Cinéma Vérité?

Australian Film, Young Lebanese-Australian Men and the Performance of Identity

Lisa Thompson

University of Sydney

Cinéma Vérité?

Australian Film, Young Lebanese-Australian Men

and the Performance of Identity

Lisa Thompson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Arts with Honours

Department of Sociology and Social Policy

University of Sydney, 2009

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As anyone who has been involved is no doubt aware, this magnum opus has been a labour of love, marked by roadblocks at almost every turn.

I would firstly like to acknowledge and thank those who generously gave of their time and of themselves in contributing to the research, for without you, this project would never have eventuated. Special thanks must go to the fantastic people at BYDS, who dedicated many hours to facilitating the research process, and were crucial to gaining access to the community.

I am also indebted to my supervisor, Dr Rebecca Scott Bray. I hope upon hope that this year has not turned her off Honours supervision for life, and am eternally grateful for the tireless input, laughs and support that saw the project through to completion.

Finally, and most importantly, I want to thank my partner Tom; in a way, this is his thesis too, because he has shared with me every minute of the joy, exhilaration, and heartache of the Honours process, and kept me sane for the duration.

ABSTRACT

Australian popular media has stereotyped young Lebanese-Australian men as 'violent misogynists'; subsequently, young Lebanese-Australian men have been criminalised as the deviant ethnic 'other'. Recently, however, a number of films have emerged that have attempted to challenge these stereotypes through a variety of mechanisms. This research aims to examine the role of stereotypes in identity-formation among young Lebanese-Australian men, and to explore their representation through characters and issues depicted within recent films. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with men who had been involved in filmmaking; these interviews explored the tensions inherent within the intersection of masculinity and ethnicity in the negotiation of everyday life, and the situational mobilisation of popular stereotypes in the performance of identity. While these results may be particular to the target group, this project illuminates the complexity of identity and the potential for empowerment and active resistance against racism and marginalisation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

> "If law is the mailed fist of the ruling class, then those hammered down by that fist, those criminalised and marginalised and made outlaws, carry with them at least the seeds of progressive opposition and transgression, offering at minimum a broken mirror in which to see power and its consequences" (Ferrell 2007: 97).

This thesis adds another dimension to a dialogue that has played out within public discourse since the beginning of ethnic migration, but particularly within the past decade: the negative stereotyping and criminalisation of young Lebanese-Australian men within the popular media[1]. This research sits within a larger conversation about the experience of ethnic minorities in Australia, particularly in terms of identity construction around "hidden injuries" of racism, and their position on the margins of working-class society (Poynting, et al. 1999: 59).

Prominent contributors to this body of work, scholar Scott Poynting and colleagues (2003a), reference the concept of 'protest masculinity' to characterise a specific form of resistance against racism enacted by young Lebanese-Australian men (Connell 1995; Poynting, et al. 2003a). Connell's original notion explored regional dimensions of masculinity among sections of the British working class marginalised by unemployment;

---

[1] For example, see Collins 2003; Collins 2005; Collins et al. 2000; Dagistanli 2007; Dunn et al. 2004; Frost 2008; Gleeson 2004; Grewal 2007; Humphrey 2007; Poynting 2008; Poynting and Noble 2003; Poynting et al. 2003; Poynting et al. 2004a; Poynting et al. 2004b; Saeed 2007; Warner 2007.

Poynting and his colleagues, however, extend this work by acknowledging the further complexity that ethnicity adds to this experience (Noble and Tabar 2002; Poynting, et al. 2004b; Tabar 2007). Other scholars gesture toward the "criminalisation of culture", and accordingly, the "culturalisation of crime" within the experience of young Lebanese-Australian and Muslim-Australians throughout the past decade (Humphrey 2007: 9); since 9/11, cultural differences have been characterised in terms of risk, whereas previously they have been framed around incompatibility. Furthermore, explanations of deviancy have increasingly been located within aspects of culture when applicable to Muslims or individuals with Middle-Eastern heritage. It is apparent from the literature that the young Lebanese-Australian man has been dehumanised, and constructed as the deviant ethnic 'folk devil', and by way of their positioning as the culturally dominated, the effect of a response to such representation is notably absent from this vast body of work. Cohen's (1972) concept of the moral panic was central to attempts to understand the negative representation of young Lebanese-Australian men during this time (Dagistanli 2007; Poynting, et al. 2004b; Warner 2004). Mobilised primarily to characterise widespread over-exaggerated public concern about a behaviour or social group, the concept of moral panic emphasises the media-perpetrated construction of the young Lebanese-Australian man as a primary site of social anxiety.

During the media coverage of the series of group sexual assaults within south-western Sydney during 2000 – 2001 (commonly known as the 'Sydney gang rapes', hereafter referred to as such), one could not ignore the saturation of popular media with hysterical calls for action by the

Muslim and Lebanese communities, outraged that 'they' could allow such heinous crimes to happen to 'our' women. During this time, it was difficult to find substantial competing cultural images within public discourse. However, with the recent release of films such as *Cedar Boys* (2009) and *The Combination* (2009), issues surrounding the experience of young Lebanese-Australian men were returned to the forefront of the social imagination after lying relatively dormant for some time, and the question emerged – why these films at this time? Taking up this question, the thesis examines these films as a way of interrogating the effect of negative media representation on the self-perception of young Lebanese-Australian men, and how they perceive others to view them. These films now constitute a set of images about Lebanese-Australian men other than the media images previously privileged in scholarship. As such, film was chosen as an organising focus for the thesis precisely because filmmaking by members of the Lebanese-Australian community is introducing a different set of images into the cultural landscape at this time. The thesis is interested then, in reflecting further on the issues of criminality and identity addressed within the films in conversation with the experiences and views of young Lebanese-Australian men involved in filmmaking.

Exploring the experiences of four young Lebanese-Australian men via an analysis of community filmmaking, this research will highlight the key issues surrounding growing up as a second-generation migrant in Australia, particularly focusing on their experience of media-perpetrated stereotypes. In investigating these concerns, this project aims to enable young Lebanese-Australian men to respond to their negative representation, and

effective silencing within wider social and cultural discourse. Secondly, this research will critically analyse the discursive construction of identity within recent mainstream films focusing on the Lebanese-Australian community, and thus, explore young Lebanese-Australian men's experience of negotiating the self-concept against the backdrop of competing cultural imagery,

This thesis is organised around five chapters. Chapter one critically reviews key concepts and theoretical frameworks underpinning this research. Chapter two outlines methodological considerations guiding the research process and design. Chapters three and four analyse narrative and textual data; the third chapter examines thematic and content-based representation within two recent films focusing on the Lebanese-Australian community, while the fourth chapter builds upon this data by exploring participants' perceptions of these representations, juxtaposed against their experiences within the community through semi-structured interviews.

Adopting this framework, this thesis illuminates the complexity of identity among young Lebanese-Australian men. The extent to which this group internalise a discursively constructed deviant identity appears to be contextual, and operates on a number of levels. While some young Lebanese-Australian men are largely resilient against popular stereotypes and on occasion enact a deviant identity in resistance to the injury of racism, more susceptible young men transition between this strategic mobilisation, and appropriating the deviant identity within their self-concept. Furthermore, while their representation within recent mainstream

film is positioned as 'honest' and 'authentic', the tenuous relationship between image and reality is highlighted within young Lebanese-Australian men's responses to such characterisations. This demonstrates how identity is both influenced by and constitutive of social and cultural discourse generally.

1. LITERATURE & THEORY

The intersection of masculinity and ethnicity within identity among young Lebanese-Australian men provides for a diverse network of influences and issues, and as such, this chapter reviews a wide body of literature that underpins the conceptual and theoretical workings of this research. Drawing from the fields of sociology, criminology, and psychology, this chapter presents a broad framework through which to understand the complex confluence of structural, social, and individual factors implicated in the experience of young Lebanese-Australian men. This chapter will explore concepts of stereotyping, prejudice, and stigma to contextualise the social position of young Lebanese-Australian men; complementing this literature, this chapter will draw on cultural criminological understandings of the discursive relationship between culture and imagery as a way to later explore the importance of cultural images on the identity-formation process.

1.1 Race and Ethnicity

As societies throughout the world become increasingly globalised, and accordingly multicultural, tensions in relations between different ethnic groups have attracted increasing academic attention. The sheer volume of literature relating to the concept of race, and accordingly prejudice and racism, problematises any attempt to present an overview of the body of literature; however, in broad terms, the most significant development in the

field might be identified in changes in the dynamics of prejudice and discrimination in response to perceived difference.

A hypothesis of 'new' racism appeared in response to supposed differences centring on aspects of culture; while it does not explicitly postulate the cultural superiority of one group, 'new' racism highlights a seemingly insurmountable incompatibility between values and lifestyles (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991; Barker 1981; Wetherell and Potter 1992). Sentiments of 'new' racism, while less direct than those associated with more overt forms of discrimination, have been mobilised recently in nationalist rhetoric within popular media and political campaigns to emphasise the dangers associated with liberalising national 'borders' (Frost 2008; Gibson, et al. 2002; Humphrey 2007; O'Doherty and Augoustinos 2008; Poynting 2008; Poynting and Mason 2008).

In response to cultural understandings of differences in human behaviour, the literature has documented real and detrimental effects for ethnic minority groups, particularly those of low socio-economic status (SES) in Western societies, subsequent to socially constructed categorisations like race and ethnicity. These concerns centre on life outcomes, particularly in terms of health and general wellbeing (Croll, et al. 2002; Krieger, et al. 1993; Thumboo, et al. 2003; Verkuyten 2008; Williams 1990), education (Biedinger, et al. 2008; Briscoe and Oliver 2006; Mamon 2004; Payne 2006), and employment (Coates and Carr 2005; Humphrey 2007; Mukherjee 1999). Given the evidence linking inequalities in life outcomes for minority ethnic groups with stigma, racism and discrimination (Allison

13

1998; Braddock and McPartland 1987; Briscoe and Oliver 2006; Coates and Carr 2005; Collins, et al. 2000; Verkuyten 2008; Yinger 1994), this thesis will now examine these processes to further illuminate the nature of inter-ethnic relations.

1.2 Prejudice and Stigma

Drawing from Allport's (1954) seminal thesis, some important definitions to be found within the sociological and social psychological bodies of literature identify two dimensions of prejudice: negative emotion directed at an outgroup, and a faulty belief or stereotype about this group derived from information in the social environment (Taylor and Pettigrew 2000). The literature does not differentiate between racism and prejudice, and suggests that the two terms can be used interchangeably (Quillian 2006).

Furthermore, Phelan, Link and Dovidio (2008) suggest that there are considerable similarities underlying models of prejudice and stigma, and that the two concepts are not mutually exclusive; as such, the two bodies of literature can be examined simultaneously to further illuminate these processes. While considerable definitional variation exists within the literature, Goffman (1963) suggests that stigma indicates the position of an individual who is unable to attain full social acceptance due to the possession of an attribute that is "deeply discrediting". Jones and colleagues (1984) echo Goffman's suggestion that stigma can be seen as a relationship between an attribute and an associated stereotype, and Link and Phelan (2001) include in the definition a component of discrimination, or a behavioural extension of prejudiced attitudes. Thus, overall, stigma

can be seen as a process of the activation of negative stereotypes in response to a discrediting attribute, that enacts the expression of prejudice through the discrimination and status loss of a stigmatised individual, or group.

Based on psychological understandings of outgroup differentiation, the literature around prejudice, stigma and racism characterises a sufficiently moderate constructionist approach that acknowledges the objective harms associated with social constructions of race, and outlines three mechanisms by which stigma/prejudice operates: automatic stereotype activation, self-stereotyping, and stereotype threat.

Automatic stereotype activation is said to increase stereotype-consistent behaviour by the stigmatised group, thus leading to stereotype threat and self-fulfilling prophecy (Darley and Fazio 1980; Dion 2001; Shih, et al. 2002; Wheeler and Petty 2001). Merton's (1948) concept of the self-fulfilling prophecy is perhaps the most important in the stigma process, in its ability to capture the vicious cycle of stereotyping and behaviour by the stigmatised group. In line with this thinking, within the Australian context, the more that negative stereotypes of young Lebanese-Australian men are disseminated through public discourse, the greater the expectation that this stigmatised group will behave consistently with those stereotypes, and when this expectation is upheld, negative stereotypes are reinforced as 'accurate' and further perpetuated.

This literature also highlights the importance of culturally held negative stereotypes in the context of how individuals see themselves, their interpretation of social situations, and others' motives in these contexts. According to the stigma-induced stereotype threat model, individuals constantly strive to maintain a positive self-image; stereotype threat occurs when an individual is concerned that they will be judged on the basis of a stereotype, or confirm pre-existing generalisations about their group (Shelton, et al. 2006). Stereotype threat has been empirically demonstrated to affect performance in educational settings (Cohen and Garcia 2008; Steele and Aronson 1995), and moderate behaviour in interethnic interactions (Davis, et al. 2006; Shelton, et al. 2006; Shih, et al. 2007; Wout, et al. 2009). This thesis will mobilise the concepts of stereotype threat and self-fulfilling prophecy in a performative sense to explore the tensions inherent within the relationship between the image (such as the media of cinematic image) and reality in examining the representation of young Lebanese-Australian men within recent mainstream film. Accordingly, of crucial concern is the effect of their representation on the way this group see themselves, and their perceptions of how others view them.

Taken together, the stigma/prejudice literature implicates stereotypes as both a direct stigmatiser, and a moderating force for stereotype-consistent behaviour in stigmatised groups that can lead to the perpetuation of negative stereotypes and further stigma. In the Australian context, it has been argued that the imbrication of public discourse with negative stereotypes of minority ethnic groups is no more prevalent than within the

Howard liberal government's (Poynting 2008: 5) national law and order agenda, with a focus on 'border security', and protecting Australian 'values' against religious fundamentalism, ethnic gangs, illegal immigrants and terrorists (Humphrey 2007; O'Doherty and Augoustinos 2008; Poynting and Noble 2003). Specifically, the amplification of concerns around ethnic 'gangs' and sexual violence into moral panics has had the effect of discursively constructing young Lebanese-Australian men as the deviant ethnic 'other' (Grewal 2007).

While this literature points to specifically media-driven processes underpinning the criminalisation of young Lebanese-Australian men within public discourse, the dynamics of their cultural representation appear to have shifted during recent years. This is evidenced by the emergence of productions within the cultural landscape that seek to both challenge media-driven stereotypes of young Lebanese-Australian men, and to engage in a wider dialogue and depiction of their experiences. One such production is *East West 101* (2009), a television series centring on a team of police officers in Sydney. Constable Zane Malik is a Lebanese-Australian Muslim man, street-wise, intelligent, and noble. He is constructed as the metaphoric bridge between the Anglo- and ethnic minority (primarily Middle-Eastern) worlds, and contrasted against Detective Sergeant Ray Crowley, a xenophobic and volatile Anglo-Australian. Dealing primarily with themes of crime, racism, and socio-economic disadvantage, *East West 101* is a serial drama that explores the emotional and psychological issues faced by an ethnic minority police officer, while urging the potential for the Anglo- and Lebanese-Australian

communities to live symbiotically. The emergence of this production, combined with other mainstream films such as *Cedar Boys* (2009) and *The Combination* (2009) that gained mainstream and commercial success both nationally and internationally, represents the production of images to fill the gap in the cultural landscape which has not adequately told the stories of the Lebanese-Australian community. This thesis will now explore the confluence of negative imagery constructed by the media in representation of young Lebanese-Australian men since 9/11.

1.3 Media Representation and Young Lebanese-Australian Men

It is widely documented that the media has played an important role in shaping and disseminating negative stereotypes about Arab-Australians through its representation of recent media events, including the 9/11 terrorist bombings (referred to herein as 9/11) (Aly 2007; Dunn, et al. 2004; Frost 2008; Kabir 2007; Osuri and Banerjee 2004; Poynting 2002a; Poynting 2008; Poynting and Mason 2008; Poynting, et al. 2004b), moral panics surrounding ethnic proclivity toward crime (Collins 2005; Collins and Poynting 2000; Collins, et al. 2000), 'queue-jumping' asylum seekers (O'Doherty and Augoustinos 2008), 'ethnic gangs' (Poynting 2002b); (Poynting, et al. 2004a; White 2007; White 1996), group sexual assaults perpetrated in south-western Sydney during 2000 – 2001 (Dagistanli 2007; Gleeson 2004; Grewal 2007; Warner 2004), and the Cronulla riots (Hyndman-Rizik 2008; Lattas 2007a; Lattas 2007b; Poynting 2006; Simmons and Lecouteur 2008).

