Thokwana. Taki did not deserve any leniency from the courts, she said* (December 29, 14:39, 2010).

> *...metro police officer has been arrested for allegedly shooting dead his girlfriend...* (December 31, 09:20, 2012).

> *...the two assailants sprayed them with automatic gunfire...* (December 28, 21:29, 2010).

> *The man threatened to do something terrible if he was not paid* (December 12, 18:00, 2011).

> *...Dewani was killed in cold blood, execution style...* (December 26, 22:39, 2010).

The excerpts depict the violent crime as particularly heinous and thus the perpetrators portrayed as animals: pitiless and unconscionable, arrogant and brazen, cold and unemotional. The sense is that the perpetrators are ruthless and brutal, as though they got enjoyment or fulfilment from their acts. There is one event however where the perpetrator is almost portrayed as saintly:

> *After a few minutes one of the rapists returned and untied the pair. He came back, untied than and informed them that his friends are planning to kill them* (December 20, 13:02, 2010)

This would show that news reports tend to bend their rules in terms of stereotyping, but do not neglect creating emotive rhetoric. The reader here is almost seduced into viewing the rapist as a hero and not the rapist that he is. Interestingly, the perpetrator is portrayed as showing emotion and remorse and concern, all descriptions opposite to the stereotypical descriptions of a violent

offender. If the case would reach court, the perpetrator's acts of 'heroism' would lighten his sentence simply because they do not fit the stereotype of a cold and hardened criminal.

It is clear that, as with many social issues, the perpetrators –the outsiders– of gratuitous violence tend to be viewed more negatively, and in a simplistic one-size-fit-all paradigm, were as victims of violent crime -the insiders- are perceived more positively and more uniquely, bearing individuality. Schinkel (2008) confirms this in reporting that cases of violent crime, are remembered by the names of the victims and the perpetrators' names are quickly forgotten in public memory, unless in cases of serial killers.

5.6.1.2. The Gendered Construction of Perpetrators

Statistics show that male perpetrators in South Africa are primarily young and black (Shaw & Louw, n.d.). As a consequence of this however, prominent ideas exist concerning black masculinity as violent and dangerous, with black men constructed as 'guilty until proven innocent' (Wilcox, 2005, p. 523). To some degrees, the constructions of masculinity and femininity are said to be responsible for the perpetration of crime and violence. Social norms construct boys and men as macho, strong, virile, and dominant (Burton, 2007). However, Jeftas and Artz (as cited in Burton, 2007) suggest that South African males experience conflict between their expected and realised roles of 'maleness'.

Men are expected to be the bread winners of households and be strong and able bodied to protect their homes (Burton, 2007). If these ideals are not attained, which seems to be the case currently due to exclusion from formal economy, this could lead to crime. Unemployment coupled with poverty becomes a contributing factor to males using violent crime to regain their 'perceived' lost masculinity. Emasculation comes with feeling disrespected and humiliated, and despair surrounds one and situations are perceived as beyond control of the individual (Barton, 2007). Violent crime then becomes an opportunity for these emasculated men to reassert their masculinity and gain respect (Altbeker, 2008). This could explain the extreme levels of violence in South Africa.

In news media, the perpetrator is presented as young and black, and where possible, they are identified as such.

> *...20-year-old man accosted them...* (December 22, 13:01, 2011).

> *The 30-year-old man allegedly raped...* (December 29, 10:05, 2011).

The 20-year-old pastor was charged... (December 15, 16:22, 2011).

A 32-y ear-old man was arrested... in connection with murder... (December 28, 13:35, 2011).

Thirty-year-old Clifford Mohloana...allegedly assaulted... (December 21, 14:44, 2011).

Though the majority of the articles analysed the perpetrator was well indeed young and black, there is a number of teenagers who are reported in murder cases. This is again straying from the stereotypical criminal.

A teenage boy has been arrested in connection with the murder... the boy, 17... was expected to appear in the Mmabatho Magistrate's Court... (December 26, 16:14, 2011).

Three teenagers were arrested after being linked to the murder of 56-year-old man.... The two, aged 15 and another 17 were arrested at Mangweni...shortly after a man who was stabbed several times died en route to the hospital [...] The motive for killing was unknown (December 30, 16:10, 2012).

Research has shown that teenagers/youths tend to be represented in a negative tone in the media and are usually demonised (Mason, 2013; Yar, 2012; Levinsen, & Wien, 2011; Bernier, 2011). The data of the current research does not allow for comparisons to be made.

The elderly are also featured as perpetrators of violent crime, however only to a small degree as they do not fit the criminal stereotype nor are they found newsworthy according to Jewkes (2010).

A 70-year-old man will appear in the Zeerust Magistrate's Court on murder charges... (December 31, 12:13, 2012).

5.6.1.3. Dehumanising the Rape Perpetrator

Stranger rapes are often riddled with the narrative of the rapist as a monster. This has the potential to influence the public's thoughts about the typical rapist. For example:

A 36-year-old was found guilty of rape, assault , housebreaking and robbery [...] After raping her, he stabbed her across the face and back, upon which he raped her again (December 9 , 08:27, 2010).

