

**DANGEROUS PEOPLE AND PLACES: A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER'S
CONSTRUCTIONS OF CRIME.**

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

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Abstract

This thesis argues that there is a clear imbalance in the representation of crime in the newspaper, *Grocott's Mail*, in Grahamstown, in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. The thesis concludes that the system of marginalisation and segregation which was established during the apartheid era is the foundation for the continued segregation and marginalisation of certain groups of people in Grahamstown as depicted in crime journalism. Previous research shows that not only people, but spaces are marginalised through media representations of crime. As people are represented as dangerous, so too the spaces they occupy become dangerous spaces. Importantly, the research shows that discourses of marginalisation are present in newspaper reports reproducing the discourses prominent in society, and in turn, the newspaper itself perpetuates these marginalising discourses. This extends into the coverage that different crimes receive in newspapers. For instance, the reports show that a middle-class audience will be more concerned with property crime in middle-class neighbourhoods, than other crimes in lower-class neighbourhoods. I argue that not only the type of crime, but the severity, the effect, and the necessity for justice represented by the newspaper, are all largely determined by the region of the crime. Further, I show that the criminal is not only demonised and represented as individually deviant in the reports in the newspaper, but that these representations are made by this newspaper because they are deeply imbedded as a discourse in society. This is partly because this newspaper has taken on a monitorial role, requiring neutral reporting from journalists, and a dedication to surveying the processes of state institutions, like the police and courts. As a result, the ways in which crime is reported on in the newspaper is fairly well fixed, making it difficult for journalists to conceive of different ways of reporting crime. The representations of the criminal justice system that the monitorial media, this newspaper included present, are a careful balance between the interest of the public, and the need to preserve relationships with sources. The monitorial media in general, and this newspaper in particular, represent the criminal justice system. The relationship between the police and the newspaper, and the courts and the media, therefore strongly influences the way in which crime news is reported. In particular, crime news is represented from the perspective of the criminal justice system. This research was carried out using Critical Discourse Analysis, qualitative interviews, and focus group interviews.

“Convicts represent those wrong-doers who have taken to a particular form of wrong-doing punishable by law. Of the larger army of bad men [sic] they represent a minority, who have been found out in a peculiarly unsatisfactory kind of misconduct. There are many men, some lying, unscrupulous, dishonest, others cruel, selfish, vicious, who go through life without ever doing anything that brings them within the scope of the criminal code, for whose offences the laws of society provide no punishment.” Henry Brodribb Irving, *A Book of Remarkable Criminals*, 1918.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Media crime encompasses all the things that make audiences come back for more: drama, suspense, heroes, villains, victims and the eternal fight for justice. Crime is the stuff that media, be it news or entertainment, is made of. Crime is neither a new concept to media, nor to society. Even though, as Carrabine (2008) argues, there are more threats to fear in the modern world than there were only a few years ago, crime has persistently both intrigued and plagued society for centuries (Doyle 2006: 868). As such, news and entertainment media have also been intrigued by representations of criminals, crime, danger and justice. Heroic villains like those which emanate from narratives on mafia myths for instance, arguably serve to make sense of the unstable concept of the human capacity for evil by reconceptualising it and making it 'fit for human consumption', neatly packaged within movies and television series (Larke 2005: 129). The crime narratives which audiences regularly eagerly consume in the form of books, podcasts, movies, television series and the nightly news, regularly feature dramatic, sensational and violent crimes like murder and sexual offences (Doyle 2006: 869), crimes which the audience is much less likely to be affected by than offences such as housebreaking or even mugging and car theft (Doyle 2006: 869).

Media crime is also a way in which the efficacy of the justice system can be explored, and most often, reinforced as central to social order, and praised. Media crime, in both entertainment and news formats, features a high number of solved crimes largely due to the relationship that media in general has with sources in the police and court systems (Doyle 2006: 870). In South Africa, the relationship between the criminal justice system and the media is especially delicate because of the historical relationship between these powerful entities in the country. The media in apartheid South Africa could be divided between political affiliations – co-operative media like the South African Broadcasting Commission and alternative, black and resistance media (Fourie 2007). It was the latter that reported on the oppressive and often violent methods of the South African police which resulted in journalists being outlawed, condemned and often imprisoned. However, the former collaborated with the police and state to report strictly news which was sanctioned and censored. This historical context puts contemporary media in a difficult position: monitorial media have a responsibility to ensure that law enforcement is accountable for its actions, whilst keeping the goals of a democratic society in mind. Media are then laden with the responsibility to both protect the rights of citizens to know, as well as building an adequate foundation for social cohesion.