Within the context of this media coverage, Arab-Australian men in particular were portrayed as the criminal ethnic 'other', a 'folk devil' to be feared and distrusted (Cohen 1972). Beginning with the 'Tampa Crisis' in 2001, public discourse demonstrated a firm opposition to Middle-Eastern asylum seekers (O'Doherty and Augoustinos 2008), which was further inflamed by 9/11, subsequent to which Muslims (and by implication, individuals of Middle-Eastern/Arabic-speaking extraction) were labelled a potential terrorist threat, and in opposition to Australian 'values' (Aly 2007; Kabir 2007; Kabir 2008a; Poynting, et al. 2004b).

In the wake of 9/11, the sociological literature identified religion as a primary site at which tensions are inflamed and cultural incompatibilities identified within the discourse of 'new' racism; in particular, the rise of "Islamophobia" has seen an unprecedented prejudice against, and discrimination of, Muslim and Arabic-speaking communities (Dunn, et al. 2004; Frost 2008; Poynting 2008; Poynting and Mason 2008; Saeed 2007). Through this lens of fear, Islam has been attributed a stereotype of fundamentalism, fanaticism, intolerance, and misogyny. As a result, its followers and other individuals who vaguely fit the cultural stereotype (in this instance, Arab/Middle-Eastern/Muslims) have been collapsed into one overarching categorisation of the Arab or Muslim 'other' within public discourse, thus holding entire communities to account for the actions of a few individuals (Dagistanli 2007; Grewal 2007; Humphrey 2007).

In response to this negative representation, there is a wealth of research pointing to the various forms of discrimination and harassment of this

group subsequent to 9/11, in the form of discrimination in employment, and physical, verbal, and emotional abuse (Dunn, et al. 2004; Frost 2008; Humphrey 2007; Kabir 2007; Kolig and Kabir 2008; Poynting 2002a; Poynting 2002b; Poynting and Noble 2004). This work gestures toward the pervasive ability of popular media to shape public opinion, and the detrimental impact of the orientation of behaviour and social relations around media-perpetuated stereotypes.

Extensive media coverage of a series of group sexual assaults perpetrated in south-western Sydney between 2000 and 2001 exemplified the potential for the media to create widespread social anxiety through biased reporting. The sexual assaults were claimed by newspaper reporters to have been racially motivated (Chulov and Gerard 2001; Chulov, et al. 2001; Gleeson 2004; Wockner 2002), and perpetrators were identified variously as Lebanese (Wockner 2002) and/or Muslim (Albrechtsen 2002; Humphrey 2007), and referred to as 'animals' (Knowles 2002), 'hunting for prey' (Wockner and Lalor 2002). This discourse identified 'gang rape' as an issue for which the Lebanese-Australian community should take responsibility (Devine 2002; Poynting, et al. 2004b), neglecting the fact that sexual assault is a common occurrence across time, space, and ethnic groups (Warner 2004).

The abovementioned confusion of ethnicity and religion not only demonstrated the role of lay perceptions in negative stereotyping and prejudice toward Lebanese-Australian men, but also served to implicate aspects of both culture and religion in public perceptions of minority

groups' proclivity toward crime (Collins 2003; Esses and Hodson 2006). Taken together, this literature highlights the media-driven processes that produced the popular stereotype of Lebanese men as violent misogynists (Aly 2007; Kabir 2007; Kabir 2008b; Kolig and Kabir 2008; Poynting 2002a; Poynting, et al. 2004a; Warner 2004).

Connell's (1991; 1995) notion of 'protest masculinity' has been invoked within this literature to reference extreme forms of sex-typed behaviours among young Lebanese-Australian men. Connell's original conception encompassed the possibility of 'positive' behaviours among young men who engage in forms of protest masculinity, such as empathy and nurturing tendencies, an assertion that has received empirical support (Gilmore 1993; Walker 2006); however, scholars such as Broude (1990) question the validity of this claim. According to Broude, protest masculinity is characterised largely by physical aggression and destructiveness, and suggested to reflect an unconscious defensiveness in response to internal conflict or insecurity about an individual's masculine identity. Furthermore, young men are seen to 'accomplish' masculinity through their involvement in crime (Collier 1998; Collier 2004; Messerschmidt 1993; Newburn and Stanko 1994); thus problematising the concept of masculinity in its contextual valorisation of crime, juxtaposed against social constructions of deviancy. In the strategic mobilisation of the concept of protest masculinity to characterise young Lebanese-Australian men, this literature points to the construction of working-class masculinity within public discourse as inherently criminogenic.

In line with this thinking, the socially constructed nature of deviance within society is mobilised within cultural criminological perspectives to examine the increasing criminalisation of marginalisation and everyday life (Hayward 2002; Muzzatti 2004), focusing particularly on the role of representation within media texts to broadly explore the intersection of cultural and criminal processes. Cultural criminology extends sociological histories of deviance, focuses on the centrality of culture and the image in understanding social constructions of deviance. These perspectives enable a new appreciation of the subject, while acknowledging enduring traditions of the past.

1.4 Cultural Criminology

By challenging the widely held assumptions about the nature of deviance, cultural criminology moves beyond a modernist understanding of criminogenic factors and adopts a broadly post-modern perspective, blurring the boundaries between structure and agency and contesting established conventions, locating structural dynamics within lived experience through the shaping of transgression by cultural forces (Ferrell 1999; Hayward and Young 2004).

For these authors, culture is the embodiment of the sites at which transgression becomes a crime in and of itself (Presdee 2004), and can be conceptualised as a series of 'loops', in the circular process by which the everyday recreates itself in its own image, and simultaneously emulates, shapes, and dictates the parameters of crime as society understands it (Ferrell, et al. 2008). Mobilising Stanley Cohen's (1972) suggestion that

the collective meaning of deviance is constantly in flux, cultural criminologists extend this metaphor, arguing that the speed with which this self-reflexive process occurs is amplifying, with each cultural loop spiralling back on itself, yet never quite returning to its origin, instead moving on to work on new experiences and meanings.

The value of this perspective for this thesis lies in its prioritising of the image to understanding how certain groups or behaviours are constructed as deviant, particularly in the context of the criminalisation of young Lebanese-Australian men. Reflecting on the trajectory of this representation, the centrality of the image becomes apparent, through the successive moral panics about ethnic gangs and Lebanese 'gang rapists', subsequent to biased media coverage around terrorist attacks and the Sydney gang rapes. In this case, the written word (and its associated imagery) became the primary weaponry with which social and cultural discourse constructed young Lebanese-Australian men as inherently criminal.

In line with this thinking, cultural criminologists emphasise the tendency for culture/crime to imitate art, and art to imitate culture/crime, as exemplified, for example, by the Columbine High School shooters stating their motivations for the crimes as being violent films (Young 2009), and the production of 'amateur fight videos' among teenagers in the US for no reason other than youthful recreation (Ferrell, et al. 2008). In this way, the reflexive process of the production and consumption of these representations becomes evident, in that cultural products such as films

exist as both a reflection and a refractor of values and social norms for absorption, and thus dissemination through the performance of culture (Ferrell 1999; Presdee 2000; Young 2009).

While the development of these perspectives offers a unique lens through which to view the criminal act, concerns about the subjectivism of cultural criminology re-ignited the debate between structure and agency in the discursive construction of crime (Hall and Winlow 2003; O'Brien 2005; Presdee 2004). Ferrell's response to this criticism is to suggest that cultural criminology aims to transcend this dichotomisation through the positioning of structural forces within real-life experience (2007). Irrespective of critics' concerns about its assumed political agenda, others consider cultural criminology to be a solution to Cohen's challenge to develop a structurally and politically informed version of labelling theory (Muzzatti 2006).

1.5 Labelling Theory

Originating within social constructionism, labelling theory is predominantly concerned with the negative effects of the application of labels. The labelling perspective explores the discursive construction of groups or behaviours as deviant, emphasising that their "behavior is a consequence of the public reaction to the deviance, rather than a consequence of the inherent qualities of the deviant act" (Becker 1963: 35). Within the context of deviancy, labelling theory has been employed particularly to examine recidivism, or the development of a criminal career (Caldas 1990; Chiricos, et al. 2007; Klein 1974; Lundman 1976; McGrath

2009; Meade 1974; Sherman and Berk 1984). Furthermore, it has demonstrated itself to be an enduring framework through which to understand juvenile 'delinquency' (Adams and Evans 1996; Horwitz and Wasserman 1979; Lotz and Lee 1999; Stum and Chu 1999; Wilson, et al. 2009). While labelling theory has not been mobilised to examine the application of labels to young Lebanese-Australian men in Australia, its central tenets align well with this project's aims, and will enable the research to redress limitations within existing literature by examining whether there has been an effect of explicit labelling on this group.

Perhaps the most salient aspect of labelling theory for this project is the assertion of an internalisation of the deviant identity. While Becker refers to it in terms of "committing the improper act and being publicly caught at it" (1963: 32), the application of a deviant label has important implications for an individual's self-concept, irrespective of whether it is in response to an actual or perceived infraction. Labelling theory asserts that the more intensely and consistently the deviant label is applied, or when the individual is not able to access alternate paths to conformity (such as the continued negative stereotyping and moral panics about young Lebanese-Australian men), the more likely they are to internalise the deviant identity and fall into a criminal career, or "secondary deviance" (Becker 1963; Schur 1971; Tittle 1975).

Through marking, identifying, defining and segregating the individual as deviant, it is suggested that the labelling process produces, through conscious and sub-conscious suggestion and emphasis, the criminal

characteristics inscribed upon them originally by their deviant label. In this context, labelling theory would evidence its arguments by suggesting that Lebanese-Australian men have actualised negative representations perpetrated by the popular media. Hirschi (1975), however, rejects this assertion in its lack of consistency with the sparsely available evidence; this proposition, in fact, forms the central critique of labelling theory and its application to deviance (Hagan 1974; Tittle 1975; Wellford 1975). Insofar as labelling theory is criticised for the relative difficulty of empirically examining its underlying tenets, this thesis aims to complement the existing body of knowledge by exploring the assertion of the internalisation of a deviant identity, within the context of the negative representation of young Lebanese-Australian men within public discourse. Through mobilising labelling theory's focus on the effect of the application of labels, in synthesis with the importance of culture in understanding social constructions of deviance, this thesis gestures towards the importance of the image in the negotiation of identity. While the literature emphasises the role of the image in constructing groups as deviant (as in the moral panic), another reading of this proposition might indicate the possibility for the production of an alternate set of images to construct another narrative in representation of this group.

As this chapter has identified, the popular media stereotyping of young Lebanese-Australian men as the deviant ethnic 'other' has been widely documented in the literature, and a glaring limitation of this representation lies within its inherent bias. Reflecting the media's ability to construct and reproduce pre-existing power structures (Jakubowicz, et al. 1994), the

position and experience of the young Lebanese-Australian male is notably absent; thus, a study affording this group an opportunity to explore and respond to their negative representation within public discourse is long overdue.

Further, the recent success of mainstream movies focusing on young Lebanese-Australian men denotes the potential for resistance against negative stereotyping, irrespective of the group's social position; and there is a proliferation of literature suggesting that film is an apposite medium through which to interrogate ethnic identity and experience (Berg 2002; Giardina 2003; Ibrahim 2007; Jakubowicz 1994; Khatib 2006; Molina Guzman 2006; Noriega and Lopez 1996; Ravi 2008). As this thesis will demonstrate, the production of a dissonant set of imagery in resistance to bias representation can have powerful and tangible effects for the group that they aim to portray. While these studies do not extend to the Lebanese-Australian community, this thesis hopes to complement this literature through its exploration of the tensions between image and reality in the representation of identity among young Lebanese-Australian men within recent mainstream film, and the function of film for this group.

If the fields of past inquiry critically explored in this chapter may be seen as a concomitant of the social climate, it is timely to consider the possible function and effects of emerging representations. Correspondingly, this chapter has outlined select concepts through which the following analysis unfolds. Given the widespread success of recent films produced by and focusing on the Lebanese-Australian community, a new era may be

dawning for the representation of this group within social and cultural discourse. Evidently, society is receptive to exploring the issues faced by ethnic minority youth, thus this thesis aims to present an alternate 'screen' of imagery through which to view the young Lebanese-Australian man – one that more adequately captures the complexity of their identity

As such, this thesis aims to interrogate the representation of young Lebanese-Australian men within recent mainstream film, and in so doing, hear the stories of individuals from this group about their experiences of their representation within public discourse. Within this problematic, this thesis will examine the extent to which participants have internalised a deviant identity, and in recognising the inseparable link between identity and culture, provide an exegesis of the function of recent mainstream film for young Lebanese-Australian men. An appreciation for these key issues shapes the research process and design of this study – a consideration to which we now turn.

2. METHODOLOGY

This thesis operates within a qualitative framework, employing semi-structured interviews to gather data, and discourse analysis to analyse film and interview transcripts. Careful consideration was given to the research design to ensure that the methodology, and processes of data collection and analysis were aligned with the stated aims of the project, and to maximise the integrity of the research process as a whole.

2.1 The Qualitative Methodology

Qualitative research aims to explain human behaviour by focusing on the ways in which individuals arrange themselves and their environment, and how they make sense of these arrangements through "symbols, rituals, social structures, social roles" (Berg 2007: 8). Such methodology differentiates itself from quantitative work in that it is concerned with the depth, rather than breadth, of information (Ambert, et al. 1995); as such, qualitative research relies on methods of data collection that produce rich, thick descriptions (Geertz 1973; Ryle 1949).

The qualitative framework is particularly suited to this project for a number of reasons. Firstly, Ponterotto suggests that the thick descriptions characteristic of this type of research adequately capture the "voice" of participants (2006: 547), thus satisfying the first aim of the project in

enabling participants to speak to their experiences of being stereotyped within public discourse. Secondly, in its focus on in-depth and "intimate information about a smaller group of persons" (Ambert, et al. 1995: 880), a qualitative framework enables this thesis to deeply explore participants' experience of growing up in Australia; in particular, the relationship between identity-formation and any internalisation of racism and negative media-perpetuated stereotypes, and the representation and exploration of identities and social issues within community films.

Particularly in the context of reflecting on reactions to significant events (such as the saturation of media-driven stereotypes throughout the past decade), an individual can hold conflicting or ambiguous understandings of their experiences (Gray 2007); mobilising a dialogical approach can aid in clarifying these, and thus necessitate richer and more fine-grained self-reflexivity. In addition, given the subjective nature of the experiences that will be explored within the interview process, the qualitative framework is particularly valuable in terms of its flexibility in allowing the researcher to adopt new lines of inquiry as understanding deepens, rather than being limited to a rigidly structured research schedule (Patton 1990; Sarantakos 1998).

The qualitative framework has been utilised successfully in previous work to elicit highly in-depth responses about individual experiences of growing up as part of an ethnic minority (Aly 2007; Collins and Poynting 2000; Poynting and Noble 2004; Poynting, et al. 2003a; Poynting, et al. 2003b; Vasta 1993; Verkuyten 2008). Thus, the qualitative methodology appears

most apposite to satisfy the aims of the project, and to maximise the integrity of the research process overall.

2.2 Validity and Objectivity

Validity, or the extent to which data is a 'true' reflection of reality (Schwandt 1997a), is a necessary methodological consideration for both quantitative and qualitative research, and was pertinent to this study in its examination of the representation of Lebanese-Australian men in recent films. Issues around validity tie into an ongoing debate among social scientists as to the objectivity and legitimacy of knowledge claims made within qualitative research. For observations in research to be valid, by definition, they must also be objective (Denzin 1996). However, criticisms levelled at qualitative research implicate its moral dimension in limiting the ability of researchers to 'objectively' interpret representations of reality (Schwandt 1997b). This methodological aim originates in positivistic science that adopts a realist ontology and objectivist epistemology in its assumption of the existence of objective knowledge that can be observed, and thus studied; an aspiration that was taken up by quantitative researchers within the conventional social sciences (Polkinghorne 2007).

A "reform" movement within the discipline responded to this criticism by suggesting that there are aspects of social reality that cannot be captured adequately by means of evidence and arguments conventionally used to validate knowledge claims (Polkinghorne 2007: 472), and acknowledging that the notion of 'truth' in representation is socially constructed around normative (thus, intersubjective) frameworks for each form (Denzin 1996:

237). This is particularly relevant to an important dimension of the data analysed by this project, however the relevance of a criterion of 'objectivity' is questionable; in interrogating the representation of young Lebanese-Australian men in recent films, this project aims not to assume their absolute objectivity, but to untangle the complex interplay of subjective and politically-driven tensions surrounding their construction.