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A 16-year-old girl was abducted and gang raped, allegedly by three men, in Maake (December 31, 16:00, 2012).

A 16-year-old girl has been gang raped at Shongwane Village... (December 27, 13:21, 2011).

A 22-year-old man has been arrested for raping six girls and two boys... (October 28, 14:39, 2012).

Depicting rapists as sex fiends and predators, puts them outside society and they are rejected. They are not seen as humans and part of active culture and therefore should be expelled from the realms of society as they also threaten the status quo. This perception of rapists removes all blame from society and sees the individual as responsible for the crime. No further 'investigations' are therefore necessary in cases of stranger rape since the acts of the rapist are self-explanatory. There is no discussion of how society, a highly patriarchal one, could in some way contribute to the alarming frequency of sexual assaults. The cause or contribution society might have made to the causation to the rapes were not mentioned in the articles.

The dehumanising of perpetrators implies that rape is a crime that is outside of society and it is an inhumane act. Rapists are constructed to be monsters that isolate themselves and prowl for innocent victims. Such a dehumanisation of rape perpetrators is usually awarded to stranger rape and thus suggesting that stranger rape is a phenomenon that cannot be understood and it is repulsive and perverse compared to acquaintance rape.

Acquaintance rape accounts for almost half of the rape articles analysed

A pastor was arrested on Thursday for raping a 15-year-old girl (December 15, 16:22, 2011).

A 10-year-old was allegedly raped by her stepfather... (December 27, 20:05, 2011).

...karate coach who sexually assaulted students... (December 5, 14:39, 2012).

A 40-year-old man was arrested for allegedly raping his 10-year-old granddaughter [...] it is alleged that the suspect called the victim under the pretext that he was sending her to his room to fetch something. He then followed her and closed the door. He allegedly raped her in his room (December 30, 12:01, 2012).

...15-year-old girl was allegedly raped by her friend's boyfriend... (December 22, 17:22, 2010).

...54-year-oldman has been arrested for allegedly raping his 22-year-old daughter... (December 30, 22:00, 2012).

It would be difficult to reconcile perpetrators of acquaintance rape as active members of society with their ability to rape. The public expectation of how a rapist is to look is that it should be quite apparent. The public expects to see perverted sex criminals and this image is the one that news media lean towards. This image is much more readily accepted by the public as it represents an outsider. More public attention is expected to be given to such cases.

5.6.2. Victims in the News

5.6.2.1. Victims at Center stage

Victims receive more focus than perpetrators, as proposed by Wilcox (2005), and this sentiment reigns true in the findings of the current research. Rhetoric that is sensational and dramatic is used to pit the forces of good (the victims) against the forces of evil (the perpetrators). Exaggerated characters and exciting events are also used to appeal to the emotions, rather than just serving as an informative piece. The enlisting of emotions is achieved by defining social issues as straightforward struggles between good and evil as also stated by Best (2000) reiterating Filler's (2000, p. 1104) work. These two examples clearly depict the pit between good and evil, i.e. good victims and evil perpetrators:

...13 females were killed who were defenseless, unarmed and trusted the accused... (December 29, 14:39, 2010),

The man allegedly set his dogs on his female workers, and slapped another (December 12, 18:00, 2011).

In other examples, the perpetrator is not mentioned at all in the article. Melodrama rhetoric continues to be used to create 'victim discourse':

Makana said he was feeling better on Tuesday, after collapsing as he and other journalists interviewed newly-elected provincial secretary [...] Makana, whose bruised head was evidence of the attack, was attended to by paramedics who then rushed him

to the local hospital. He said he had suffered from migraine headaches since the attack (December 21, 14:14, 2011).

The 79-year-old woman was severely assaulted by two farm workers employed by her grandson died in a Vereeniging hospital [...] She died shortly after the noon on Friday. The cause of her death will only be confirmed by the post-mortem… (December 27, 12:17, 2010).

She looked like someone who had maybe passed out after drinking or had been sedated. It looked as if someone in the passenger seat had leant over and shot her in the neck. I got the definite impression that she was executed (December 26, 22:39, 2010).

Altheide (2003, p. 42) has claimed that the personal side of a crisis is formed by victims; in fact, a crisis is where victims reside. Victims seem to be more important in the articles analysed, they have become the center of crime reporting. The very subject position of the reporting is constituted by victims' sufferings. This fact is also proven by Smolej (2010). How the victim is positioned seems to also amplify the notion of the violation of justice in the world because something bad has happened to undeserving good people. It is not commonplace to depict the victim in a bad light, but it can happen, as portrayed in one article: *"A 24-year-old man was murdered after he went on a drinking spree with another man in a village in Dutywa, [...] They were consuming alcohol yesterday morning [...] One of the men was then stabbed to death, apparently by his drinking partner"* (December 27, 14:41, 2010). The common bad vs. evil rhetoric is missing here, as no sympathy is evoked for the victim became of the introduction of the alleged cause of the stabbing, namely, alcohol. The subject of the report has shifted to the consequences of alcohol consumption.