Much research has been conducted on trying to determine what influences crime in the media might have on the audience. But much like research into video games and violence, the results are highly contrasting, and highly contested (see Altheide 2009, Doyle 2006, Cohen 1972, Adebani 2004, Gutman 2003).

Largely though, crime in the media has been hypothesised to foster a variety of public beliefs and attitudes around crime and control. These include the increased fear of crime and the consequent support for law-and-order measures, which are sometimes extremely punitive without cognisance of the social situations and factors which produce criminal behaviour (Doyle 2006: 872).

Regardless of the difficulty which researchers have encountered in attempting to ascertain the possible effects that crime in the media has on audiences, the media are nevertheless a central institution of social control. Media work in conjunction with the legal system to define deviance and exert control on individuals (and groups), with demonstrable and tangible effects (Doyle 2006: 875). One of the many potential effects of the fear of crime, or the potential risk of victimisation, comes in the form of heightened security measures such as armed response private security, security complexes, and walled-in communities. Cities all over the world are segregating populations from one another by cordoning off certain areas, erecting booms, stationing security guards, and building walls around the affluent and influential to protect them from the mysterious, and dangerous 'other'. Cities like Johannesburg are experiencing a rush of migration from previously open and accessible suburbs to security complexes forcing not only pedestrians but traffic to reroute around them (Saff 2001, Powdthavee 2005, Berg and Nouveau 2011, Kempa and Singh 2008).

Theoretically, crime has several facets which can be disaggregated for study. These include the criminal; the crime itself; the victim; spaces of crime and danger; and justice and control. This research project investigates the particular forms the reporting of crime takes in the local Grahamstown community newspaper, *Grocott's Mail*, focusing in particular on the representation of the criminal, the crime and the space and place of crime.

As a result of largely unreliable statistics, the crime situation in South Africa is rather difficult to pin down empirically. Consequently, academic research into crime in South Africa becomes difficult because there are significant differences in estimates of how much crime goes unreported (Kamper and Badenhorst 2010: 248). Working with available statistics, Burger et al present a mixed bag of statistical analyses. They conclude that crime in

South Africa since 1994 (when statistics have been considered somewhat more reliable) has been relatively stable but exceptionally high in most areas, the peak being more than 2.5 million incidents of crime in the 2002/2003 reporting period (Burger et al 2010: 4). National crime levels dropped until the 2007/2008 reporting period, to a total of around 2 million incidents. In the 2009/2010 reporting period however, the national crime rate increased again to around 2.2 million incidents. It is no wonder then that crime is such a significant cause for concern in this country.

Fear of crime and perceived risk are two of the tools that psychological researchers in particular use to analyse individuals' reactions to crime (Ferraro 1995). Fear and risk though, are not the only concerns. Feelings of safety are innately linked to security and happiness and these are endangered by the perpetuation of crime (Powdthavee 2005: 542). Beyond this, the tangible effects of responses to crime create a highly-divided and socially-stigmatising culture, plainly visible in South Africa, but also elsewhere in the world. The wealthy middle class can wall themselves off behind security systems and armed response, whilst the victims of the worst crimes, the socially and financially impoverished (and in South Africa those worst affected by the enduring effects of apartheid) are blamed for crime and deviance.

Crime is then not only a social and cultural problem, but a political one, one which alienates the lower, un-propertied and previously disadvantaged classes, retards democracy and importantly, slows the integration of the races and classes in a country in which the disparate population is tenuously tied together on the promise of democracy (Gordon 1998). This highly volatile situation pivots on the effects that are produced by the abundance of crime in a society which is still suffering the ravages of a highly-divided political system: 'othering' casts certain highly visible groups in a highly deviant light, demonising them usually on the basis of appearance. Fear in South Africa, as Hansen so aptly puts it, "has a black face" (2006: 284).

Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape is not untouched by this legacy of apartheid. Indeed, it is still suffering the consequences of a deeply racially-divided society. The apartheid city planning structure of the town remains in place, to a great extent, even to the point that buffer zones still exist between town and townships. Locals easily discuss the town in divided terms: "Grahamstown West" means affluence, middle-class, running water and sanitation services; "Grahamstown East" means danger, poverty and neglect.

It is against this context that *Grocott's Mail* aims to target the entire town, and all its residents as its readership, according to the editor who considers that no citizen of Grahamstown (East or West) should be without cause to read his (English-language) newspaper. This interesting element becomes even more dynamic when the tensions around the production of news in general are added to the context of journalism in this town. In terms of crime news, these different dimensions of the journalist's role, usually results in a very particular representation of crime: violent, committed by marginalised individuals (who are identifiable by their skin colour and/or economic situation), individually deviant, and happens in unsafe, dangerous and marginalised spaces (Hansen 2006, Christopher 2001, Gibson 2003).

As a community newspaper, *Grocott's Mail's* role in Grahamstown (which is small and closely connected) becomes conflicted between observation/monitoring and participation where too much of either position might negatively affect the newspaper's precarious financial situation. Even though 39% of *Grocott's* readership classify themselves as Black (African), and 35% classify themselves as White (with the remaining 26% Coloured, Indian and Not classified), only 26% of the total readership has a degree or diploma, while 45% have a high school matric.

In order to understand how *Grocott's Mail* represents crime in the media, I have undertaken a textual and institutional analysis located within the qualitative tradition of enquiry. Specifically, interpretivism provides a theoretical framework from which the textual and institutional analyses can be positioned in terms of understanding, rather than explaining phenomena. In this vein, the bulk of the textual analysis was conducted using a Critical Discourse Analysis approach (Richardson 2007) which takes social and discursive practices, as well as textual and linguistic evidence, into account. In the interests of triangulation and accuracy, individual interviews conducted with permanent staff members, and a focus group interview with students who spent a semester in their final year of study in the newsroom as reporters, rounds out the enquiry to gain a more three-dimensional perspective on the research question.

My research report will argue that findings from not only the textual, discursive, and social analysis conducted in the form of a Critical Discourse Analysis, but also the findings from the individual and focus group interviews show a clear imbalance in the representations of crime in the newspaper. I will argue that not only the type of crime, but the severity, the

effect, and the necessity for justice represented by the newspaper are largely determined by the regional location of the crime. Further, I will show that the criminal is not only demonised and represented as deviant in the reports in the newspaper, but that these representations are made by this newspaper because they are prevalent in society. Journalists at the newspaper, even the student journalists who are a temporary part of the community, are part of the Grahamstown community; they are affected by and therefore reproduce the discursive patterns in this society. This reproduction of a discourse of deviancy by the newspaper then reinforces the social discourse, from whence the journalists take their cues. Crime reporting in *Grocott's Mail* is significantly influenced by the journalists' perceptions of their audience, by dominant, enduring news values and the economic imperative of ensuring the paper's advertising and financial stability.

Chapter Two: Research Context

Crime Statistics in South Africa

If the amount of media attention given to an issue is a direct indication of the prominence of that issue, then crime is one of the most topical social issues in South Africa (Kamper and Badenhorst 2010: 247). There are many other indications that this is so. For instance, British criminologist, David Garland, has characterised the country as a high crime society (Kamper and Badenhorst 2010: 248) and analysis of reported crime figures from the South African Police Force show that between 1999 and 2004 total national crime levels were above the 2.5 million incidents mark. The figures have declined since then but between 1994 and 2010 have never been below 2 million incidents (Burger et al 2010: 3). According to the analysis of South Africa's crime statistics conducted by Burger et al, the type of crime that has made up the largest proportion of crimes statistics in South Africa since 1994 is property crime. Violent interpersonal crime is the next most prevalent; following this are crimes described as 'other'; robbery represents a comparatively small proportion of the crimes committed in the country, but the number is increasing (Burger et al 2010: 4).