According to Polkinghorne (2007), the aim of the qualitative researcher is to minimise the distance between articulated meaning, and the experienced meaning itself. Vis-à-vis considerable evidence to suggest that the characteristics of the researcher can elicit variations in responses from participants from religious or ethnic minority groups, maximising the integrity of participant responding was a foremost consideration in the research design (Ambert, et al. 1995; Barrett and McIntosh 1985; Carby 1982; Sarantakos 1998; Young 2004). Academic scholarship appears divided as to the ability for 'outsiders' to be able and understand the experiences of participants from different genders or cultural groups; Saeeda Shah (2004) is a particularly vocal advocate for the position that 'outsiders', by virtue of their divergent cultural experiences, are unable to access the level of understanding required for effective intercultural research. This project is particularly ambitious in terms of testing the above concerns about perceived researcher-participant differences, in the sense that it will be interviewing across both gender and culture, thus will be well placed to explore the suggested difficulties associated with conducting intercultural research as an 'outsider'.

2.3 Ethical Considerations

A common issue in qualitative research pertains to participants divulging information during interview that they might later want to retract (Clark and Sharf 2007); in order to protect against this risk, participants were offered a copy of their interview transcript and given the opportunity to add, remove, or amend their answers. This measure was in combination with the standard procedures of obtaining informed consent and (if applicable) written consent to be personally identified within the study, and measures aimed at protecting the confidentiality of data, so that participants could feel confident that however candid their responses, their anonymity would be respected. All but one participant wanted to remain anonymous, thus greater care was taken to ensure that participants could not be personally identified by their responses.

2.4 Film Selection

Though generalisability is an ambition for some research within the social sciences (Ambert, et al. 1995), the focus of this project was to examine complex layers of meaning within select experiential and filmic contexts. The logic behind this decision was two-fold; filmmaking involving the Lebanese-Australian community is still a relatively small domain, and the unique confluence of factors surrounding the experience of Lebanese-Australian men and their representation necessitates an examination of films that concentrate on this group, thus only a small sample of films were suitable for analysis. The project selected two mainstream films, which were released in early and mid- 2009 and as such, being quite unique, the project was interested in their place in the social domain. At this point, it is

important to note the divergences between community and mainstream film; while community films are produced by and for a smaller target audience, mainstream film aims to engender widespread appeal and maximise revenue generation, thus, the two forms are vastly different in their ambitions. Given the limited access to community film, and the involvement of the study in exploring how images that engage a wider audience/dialogue redress gaps, it appeared more relevant to focus on mainstream film. As such, this research seeks to explore the characters, content, themes addressed within recent mainstream films depicting the Lebanese-Australian community in order to interpret the dialogue surrounding their experience of growing up in Australia.

2.5 Participant Recruitment

In consideration of these factors, the project sought primarily to draw on community contacts in order to recruit participants[2]. Recruitment of participants, however, was hindered considerably by time constraints due to the process of obtaining Ethics Committee approval, and by the fact that the researcher's community contacts were initially limited. Recruiting additional participants was further complicated because of film and television production schedules, which meant that many potential participants were engaged in production commitments. Gaining access to the community required significant effort in terms of establishing and maintaining relationships with referred contacts, which proved difficult in the limited timeframe. Some individuals voiced concerns about academics 'taking advantage' of their organisations and people in the past, and

---

[2] See *Appendix One* for a full listing of organisations approached about the project.

insisted on formal acknowledgement for taking part in the study. Ethical considerations around the need to maintain participant anonymity (unless written consent was obtained) were discussed with primary contacts from the organisation, and the issue resolved. Irrespective of these obstacles, the project recruited a satisfactory sample of participants in order to fulfil the stated aims.

2.6 Participants

Any individual over the age of 18 with experience in community filmmaking involving the Lebanese-Australian community was eligible to participate. In total, four male participants were recruited from a wide range of ages, between 20 to 38 years old[3]. Participants were recruited from a variety of roles within filmmaking, including writers, actors, producers, and directors, and three of the four participants were directly involved with the films that the project analysed. All but one of the participants was from a Lebanese background; while one identified himself as Muslim, only one other participant explicitly stated religious beliefs (Christian). The sample was admittedly narrow in some respects; primarily, ascertaining a larger pool of participants would have benefited the study. Furthermore, all participants were from metropolitan areas.

2.7 Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the preferred method of data collection for their ability to capture rich, fine-grained and in-depth information about issues through the communication of experience

---

[3] A matrix outlining participant characteristics is attached in Appendix Three

(Seidman 1998). For Keats, an interview is "a controlled situation in which one person, the interviewer, asks a series of questions of another person, the respondent" (2000: 1); however, this definition achieves very little in expressing the complex set of dynamics inherent within the research setting.

Seidman's articulation expands on the above in stating that "the very heart of what it means to be human is the ability of people to symbolise their experience through language", and captures in a most apposite fashion the close alignment between this method and the aims of the project (1998: 2). Rather than attempting to combine and distil the complex networks of participants' experience into quantitative figures, the interview as a research method "affirms the importance of the individual without denigrating the possibility of community and collaboration" (Seidman 1998: 7). Other scholars recognise the illuminating potential of the interview method in suggesting that "by listening enough, something might be learnt and something might be changed" (Schostak 2006: 1). In line with these suggestions, the project deemed a semi-structured interview format to be the most appropriate to facilitate its previously stated aims.

2.8 Data Analysis

This study utilised discourse analysis as a method of data analysis. Discourse analysis is primarily concerned with exploring the use of language and behaviour to enact social activities and identities; it highlights the performative nature of discursive construction through the mobilisation of language, actions, interactions, symbols, tools and objects

to reflect socially recognisable identities (Gee 2005). For this methodology the basic discursive unit is the "text", which may embody a variety of forms including written text, spoken word, pictures, film, symbols, and media (Phillips and Hardy 2002).

In this way, discourse analysis recognises texts as sites for the production and transformation of social meaning, and within their contexts, affords credence to the histories of the individuals responsible for their construction, and their positioning relative to other participants in relations of power (Kress 1995: 122). Locating ideology as residing within texts themselves, the method highlights the imbrication of language in social relations, and thus identifies social products as ideal sites through which to interpret the nexus of gender and ethnicity in identity formation against the backdrop of racism and media-perpetuated stereotypes (Fairclough 1995).

Scholars using discourse analysis focus on representations of experience as the subjective point of orientation from which to understand the complex set of dynamics underpinning them; various studies have engaged this methodology to examine the way in which both verbal (Van Dijk, et al. 2000) and film-based (England 2004) texts enact and reproduce structures of power and cultural hegemony. Film as a discursive medium is important in terms of the fluid relationship between image and reality; in an increasingly uncertain and dispirited late-modern society, film has the potential to either anchor audiences to faithful representations of everyday life, or offer stereotyped, manufactured depictions too far from audiences' experience to engage with.

It is from within this vast disparity that the project derives most interest; while it is suggested that mainstream film and visual culture generally fulfils a function of escapism for audiences (Hill and Church Gibson 2000), the contextual and stylistic factors surrounding this form of film denotes a specific discursive relationship between the image and its consumers. In offering audiences a visual approximation of reality imbued with a specific set of structural dynamics, norms, and values, mainstream film can function to either reinforce or normalise its representation of everyday life; scholars gesture toward the mutually reinforcing relationship between identity and culture (Ferrell 1999; Van Dijk, et al. 2000; Weedon 2004), thus it is crucial to recognise the potential for visual culture to influence individuals' self-concept

While this methodology has not been drawn on previously to examine identity-formation within the Lebanese-Australian community specifically, studies using national and community film to explore identity-formation in other minority ethnic groups are well-documented (Berg 2002; Guzman 2006; Ibrahim 2007; Powell 2005; Ravi 2008). According to Durmaz (1999), film can be conceptualised as a surface on which to write social life, thus this method is well-placed to examine the intersection of image and reality within the representation of young Lebanese-Australian men. Triangulating film analysis with interview data enables the project to better understand this relationship through its ability to glean direct insight into the constitution of identity among young Lebanese-Australian men.

Underpinning the theoretical framework of discourse analysis is the assumption of a reciprocal relationship between discourse and identity; identity is constitutive of discourse, and is subsequently discursively shaped by it. This tension between active and passive identity construction forms a central area of concern for the project, and is summarised appositely by Stuart Hall, who sees identity "as a 'production', which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation" (1990: 222). In this way, the imagery embedded within social and cultural discourse forms a central point of orientation from which individuals self-reflexively negotiate identity. Representation, in this sense, can take many forms; particularly within the context of negative stereotyping of young Lebanese-Australian men throughout the past decade, the project's value lies in its exploration of concomitant cultural products that have emerged from the community during this period, juxtaposed against images of deviancy and criminality as perpetrated by the media.

In summary, this chapter has outlined the qualitative framework used to achieve an analysis that enfolds participants' experiences with cultural products to explore the relationship between image and reality in the discursive construction of identity. This thesis will now move to an analysis of two recent mainstream films whose plots and narratives centre on young Lebanese-Australian men. Chapter Three examines the representation of these men within these texts, and begins to consider the function of film for young Lebanese-Australian men; a consideration that

finds further development in Chapter Four where the analysis draws directly on interview data.

3. VISUAL CULTURE AND

THE LEBANESE-AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY

Though migrants of Lebanese descent have been an integral part of Sydney for over a hundred years[4], social products reflecting on their experiences within the community have only become apparent since the 1950's, beginning with Maslyn William's *Mike and Stefani* in 1952, and *They're a Weird Mob* in 1966. Notwithstanding their inclusion of characters from the ethnic 'other', which was a revolution for Australian media of the time, these productions served to reinforce the Anglo-centric colonialist ideology that underscored them, and it would be some time before an authentic migrant voice was heard.

Parody productions such as *Fat Pizza the Movie* (2003) characterised the emergence of the migrant experience within mainstream Australian cinema. Taking aim at issues such as 9/11; the Woomera detention centre riots; 'boat people'; the disabled; overweight; Lindy Chamberlain; and numerous ethnic groups, *Fat Pizza* was lauded for its ability to shock, offend, and "laugh away many of life's bigger problems" (Keller 2003). *Fat Pizza* followed in the tradition of television production *Acropolis Now* (1989), an adaptation of the immensely popular stage comedy about Greek

---

[4] Sydney is said to be the hub of Middle-Eastern immigration, with 7 out of 10 (107 405 or 72.2%) of Australia's Lebanese immigrants settling there (Collins 2005:3), with the first having arrived in around 1878 (Humphrey 2000: 141).

migrants *Wogs Out of Work* (1987); while *Wogs Out of Work* was celebrated for its intelligent subversion of colonial discourse and rejection of Anglo ('skip') cultural hegemony, the characters in *Acropolis Now*'s were seen as the sacrificial lambs necessary to keep minority ethnic groups in the popular media, regardless of the tenor of their representation (Jakubowicz 1994).

Critics suggest that the representation of "harmless, infantile stupidity" of ethnic minorities functions as a tool to ameliorate deep-seated Anglo concerns about the threat posed by migrant groups to their employment, values, and well-being (Mitchell 1992: 4). Furthermore, members of the target audience argue that ethnic actors' self-deprecating humour is offensive, that they are "the buffoons that we as whites and as blacks and as migrants can all laugh together (at)" (PIE-O 1990). As Tony Mitchell remarked, "Australian comedy in the early 1990s shows few indications that a further stage can be reached in migrant representation in the mass media, where ethnicity no longer needs to be foregrounded … and migrant performers have space to play roles, both straight and comic, which do not require them to caricature or stigmatise their ethnicity" (1992: 10). Since this time, Australian visual culture has seen a shift from parodies of ethnic minority groups to dramatic representations, particularly within television and mainstream film.

While the negative newspaper and television coverage of young Middle-Eastern Australian men throughout the past decade has been well-documented, the confluence of events (such as 9/11 and the Sydney gang

rapes) presented an opportunity for this group to respond to their stereotyping, and criminalisation, through the creation of their own set of self-representations. Young Lebanese-Australians thus could capitalise on the paroxysm of fear that held the Australian public within a climate of paranoia generated by the government of the time (Frost 2008; Gibson, et al. 2002; O'Doherty and Augoustinos 2008; Poynting 2008), while engaging in a praxis of cultural performativity in resistance against popular stereotypes.

Two prominent examples of visual media that engaged popular audiences in dialogue around young Lebanese-Australian men's experience of negative representation are *Cedar Boys* (2009), written and directed by Serhat Caradee, and *The Combination* (2009), directed by David Field and starring writer George Basha. These films screened in cinemas months apart from each other in 2009, and received mixed receptions; *The Combination* was pulled from cinemas and then re-instated, after allegations of assaults among audience members and security personnel during screenings (Maddox 2009). Furthermore, in an unfortunate synchronisation of life imitating art, crew attended the film's premiere without Ali Haidar (who plays 'Zeus' in the film), who was remanded in prison for assault shortly beforehand (Sams and Kennedy 2009). *Cedar Boys*, however, was less controversial within news media, only making mention in another example of life imitating art, when one of the lead actors was refused entry to an exclusive Sydney bar in an alleged case of racial discrimination (Duff 2009).

This chapter will now move to synopsise the above films, and provide an analysis of their characters, themes, and content to examine their constructions of young Lebanese-Australian men, and the potential repercussions of these representations for the group that they portray.

3.1 Cedar Boys

Tarek (Les Chantery) is a young Lebanese-Australian man who lives at home with his parents and younger sister, and works as a panel beater in western Sydney. Tarek whiles away the days at his job fielding ethnic jokes from his co-workers, and dreaming of the day that he can start a workshop of his own. His cocky, sharp-witted friend Sam (Waddah Sari) is already trying to make a name for himself on the street, as an established small time drug dealer. Their intelligent, albeit downtrodden friend Nabil (Buddy Dannoun) leads a similar life of drudgery, cleaning rich peoples' apartments, until one day he becomes suspicious of the comings and goings of one of the apartment building's residents.

After suspecting that the apartment is being used to store drugs, Nabil tries to convince Tarek to get involved with his plan for a heist that could help them realise their dreams, so that Tarek can help his father (Tofeek Hany) out of the laborious late-night taxi work that supports their family, and to mount an appeal against his older brother Jamal's (Bren Foster) gaol sentence. Tarek is honest and hard-working and initially resists the offer, but his mind is made up when he meets Amie (Rachael Taylor), a beautiful blonde Eastern Suburbs girl who represents the life of Tarek's dreams; the three boys do the heist, and are convinced that their plan is bullet-proof.

3.2 The Combination

In a similar vein to Cedar Boys, *The Combination* is a gritty urban drama based in Sydney's western suburbs, and details the intense schoolyard rivalry between a Middle-Eastern and Anglo gang that spills over into the streets with dire and tragic consequences. The film opens with John (George Basha) returning home from prison, with a steely resolve to prevent his younger brother Charlie (Firass Dirani) from following the same trajectory. Charlie, however, is already embroiled in criminal dealings of his own; while they exist largely on the periphery of the film, Charlie's friends Mo, Tom, and Nipper flesh out the rest of the Middle-Eastern gang, who lock horns with Anglo boy Scott, and his group. Charlie's brother John's rage simmers just below the surface, and Charlie feels the full weight of it when he decides to go into business selling drugs for Ibo, a local drug-dealer.

Ibo partners Charlie with Zeus (Ali Haidar), an unravelled, troubled school friend, and the two are given a deadline, a haul of drugs, and guns to carry. John begins returning to the straight and narrow after finding a job at the local boxing gym, and meeting beautiful Anglo girl Sydney (Claire Bowen), but his new life and his family's safety are compromised by Charlie's increasing entrenchment within the criminal underworld, and John is forced to step in and correct Charlie's mistakes.

3.3 Film Analysis

At face value, *Cedar Boys* and *The Combination* appear to characterise and contextualise young Lebanese-Australian men in similar ways, and maintain parallel thematic trajectories; for example, they are both crime narratives set in the western Sydney suburbs, that detail the pathways of a group of young Lebanese-Australian men into deviancy. Upon closer inspection, however, marked differences between the two become apparent within the characters, themes, and content of the films. This chapter will now explore these divergences and intersections, and conclude with an exegesis of their function for the Lebanese-Australian community.