Similar examples are the gang rape of a teenager and the rape of another teenager on her way home and articles, respectively

A 16-year-old girl has been gang raped at Shongwane village outside Lephalale, [...] Lieutenant Colonel Mohale Ramatseba said the girl and her boyfriend, 18, were on their way home from a tavern on Monday night when they were confronted by five men who assaulted the boyfriend. (December 27, 13:21, 2011).

A 16-year-old girl was raped in two separate incidents by seven men in Ivory Park on Friday night [...] the girl was headed home from a party in Extension 7 in the early hours

of the morning when two men approached her, covered her face with a t-shirt, and took her to a bridge in the area. On arrival there they threatened her with a knife and both of them allegedly raped her without protect on and fled the scene. (December 12, 13:02, 2010).

Unfortunately this story does not end *here, it continues to say:*

...the girl decided to walk home after the incident, but on her way she came across four men assaulting another man [...] they tied her up with the man they were assaulting. They raped her and ran away, leaving her tied to the man." The article ends by making a reference to rape and lifestyle. "*...police appealed to the youth, especially girls, to take care during festive season. Constable Hlase said about six rape cases were opened over the past weekend and all the victims were aged between 16 and 20 years and were returning from shebeens and parties."*

This closing alludes to safety, and that for girls not to be raped, they should avoid going out to places with alcohol at night.

5.6.2.2. The construction of 'Ideal' or 'Ultra' Victims

The label of victim can be simply be placed on any individual or individuals who have experienced a crime, victim status, i.e., who really is looked at as a victim, is determined by a number of social divisions including race, ethnicity, gender, age and sexuality (Greer, 2007) and this is mirrored in the media. The criminal victimisation of strangers over familiar or family conflict is mainly represented in news media, and Ferraro (2005 as cited in Greer, 2007) has made the same discovery. This is however contrary to the facts in South Africa, where violence greatly ensues between persons that know each other. Domestic violence is a much bigger problem, where one in four women in certain areas reporting abuse (Jewkes, Penn-Kekana, Levin, Ratsaka & Schreiber, 1999 as cited in Dissel & Ngubeni, 2003). The coverage of characters of victimisation does not match the social distribution of them (Sacco, 1995). From this, Greer (2007) claims that He selection of news reporting on crime

Therefore, in the same way that news reporting on crime and news on crime victims can also be unrepresentative.

Garland (1999) states that a victim of crime is no longer portrayed as an unfortunate citizen but rather as the 'everyman'. The everyman's experiences are general and collective instead of

individual and atypical. This type of portrayal encourages the reader to identify and empathise with crime victims (Smolej, 2010). Victims are painted as ordinary, innocent and vulnerable (Reiner et al., 2003 as cited in Wilcox, 2005). The imagined connection between the readers and the victim can easily bad to an increase in public fear of crime. The following excerpts encourage empathy for victims as 'people like us'.

> *...robbers...fatally shot two guards and a man walking his dog...* (December 28, 21:29, 2010).

> *...accused of assaulting a boy at the Johannesburg school...* (December 14, 09:47, 2010).

> *He* [the accused] *allegedly shot a teenager dead and wounded another for fishing on his farm...* (December 12, 18:00, 2011)

> *Scheiblecker* [the victim] *was in court supported by his wife cherty and daughter Monique [...] She* (the daughter) *was with her father when he was allegedly punched by the policeman... (December 7, 19:03, 2011).*

> *...sexually assaulted students...* (December 5, 14:39, 2012).

> *12-year-old boy was raped... walking from church...* (December 22, 13:01, 2011).

> *...22-year-ol2 24-year-old daughter...* (December 30, 22:10, 2012).

Articles tend to also be written in such a way that makes the reader have the victim's vantage point and also feel what the victim is feeling, this too results in identification and empathy. The reader becomes emotionally involved unaware (Greer, 2007). The presentation of the victim's suffering in the news articles evokes feelings of fear and anger among the public (Garland, 1999 as cited in Smolej, 2010).

> *It is alleged the suspect...has been molesting the victim for months* (December 31, 16:00, 2012).

> *...found lying in the street. 'He had been beaten with an object on his head and bled from his nose and head…* (December 26, 16:14, 2011).

> *She was found in a pool of blood. A neighbour went to check on her after she was not seen the whole day, and found her dead* (December 28, 13:35, 2011).

A five-year-old boy, who lived across the street was shot in the leg (December 31, 09:20, 2012).

Often these emotions, responses and thoughts are voiced in the media by friends, neighbors and family of the victims as the voice of 'everyman', to generate identification in the readership and feelings of fear and anger, as in the example above.

It can be taken for granted that the violent crime requires a victim, but the construction of gratuitous violence requires an 'ideal' victim. The 'ideal' victim is characterised by the elderly, children or women. It can be said that such victim easily receive crime victim status (Christie, 1986 as cited in Greer, 2007, p. 22). The handicapped also fall within the category of ideal victim. The ideal victim should also be worthy of sympathy and compassion. Greer (2007) states that typical ideal victims are young children, young white women or map rained mothers. The media is more likely to play to readers' emotions when reporting on victims who can be portrayed as 'ideal', as is demonstrated below:

The male nurse who allegedly raped d mentally ill patient at the Osindisweni hospital in Verulam has been arrested (December 29, 10:05, 2011).