However, any analysis of crime should take into consideration what Kamper and Badenhorst (2010) refer to as the 'blind spot': that crime statistics are generally considered to be unreliable due to various factors. Before 1994 crime figures were inaccurately recorded by the police force; but it can be taken as a regular occurrence that not all incidents of crime will end up being represented in the official police crime statistic, for various reasons, leaving a blind spot. Statistics then should only be taken as an indication of the levels of crime in the country (Kamper and Badenhorst 2010: 248).

Burger et al's (2010) analysis also revealed that the increase in crime can be attributed largely to an increase in property crimes: shoplifting, commercial crime, residential burglary, theft out of motor vehicles, and business burglary (2010: 4). While property crimes have increased, thus increasing the total number of crime incidents, violent interpersonal crimes have decreased in number (Burger et al 2010: 4). Violent interpersonal crimes include crimes like murder, assault, sexual offences and domestic violence and are also referred to as 'social fabric' crimes. These have declined or stabilised (with the exception of attempted murder which increased in 2002/03), but Burger et al also found that although the numbers of incidents of aggravated robbery (street robbery, car hijacking, truck hijacking, cash-in-transit robbery, bank robbery, house robbery and business robbery) have declined, the numbers

remain high: by 2010 there were close to 120 000 incidents of aggravated robbery, but the peak was around 2003/04 when there were almost 140 000 incidents of aggravated robbery (Burger et al 2010: 7). They argue that aggravated robbery has a major impact on perceptions of safety as well as a significant economic impact (Burger et al 2010: 6).

Crime in the Media

To inform the context of crime in South Africa, and the context of Grahamstown and *Grocott's Mail*, it is important to understand how the news media around the world report on crime. Crime in the media is an extensive topic of research, so in this section I will begin by exploring the most general research, and then review some of the most pertinent, specific research findings.

Reiner (2006) conducted an extensive review of British research which sought to understand representations of crime in the media, for the *Oxford Handbook of Criminology*. This and subsequent editions seek to provide a guide to the field of criminology for students and practitioners. In “Media-made criminality: the representation of crime in the mass media”, Reiner brought together several British studies of media representations of crime and concluded that news and entertainment media representations of crime can be summarised in six key points. Firstly, crime is a prominent feature of *all* media. Second, the overwhelming proportion of media attention is focused on violent crimes against individuals. Because of this, the crimes that are represented most in the media are those which happen least often. Third, media represent offenders as older and higher status than statistics suggests. Children, as victims as well as perpetrators of crimes, are disproportionately represented as being more involved in crimes than statistics suggest. Reiner argues that this is because of the focus of the news media on the unusual: older and higher status individuals and children are not expected to commit crimes, whereas younger individuals typically commit the most crime. It should be noted that this is a feature of British crime representations. Fourth, the risks of crime portrayed by the media are more serious than statistics suggest, and that media underrepresent the probability of victimisation in property crime. Fifth, the media represent the police as having a high success rate, and having a high degree of integrity. Lastly, “individual victims and their suffering increasingly provide the motive force of crime stories” (Reiner 2006: 315).

Selective Reporting

Beginning with Reiner's second point, evidence suggests that the prominence of crimes which are portrayed most in the news media bears little resemblance to official statistics on crime. Indeed it seems that news values play a bigger role than social impact in determining which crime events become news. For instance, even though corruption in government, or crimes like fraud and embezzlement, might have a greater social and financial impact than business robbery, the former do not fit the criteria of news values as well as does the latter. They are complicated to understand and write about, they have indeterminate villain and hero characters, and they usually take place over a much longer period of time than other types of crime. These characteristics make these crimes much less newsworthy than violent crimes. Therefore, violent, dramatic crimes such as murder and sexual offences are represented more often in the news and entertainment media than non-violent crimes (Doyle 2006: 869). Innes labels these crimes 'signal crimes', so called because they are dramatic enough to be picked up by the news media and stir interest, but they are also the kinds of crimes that don't usually threaten or affect most people (Innes 2005: 56).

South African Crime in the Media

Silber and Geffen (2009) argue that

Everyone in South Africa is affected by crime, and the consequent sense of insecurity that comes with living in fear. Some encounter it directly, others through the experience of friends and family, and just about all of us through news media, which routinely reminds us of the abundant violence that has come to characterise our society (2009: 35).