3.3.1 Characters

In *Cedar Boys*, Tarek is represented as the embodied working-class toiler trapped by his class position and cultural heritage, feeling that they dictate his course in life; which bars he can go to, who his friends are, which girls he can meet, even where he lives. Throughout the film, the audience is made aware of Tarek's internal battle between good and evil; early on, he is established in a position of vulnerability, as the subject of racial taunts from co-workers, never quite accepted by the circles in which he so desires to walk – he is forever an outsider looking in. Even to the extent that Nabil has to persuade him to be involved in the heist, and he is derided for being 'too good' to hang out at Lebanese clubs, Tarek exists on the periphery of belonging throughout the film. While Tarek's characterisation does not actively rebel against popular stereotypes, writer-director Serhat Caradee appeals to the audience's sympathies, ostensibly constructing Tarek as a likable symbol of humanity within a discourse that had previously

cemented young Lebanese-Australian men as the deviant ethnic 'other' (Humphrey 2007; Poynting, et al. 2004b).

Tarek's friends Sam and Nabil appear to superficially reflect the popular 'archetypes' of young Lebanese-Australian men, but scholars might suggest that these stereotyped characterisations are merely performative resistance against these ethnic generalisations (Pallotta-Chiarolli 1997; Poynting, et al. 2003b). Sam is carefully crafted as the "attractive criminal role model" spoken of by Caradee, in demonstrating the ease with which young Lebanese men are stereotyped to become enmeshed in crime (Urban 2009); I hesitate to echo Caradee's suggestion that these men "fall into" this lifestyle, however, as the film clearly reflects a complicated and reflexive decision making process.

Similarly, George Basha (writer and lead actor) establishes Charlie and his friends as impressionable young men who become transfixed by the seductions of crime in *The Combination*, but the fine line between guilt and innocence is crossed when Charlie's friend stabs another boy over a video game. After John bails Charlie out from the police station, Charlie remarks to him that he's different to John, he doesn't "wanna work at a gym for a lousy few hundred dollars, shovelling shit for some fuckin' Abo"; thus invoking the stereotype of the deviant ethnic 'other', juxtaposed against John's character of the redeemed sinner.

After acknowledging the subtle construction of Tarek as well-meaning but naïve in *Cedar Boys*, it is difficult to say that Charlie's character in *The*

Combination attracts equal sympathy. Rather than emphasising his humanity, Basha has amplified the derisive, criminal aspects of the popular stereotype of the young Lebanese-Australian man through Charlie's character; in this way, rather than attempting to present a realistic representation of young Lebanese-Australian men, *The Combination* presents the 'mythical' qualities of this community as entertainment (Jakubowicz 1994). While there are flashes of Charlie's innocence within the film, emphasising the characterisation of the juvenile delinquent subordinates any exploration of the complexity of identity, which *Cedar Boys* does so successfully.

Conversely, John appeals in a similar way to Tarek; throughout *The Combination*, his nobility and fierce loyalty are emphasised, and he is positioned as the redeemed sinner. While his entrance into the film shows his return from prison, and his moments of volatility throughout the film are sometimes questionable, the audience cannot help but be drawn to John as the saviour, particularly within the final scenes as he steps in to right Charlie's wrongs. However persuasive John is in comparison to Charlie, his characterisation is undeniably stereotyped; the audience sees little transition from prison to the outside world, he is immediately inserted into the role of the prodigal son. In this way, the film further oversimplifies the complexity of identity, thus the characters appear somewhat superficial, and unconvincing.

John and Sydney's characters negotiate the terrain of love against the backdrop of cultural difference, as highlighted by Sydney's xenophobic

parents (John Brumpton and Ruth McGowan), who constantly drown their

sorrows with alcohol, in response to Sydney dating an 'ethnic' man.

Sydney's parents are contrasted against the Lebanese characters in the film,

who laugh, dance, party, and eat heartily while the Anglo characters are

morose and dysfunctional. Thus, representations of Anglo cultural

superiority are challenged and the emerging function of film as resistance

for the Lebanese-Australian community becomes apparent (Berg 2002).

3.3.2 Issues of Identity

The Combination addresses a range of issues relating to the self, including

the delicacy of negotiating cultural differences within the context of love;

loyalty, family, and mateship; and the general tensions that arise within the

ethnic minority experience in Australia. Charlie's innocence and naivety is

highlighted within the film when he is shown vamping around his bedroom

with the gun from Ibo, pretending to be Scarface, when his mother knocks

on the door and interrupts the performance, returning him to the persona of

loyal and devoted Lebanese son. In plastering his room with posters of

rappers and gangster movie scenes, Charlie simultaneously valorises

stereotypes of ethnic criminality, and recalling the discursive relationship

between identity and culture (Weedon 2004), accordingly offers them as

worthy ambitions for young Lebanese-Australian men. Given the centrality

of racial conflict and youthful transgression within the film, rather than

viewing this display as evidence of self-stereotyping, one cannot help but

view the performative aspects of Charlie's seamless transition between

identities as support for the literature suggesting the enactment of ethnic

identity in response to hidden injuries of racism (Pallotta-Chiarolli and

Skrbis 1994; Poynting, et al. 1999; Poynting, et al. 2003a) and the increasing criminalisation of social life on the margins (Hayward 2002; Hayward and Young 2004; Muzzatti 2004).

Issues around ethnicity and identity within *The Combination* are firstly touched upon by Sydney, when she asks John whether he sees himself as an Australian. John replies somewhat bitterly that when his father took him to Lebanon, the Lebanese called him Australian, but at home, Australians call him a 'wog'; this exchange appears to challenge Poynting and colleagues' suggestion that the characterisation of young Lebanese-Australian men as lost between two cultures can be seen as an "ethnocentric misreading, or an exploitative and even racist misrepresentation" (2003a: 93). According to their research, these scholars suggest that young Lebanese-Australian men move fluidly and strategically between aspects of Lebanese and Australian cultures, and are actively engaged in a process of constructing hybrid identities that transcend the dichotomisation of the two cultures within Anglo-centric understandings of belonging; thus, this exchange appears to represent a facet of a superficial, 'syncretic' identity (Molina Guzman 2006). In this way, syncretic identities are characterisations composed of stereotypical aspects of a 'foreign' culture that are intentionally positioned within a text to improve its reading as an authentic representation.

Later in *The Combination*, John and Sydney are shown dining on Lebanese food, watching a bellydancer, and dancing the dabki, as though this routine is constitutive of everyday life as a Lebanese-Australian; inclusion of these

symbols of Lebanese culture arguably characterise further aspects of a syncretic identity (Molina Guzman 2006). Taken together, these elements of the film reinforce its foremost function as entertainment, and largely undermine the fluidity and hybridity of identity in its true form.

3.3.3 Racial Tensions

Racial tensions between the Anglo and Lebanese characters are highlighted during a retribution attack on Mo by the Anglo 'gang', during which Anglo boy Scott claims, "This is our country. We grew here, you fuckin' flew here", to which Mo retorts, "We came in planes, you came in chains". The problematics inherent within such hybridity are referred to in these scenes, but are backgrounded as secondary to the main crime plot (Poynting, et al. 2003a).

Momentum toward a predictably violent ending to *The Combination* gains as Zeus and the boys are watching Scott and his friends across the room at a nightclub; Zeus and Scott's eyes lock and they stride toward the centre of the room, grappling, as Zeus knocks Scott to the ground. Zeus retrieves his pistol, and says "it's us against them, can't you fuckin' see that?" as Charlie is heard trying to persuade him to back off. Zeus screams at Scott "tell him I'm Australian", and shoots him three times after being dissatisfied with his response. This attempt at referencing the nexus of identity and ethnicity, however, falls short of the mark in its contrived scripting and self-important violence. At the same time, the nightclub scene glorifies the deviant identity and its mobilisation of violence and weapon use, as Zeus turns around to view the onlookers' response to the shooting,

51

and blows imaginary smoke from the end of his pistol, like a John Wayne movie hero.

After this point, the plot twists unpredictably; as Charlie is walking home from school, Ibo drives up behind him and shoots him in the back as Charlie attempts to run away. The final scenes of the movie seem incongruous, somewhat disjointed, as Ibo and his bodyguard turn up to Charlie's funeral, and John confronts him the next day and unleashes his fury on him, leaving Ibo a bloody pulp while his neighbours watch on and cheer. John returns to his house as dusk is falling, where Sydney, his Mum and grandma are waiting; he and Sydney embrace, and the four of them walk inside and shut the door, while the credits roll.

Insofar as John's actions as the 'saviour' are more often than not underscored by unnecessary violence, his characterisation necessitates an important question – why is the crime narrative so central, if these films are positioned as faithful representations of young Lebanese-Australian men? In presenting an approximation of everyday life for audiences' entertainment, mainstream film blurs the boundary between image and reality, reinforcing the cultural criminological assertion of a "shifting interplay between the real and the virtual, the factual and the fictional" (Ferrell, et al. 2008: 123 - 124). When the delineation between what is real and what is fictional is ambiguous, it becomes easier to infer that an entire representation is authentic, irrespective of its divergence from the 'truth'. Thus, films such as *The Combination* perpetuate stereotypes of deviancy as authentic representations of young Lebanese-Australian men, and in so

doing, offer a deviant identity as a construction of the status quo to be appropriated by this group.

3.3.4 Crime and Personal Choices

The Combination is based on experiences from writer and lead actor George Basha's youth, offering a timely and forceful portrayal of the personal and interpersonal conflicts at the heart of the characters' everyday interactions. As with *Cedar Boys*, *The Combination* depicts the confluence of factors involved in the commission of crime, but explores the impact of these decisions more from the family's perspective. As explored above, *The Combination* is brash in its depiction of the pervasiveness of crime and violence within characters' lives, and Basha positions the film as "a powerful story to show what Australia is really like, this is what it really is" (Kinski 2009).

In similar thematic style to *The Combination, Cedar Boys* is a subtle exploration of the tensions inherent within the choices an individual makes, and the often conflicting influences on that decision making process. While the film acknowledges social issues of crime, it provides young Lebanese-Australian men with a voice of their own, portraying them with an apparent honesty and authenticity that has been absent within Australian cinema until this point. The film's tagline, "when you're on the outside, all you want is in" forms the crux of the message conveyed by Caradee, whose stark portrayal of the descent into a criminal lifestyle warns against the dangers of becoming enmeshed with the wrong crowd. Secondary to this theme of social exclusion are issues around love, ethnic identity and

mateship; however, these issues are afforded considerably less representation than the main plot.

Rather than attracting the perception of a superficial perpetuation of popular stereotypes, *Cedar Boys*' subtle exploration of how and why young Lebanese-Australian men become involved in crime presents an arguably more realistic, three-dimensional representation of this group than does *The Combination*.

Cedar Boys opens with an ominous depiction of what is to come, as three young men walk along a dimly lit corridor, faces fallen, carrying a large duffel bag. As they gesture to knock on the door of an apartment, the film flashes back to the preceding months before that moment, which would change all of their lives irreparably. After the boys steal the drugs, and begin to establish themselves within the night time streetscape, for a brief moment, Tarek is living the life he's always dreamed of, partying with Amie and her rich and beautiful Eastern Suburbs friends, and feels as if returning to his 'old life' is no longer an option.

Caradee only allows the audience a glimpse of the high-life that crime has afforded the boys, so the central theme of the film remains crystal clear – crime does not pay. The masterfully crafted act of revenge that ensues is a stark reminder of Caradee's intent with the film; in the end, nobody wins – as Tarek, making the wrong choices, is murdered. After mobilising his connections from his jail cell, the original owner is tipped off about the boys' identities, and arranges for his colleagues to meet with the boys in an

anonymous apartment building (their return to which forms the first scene of the movie) to return the drugs, Even though they do so, crying and pleading for forgiveness, one of the goons shoots Tarek in the head, and he is farewelled as a martyr.

3.4 Synthesis

Overall, *Cedar Boys* is a credit to the Lebanese-Australian community. It delves into the experience of growing up as a young man with Lebanese heritage in Sydney, subtly exploring the negotiation of the temptations of crime in response to issues of social exclusion. In representing these issues, the film supports the suggestion that the exclusion of minority ethnic groups from the lifestyles of the culturally hegemonic serves as propulsion toward crime for material ends (Young 1999; Young 2003). *Cedar Boys*, however, does not glorify crime in any sense; if anything, the film serves as a warning of its consequences.

The Combination is surprising in its representation of power relations between characters, subverting traditional understandings of Anglo cultural hegemony. Basha's confronting, and less-than-subtle exploration of overflowing racial tensions within Australian society is benefited by footage of the Cronulla riots, interspersed within the final scenes of the film. While it ostensibly exists as a sub-plot, the issues of ethnicity and identity dealt with throughout John and Sydney's relationship anchor the amplified stereotype of ethnic crime within the film; whether Basha's intent was to inflame the sensitivities of the audience or parody the

representation of young Lebanese men with his choice of characters and narrative, however, remains to be seen.

While *The Combination* is undeniably gripping in its drama, overall its glorification of crime and reinforcement of deviant stereotypes of young Lebanese men could serve as a negative influence on this demographic. The mainstream appeal and commercial success of *The Combination* and *Cedar Boys*, however, demonstrates that society is receptive to bringing the issues surrounding the migrant experience in Australia to the fore, and these films could pave the way for a re-opening of dialogue. In support of its success as an adjunct to this broader conversation, *Cedar Boys* was recently selected for screening within numerous international film festivals, including Chicago, Vancouver, Antalya (Turkey), and Dubai; thus positioning the issues surrounding young Lebanese-Australian men well to be received by a global audience.

3.5 Function of Film for Ethnic Minorities

The representation of young Lebanese Australian men within these films as prodigal son/deviant ethnic 'other' (much like a masculinised Madonna/whore dichotomy) has important implications in terms of dissecting the function of these texts for the young men that they depict. Tensions within the relationship between image and reality are made apparent in the simultaneous juxtaposition of competing identities; such self-reflexive mobilisation of multiple identities can be read as both an act of subversion, and in an oppositional fashion, constitution and perpetuation of popular stereotype. The latter interpretation, however, pivots on the

realist assumption that texts discursively shape and reproduce culture, and that such representations should be read as authentic.

Characters like Zeus and Sam represent the 'outlaws' conceived of by the socially powerful; the audience views them negotiating spaces of the everyday without regard for ethics, the infantile ego colliding with other bodies in its quest to satisfy primitive desires (Young 2008). Charlie and Tarek, however, seem to represent a more self-reflexive position in their subtle exploration of the tensions inherent within negotiating the temptations of crime. While these characterisations are not obviously oppositional to popular stereotypes, their inclusion goes some way to representing for audiences how young men can become involved in crime, rather than either denying the existence of criminality, or portraying them as criminals devoid of any context.

Thus, we might begin to view the process underpinning this representation as being characterised by the exercise of self-determination and resistance against popular stereotypes, acted out within the medium of visual culture. Scholars such as Poynting and his colleagues (1999) and Pallotta-Chiarolli (1994) support this view, asserting that the performance of these feared and expected behaviours is in resistance of the very stereotypes they emulate. In order to clarify this relationship, this thesis will now turn to an analysis of interviews with individuals involved in the discursive construction of identity. As filmmakers, actors, and writers of recent mainstream film, these individuals are well placed to reflect on the confluence of image and reality within the identity formation process.

4. YOUNG LEBANESE-AUSTRALIAN

MEN, IMAGE, AND REALITY

This chapter explores the complex relationship between image, representation and reality, through participants' perspectives on their portrayal within recent mainstream film, in conversation with their own experiences within the community. As film is a central site at which norms and values are simultaneously constructed, reflected, and resisted, this chapter will further explore the function of film for young Lebanese-Australian men, and the extent to which these individuals have internalised a discursively constructed deviant identity.

Recalling the notion of resistance against the increasing criminalisation of everyday life, and accordingly, existence on the margins of society (Hayward and Young 2004; Muzzatti 2004; Pallotta-Chiarolli and Skrbis 1994; Poynting, et al. 1999; Poynting, et al. 2003a; Presdee 2000), this chapter looks specifically at personal experiences of being a young Lebanese-Australian man post-9/11 and the events collectively known as the 'Sydney gang rapes' against the backdrop of this group's representation within recent film. This analysis is mobilised by an exploration of the mutually reinforcing relationship between image and reality in the effect of stereotypes on participants' self-concepts, and the role of mainstream film in this process. To achieve this, the chapter draws on key concepts and theoretical approaches outlined in Chapter Two, including aspects of

labelling theory and cultural criminology's appreciation of the importance of images in and for identity.