The 38-year-old rape victim from Vanderbijlpark was raped in front of her son, nephew, out -their two friends at their self-catering unit in the upmarket suburb [...] After ransacking the self-catering unit; allegedly four armed suspects entered another self-catering unit on the same property and held an elderly couple at gun point while they searched the house, also threatening them with rape and murder (December 23, 15:57, 2011).

The 79-year-old woman who was severely assaulted by two farm workers... they say she is still in a critical condition. [...] The two assaulted her until her grandson returned to the house" (December 24, 12:00, 2010).

The 3-year-old was raped allegedly by a neighbour ... Her mother caught the man in the act at a nearby river (December 31, 16:00, 2012).

5.6.3. The construction of women as ultra-victims

In media discourse women tend to lack complexity, they are reduced to a simple black and white perspective of and are rather reduced to 'good' (innocent) or 'evil' (guilty). Good women, according to the media, should be "pure, passive, caring, maternal, monogamous, house-proud,

dependent, fragile and fair...women who do not conform to that model attract labels outside of the range available for 'good' women" (Wykes, 2001 as cited in Wilcox, 2005, p. 528).

Not all women are created equal in the eyes of the media. Women tend to dominate news reports as victims because they are considered to be more newsworthy than male victims and this leads to their overrepresentation in news reports (Dowler, Fleming & Muzzatti, 2006). The social status of the woman adds to her newsworthiness. The typical woman must be innocent, virtuous and honourable and she must be decent and respectable (Wilcox, 2005). A woman contrary to these ideals is considered blameworthy. Wilcox (2005) suggests that the stereotypical portrayal of women stems from patriarchal notions of femininity and gender. The following examples portray that.

> *The body of a 52-year-old woman who had been murdered was found under a bridge in Zeerust. Police say the body was found partially decomposed and half naked.... Police suspect the woman was hit with a rock on her head and could have been raped by her attackers"* (December 29, 19:21, 2012).

> *…rape a Gauteng woman who was holidaying in Richards Day.... The 38-year-old rape victim....* (December 23, 15:57, 2011).

The following excerpts depict blameworthy women:

> *A woman was arrested after allegedly stabbing her boyfriend to death ... in the early hours of Saturday morning [...] A fight ensued, with the woman reportedly stabbing the boyfriend in the left arm with a broken bottle and then fleeing on foot* (December 24, 21:18, 2011).

It should be noted here however that the cause of events that led to the fight are not mentioned in the article. The woman however is still perceived as blameworthy.

5.6.4. Construction of a 'Collective Threat'

A lot of coverage is given to the 'collective threat' discourse where more than one perpetrator is involved in an act of violent crime. This dramatically increases feelings of fear as the saying goes, 'there is strength in numbers'. The victim is placed at a disposition where they are over powered by more than one perpetrator, and the risk of injury to the victim is increased. As Cohen and Young (1973) proposed, mobs become a threat to justice and social order. Katz (1988) argues that groups are set apart from others by their ability to create dread, a direct

consequence of involvement in and willingness to use violence. Dread elevates perceived threat levels.

> *...arrests have been issued for two youths...* (December 14, 09:42, 2010).

> *...assaulted by two farm workers...* (December 27, 12:12, 2010).

> *Seven people were arrested...* (December 30, 18:25, 2010).

> *A couple were arrested following the murder of a policeman...* (December 28, 20:00, 2011).

> *Teen gang-raped by 5 men* (December 27, 13:21, 2011).

> *Three men, including a soldier were arrested...* (December 31, 16:00, 2012).

> *Gauteng teen raped by 7 men* (December 20, 13:02, 2010).

5.7. Motives

Out of the 50 articles studied, only a handful gave reasons or motives for the crime occurring. The vast majority of articles neglected ascribing motives of the perpetrator. In the rape cases, no attempt was made to try to explain the crime of rape or give motives. This makes it seem like rape is a crime that cannot be understood and is then perceived as a unique crime. On the other hand, investigators and police are mentioned in murder and assault incidents in order to try understand.

> *Police are investigating two counts of murder* (December 15, 14:42, 2011).

> *A double murder case and an attempted murder case here being investigated* (December 24, 12:00, 2010).

> *The man was arrested following a police investigation in which the murder weapon was apparently found* (December 29, 22:42, 2012).

> *Warrant officer Sam Tselanyane said the boy, 17, was arrested at his home in Moshawane Village after police received information apparently linking him to the crime* (December 26, 16:14, 2011).

I would presume that there is a lack of motive given in rape articles because of two main factors. One could imagine that the reporters, because of empathy, were overcome with feelings of senselessness and could not comprehend why a man could commit such an atrocious act as in the case where a man kidnapped a twelve-year-old boy and raped him repeatedly. Senselessness is a warranted reaction to vile acts that seem to not make any sense. In a way it is a coping mechanism for dealing with tragedy. Believing an act to be without explanation prevents people from having to try to actually contemplate why the act was committed (Knobloch-Westerwick, Gong, Hagner & Kerbeykian, 2012).

> ...police stormed into the man's home and rescued the child around 13:00.... They arrested the man after finding him stark naked, still raping the boy in his room... (December 22, 13:01, 2011).