Crime has highly political implications in South Africa because the efficacy of the African National Congress (ANC) government is judged according to its ability to control and manage crime. The suitability of the ANC to govern the country is therefore judged by the efficacy with which they control crime. As a result of this politicisation of crime, crime news is not only a staple of news media in South Africa, but also an incredibly important aspect of everyday life. Silber and Geffen cited above discuss the 'Huntley Thesis', which is the argument that white South Africans are disproportionately affected by crime that is perpetrated by black South Africans. The paper aims to dispel the Huntley Thesis and to prove statistically that this is a gross misrepresentation of the facts. It stems from an incident in 2009, when Brandon Huntley was granted refuge in Canada because he claimed that as a white man his life was in danger in South Africa, due to the high crime rate. The case created

a media sensation. When 142 academics signed an open letter to the Charge d’Affaires of Canada denouncing the decision, but especially when the Freedom Front Plus (FFP, a right-wing political party) came out as sympathetic, this fuelled media stories for months. *The Times* reported in September 2009 that Huntley was granted refugee status to escape persecution from African South Africans, because the state was either unable or unwilling to protect him. In the article, a Democratic Alliance spokesperson condemned this decision, and the chairman of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies rejected the allegations on which the claims were based. In the same month, *The Star* reported that the Huntley ruling was found to be erroneous by Canada’s Deputy Attorney General, and cited in particular one of the judge’s findings that Huntley would “stand out like a sore thumb because of his colour in any part of the country”, to be “perverse”.

The case was condemned in letters to the *City Press* in which one reader argued emotively that “Huntley and Canada deserve each other”. Another reader argued that it was “just a pity that he had to play the race card”, because all South Africans are seeking refuge from “our war zone”. This reader argued that Huntley was not threatened because of race but because of the government’s lack of willingness and/or ability to protect everyone. In November 2010 the *Sunday Tribune* reported that Huntley would be sent back home, to “suffer the indignity of his false claims”, according to a Home Affairs source cited in the article headlined “Canada to send ‘white crime victim’ back”.

This case shows the heightened emotion, disagreement, and debate evoked by crime and crime in the media in South Africa. This fact is made clear by Huntley himself, who in 2012, as reported in *The Star*, appealed the revocation of his Canadian refugee status to the Immigration and Refugee board in Canada, on the grounds that “he will come to harm if he has to return to SA, because of the extensive media coverage his case has attracted”.

Despite the significant connection between crime and the media in South Africa specifically, very few researchers have investigated the link between the concepts as it applies to South Africa. While Bonnes (2010) investigated rape coverage in *Grocott’s Mail*, very few researchers have conducted research aimed at the link between crime and the media. Indeed, the journal ‘South African Crime Quarterly’ has not published any research aimed specifically at exploring this link. SACQ instead publish research that deals with the practical problem of crime, largely ignoring the media aspect of crime. In most research conducted on crime the media are mentioned as a part of the process of garnering support for projects

related to crime prevention and the like, or mentioned in passing as an example of how people experience crime.

Grahamstown Context

Grahamstown is a small town in the Eastern Cape of South Africa with an estimated population of between 76 500 and 124 700 (Statistics South Africa 2001). Grahamstown was established by British settlers in 1820. When the Afrikaner National Party took control of the country in 1948 the city's already segregated society became highly segregated, with sections demarcated by race, for instance with the 'white' sections being closest to the CBD, and on the opposite side of town from the Black areas. This apartheid-inspired regional partitioning has arguably remained much the same to this day (Fox 2009: 3).

Up to 1930 the city's geography resembled a segregated city, with a central business district, distinct areas for residences of different races, and a zone of racial mixing (See figure 1: segregation city model applied to Grahamstown in the mid-1930s).

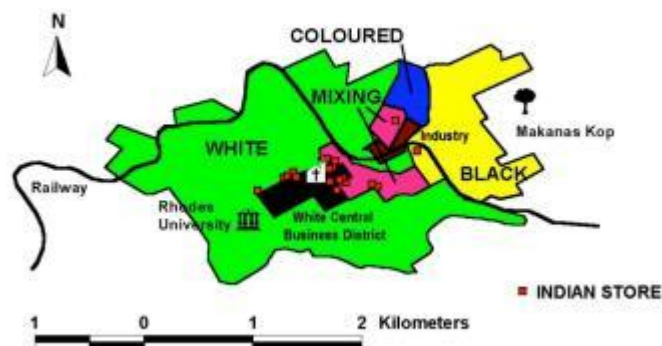


FIGURE 1: SEGREGATION CITY MODEL APPLIED TO GRAHAMSTOWN IN THE MID-1930S. (FOX 2009: 7).