This chapter will begin by examining participants' responses to their stereotyping within popular media and public discourse, in order to contextualise the proceeding sections, which delve further into participants' sense of self and the effect of media-perpetrated stereotypes on identity. Mobilising the ideology of the cultural criminological 'loop', this chapter will conclude by returning to the link between image and reality within recent mainstream film to analyse its ability to reinforce subjectivity, and thus affect identity, among young Lebanese-Australian men.

4.1 Stereotypes

Participants all recalled having strong, albeit varied emotional reactions to the events that arguably catalysed what some scholars have referred to as their criminalisation within public discourse (Humphrey 2007; Poynting and Noble 2003; Poynting, et al. 2004a). Kassim[5] reflected on his memories of 9/11, remembering that it was "kind of a really exciting time, like everyone was kind of really excited about what's going to happen next", during which their Principal gathered the entire school to talk about the tragedy. He remembered thinking "that morning I was the same guy. But the whole world saw me differently"; there was a sense that Kassim and his friends knew they would be "hated" and "demonised", but he was excited nonetheless at the prospect of the creation of dialogue to bring

---

[5] For a list of participants' roles within film, please see Appendix Three

issues to the fore that had not previously been spoken about. One would not assume that such a reaction could come naturally to a group that was aware that they stood on the precipice of racial vilification and further marginalisation, but rather demonstrates a capacity for resilience overarching the forces at work on them.

At the same time, however, there was a sense of injustice among the Middle-Eastern community in Sydney about unequal treatment of individuals affected by other global conflicts. Kassim recounted the symbolism of his school Principal lowering the flag in the middle of the quadrangle to half mast in sympathy for the Australians who died in 9/11, and the resulting outrage from students who felt disrespected by the school neglecting to recognise in the same way the Middle-Eastern Australians who had been killed fighting in Palestine. He recalled a friend saying to the Principal:

> "'Look, I've been at this school since 1996, and in that time over 10 000 Middle-Eastern Australians have died in the war in Palestine, and I've never seen you show any sympathy for them, and put the flag at half mast in sympathy for them, and this school is 99% Middle-Eastern Australian, you know? Then yesterday (9/11), 3 Australians die, and 300 Americans die and straight away, without thinking about it, you put the flag at half mast' So it just kind of showed, and you know, the whole class was like 'YEAH YEAH **Cheering** YOU ROCKED HIM, YOU KILLED HIM'"

In this way, the hybridity of young Lebanese-Australian men's identity is emphasised in the shifting concern for political issues within their homeland, in conjunction with those of their heritage. The division of

identity along religious lines among this group, however, was highlighted by George's comment about his young son's naïve concern about being "blown up" by Muslim extremists; while public discourse in Australia collapsed ethnic and religious groups into overarching categorizations of the deviant ethnic 'other' (Collins and Poynting 2000; Grewal 2007; Humphrey 2007; Poynting, et al. 2004b), it appears that some individuals fragmented conceptions of their own belonging in resistance against the stereotypes attracted by such affiliations.

4.2 Masculinity

Participants highlighted the tensions inherent within the intersection of masculinity and ethnicity in exploring their experiences of being young Lebanese-Australian men during the 'moral panic' around Lebanese 'gang rapists'. Much like during 9/11, Kassim indicated that media representation of the Sydney gang rapes necessitated an opening of communication lines, with young men speaking out about issues they had previously never reflected on, nor spoken about. Irrespective of whatever gains this dialogue was to make, participants reflected on experiences characterised by intense, often contradictory, and largely negative emotions. George spoke of reading a newspaper article about the father of one of the victims finding his daughter in a park after the attack, and said "I remember crying, I cried, and cried, and cried, and my immediate reaction was to write", ostensibly as a cathartic release. Kassim indicated that he and his friends:

> Never thought about the possibility that they were rapists, you're not, you know you're not, like you know you're not doing the wrong thing, all of a sudden a group of people are telling you that you

61

might be, and all of a sudden you're asking yourself, you're wondering and you're trying to interpret and you're trying to define…all of a sudden they were so self-conscious about what we do, which now has to be analysed and critiqued because a couple of people did something that could be interpreted as what we're doing.

Such self-consciousness and obligation to censor their behaviour at the risk of being compared to gang rapists, even though they were just "doing what young men do", contributes support for the concept of stereotype threat within the literature (McGlone and Pfiester 2007). This example of stereotype threat, however, cannot be located unambiguously within or external to the process of internalisation of a deviant identity, as highlighted by Kassim's suggestion that "all of a sudden you're asking yourself", even though they "know [they're] not doing the wrong thing", which could be construed as self-stereotyping, and by implication, the appropriation of aspects of popular stereotypes within their self-concept. In suggesting that "what we do now has to be analysed and critiqued because a couple of people have done something that could be interpreted as what we're doing", Kassim expressed a common desire to manage others' impressions of them in the wake of such stereotyping (Goffman 1990). Taken together, the juxtaposition of these two comments highlights the inherent complexity of identity, whereby young Lebanese-Australian men fluidly transition between a self-reflexive resistance against popular stereotypes, and what could be viewed as self-stereotyping.

Lamenting what they perceived to be double standards within the treatment of ethnic minority offenders in the criminal justice system, participants questioned why Anglo perpetrators who had carried out similar crimes had

received significantly reduced sentences compared to the Skaf brothers. George remarked that he "felt the media and the community at large had gone to town on this sentence, and I felt an injustice in that; I felt that justice had been done on some level, but some of that justice had been undone".

Irrespective of participants' perceptions of the injustice of the criminal justice system, the Sydney gang rapes made negotiating sexual politics more treacherous for young Lebanese-Australian men, and was doubly complicated by public perceptions of this group as violent misogynists (Warner 2004). Kassim recounted a story about one of his friends:

> I had a friend who had a girlfriend who consented to blowing off him and his best friend…My friend at the time told me that he was so freaked out, he had to ask her if he could record her on his phone consenting.

While the boundaries were crystal-clear beforehand, subsequent to their stereotyping within the media, social constructions of the parameters of 'acceptable' sexual relations for Lebanese-Australian and Muslim men became unsettled, and ambiguous. Fadi recalled a conversation with an acquaintance, in which they were discussing domestic violence allegations involving rugby league players; he was shocked and appalled when his acquaintance stated "what an idiot – why would you hit her with a closed fist? Well it's wrong to hit a girl, but sometimes if they really deserve it, you give them just a *bit* of a slap".

Thus, the ability for young Lebanese-Australian men to subvert media-driven stereotypes is further problematised by aspects of traditional Lebanese culture that some participants considered to stand at odds with contemporary values. Fadi remarked that he would "get in trouble if my relo's [sic] heard this, but they do, they treat women differently - there's not that equality", in admitting that the dynamics of a traditional relationship subordinate the woman to the man and that a 'Madonna-whore paradox' still exists in relations with women. Fadi, however, considered it an "innocent" sexism, in that "it's part of the culture and the way they've grown up, they're not even aware of it"; thus highlighting the tensions in negotiating two sometimes conflicting cultures. Insofar as participants perceive this aspect of Lebanese-Australian male identity as a concomitant of diasporic 'double-consciousness' (Moreiras 1999), rather than attributing it to the process of stereotyping, inferring the internalisation of a deviant identity becomes problematic.

While the discourse of new racism within the media and society generally called into question the compatibility of Middle-Eastern and Australian values during these events (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991; Barker 1981; Wetherell and Potter 1992), only one participant recalled a specifically racist backlash. George recalled coming home from an audition in Sydney during the first Gulf war, when America had started bombing Iraq:

> This old man, he must've been a war veteran, he was probably only about 55 or 60 – he crossed the road, he was inebriated, he crossed the road and he nearly got hit by a car, just to come over to me and say 'Die, Arabs, Die'…I was quite saddened…I was very sad that this man was quite…He was

> drunk. But something in him, I mean, there's definitely a racism in him that's allowed him this outburst. You know maybe he harboured anti-Arab or anti-foreigner fears for years, and you know the demise on TV with the smart bombs and whatever must've given him reason for celebration, I suppose.

He reflected on the Cronulla riots, recalling his deep embarrassment at realising that Australia's usually thinly veiled racism was suddenly on display, stating that "I was deeply ashamed when I realised the rest of the world was watching us on their television screens…Australia was being judged in a way that I'd never experienced that sort of hate or recrimination". Overall, from these comments, it appeared that participants considered their Lebanese heritage a stigmatising attribute during this time, the experience of which was marked largely by feelings of shame and confusion (Goffman 1963).

In retrospectively exploring their adolescence, participants characterised experiences as being common to young males in general, irrespective of their ethnicity; however, in recounting events involving negative aspects of 'masculinity', such as violence, sexism, etc., participants often positioned themselves within these scenes as disinterested observers, rather than active participants. Fadi, in his conversation about domestic violence with an acquaintance, Kassim, in stating that he "could fight, but I never got in trouble, I never got into a fight outside the boxing ring", and George's assertion that "I've never driven a fast car in my life"; these experiences counter the proposition of protest masculinity among working-class males (Connell 1995; Pallotta-Chiarolli and Skrbis 1994; Poynting, et al. 2003b), and stand starkly at odds with the popular stereotypes of young Lebanese-

Australian men within public discourse as violent misogynists (Grewal 2007; Warner 2004).

Contrary to what popular media would have one believe, conflict between the Lebanese and Anglo- Australian communities exists largely on the periphery of participants' lives, and as such, racial confrontation seemed to occur only when circles crossed and there were pre-existing tensions between the groups, as in the Cronulla riots. Rather, they described a friendly "larrikinism", with Jamil recalling that he:

> Went to…an all boys school, and it was a mix of Anglos, Asians, Filipinos, lots of wogs, and we used to interact like you wouldn't believe! We all used to, we were always in the same football team or the same volleyball team, and there was this kind of connection/camaraderie between all of us, it wasn't like competition at all – if there was competition, it was always with other schools.

Further, for Jamil, when violence erupted, "we'd fight with other schools, and that's got nothing to do with their race, it's just another school…It's just a boy thing, it's got nothing to do with race".

There was a sense that young Lebanese-Australian men as a group were heavily influenced by American hip-hop artists, and strived to emulate their lifestyles in their physical appearance, mannerisms, language, and especially in their choice of transportation. This was highlighted by Jamil's comment about competing identities assumed by young Lebanese-Australian men:

> Yes Mum, yeah I'm gonna marry a good Lebanese girl and yep I'm studying, or working hard, Mum, just going over to my friend's house on the weekend. As soon as they jump in the car it's like boom…Turn the stereo on, man, fuck yeah, look at that (girl).

Such displays, however, extended only to social or educational settings; at home, another aspect of the ethnic-masculine identity was assumed, wherein participants were returned to their familial or religious obligations and became the subordinated, rather than the subordinators. In their ability to seamlessly transition from aspects of one identity to another as outlined above, it seems unfeasible that this could characterise the internalisation of a deviant identity, but still gestures toward the potential for this group to engage in forms of protest masculinity in certain contexts (Connell 1991).

In their social lives, participants recalled social exclusion as a large determinant of young Lebanese-Australian men's trajectory. By virtue of their residence largely within the geographical peripheries of Sydney, this group relies heavily on car ownership to access the clubs and nightspots that form the hub of their leisure time. According to Jamil, "suddenly cars become the transport to another world, which becomes the city, they go into clubs, and if they can't get in to clubs they just cruise around in their cars because they can't get in most of the time anyhow", and it is this confluence of perceived discrimination, masculinity, and ethnicity that becomes a central site at which stereotypes of the deviant ethnic 'other' are discursively constructed and perpetuated. From these experiences, night-time streetscape appears the primary context in which young Lebanese-Australian men enact forms of 'protest masculinity' (Connell 1995) against

"hidden injuries" of racism (Poynting, et al. 1999: 59), thus lending support for the internalisation of a deviant identity through the very practice of everyday life, or an oppositional reading as the increasing criminalisation of life on the margins (Muzzatti 2004).

Furthermore, Fadi described the way in which he and colleagues within the film industry had begun to question themselves and their abilities in being relegated to roles that fulfilled popular stereotypes, such as drug dealers and terrorists, thinking "I'm auditioning for these roles, but I'm not getting them…am I a poor actor? Am I not as good as I thought I was? You start doubting yourself". To the extent that their own self-conceptions were affected by the negative connotations of the labelling process, these experiences align with the labelling perspective (Becker 1963).

Both Fadi and Kassim believed that Lebanese-Australian actors had been cast in a stereotypical mould, Kassim suggesting that "in the mainstream film industry in Australia, all Middle-Eastern Australian actors have only been offered drug dealer roles, predominantly". Kassim, however, did not feel obliged to continue taking these roles in active resistance against perpetuating stereotypes, and was confident in his ability to sustain a career within the industry by taking alternate paths, since his "big break came in other places, so I didn't need to resort to auditioning to play drug dealers". As a more moderate method of resistance, George was concerned with bringing important social issues to the fore through the roles that he chose to take on; while he did not resist playing stereotypical characterisations,

he actively sought to explore the intricacy of these issues through performance that "confronts the audience".

Inasmuch as this could be construed as a mechanism of resistance, Kassim, too, framed young Lebanese-Australian men's responses to explicit labelling and stereotyping in performative terms:

> I wish I was dangerous, I wish people feared me, I wish girls would all love me, you know like that's kind of a young man's fantasy…You know, I've got guns, you know and that's what they do in their bedrooms – they imagine being real tough!

He recalled attending a production based on the Cronulla riots shortly after it, in which there was a Lebanese 'gang' and an Australian 'gang'; when the Australian gang would say "You're a bunch of terrorists" to the Lebanese gang, all the Middle-Eastern schoolboys in the audience would stand up and cheer, saying "Yeah, we're terrorists, we're drug dealers, yeah we're rapists".

For Kassim, these boys were not engaging in an inert process of self-stereotyping, but actively subverting the negative connotations of the label by mobilising their 'attractive' aspects in order to inflate others' perceptions of them. As he said, "they'd get really excited about being feared that way, being perceived that way. So it's like, they're not like that, but they like the idea because there's something romantically scary, or you know, tough about that…So they kind of feed off it". For participants, girls were undeniably attracted to the power (and thus fear) associated with the label of drug dealer/gang leader, and as according to Kassim, "to get as

much sex as you can from girls is the ultimate male fantasy", thus it seems that young Lebanese-Australian men situationally adopt this identity in order to increase their sex appeal.

Conversely, however, Kassim explained a self-fulfilling prophecy in the effect of the popular media and films such as *Cedar Boys* and *The Combination* (Darley and Fazio 1980; Merton 1948; Shih, et al. 2002). He suggested that their pervasive representation of young Lebanese-Australian men as gun-toting, drug dealing gang rapists both incites anger, excitement, and defensiveness, but at the same time necessitates a process of reflection in which young Lebanese-Australian men think "I didn't know that was how you saw me, but now that I know you see me that way, I'm going to scare you!"

Further, he believed that films such as *Cedar Boys* and *The Combination* make young Lebanese-Australian men "feel 100% tough (after only feeling 50% tough before seeing them), and they start thinking 'this is who we are'…They're almost being told who they are through the stereotypes, and the stereotypes amplify their behaviour". At face value, this appears to refer directly to the labelling tradition's trajectory toward the internalisation of a deviant identity; however, this perspective denotes a particular absence of agency in the process, whereas this characterisation of young Lebanese-Australian men appears more intentional and conscious in their performance of stereotyped identities.

4.3 Identity

To the extent that young Lebanese-Australian men actively mobilise popular stereotypes in a performative sense against the hidden injuries of racism, Kassim was particularly vocal in denying the existence of a 'crisis of identity' inferred by academic scholarship (Poynting, et al. 2003a; Tabar 2007). He believed that "you can say that those boys have an identity crisis, but they know who they are…they actually have kind of a nice understanding about what thing they like, and what things they don't like…they know who they are, and who they want to be. It's just that we haven't identified it as a collective yet". Furthermore, Kassim "grew up in institutions that were struggling to work out it, while me and my friends were just being ourselves". Fadi, however, was in staunch opposition to these views, suggesting that "they see themselves a little bit like a man without a country…they don't see themselves as Lebanese, and they're out and about, and they get a message from the media that they're not Australian, either".

Later in the interview, Kassim highlighted the often contradictory nature of identity, by describing the self-fulfilling prophecy of the identity crisis thrust on them by society, after originally denying its existence:

> When those gang rapes happened, you know, the boys in my class were being boys. You know they were going out, they were starting to like girls…Then all of us, all of me and my friends had to stop and say 'am I a member of this group of people that are being identified?' you know, am I one of them?