Another factor for neglecting to give motive could be that the reporter assumed that there was an obvious inherent motive for the rapes, which is sexual desire. Most articles discussed rape as an act for fulfilling sexual desire. This leaves the implication that sexual desire is a motive for rape.

> The male nurse who [...] allegedly raped a mentally ill patient in the shower at the hospital ... (December 29, 10:05, 2011).

> A pastor was arrested on Thursday for raping a 15-year-old girl [...] the pastor allegedly lured the girl to a spot near an unused railway line [...] she tried to run but the pastor overpowered her... (December 15, 16:22, 2011).

There are several implications for giving no reason or rationalisation to a perpetrator's actions. Firstly, society and the environment are not held responsible in anyway. Of the articles studied, no contributing factors were mentioned. Factors such as society or childhood environment were ignored. Even when motives were suggested, these were neglected for being possible factors capable of influencing a perpetrator's behaviour.The only incident where motive and reason was given was in the case of the serial killer Taki. His life was discussed in length in the article.

> "...Taki had only been educated up to Grade 4, which he did not pass. At the age of nine his father went to Johannesburg to seek employment and never returned till this day. He was left with his mother who was sick and unemployed. His mother pasted away at age 19... . Taki was the eldest of three siblings. He started looking for a job when he was 13

years old. [..] His father who was supposed to contribute to his well-being left him" (December 29, 14:39, 2010).

The lack of given motive in other cases creates the perspective that crime is an individualised phenomenon (Hương, 2012). This paints the perpetrator as an inherently bad person and cut off from society. This removes responsibility from societal norms and cultural values (McGee, O'Higgins, Garavan & Conroy, 2011). It is more comforting for to believe that society or culture is without blame in crime. The idea of senselessness also frees members of communities from taking action against offenders (Bernhardsson & Bogren, 2012).

The lack in reported motives for sexual assault crimes could leave implication that rape is a crime of sexual desire and not of violence, dominance or control. This is not to imply that sexual desire should be removed completely as a motive, but simply to highlight that it would be erroneous to dilute the motive for sexual crimes to purely desire. This error misrepresents and neglect of other reasons why rape occurs.

The over simplification that men who rape do not intend to injure or inflict suffering, but merely want sex is entirely misleading. First it suggests that rape can be perceived merely as consensual sex. If there is consent, it means rape never happened. This view is prevalent in South African Police Service, as many victims of rape suffer secondary victimisation when they report their cases (Albert, 2013). Police officers are mostly inclined to believe that the rape was warranted because of the victim (Patterson, 2011). Needless to say, this is completely false. Secondly, takes away the seriousness of the situation, and essentially rejects the existence of violence violence and the violation against victims of sexual assaults (Ryan, 2011).

Another perceived motive for perpetrators was the supposed inherent evil. The perpetrator's reasons for committing the violent acts can be assumed to lie in the individual's twisted personality. If this is the case, Pharoah (2008) states that reform is near impossible.

Research by Muehknhard and Kimes (1999) proposes a third motive, that at the perpetrator's mental health. Their research revealed a small percentage of the articles they analysed revealed that the perpetrator may have had a mental illness, or generally referred to him as insane or deranged. Thy found the articles to be lengthier than other articles which did not mention the perpetrator's mental health. Their articles mention some attorneys requesting psychiatric tests for their clients. Judges compelled perpetrators to seek psychiatric help. One article quoted a defense lawyer, who argued that his client was afflicted with paraphilia, and

couldn't control his urges (Muehknhard and Kimes, 1999). The reason of mental illness was not found this research's dataset.

5.8. Victim Resistance

An insignificant number of articles mention victim resistance. Of the one article that mentions victim resistance, mere sympathy is given to the victim as opposed to the other articles that do not mention victim resistance.

> *...pastor arrested... for raping a 15-year-old girl [...] she tried to run but the pastor overpowered her...* (December 15, 16:22, 2011).

Another article describes an escaped victimisation:

> *The other three boys ran away and told their parents* (December 22, 13:01, 2011).

Both these articles tended to be longer than the others. Comparing with Leclerc, Wortley and Smallbone's (2011) research it seems that victims of rape who do not submit to their attackers are more sympathised with. An article mentioned by Leclerc et al. (2011) illustrated this. The article was about a multiple victim serial rape case. Of the victims mentioned, the only one discussed in length was the woman who resisted her attacker until meeting her death. The prosecutor depicted the victim as a hero because: "she resisted, she yelled, she cried out". The victim in the article is portrayed as being better than the others because at her attempts to ward off the perpetrator

Another article from Leclerc et al. (2011), the reporter applauds the victim for resisting. The victim is described as 'kicking and screaming' and in still another article a victim proudly announces that she would have fought to the death. However, not all victims can struggle against their attackers for a number of reasons: physical inaptitude or fear of further injury as in the following article:

> *...on her way she came across four men assaulting another man. He said they tied her up with the man they were assaulting. They raped her and run away...* (December 20, 13:02, 2010).

Confusion, the feeling that fighting back is futile, or the victim simply lacks the physical strength to resist as in many cases mentioned were the victim was a child. When news reports commend

victims that resisted, they evoke indifference towards victims who did not actively resist the perpetrator.