The Group Areas Act (1950) was part of the regional engineering of cities, which relied on a central place of work, with residential areas for different races radiating out from the Central Business District to minimise races having to cross other race's residential zones (Fox 2009: 9). Buffer zones divided the races from one another, white areas were closest to the business districts, and black areas were concentrated on the outskirts of the city closest to the nearest homeland (See figure 2: the apartheid city model applied to Grahamstown in the mid-1980s. Fox 2009: 6).

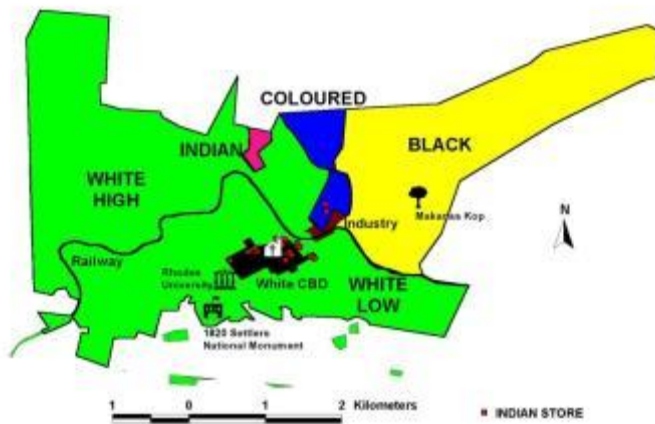


FIGURE 2: THE APARTHEID CITY MODEL APPLIED TO GRAHAMSTOWN IN THE MID-1980S. (Fox 2009: 8).

The blue area in Figure 2 is the buffer zone Lavender valley which separated the coloured township from the black township and is still largely an open area of land today (See Photo 1 Fox 2009: 19).



PHOTO 1: LAVENDER VALLEY FROM SUGARLOAF HILL 2002 (Fox 2009: 19).

Since the end of apartheid, massive population increases have changed the geography of the city and increased the area of the city enormously (See figure 5: Grahamstown's Historical Development, Fox 2009: 6). When Figure 5 is compared to Figure 4, it can be seen that the development of the city is largely in accord with the already existing geography of

the city. When Figure 3 is compared to Map 1, it can also be seen that the racial segregation enforced by apartheid is largely still in effect with townships and formal and informal settlements branching out from the Group Areas Act designated black residential area.