71

Further, he emphasised that the recent tendency within academic scholarship to attempt to "work out what the Middle-Eastern Australian 'type' of person is" arguably induced the very identity crisis of its construction, and recounted sermons at his mosque around the time of the media coverage of the gang rapes, saying:

> Imagine being at a sermon where your lecturer was forced to tell you, like was forced by the local media and the local government that we don't condone rape as a religion…Boys, did you get that? We've gotta be clear on that, do you understand? Our preachers had to make it really clear to us that we weren't okay with rape, because apparently we were.

Kassim believed that these compensatory behaviours of the Muslim and Lebanese communities in Sydney in response to the larger sentiment of stereotype threat during that time disrupted notions of young Lebanese-Australian male identity and cornered them into a process of conscious self-reflexivity (Dion 2001; Shelton, et al. 2006; Wheeler and Petty 2001). These experiences in particular highlight the contextual ability for young Lebanese-Australian men to at times resist the internalisation of discursive constructions of deviance, and at others negotiate, and even begin to appropriate the deviant identity within their self-conception, thus gesturing towards the highly complex and contested nature of identity among this group.

Reflecting on his adolescence, Fadi recalled lunchtimes at his high school when he chose to sit with Anglo-Australian friends; the Middle-Eastern Australian kids "used to say to me 'How come you hang out with Aussies

for, Fadi, you know, why don't you hang out with us?' it was like, to me, that was the most unattractive thing to do. Like, hang out in a quadrangle with fifty wogs at lunchtime". While Fadi had previously characterised the self-reflexive use of the term 'wog' as active resistance against its racist connotations, its deployment in this context underscores the inscription of stigma on participants by way of their Lebanese heritage (Goffman 1963).

As a concomitant of their biased representation within the media, combined with old injuries of racism, young Lebanese-Australian men largely rejected notions of 'Lebanese-ness' within their self-concept. Three of the four participants described not having any close Middle-Eastern friends while they were growing up, intentionally avoiding having Lebanese girlfriends, and largely spending their youth "running away from being Lebanese". As Fadi said, "I didn't want anyone to know I was Lebanese…I wanted to surf, I wanted to play rugby league, I wanted to, you know, hang out with the cool, blonde, Aussie surfer guys and girls, I wanted to fit in". In this way, self-identifying with the cultural majority and appropriating aspects of stereotypically 'Aussie' culture (such as surfing, and playing rugby) were mechanisms by which participants withstood the negative emotions elicited by reflecting on their cultural heritage.

This shifting, mutually reinforcing relationship between performance and reality within the discursive construction of culture was reflected in young Lebanese-Australian men's perceptions of their representation within mainstream film, and was characterised within these texts as a transition from the parody to drama.

4.4 Transitioning from Parody to Drama

Participants overwhelmingly saw the shift away from stereotype-driven parodies (such as *The Pizza*) to more realistic portrayals of young Lebanese-Australian men (*Cedar Boys* and *The Combination*) as being a positive step forward for the community; complicating the process somewhat, however, were differing views on the parody genre. Kassim viewed the portrayal of stereotypes in a humorous way as an entertaining genre that the Lebanese-Australian community could identify with (ostensibly because they are most often the focus of such films), and Fadi indicated that the mobilisation of racially derogatory terms such as 'wog' by Lebanese-Australians in self-referential terms was an act of resistance against racism.

For Fadi, mobilising the weapons that had been used against him was a way of "taking the sting out" of them, echoing the sentiments of scholars suggesting the strategic deployment of language as active resistance against racism (Pallotta-Chiarolli and Skrbis 1994; Tabar 2007). Jamil, however, was in staunch opposition to these views, calling parody films "embarrassing", and stating that "I've only seen about 20 minutes of it, and then turned it off – I couldn't watch anymore". For him, progressing to more serious, dramatic representations of young Lebanese-Australian men was necessary to regain some semblance of self-respect for the community. In this way, we glean some notion of the complexities inherent within the way such texts are made sense of by the group that they portray; this differential interpretation seems to extend through the parody genre, and in to the dramatic representations of *Cedar Boys* and *The Combination.*

As a young Lebanese-Australian man, Kassim found it hard to engage with the themes and characterisations in *The Combination*, stating that it "is actually far away from the Middle Eastern community, like they watch it and say 'I can imagine that happening if you amplified my life by 100 times…you just pack it on thin and nobody connects with it, nobody identifies with it, it feels far away". In comparing *Fat Pizza* to *The Combination*, he suggested "the thing about *Fat Pizza* is that it pokes fun at all those stereotypes, and I think the thing about *The Combination* is that it takes those stereotypes seriously, so it's hard not to laugh at it". Furthermore, whilst he acknowledged that criminality existed within the community, as in many communities, Kassim felt that this stereotype distanced the story. He stated, for example, "I know of a friend of a friend of a friend who might be a drug dealer…we know where the stereotype comes from, but (in *The Combination*) it's so amplified that it's actually beyond us". In support of a critical perspective on these films, George suggested that "it would be nice to see something that celebrates us as a people", indicating that mainstream film still had some way to go in accurately portraying the Lebanese-Australian community (Giardina 2003).

These responses further illuminate the question of the centrality of the crime narrative within *The Combination* and *Cedar Boys*; while this may not be generalisable to all young Lebanese-Australian men, Kassim and George read the representations of deviance within the films as merely serving to perpetuate popular stereotypes, rather than viewing them as

legitimate (or authentic) constructions of identity[6] that might influence an individual's self-concept. Thus, the shifting interplay between image and reality could have differential effects on young Lebanese-Australian men and their negotiation of identity.

Perhaps the most prominent issue around authenticity of representation within *Cedar Boys* and *The Combination* (and other mainstream film generally), for Kassim, was their primary function as revenue-generating entertainment. According to Kassim, "they were written with a particular intent…the thing about films with intent is that they're, they're put in the wrong context. They're always going to be stereotypical, they're always going to be cheesy, they're always going to be clichéd", echoing scholars' sentiments of the foremost function of film as capturing the mythic qualities of society for pleasure (Jakubowicz 1994). In comparing mainstream and community film, Kassim remarked:

> I'd say *The Combination* was 'let's make a film about Arabic people, and we'll just have all these Arabic issues manifesting themselves', whereas *The Pizza* is just kind of 'I'm going to tell a story about my family'. All those issues that are slightly Middle Eastern, or Middle Eastern Australian, or Australian, just reveal themselves in the story. You know, those things just manifest themselves naturally. We don't have to change the pizza to a felafel just to make a point, you know, people don't have to speak in Arabic to make that point. It is what it is.

For Kassim, *The Combination* and *Cedar Boys* relied on stereotypes and over-exaggerated issues of criminality (characterised as specifically

---

[6] See Weedon 2004; van Dijk et. al, 2000; Ferrell 1999.

Middle-Eastern) to attract and sustain audiences, whereas community film (made by the community and for the community) is enabled a greater freedom through its purpose largely as storytelling. Within community film, symbolic aspects of Lebanese culture do not need amplification or adjustment to appear authentic, and according to Kassim, "if you just tell a story, a beautiful thing will reveal itself".

It appears, however, that the underlying motivation behind mainstream film such as *Cedar Boys* was interpreted differently by participants than had been intended by filmmakers. Jamil was vocal in wanting to give voice to young Lebanese-Australian men through film, and said that the fundamental intent behind *Cedar Boys* was:

> To show how come some of them (young Lebanese-Australian men) fall into crime, and why some of them choose crime, and go down this path, and give them a voice for once, not just write them as criminals straight away…I've chosen to explore how this group of Lebanese boys, not all, but this group, make those choices.

Rather than simply dismissing characters such as Tarek and Charlie as evil, calculating criminals, we cannot ignore their humanity – we see them laugh, cry, and love. This ability to present an 'authentic' three-dimensional representation, effectively aiming to re-humanise the young Lebanese-Australian man within public discourse, appears to be the foremost mechanism of resistance within these films (Molina Guzman 2006).

While Jamil's explicitly voiced intent was to explore the network of factors influencing the descent into crime, and to avoid glamourising the criminal lifestyle to highlight its negative impact, he also remarked that he "didn't show them living the high life for too long…[but] considering the box office, maybe I should've". Further, he intimated that his intention with focusing on crime as the central theme was "for the entertainment side of the film, the thrill". This comment from Jamil further illuminates the centrality of the crime narrative within the film, in suggesting that its function was merely for entertainment value, rather than an approximation of 'real' life. While this clarification aids in understanding filmmakers' motive in centring the film on crime, juxtaposed against the imagery of *The Combination*, Jamil's response reinforces the constantly shifting relationship between 'truth' and fiction. Furthermore, this response gestures towards the complicated negotiation of competing priorities within the construction of mainstream film; presenting an accurate depiction of young Lebanese-Australian men (as exemplified within community film) came secondary to the revenue-generating aspect of the film. Nevertheless, the filmmakers utilised more subtle techniques in resistance against popular stereotypes of young Lebanese-Australian men within public discourse, particularly in terms of the power dynamics embedded within the film, and accordingly, constructions of social and cultural hegemony.

Assuming the role of cultural producers enabled filmmakers to subvert power structures characteristic of Anglo-centric films; according to Jamil, "the Lebanese characters are more quick-witted than the Anglos in this film for once". He saw this as a way of empowering Lebanese-Australian

audiences, and commented that "I think when they see themselves portrayed so dramatically and so truthfully, I think they're very patriotic in the sense that they'll go and see a film and feel really good about the film because I'm not making a parody of them". While at face value this may appear a mild form of rebellion against popular stereotypes, in film's function as a surface on which to write social life (Durmaz 1999), such characterisation may be read to have the potential for more tangible effects over time.

While the abovementioned films centre on issues of importance to the community, there was a sense that the representation of Lebanese-Australian characters within them had the effect of attributing responsibility for speaking on the community's behalf to the producers of these texts. According to Jamil, "just because we are, because of our backgrounds and who we're playing, people think we're the voice of them – we're actors first, and we're playing Lebanese characters second. It's a very important point." Both Jamil and Kassim expressed a reticence in becoming spokespeople for the Lebanese-Australian community external to their films, thus highlighting the complex relationship between image and reality. Furthermore, the transcendence of this boundary denotes the ability for fictional representations of characters and issues within film to become discursively constructed as authentic, and function as normative frameworks around which young Lebanese-Australian men arrange their behaviour.

The findings of this chapter suggest a complex intersection of influences at work on young Lebanese-Australian men, that play a considerable role in shaping their self-perceptions, and how they believe others see them. By and large, participants were cognisant of popular stereotypes and their negative implications; those interviewed implied that media-driven stereotypes had little effect on them, but stated that those around them had been impacted considerably.

For these young Lebanese-Australian men, mainstream films such as *Cedar Boys* and *The Combination* functioned as moulds in which to insert themselves, serving as a self-fulfilling prophecy in dictating norms, values, and behaviours for susceptible young Lebanese-Australian men to adopt, thus perpetuating popular stereotypes. Conversely, however, there was a sense that those who were unaffected by popular stereotypes would engage in a playful mobilisation of those very stereotypes, in resistance against hidden injuries of racism; thus, to the outsider it appears that this group overwhelmingly behave in accordance with popular stereotypes. To these ends, the overwhelming story suggests that the process of explicit labelling affects young Lebanese-Australian men differentially; on one level, some enduringly internalise the deviant identity, and on another, those who are generally resistant to stereotypes at times find their self-concept affected by the label of the deviant ethnic 'other'.

CONCLUSION

As this thesis has demonstrated, the negotiation of the self and management of others' perceptions is a complex process for young Lebanese-Australian men. Identity is inextricably bound up with culture, and their mutually reinforcing relationship can have the effect of reproducing harmful stereotypes (Weedon 2004). Though the intent of cultural producers may not be to negatively impact the ethnic minorities that they portray, mobilisation of 'entertaining' aspects of social life for profit, as in mainstream film, can have unforeseen concomitant effects, highlighted by the films discussed in Chapter Three and the views of participants documented in Chapter Four (Jakubowicz 1994).

As the interview analysis in Chapter Four illustrates, participants' experiences illuminate the way in which mainstream film within recent years has constructed a self-fulfilling prophecy among some young Lebanese-Australian men who strategically and situationally adopt a deviant identity in resistance against the injury of racism, thereby amplifying public perceptions of young Lebanese-Australian male criminality (Poynting, et al. 2003b). Operating on another level, however, was a distinct dynamic of resilience against popular stereotypes among some young Lebanese-Australian men, the degree of which was influenced by various individual and situational factors. The overwhelming story from

the participants seems to indicate that irrespective of whether young Lebanese-Australian males maintain a stable sense of self throughout their adolescence, their process of identity formation is inevitably impacted by the pervasive effect of negative stereotypes perpetuated through popular media and visual culture. Further research would benefit from examining these dynamics within a much larger sample over time, and could encompass an interdisciplinary dimension exploring life outcomes, mental health and general wellbeing among young Lebanese-Australian men.

This thesis has analysed representations of young Lebanese-Australian men within recent mainstream film in conversation with participants experiences of, and responses to popular stereotypes, to explore the complex confluence of image and reality in the negotiation of identity among this group. Responses to negative stereotypes were varied; throughout their adolescence, all participants rejected notions of 'Lebanese-ness' within their self-concept, choosing instead to appropriate aspects of traditionally 'Aussie' culture. However, there was a perception that the 'powerful' and 'romantically scary' aspects of the deviant identity thrust upon this group by public discourse were highly valued by women, and this notion valorised within recent mainstream film, thus young Lebanese-Australian men might situationally adopt characteristics of this identity to improve their perceived sex appeal.

While the perpetuation of negative stereotypes within recent mainstream film does not provide young Lebanese-Australian men with ideal role-models against which to mirror their self-image, this group were able to

appreciate the films for their entertainment value, rather than a faithful representation of life for young Lebanese-Australian men. However, this ability is very much tempered by age; participants demonstrated a concern that these films functioned as self-fulfilling prophecies for Lebanese-Australian adolescents, in that they present glorified depictions of violence and criminality that could be construed as an attractive mould for their own self-image. Interestingly, however, most participants positioned themselves as observers (as opposed to active participants) on the periphery of flagrant displays of 'protest masculinity'; while they characterised friends and acquaintances as often influenced by discursive constructions of ethnic deviancy, participants maintained that they were resilient to these stereotypes, choosing instead to dictate their own self-perceptions. While one participant initially denied the existence of a 'crisis of identity' among young Lebanese-Australian men, he then acknowledged that such disconnection from their sense of self was a 'natural result' of their negative representation within public discourse.

This thesis questions the ability of the labelling perspective to capture the tensions and contradictions inherent within the process of identity formation within this group; the extent to which young Lebanese-Australian men internalise a deviant identity is influenced considerably by age (the older participants got, the less affected they were by ethnic stereotypes), contextual factors such as education, employment, and leisure activities, and other situational dimensions. Moreover, the larger sense from participants was that engagement with the self-concept external to media-driven stereotypes was a relationship constantly in flux, where at

certain points young Lebanese-Australian men self-stereotyped, and actively rebelled against them at others.

In general, young Lebanese-Australian men manage others' perceptions of them by engaging in self-conscious assessment of their own behaviour, assuming the standpoint of the other in order to pre-empt how their behaviour will be interpreted. While this is not in theory a negative process, against the backdrop of pervasive marginalisation and criminalisation, self-reflexivity in this context is accompanied by a sense of shame, frustration, and often confusion for the young men, doubly complicating the injury of racism. These responses lend support for the notion of stereotype threat within the literature and highlight the potential for negative stereotypes to disrupt both cognitive processes and the self-concept itself (Davis, et al. 2006; Dion 2001; McGlone and Pfiester 2007; Shih, et al. 2002).

The static and hybrid nature of identity as demonstrated by participants stands in stark contrast to characterisations of young Lebanese-Australian men within recent mainstream film, in which their performance of identity is relatively fixed and uni-dimensional. Given the flow-on effects of films such as *The Combination* in influencing young Lebanese-Australian men to potentially mimic the characterisations they view on the screen, the ability for these cultural products to engender the very behaviours they position themselves as resisting against is self-evident. Thus, it becomes apparent that visual culture can be read as a 'hall of mirrors', representing the

circular and mutually reinforcing relationship between image, reality, and identity (Ferrell, et al. 2008).