5.10. Childhood and old Age

Children are usually painted as inherently innocent, pure and virtuous (Meyer, 2007). The image of a child is further stretched to annotate to immaturity, weakness, vulnerability and ignorance. The child as a victim is then perceived as reading protection, primarily from adults (Finkelhor, Turner, Hamby, & Ormrod, 2011). Vulnerability is however a key feature of childhood as children are vulnerable physically, socially and structurally. The discourse of innocence and vulnerability is exploited by the media, by referring to the age or youth of the victim.

Two teenagers died (December 15, 14:42, 2011).

12-year-old girl sexually assaulted (December 4, 16:37, 2012).

Man held for raping 6 girls, 2 boys (October 28, 14:39, 2012).

Girl raped by friend's boyfriend (December 22, 17:22, 2010)

Limpopo boy kidnapped, raped (December 22, 13:01, 2011).

These headlines create a foreground for the content of the articles which also continue to make references to the victims' youth. The underlying message is that innocence has been taken and vulnerability exploited.

The 3-year-old was raped, allegedly by a neighbour.... Her mother caught the man in the act... (December 31, 16:00, 2012).

A 22-year-old man has been arrested for raping six girls and two boys... the man lured the children into his tuckshop... (October 28, 14:39, 2012).

A 12-year-old boy was raped [...] The man asked for money from the boys to buy a cigarette. When they said they had here, he grabbed one of them and dragged him to his nearby home [...] The victim was taken to Mankweng Hospital for treatment (December 22, 13:01, 2011).

A 15-year-old girl was allegedly raped by her friend's boyfriend in Jabulani, Soweto.... Suddenly the friend's boyfriend allegedly started assaulting her and demanded that she take her clothes off. He raped her without a condom, (December 22, 17:22, 2010).

Emotive language has clearly been employed in these examples and it is made all the more sad because of the ages and vulnerability.

5.11. Conclusion

In this chapter the analysis has shown that discourses of fear around violent crime have pervaded the South African public, and news agencies are the major distributors of these is discourses just as Cohen (1973) proposed. It can be claimed that news agencies have their own agendas and motives for presenting news in the way they do. Commercial motives are the most evident. What is open for further discussion however is whether South African news media acts as a catalysing agent and simultaneously the sustaining force of violent crime as a daily diet for the public. The media take on a highly reductionist explanation of the many complexities that lie in violent crime.

The interplay between moral entrepreneurs and news media is unexplored in South Africa, hence the lack of inclusion criminal justice system agencies in news reports except when the reporter is furthering their agendas. Mention of police is only to try seem objective and increase authenticity and not to curb crime. Stronger cooperation between the media and other stakeholders in violence reporting could result in a better picture of the proportion of violence that may be considered gratuitous in the country. This would ultimately bring some perspective to the context of what the press constructs as the scourge of gratuitous violence in South Africa.

In this study victims and perpetrators were clearly stereotyped, more so perpetrators who were portrayed as inherently evil and seeking to only do harm to moral members of society. Victims were downplayed to only evoke sympathy from the reader. The portrayal of victim vs. perpetrator is typified by middle-class female, blameless victims and homogenous young, black, poor, violent male perpetrators. However, public health surveillance systems have clearly shown that young black males are disproportionately victims of homicide, and that violent crime is prevalent in environments characterised by marked social inequality and poverty.

It is always interesting to note however that no bias was evident in the majority of the articles under study and the majority of them carried a positive neutral tone. The findings are supported by those of Floyd (2000). He discovered that the use of reporting verbs show the preferences journalists have over events. This study also agrees withthe findings of Yamashita (1999). This reveals that positive reporting verbs are less frequently used as opposed neutral reporting verbs.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

6.1. Conclusion

Newspapers are a primary means through which the public learns about crime, criminals and victims. This study has investigated media representations of violent crime in South Africa as reported on an online news aggregator. It not only looked at 'what' the reports said, but also 'why ' and 'how' they say it. Violent crime is a fluid concept, therefore three specific types of crime were chosen, namely rape, murder and assault. Bruce (2010) has made the suggestion that violent crime should be understood subjectively. Therefore, arriving at a universal definition of violent crime would be difficult, hence the selection of the specific crimes studied. The media platform for the study was online news reports. Media is an important conduit for public messaging. The mass media is widely acknowledged as having a significant effect on an excessive number of issues, and therefore can shape culture, reformulate policies and affect the way people live their everyday lives (Altheide, 2003). With all this power however, the media seem not to embrace calls for evidence-based reporting and reports that ultimately benefit society as a whole.

It is not the primary agenda of news agencies to educate or inform accurately, but simply to paddle newspapers by gaining more readership. The online environment is no different, advertisement still features on the site. Newsmaking is an enterprise just like any other. It is unfortunate that exploring news articles does not provide the whole story of how a society frames a criminological problem, but newspapers still remain powerful and important contributors to public knowledge and consciousness of crime issues. News articles also construct public narratives about crime that can be different from reality. Editors select what is reported on and this filtering of news contributes to the public's distorted perception of crime. It is the role of criminologists then to understand the outlines of social and political responses to crime. Sorenson et al. acknowledged that the public need to be informed about crime, but it can be brought into question whether the media does carry this duty in a manner that does not have hidden agendas seeing the eye-catching headlines provided. As evidenced, policies are affected by public outcries, and the public is informed through news media.