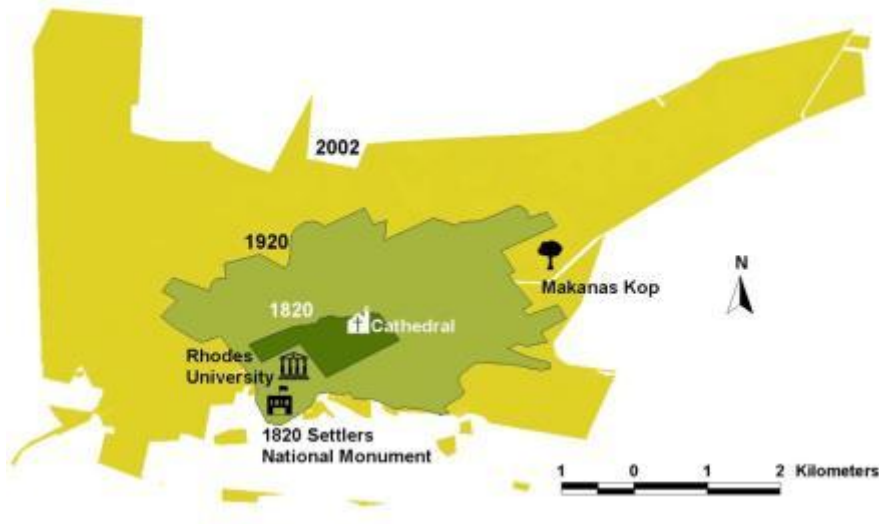
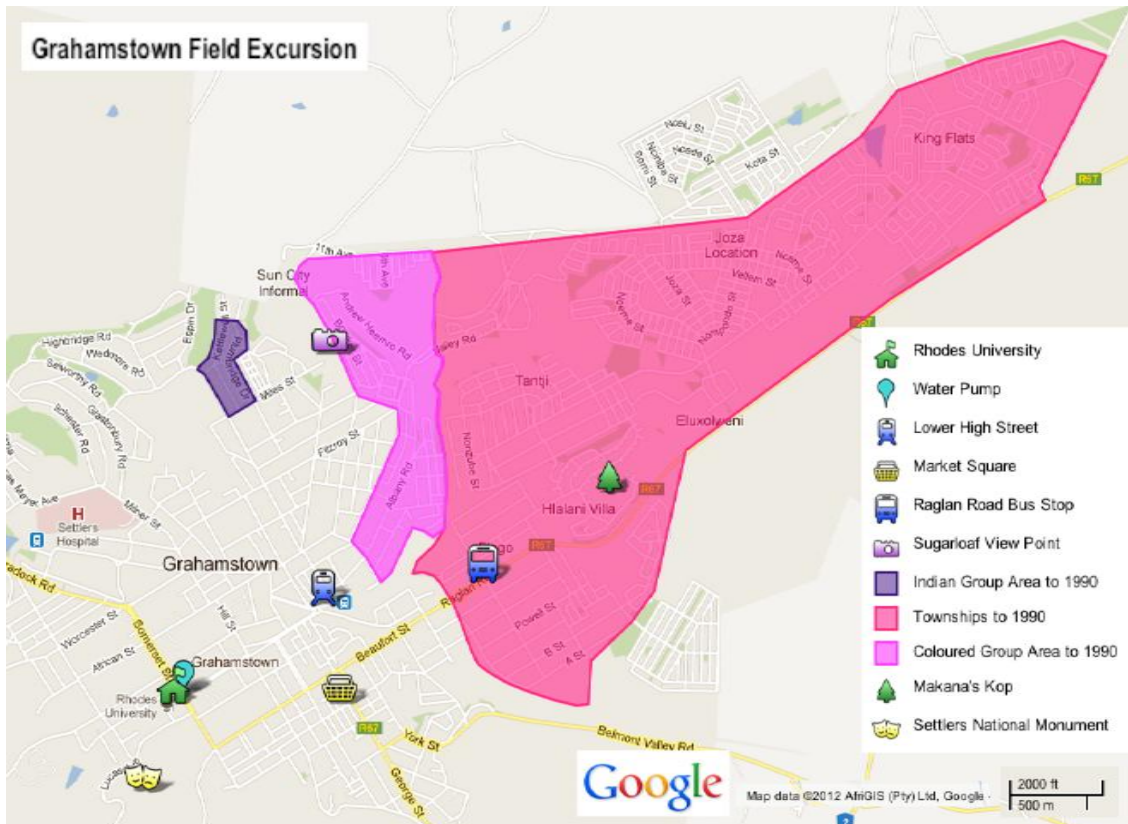


FIGURE 3: GRAHAMSTOWN'S HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT (FOX 2009: 6).



MAP 1: SHOWING MAJOR LANDMARKS IN GRAHAMSTOWN AND GROUP AREAS, 2002 (FOX 2009: 2).

From these maps it is easy to see the regional influence that first colonial policy and then apartheid policy had on the landscape. Grahamstown is a prime example of the legacy of apartheid inequality: the Group Areas Act aimed to segregate the races such that whites would have the greatest advantage and live in the most prosperous areas and blacks would live in inconvenient and underdeveloped areas, and this geography of unequal development still persists in Grahamstown today. From Map 1 it is possible to slice the town into two distinct areas: the area West of the townships marks the prosperous area where the main business area, the suburbs, the hospital and the university campus are located. This area is characterised by an increasing number of houses advertising armed security protection, high walls, and electrical gates and fences. The houses in this area are for the most part built from bricks, mortar, and concrete and have piped water and sanitation and electricity. The area

marked on the map as ‘Townships to 1990’ in the East of Grahamstown is where the townships are still situated in the far less prosperous and wealthy half of Grahamstown. Although the municipality, and the government at large have made attempts to upgrade the living conditions of people living in Grahamstown East, many of the houses are constructed of scrap metal, few homes have piped water, sanitation services or electricity, and the roads are not tarred.