On the flipside, however, the spark of resilience and rebellion contained within young Lebanese-Australian men is evident. In their strategic deployment of forms of 'protest masculinity', young Lebanese-Australian men mobilised a deviant identity both to increase their perceived status among peers, and in resistance against the hidden injuries of racism rather than as a concomitant of a crisis of identity (Poynting, et al. 1999; Poynting, et al. 2003a; Poynting, et al. 2003b). Such agency further problematises the process of internalisation posited by the labelling perspective, and rather suggests a performance of the multifaceted identity at the nexus of ethnicity and masculinity. This notion of performance lies at the very heart of the complex relationship between identity and culture that has been examined within this thesis, and denotes the possibility for fostering of resilience and active (albeit constructive) resistance by young Lebanese-Australian men as a means of negotiating their way through the potentially harmful, pervasive stereotyping that has characterised their existence within recent public discourse.

Overall, this thesis both confirms and extends theoretical directions and findings of past research on young Lebanese-Australian men. It lends a unique dimension to the wider dialogue around the experience of ethnic minorities in Australia, through its juxtaposition of participants' stories of their experience of media stereotypes, and their characterisation within recent mainstream film, in order to explore the complex relationship

between identity and culture. Giving credence to recent films, this thesis uncovers an important dimension of the relationship between deviancy and the image. In these examples of visual culture, the value of crime as the embodiment of the entertaining, 'mythical' aspects of society is self-evident (Jakubowicz 1994); however, constructing the crime narrative as such distances us from, as Kassim would put it, the "beauty" of an authentic story. In this way, the ability of cultural products to discursively construct identity is uncovered as a double-edged sword.

By filtering their characterisations through popular stereotypes, films such as *The Combination* offer representations of ethnic deviancy simultaneously as entertainment, and as legitimate approximations of the status quo, and can thus perpetuate negative representations through a spiral of self-fulfilling prophecy. The intent of these films to present a new screen of imagery through which to view young Lebanese-Australian men is doubly complicated by the necessity to entertain an audience.

Simultaneously drawing on and partially challenging popular stereotypes in order to engage audiences necessitates the question of whether these 'new' images are really different, or if their refraction through the lens of stereotype serves to perpetuate the very representations they ostensibly resist against. Nevertheless, the value of these images as potential catalysts cannot be ignored; while it may not redress the imbalances of the past, we can at least feel secure in the knowledge that the seeds of change are beginning to be sown.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books and Articles

Adams, M. S. and Evans, T. D. 1996 'Teacher Disapproval, Delinquent Peers, and Self-Reported Delinquency: A Longitudinal Test of Labeling Theory', *The Urban Review* 28(3): 199 - 211.

Albrechtsen, J. 2002 'Blind spot allows criminal barbarism to flourish - The cultural divide' *The Australian*, Sydney.

Allison, K. W. 1998 'Stress and oppressed category membership', in J. K. Swim and C. Stangor (eds) *Prejudice: The Target's Perspective*, San Diego, CA: Academic.

Allport, G. 1954 *The nature of prejudice*, Garden City, New York: Doubleday.

Aly, A. 2007 'Australian Muslim Responses to the Discourse on Terrorism in the Australian Popular Media', *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 42(1): 27 - 40.

Ambert, A., Adler, P. A., Adler, P. and Detzner, D. F. 1995 'Understanding and Evaluating Qualitative Research', *Journal of Marriage and Family* 57(4): 879 - 893.

Balibar, E. and Wallerstein, I. 1991 *Race, Nation, Class*, London: Verso.

Barker, M. 1981 *The New Racism*, London: Junction Books.

Barrett, M. and McIntosh, M. 1985 'Ethnocentrism and socialist feminism', *Feminist Review* 20: 23 - 45.

Becker, H. S. 1963 *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*, New York: The Free Press.

Berg, B. L. 2007 *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

Berg, C. R. 2002 *Latino Images in Film: Stereotypes, Subversion & Resistance*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Biedinger, N., Becker, B. and Rohling, I. 2008 'Early Ethnic Educational Inequality: The Influence of Duration of Preschool Attendance and Social Composition', *European Sociological Review* 24(2): 243 - 256.

Braddock, J. H. and McPartland, J. M. 1987 'How minorities continue to be excluded from equal employment opportunities: research on labor market and institutional barriers', *Journal of Social Issues* 43: 5 - 39.

Briscoe, F. M. and Oliver, M. 2006 'Access to Higher Education: A Conflict between Landed Interests and Democratic Ideals', *Education and Urban Society* 38(2): 204 - 227.

Broude, J. E. 1990 'Protest Masculinity: A Further Look at the Causes and the Concept', *Ethos* 18(1): 103 - 122.

Caldas, S. J. 1990 'Intensive Incarceration Programs Offer Hope of Rehabilitation to a Fortunate Few: Orleans Parish Does an "About Face"', *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 34(1): 67 - 76.

Carby, H. 1982 'White women listen! Black feminism and the boundaries of sisterhood', in C. f. C. C. Studies (ed) *The empire strikes back*, London: Hutchinson.

Chiricos, T., Barrick, K., Bales, W. and Bontrager, S. 2007 'The Labeling of Convicted Felons and Its Consequences for Recidivism', *Criminology* 45(3): 547 - 581.

Chulov, M. and Gerard, I. 2001 'Rape menace from the melting pot' *The Australian*, Sydney.

Chulov, M., Videnieks, M. and McIllveen, L. 2001 'Gang rape terms "too lenient"' *The Australian*, Sydney.

Clark, M. C. and Sharf, B. F. 2007 'The Dark Side of Truth(s): Ethical Dilemmas in Researching the Personal', *Qualitative Inquiry* 13(3): 399 - 416.

Coates, K. and Carr, S. C. 2005 'Skilled Immigrants and Selection Bias: A Theory-Based Field Study from New Zealand', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 29(5): 577 - 599.

Cohen, G. L. and Garcia, J. 2008 'Identity, belonging, and achievement: A model, interventions, implications', *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 17(6): 365 - 369.

Cohen, S. 1972 *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*, London: MacGibbon & Kee.

Collier, R. 1998 *Masculinities, Crime and Criminology*, London: Sage Publications.

— 2004 'Masculinities and Crime: Rethinking the "Man Question"?', in C. Sumner (ed) *The Blackwell Companion to Criminology*, Carlton, VIC: Blackwell Publishing.

Collins, J. 2003 'Immigrant Crime in Europe and Australia: Rational or Racialised Responses?' *The Challenges of Immigration and Integration in the European Union and Australia*, University of Sydney.

— 2005 'Ethnic Minorities and Crime in Australia: Moral Panic or Meaningful Policy Responses', Office of Multicultural Interest, Western Australia.

Collins, J. and Poynting, S. (eds) 2000 *The Other Sydney: Communities, Identities and Inequalities in Western Sydney*, Melbourne: Common Ground Publishing.

Collins, J. H., Noble, G., Poynting, S. and Tabar, P. 2000 *Kebabs, kids, cops and crime*, Sydney: Pluto Press.

Connell, R. W. 1991 'Live Fast and Die Young: The Construction of Masculinity among Young Working-class Men on the Margin of the Labour Market', *Journal of Sociology* 27: 141 - 171.

— 1995 *Masculinities*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

Croll, J., Neumark-Sztainer, D., Story, M. and Ireland, M. 2002 'Prevalence and Risk and Protective Factors Related to Disordered Eating Behaviors among Adolescents: Relationship to Gender and Ethnicity', *Journal of Adolescent Health* 31(2): 166 - 175.

Dagistanli, S. 2007 "Like a pack of wild animals': Moral panics around 'ethnic' gang rape in Sydney', in S. Poynting and G. Morgan (eds) *Outrageous: Moral Panics in Australia*, Hobart: ACYS Publishing.

Darley, J. M. and Fazio, R. H. 1980 'Expectancy confirmation processes arising in the social interaction sequence', *American Psychology* 35(10): 867 - 881.

Davis, C., Aronson, J. and Salinas, M. 2006 'Shades of Threat: Racial Identity as a Moderator of Stereotype Threat', *Journal of Black Psychology* 32(4): 399 - 417.

Denzin, N. K. 1996 'The Facts and Fictions of Qualitative Inquiry', *Qualitative Inquiry* 2(2): 230 - 241.

Devine, P. 2002 'Racist rapes: Finally the truth comes out' *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney.

Dion, K. L. 2001 'The Social Psychology of Perceived Prejudice and Discrimination', *Canadian Psychology* 43: 1 - 10.

Duff, E. 2009 'Exclusive bar denies access to actor' *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney: Fairfax Publishing.

Dunn, K. M., Klocker, N. and Salabay, T. 2004 'Contemporary Racism and Islamophobia in Australia: Racializing religion', *Ethnicities* 7(546 - 589).

Durmaz, H. 1999 'Film: a surface for writing social life', in I. Parker (ed) *Critical Textwork: An introduction to varieties of discourse and analysis*, Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

England, J. 2004 'Disciplining Subjectivity and Space: Representation, Film and Its Material Effects', *Antipode* 36(2): 295 - 321.

Esses, V. M. and Hodson, G. 2006 'The Role of Lay Perceptions of Ethnic Prejudice in the Maintenance and Perpetuation of Ethnic Bias', *Journal of Social Issues* 62(3): 453-468.

Fairclough, N. 1995 *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*, London: Longman.

Ferrell, J. 1999 'Cultural Criminology', *Annual Review of Sociology* 25: 395 - 418.

— 2007 'For a ruthless cultural criticism of everything existing', *Crime, Media, Culture* 3(1): 91 - 100.

Ferrell, J., Hayward, K. and Young, J. 2008 *Cultural Criminology: An Invitation*, London: Sage.

Frost, D. 2008 'Islamophobia: examining causal links between the media and ''race hate'' from ''below''', *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 28(11/12): 564 - 578.

Gee, J. P. 2005 *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, 2nd Edition, London: Routledge.

Geertz, C. 1973 *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*, New York: Basic Books.

Giardina, M. D. 2003 '"Bending it Like Beckham" in the Global Popular: Stylish Hybridity, Performativity, and the Politics of Representation', *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 27(1): 65 - 82.

Gibson, R., McAllister, I. and Swenson, T. 2002 'The politics of race and immigration in Australia: One Nation voting in the 1998 Election', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 25(5): 823 - 844.

Gilmore, G. 1993 *Manhood in the Making: Cultural Concepts of Masculinity*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Gleeson, K. 2004 'From Centenary to the Olympics, Gang Rape in Sydney', *Current Issues in Criminal Justice* 16(2): 183 - 201.

Goffman, E. 1963 *Stigma: Notes on the Management of a Spoiled Identity*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

— 1990 *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, London: Penguin.

Gray, P. O. 2007 *Psychology*, 5th Edition, Boston, MA: Worth Publishers.

Grewal, K. 2007 'The 'Young Muslim Man' In Australian Public Discourse', *Transforming Cultures eJournal* 2(1): 116 - 134.

Guzman, I. M. 2006 'Mediating Frida: Negotiating Discourses of Latina/o: Authenticity in Global Media Representations of Ethnic Identity', *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 23(3): 232 - 251.

Hagan, J. 1974 'Extra-Legal Attributes and Criminal Sentencing: An Assessment of a Sociological Viewpoint', *Law and Society Review* 8: 357 - 388.

Hall, S. 1990 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora', in J. Rutherford (ed) *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Hall, S. and Winlow, S. 2003 'Rehabilitating Leviathan: Reflections on the State, Economic Regulation and Violence Reduction', *Theoretical Criminology* 7(2): 139 - 162.

Hayward, K. 2002 'The vilification and pleasures of youthful transgression', in J. Muncie, G. Hughes and E. McLaughlin (eds) *Youth Justice: Critical Readings*, London: Sage.

Hayward, K. J. and Young, J. 2004 'Cultural criminology: Some notes on the script', *Theoretical Criminology* 8(3): 259 - 273.

Hill, H. and Church Gibson, P. (eds) 2000 *Film Studies: Critical Approaches*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hirschi, T. 1975 'Labeling Theory and Juvenile Delinquency: An Assessment of the Evidence', in W. R. Gove (ed) *The Labeling of Deviance: Evaluating a Perspective*, New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Horwitz, A. and Wasserman, M. 1979 'The Effect of Social Control on Delinquent Behavior: A Longitudinal Test', *Sociological Focus* 12(1): 53 - 70.

Humphrey, M. 2007 'Culturalising the Abject: Islam, Law and Moral Panic in the West', *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 42(1): 10 - 25.

Hyndman-Rizik, N. 2008 "Shrinking Worlds': Cronulla, Anti-Lebanese Racism and Return Visits in the Sydney Hadchiti Lebanese Community', *Anthropological Forum* 18(1): 37 - 55.

Ibrahim, Z. 2007 'The Beginning of Neo-Realist Imaginings in Malaysian Cinema: A Critical Appraisal of Malay Modernity and Representation of Malayness in Rahim Razali's Films', *Asian Journal of Social Science* 35(4 - 5): 511 - 527.

Jakubowicz, A. 1994 'Australian (dis)contents: Film, mass media and multiculturalism', in F. Rizvi and S. Gunew (eds) *Arts for a Multicultural Australia: Issues and Strategies*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Jakubowicz, A., Goodall, H., Martin, J., Mitchell, T., Randall, L. and Seneviratne, K. 1994 *Racism, Ethnicity and the Media*, Sydney, Australia: Allen & Unwin.

Jones, E., Farina, A., Hastorf, A., Markus, H., Miller, D. T. and Scott, R. 1984 *Social Stigma: The Psychology of Marked Relationships*, New York: Freeman.

Kabir, N. A. 2007 'Muslims in Australia: The Double Edge of Terrorism', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33(8): 1277 - 1297.

— 2008a 'Are young Muslims adopting Australian values?', *Australian Journal of Education* 52(3): 229 - 241.

— 2008b 'To be or not to be an Australian: Focus on Muslim youth', *National Identities* 10(4): 399 - 419.

Keats, D. M. 2000 *Interviewing: A practical guide for students and professionals*, Sydney, NSW: University of NSW Press.

Keller, L. 2003 'Urban Cinefile FAT PIZZA: DVD', Vol. 2009.

Khatib, L. 2006 *Filming the Modern Middle East*, London: I. B. Tauris.

Kinski, K. 2009 'Interview with George Basha', Vol. 2009, Sydney: Design Federation.

Klein, M. W. 1974 'Labeling, Deterrence, and Recidivism: a Study of Police Dispositions of Juvenile Offenders. ', *Social Problems* 22 (2): 292-303.

Knowles, L. 2002 'Wild Animal - Gang rapist sentenced to 32 years jail' *Daily Telegraph*, Sydney.

Kolig, E. and Kabir, N. A. 2008 'Not Friend, Not Foe: The Rocky Road of Enfranchisement of Muslims into Multicultural Nationhood in Australia and New Zealand', *Immigrants & Minorities* 26(3): 266 - 300.

Kress, G. 1995 'The social production of language: History and structures of domination', in P. Fries and M. Gregory (eds) *Discourse in society: Systemic functional perspectives*, Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Krieger, N., Rowley, D. L., Herman, A. A., Avery, B. and Phillips, M. T. 1993 'Racism, sexism, and social class: implications for studies of health, disease, and well-being', *American Journal of Preventative Medicine* 9: 82 - 122.

Lattas, A. 2007a ''They Always Seem to be Angry': The Cronulla Riot and the Civilising Pleasures of the Sun', *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 18(3): 300 - 319.

Lattas, J. 2007b 'Cruising: 'Moral Panic' and the Cronulla Riot', *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 18(3): 320 - 335.

Link, B. G. and Phelan, J. C. 2001 'Conceptualizing Stigma', *Annual Review of Sociology* 27: 363 - 385.

Lotz, R. and Lee, L. 1999 'Sociability, School Experience, and Delinquency', *Youth and Society* 31(2): 199 - 223.

Lundman, R. J. 1976 'Will Diversion Reduce Recidivism? ', *Crime and Delinquency* 22(4): 428 - 437.

Maddox, G. 2009 'Popcorn, patrons and punch-ups' *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney: Fairfax Publishing.

Mamon, S. 2004 'Mapping the Attainment of Black Children in Britain', *Race and Class* 46(2): 78 - 91.

McGlone, M. S. and Pfiester, R. A. 2007 'The Generality and Consequences of Stereotype Threat', *Sociology Compass* 1(1): 174 - 190.

McGrath, A. 2009 'Offenders' Perceptions of the Sentencing Process: A Study of Deterrence and Stigmatisation in the New South Wales Children's Court. ', *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 42(1): 24 - 46.