Unfortunately there exists a tension between the way violent crime is understood by the public and the way that it is represented in the media. The public health model argues that the media in general misrepresents the frequency of violent crime while exaggerating and sensationalising it (Thorson et al., 2003). Findings of this study however have found no sensationalising. The

majority of the articles studied were neutral in terms of bias and positive reporting was used. What was discovered was the neglecting of causal factors to crimes and the fostering of stereotypes around gender and age.

Because of reports which so frequently do not mention the perpetrators' motives, there is a sense that crime occurs for no reason and this can create a moral panic. The impression is given that the reader is to deduce or assume the motive. Violence is portrayed as random, which makes everybody a potential victim. This type of reporting puts the public on high alert and makes moral panics about crime eminent. This sense is intensified by the portrayal of *many* perpetrators against a *few* victims creating the image of good vs. evil and no reports on those that are supposed to be the defenders and protectors of the good, i.e. the police.

This study also tried to detect possible bias within news articles through linguistic analysis. As already stated, there were surprisingly few biases. The bias found, was of the type that would be easily missed had it not been for the theory grounding the analysis. Contrasting grammatical and syntactic means with lexical choice (the choice of words), it proved that the former are more prominent in the representation of articles analysed. This suggests that some presentational features are more effective in the realisation of bias than others. At times however it was difficult to determine the degree of bias, whether overt, slight or nonexistent at all. It is worth emphasising that this farm of analysis cannot be completely objective. No two researchers or analysts would arrive at exactly the same interpretations or codes. Naturally then, no far reaching conclusions can be drawn.

Looking at the particular crime of rape, the way in which articles talk about this crime has extremely important implications for the legal system. Under the law, there is no distinction between stranger and acquaintance rape, and therefore perpetrators should receive the same punitive sentences. However, judges, after being exposed to such different narratives about the two crimes, could find stranger rape to be a worse and more horrific crime than acquaintance rape. They may be more likely to view the perpetrator of the stranger rape as a sex crazed monster that cannot change his ways, because this is indeed the picture that articles paint. A perpetrator of acquaintance rape, on the other hand, may be viewed in a more sympathetic light, and may be seen as less guilty. This is due to news articles portraying such crimes as in an ambiguous manner which turns the incident into a case of 'he said/she said'. The victim's credibility is then brought into question, except where the victim is a child. The press' portrayals of suspects of acquaintance rape affects the legal system in such a way that doubt over events

could be cast Perpetrators of acquaintance and stranger rape may therefore not be treated equally by the criminal justice system.

Victims could also suffer being treated unequally because of the differences in the two narratives. Victims of stranger rape might be perceived as more truth telling and thereby their stories more readily listened to and believed. Communities also give their support to stranger rape victims more readily than to acquaintance rape victims. Communities should support all victims of rape or sexual assault. The support should not be based on gender or age. Claims of rape or sexual assault should not be treated lightly as well. This is however not realised, due, in part, to the constructions of rape victims by the media.

News reports enjoyed an assumed objectivity for a long time and the style of writing created an impression of impartiality. The articles appear to be giving all the facts, but they in fact do not. It was assumed that through the luxury of the use of online based reporting, leading to the freedom from restrictions of space and position, reporters could write to their hearts content. This was however not the case, as most of the articles were inconceivably short, resulting in pertinent facts being neglected. Only the bare minimum of information was presented and it was lacking to say the least.

6.2. Limitations and Future Directions

There is so much that has been left out of this study. There are so many narratives and themes that could not be explore because of both lack of data and time, also a more detailed analysis could not be done. For the sake of widening the scope of the types of violent crimes, the exploration of more narratives to specific types of crime could not be done. Future studies could examine each specific violent crime in online news reports for their individual narratives and themes, in order to have a greater understanding of the grammatical styles of writing that apply to different stories. For example, researchers could focus on narratives of home invasions or white collar crime stories. Narratives of males as victims of sexual assault would also be interesting to explore.

Although the correct methodology was used, there were several flaws in the design Strict and consistent coding standards were adhered to, but subjectivity to selecting of codes could not be avoided. It is possible that coding was inconsistent or skewed because of the researcher's own decision-making. In retrospect, it would have been beneficial to strive to check for the reliability of these codes with other research assistants, but lack of finances and time and availability, or

lack thereof, free volunteers to the endeavour did not make this possible. . The research proposal did however call for assistant coders.

Also, the sample size being sufficient for the purposes of this research, it did not allow for analyses of more themes and the drawing of comparisons with other researches of a similar nature. For example themes on public reactions to news and the investigation of the extent of involvement of moral entrepreneurs in using media to combat crime could not be explored. The latter being one of the objectives of the study. It can be assumed that there is no involvement at all however. The representation of the criminal justice system (police, courts and prisons) was also not evident in the dataset. Future research should make the selection of data more purposive to this narrative. To conduct an in-depth and more thorough study, a larger dataset would is required. Future studies would greatly benefit from a larger sample size.