Meade, A. C. 1974 'The Labeling Approach to Delinquency: State of the Theory as a Function of Method', *Social Forces* 53(1): 83 - 91.

Merton, R. K. 1948 'The self-fulfilling prophecy', *Antioch Review* 8: 193 - 210.

Messerschmidt, J. W. 1993 *Masculinities and Crime: Critique, and Reconceptualization of Theory*, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Mitchell, T. 1992 'Wogs Still Out of Work: Australian television comedy as colonial discourse', *Australasian Drama Studies* 20: 119 - 133.

Molina Guzman, I. 2006 'Mediating *Frida*: Negotiating Discourses of Latina/o Authenticity in Global Media Representations of Ethnic Identity', *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 23(3): 232 - 251.

Moreiras, A. 1999 'Hybridity and Double Consciousness', *Cultural Studies* 13(3): 373 - 407.

Mukherjee, S. 1999 'Ethnicity and Crime', *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice* 117: 1 - 6.

Muzzatti, S. L. 2004 *Criminalising Marginalisation and Resistance: Marilyn Manson, Columbine and Cultural Criminology*, London: The Glasshouse Press.

— 2006 'Cultural Criminology: A Decade and Counting of Criminological Chaos', in W. S. DeKeseredy and B. Perry (eds) *Advancing Critical Criminology*, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Newburn, T. and Stanko, E. A. (eds) 1994 *Men, Masculinities and Crime*, London: Routledge.

Noble, G. and Tabar, P. 2002 'On being Lebanese-Australian: Hybridity, essentialism and strategy among Arabic-speaking youth', in G. Hage (ed) *Arab-Australians today*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing.

Noriega, C. A. and Lopez, A. M. (eds) 1996 *The Ethnic Eye: Latino Media Arts*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

O'Brien, M. 2005 'What is *cultural* about cultural criminology?', *British Journal of Criminology* 45: 599 - 612.

O'Doherty, K. and Augoustinos, M. 2008 'Protecting the Nation: Nationalist Rhetoric on Asylum Seekers and the Tampa', *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* 18: 576 - 592.

Osuri, G. and Banerjee, S. B. 2004 'White diasporas: Media representations of September 11 and the unbearable whiteness of being in Australia', *Social Semiotics* 14(2): 151 - 171.

Pallotta-Chiarolli, M. 1997 'We want to address boys' education, but...', *Curriculum Perspectives* 17: 1.

Pallotta-Chiarolli, M. and Skrbis, Z. 1994 'Authority, Compliance and Rebellion in 2nd Generation Cultural Minorities', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology* 30(3): 259-272.

Patton, M. 1990 *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, Newsbury Park, CA: Sage.

Payne, G. 2006 'Re-Counting 'Illiteracy': Literacy Skills in the Sociology of Social Inequality', *British Journal of Sociology* 57(2): 219 - 240.

Phelan, J. C., Link, B. G. and Dovidio, J. F. 2008 'Stigma and Prejudice: One animal or two?', *Social Science and Medicine* 67: 358 - 367.

Phillips, N. and Hardy, C. 2002 *Discourse Analysis: Investigating Processes of Social Construction*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

PIE-O 1990 *AFTRS Conference*: SBS Vox Populi.

Polkinghorne, D. E. 2007 'Validity Issues in Narrative Research', *Qualitative Inquiry* 13(4): 471 - 486.

Ponterotto, J. G. 2006 'Brief Note on the Origins, Evolution, and Meaning of the Qualitative Research Concept "Thick Description"', *The Qualitative Report* 11(3): 538 - 549.

Powell, G. A. 2005 'Rhetoric of Identity: An Inquiry into Symbolic Syntax and Composition of Black Identity in Bamboozled', *Journal of African American Studies* 9(3): 45 - 53.

Poynting, S. 2002a ''Bin Laden in the Suburbs': Attacks on Arab and Muslim Australians before and after 11 September', *Current Issues in Criminal Justice* 14(1): 43 - 64.

— 2002b 'Racism and Community Safety', *Current Issues in Criminal Justice* 13(3): 328 - 332.

— 2006 'What Caused the Cronulla Riot?', *Race and Class* 48(1): 85 - 92.

— 2008 'The Attack on 'Political Correctness': Islamophobia and the
Erosion of Multiculturalism in Australia Under the Howard Regime',
Social Alternatives 27(1): 5 - 9.

Poynting, S. and Mason, V. 2008 'The New Integrationism, the State and
Islamophobia: Retreat from multiculturalism in Australia', *International
Journal of Law, Crime and Justice* 36: 230 - 246.

Poynting, S. and Noble, G. 2003 ''Dog-Whistle' Journalism and Muslim
Austrailans since 2001', Vol. No. 109: Media International Australia
incorporating Culture and Policy.

— 2004 'Living with Racism: The Experience and Reporting by Arab and
Muslim Australians of Discrimination, Abuse and Violence since 11
September 2001: Report to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity
Commission': Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney.

Poynting, S., Noble, G. and Tabar, P. 1999 ''Intersections' of Masculinity
and Ethnicity: a study of male Lebanese immigrant youth in western
Sydney', *Race Ethnicity and Education* 2(1): 59 - 78.

— 2003a 'Lost between Cultures or Resisting Racism?: Second generation
Lebanese immigrant young men in Sydney', *Palma Journal: An
interdisciplinary research publication* 9(1): 93 - 114.

— 2003b 'Protest Masculinity and Lebanese youth in western Sydney: an
ethnographic study', in S. Tomsen and M. Donaldson (eds) *Male trouble:
looking at Australian masculinities*, North Melbourne, VIC: Pluto Press.

— 2004a 'Middle Eastern Appearances: "Ethnic Gangs", Moral Panics and
Media Framing', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*
34(1): 67 - 90.

Poynting, S., Noble, G., Tabar, P. and Collins, J. 2004b *Bin Laden in the Suburbs: Criminalising the Arab Other*, Sydney: Sydney Institute of Criminology.

Presdee, M. 2000 *Cultural Criminology and the Carnival of Crime*, London: Routledge.

— 2004 'Cultural Criminology: The long and winding road', *Theoretical Criminology* 8(3): 275 - 285.

Quillian, L. 2006 'New Approaches to Understanding Racial Prejudice and Discrimination', *Annual Review of Sociology* 32: 299 - 328.

Ravi, S. 2008 'Tamil identity and diasporic desire in a Kollywood comedy: 'Nala Damayanti' (2003)', *South Asian Popular Culture* 6(1): 45 - 56.

Ryle, G. 1949 *Concept of the mind*, London: Hutchinson and Company.

Saeed, A. 2007 'Media, Racism and Islamophobia: The Representation of Islam and Muslims in the Media', *Sociology Compass* 1(2): 443 - 462.

Sams, C. and Kennedy, L. 2009 'Life imitates art: Gang film star on remand' *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney: Fairfax Publishing.

Sarantakos, S. 1998 *Social Research*, 2nd Edition, South Yarra, VIC: Macmillan Education.

Schostak, J. 2006 *Interviewing and Representation in Qualitative Research*, New York, NY: Open University Press.

Schur, E. M. (ed) 1971 *Labeling Deviant Behavior: Its sociological implications*, New York: Harper & Row.

Schwandt, T. A. 1997a *Qualitative inquiry: A dictionary of terms*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

— 1997b 'Reading the "Problem of Evaluation" in Social Inquiry', *Qualitative Inquiry* 3(1): 4 - 25.

Seidman, I. 1998 *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences*, 2nd Edition, New York: Teachers College Press.

Shah, S. 2004 'The researcher/interviewer in an intercultural context: A social intruder!', *British Educational Research Journal* 30(4): 549 - 575.

Shelton, J. N., Richeson, J. A. and Vorauer, J. D. 2006 'Threatened identities and interethnic interactions', *European Review of Social Psychology* 17: 321 - 258.

Sherman, L. W. and Berk, R. A. 1984 'The Specific Deterrent Effects of Arrest for Domestic Assault', *American Sociological Review* 49(2): 261 - 272.

Shih, M., Ambady, N., Richeson, J. A., Fujita, K. and Heather, G. 2002 'Stereotype performance boosts: the impact of self-relevance and the manner of stereotype activation', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 83: 638 - 647.

Shih, M., Bonam, C., Sanchez, D. and Peck, C. 2007 'The social construction of race: Biracial identity and vulnerability to stereotypes', *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 13(2): 125 - 133.

Simmons, K. and Lecouteur, A. 2008 'Modern racism in the media: constructions of 'the possibility of change' in accounts of two Australian 'riots'', *Discourse & Society* 19: 667 - 687.

Steele, C. and Aronson, E. 1995 'Stereotype vulnerability and the intellectual test performance of African-Americans', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 69: 797 - 811.

Stum, K. and Chu, M. M. 1999 'Gang Prevention and Intervention in a Rural Town in California: At-Risk Youths and the Community Policing School Partnership Program', *Journal of Gang Research* 7(1): 1 - 12.

Tabar, P. 2007 '"Habiibs" in Australia: Language, Identity and Masculinity', *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 28(2): 157 - 172.

Thumboo, J., Fong, K., Machin, D., Chan, S., Soh, C., Leong, K., Feng, P., Thio, S. and Boey, M. 2003 'Quality of Life in an Urban Asian Population: The Impact of Ethnicity and Socio-Economic Status', *Social Science and Medicine* 56(8): 1761 - 1772.

Tittle, C. R. 1975 'Labeling and Crime: An Empirical Evaluation', in W. R. Gove (ed) *The Labeling of Deviance: Evaluating a Perspective*, New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Urban, A. L. 2009 'A Life or Crime - Interview with Serhat Caradee', Vol. 2009.

Van Dijk, T. A., Ting-Toomey, S., Smitherman, G. and Troutman, D. 2000 'Discourse, Ethnicity, Culture and Racism', in T. A. van Dijk (ed) *Discourse as Social Interaction*, Vol. 2nd, London: Sage.

Vasta, E. 1993 'Multiculturalism and Ethnic Identity - The Relationship between Racism and Resistance', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology* 29(2): 209-225.

Verkuyten, M. 2008 'Life Satisfaction Among Ethnic Minorities: The Role of Discrimination and Group Identification', *Social Indicators Research* 89(3): 391 - 404.

Walker, G. W. 2006 'Disciplining Protest Masculinity', *Men and Masculinities* 9(1): 5 - 22.

Warner, K. 2004 'Gang Rape in Sydney: Crime, the Media, Politics, Race, and Sentencing', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 37(3): 344 - 361.

Weedon, C. 2004 *Identity and Culture: Narratives of Difference and Belonging*, New York: Open University Press.

Wellford, C. F. 1975 'Labeling Theory and Criminology: An Assessment', *Social Problems* 22: 332 - 345.

Wetherell, M. and Potter, J. 1992 *Mapping the Language of Racism: Discourse and the Legitimation of Exploitation*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Wheeler, S. C. and Petty, R. E. 2001 'The effects of stereotype activation on behavior: a review of possible mechanisms', *Psychological Bulletin* 127: 797 - 826.

White, R. 2007 'Youth Gangs, Violence and Anti-Social Behaviour': Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth.

White, R. D. 1996 'Racism, Policing and Ethnic Youth Gangs', *Current Issues in Criminal Justice* 7(3): 302 - 313.

Williams, D. R. 1990 'Socioeconomic differentials in health: a review and redirection', *Social Psychology* 53: 81 - 99.

Wilson, D. M., Gottfredson, D. C. and Stickle, W. P. 2009 'Gender differences in effects of teen courts on delinquency: A theory-guided evaluation', *Journal of Criminal Justice* 37(1): 21 - 27.

Wockner, C. 2002 'Faces of Evil - We Name Gutless Rapists - Evil Rapists - Name and Shame' *Daily Telegraph*, Sydney.

Wockner, C. and Lalor, P. 2002 'Hunting for prey on a day at the beach' *Daily Telegraph*, Sydney.

Wout, D. A., Shih, M. J., Jackson, J. S. and Sellers, R. M. 2009 'Targets as perceivers: How people determine when they will be negatively stereotyped', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 96(2): 349 - 362.

Yinger, J. M. 1994 *Ethnicity: Source of Strength? Source of Conflict?*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Young, A. 2004 'Experiences in ethnographic interviewing about race', in M. Bulmer and J. Solomos (eds) *Researching race and racism*, London: Routledge.

— 2008 'Culture, Critical Criminology and the Imagination of Crime', in C. Cunneen and T. Anthony (eds) *The Critical Criminology Companion*, NSW: Hawkins Press.

— 2009 'The Screen of the Crime: Judging the Affect of Cinematic Violence', *Social & Legal Studies* 18(1): 5 - 22.

Young, J. 1999 *The Exclusive Society*, London: Sage.

— 2003 'Merton with Energy, Katz with Structure: The sociology of vindictiveness and the criminology of transgression', *Theoretical Criminology* 7(3): 389 - 414.

Films

Cedar Boys 2009, Templar Films, Director Serhat Caradee

The Combination 2009, See Thru Films, Director David Field

The Pizza 2003, Roadshow Entertainment, Director Paul Fenech

<u>Television Programs</u>

East West 101 (2009), Knapman Wyld Television, Creators Steve

      Knapman & Kris Wyld

Acropolis Now (1989 - 1992), Seven Network & Crawford Productions,

      Creator Nick Giannopoulos

<u>Stage/Theatre</u>

Wogs Out of Work (1987), Creators Nick Giannopoulos & George

      Kapiniaris

<u>Interviews</u>

12/08/2009: Fadi

28/08/2009: Kassim

01/09/2009: George

02/09/2009: Jamil

APPENDIX ONE: ADVERTISING

This research was advertised through a wide range of sources, including:

- Academic contacts

Community Organisations

- Bankstown Youth Development Service

- Information and Cultural Exchange

- ICRA Youth Centre

- Shopfront Theatre for Young People

- Auburn Community Development Network

- Community Cultural Development New South Wales

- Hack program, Triple J (ABC Radio Station)

Film Organisations

- Templar Films

- Mushroom Pictures

- Ronin Films

- Australian Film Syndicate

- Sally Burleigh PR

Filmmaker's Websites

- www.serhatcaradee.com.au

- www.thecombinationmovie.com

APPENDIX TWO: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The interview schedule was amended slightly according to what role the participant played in their film, e.g. actor, producer, director, writer, and whether or not they were affiliated with either *Cedar Boys* or *The Combination*, but interview topics were consistent across interviews.

Film

- How did you become involved with film?

- In general, what function do you think community films such as Cedar Boys fulfil for the Lebanese-Australian community?

- Were there particular issues that you were trying to represent in your film?

- How did you seek support for Cedar Boys, and what sort of challenges did you face in the process?

Friendship Groups

- What is the place of friendship in the film?

- How do your own friendship groups affect how you see yourself, and how you think others see you?

Masculinity

- To what extent are you commenting on masculinity in your film?

- How did you represent different masculinities in your film?

- I thought Tarek was an extremely interesting character, and I was wondering if you could elaborate on whether his struggle between good and evil is a common experience among young Lebanese-Australian men.

- Sam was a very different character – what were you trying to represent with him?

Racism – Inclusion vs. Exclusion

- How do you think racism, or social exclusion affects how young Lebanese-Australian men see themselves?

- I got the sense that this was what you were trying to convey in the film – can you comment on how the feeling of exclusion, or being on the outside looking in, affects the decisions that young Lebanese-Australian men about their lives?

Crime

- What were the aims of the film in portraying crime in the way that it did?

- In your opinion, what is the relationship like between young Lebanese-Australian men and the police?

- Do you think the way that Cedar Boys represented crime will have an effect on young Lebanese-Australian men? Can you elaborate on this?

Media

- Do you think the Australian popular media has any effect on how young Lebanese-Australian men see themselves?

- Do you think the Australian popular media has any effect on how non-Lebanese Australians view young Lebanese-Australian men?

- In your opinion, does the media construct positive or negative stereotypes of young Lebanese-Australian men? Can you comment on these stereotypes?

Conclusion

- Is there anything that you think needs to be said that we haven't covered already?

APPENDIX THREE: PARTICIPANT MATRIX

Pseudonym	Role	Religion	Background	Interview Date
Fadi	Producer	Christian	Lebanese	12/08/09
Kassim	Writer/Actor	Muslim	Lebanese	28/08/09
George	Writer/Actor	N/A	Lebanese	01/09/09
Jamil	Writer/Director	N/A	N/A	02/09/09