There was a desire to conduct a study, but due to the constraints of time and the scope of the study, this could not be done. How the representation of violent crime in traditional print newspapers differs from online news reports would be interesting to know. Newspapers and the media in general carry the salient ideologies of the time, so investigating the change -if any- of the representation of violent crime during certain defining moments of the country (e.g. during apartheid; after freedom from apartheid regime; during the 2010 FIFA World Cup, etc.) would be valuable. It is strongly believed that such a study would yield abundant and interesting findings that could affect the future of journalism in the online environment. It is urged that future researchers look more deeply into these topics. However the study of online based news is fairly new, so this study and its results are satisfactory for now.

Traditional print newspapers are evidently a dying tradition in contemporary global culture. The more the world moves away from the use of paper and moving into a digital age, print newspapers will cease to exist. Albeit an immensely slow process, the day will come, as already arrived in America (the world's superpower). It is therefore beneficial to begin studies around online news. Granted South Africa is still by and large still very far from experiencing the death of print newspapers, one can be certain that editors are aware of the shift, seeing that many popular newspapers have online distributions. The online environment is increasing and young people's source for news is predominantly internet based. Blogs and online newspapers were excluded from this study so as to achieve a general feel of the data from an aggregator which pulls its articles from other newspapers. However, it is certainly worth exploring whether internet news sources are sending the same messages as newspapers. If they are not, how do these

sources differ? If online news and blogs are the future of crime reporting, future research on this topic should reflect that.

6.3. Recommendations

There should be a number of approaches that should be employed by the online news media when reporting en violent crimes. Information of the violence should be given with regard to the community. Violence put in a particular context can help evade misconceptions. What is 'normal' and can be prevented and what is uncommon and unavoidable should be clearly shown in reports, not all crime should be reported in such a general manner. However, the media is under pressure to sell advertising and gain readership online, which is achieved by reporting newsworthy stories. Consequently however, it is only newsworthy stories that gain privilege over community concerns. I could further propose that newsworthiness be reassessed and redefined. The newsworthiness of an event is decided upon by newsmakers based on what they think the audience wants to know about.

Jewkes (2004) proposed the elements that constitute newsworthiness. These elements have been undergoing refinement since their inception in 1965 by Galtung and Ruge. They ought to be refined again to include elements that would help in avoiding moral panics and to some degrees assist in the alleviation of crime. Being a criminology student and not a student of media, I dare not suggest elements of newsworthiness, but merely add a comment. There should be an alliance between moral entrepreneurs and news agencies. Stronger cooperation between the media and other stakeholders in violence reporting could result in a better picture of the proportion of violence that may be considered violent in the country. This would ultimately bring some perspective to the context of what the news media constructs as rampant violence in South Africa.

In this study victims and perpetrators were clearly classified by race. This results in the production personalised white, middle-class female, blameless victims and homogenous young, black, poor, violent male perpetrators. It has been shown that black mates are disproportionately victims of murders however, and that violent crime is prevalent in environments characterised by marked social inequality and poverty. This is also true for gender. For example, while females only account for 11% of all violent deaths in South Africa (Burger, Gould & Newham, 2014), an overwhelming majority of the reports in this study concerned female victims.

The existent gap between the criminal justice system and news media can be bridged by law enforcement agencies being more open to the media. Journalist would have no need to go out following leads on stories and possibly causing more harm than good. Establishing dialogues between law enforcement and media furthers this ideal. Law enforcement should:

- Use news agencies as a voice for publicising concerns about crime.
- Call for meetings with news agents to establish how they should engage with each other.
- Ensure that officers adhere to policies concerning media relations.
- Give officers the information they are permitted to give to the press.

Training classes can be developed to assist with the process. The media can also enhance the relationship. Despite the fact that majority of crime related stories mention police, there is no evident policy governing relations between newsmakers and police. Such policies should be formulated to benefit both agencies involved.

Journalistneed to be aware the sensitivities of some cases and report them accordingly. Not all information pertaining to a case is meant to be released. Journalists tend to ignore requests from officers not to report on certain aspects of the crime. When information is denied a journalist, they usually find an alleged witness who will feed them the information they want. The accuracy of the information is of little relevance (Vandenberg, Brennan & Chesney-Lind, 2013). Due to serial reproduction, what a witness recollects could be completely erroneous. Reporters have to respect the privacy of investigations so as not to disturb the process. Journalists usually have to cover a whole assortment of events and issues. This would mean no special skills are developed by the journalist in one particular field of events. In this regard, it is recommended that a group be developed that will liaise with police, since they are the gate keepers of the criminal justice system. Familiarity and trust will be fostered if officers see the same faces.

It is quite possible for the criminal justice and news media can coexist. Each of these agencies can serve similar yet different tasks according to their agendas and together form a tool for combating crime mare effectively. For this coexistence to for, there needs to be a strong relationship between news agencies and the different parts of the criminal justice system, mainly police, and news agencies. It is critical for relationships to be established before incidents are reported on. Communication is key to a healthy relationship. If ultimately how newsworthy events are reported on affects policy, the government should have rights, without breaking other rights, to control how media chooses to paint the picture of violent crime. .

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