Grahamstown’s Crime Profile

Theorists, such as Kamper and Badenhorst (2010), working in third world and under-developed countries have argued that social and economic circumstances such as poverty and discrimination are a leading cause of crimes like petty theft, and mugging.

Grahamstown suffers from a fairly large number of incidents of the group of crimes categorised under ‘contact crime (crimes against a person)’ according to statistics from the Grahamstown branch of the South African Police Force. From April 2010 to March 2011 there were a total number of 2 077 incidents of these types of crimes. The next highest occurrence is 1 844 incidents of property-related crimes in the same period, and 1 700 incidents of ‘other serious crimes’ (commercial crime, shoplifting and minor incidents of theft) in the same reporting period. Theft, categorised within ‘other serious crimes’ has the highest number of incidents in this category at 1 245 in 2011, followed by burglary at residential premises at 1 057 incidents in 2011. From April 2003 murder (categorised under contact crimes) increased gradually to 42 incidents, and then fell to 35 incidents in 2011. The number of sexual crimes increased in 2006 to 206 incidents, and then dropped to 179 incidents in 2011. However, common robbery, also categorised under contact crimes, increased in 2011 to 165 incidents. Under property-related crimes, there were a high number of incidents in 2003 at 1096, increasing to 1158 in 2006 and then dropping to 976 incidents in 2007. By 2011 the number had increased again to 1 057 incidents. There were very small numbers of kidnapping (seven incidents in 2011) and public violence (two in 2011)¹.

Grocott’s Mail

Grocott’s Mail is the community newspaper which serves the region of Grahamstown. It is the oldest independently-owned newspaper in South Africa in continuous publication; it is printed twice a week and most of the content is written in English. In the publication’s

¹ All statistics supplied by the Crime Research and Statistics department of the South African Police Force. Report entitled: ‘Crime in Grahamstown (EC) for April to March 2003/2004 – 2010/2011.

readership survey of 2008, 73% of respondents reported that they bought the paper twice a week. Despite the high number of non-first-language English speakers in Grahamstown, 40% of those surveyed reported that they spoke English as a first language and 37% reported speaking isiXhosa. Thirty-nine percent of the readers surveyed reported that they are black, and 34% reported to be white. Fifty-nine percent of the readership reports that they have a salaried job, and 45% report that they have a matric (*Grocott's Mail* Readership Survey Results 2008).

The newspaper has a very small staff of permanent employees, and takes on several student reporters over the year. The major pool of student reporters who work at *Grocott's Mail* are fourth-year Journalism and Media Studies students who have chosen writing and editing as their specialisation. These students are in their final year of working towards their Bachelor of Journalism degree at Rhodes University. They work at the newspaper for the first six months of the year during which time they are required to write two or more articles for each section (or beat) of the newspaper. They often complete this requirement and then spend the remainder of their time at the newspaper working under the beat they enjoyed most.

The permanent staff includes various editors and managers. Apart from the editor there is a production editor, and a sports editor, as well as an advertising manager and general manager. There are also several beats, all of which are headed by one reporter who is entirely responsible for the beat, but who is assisted on occasion by the student reporters. The beats include business, community, crime and courts, politics, motoring, and most recently, entertainment.

The crime and courts reporter is Anele Mjekula. He is a Grahamstown local, as are many of the permanent staff members at the newspaper. He is relatively new to the newspaper's staff complement, having only begun at the newspaper in the second half of the year. He was therefore not responsible for any of the crime articles which were analysed in this thesis, but has been working at the newspaper long enough to understand the workings of the newspaper as well as the relationship that the newspaper has with the police department. The relationship that the newspaper has with the police department in Grahamstown is fairly limited because the journalists are allowed to deal only with the police spokesperson, Captain Mali Govender, and she can only give information on crime which she has personal knowledge of. This limits the scope of the statements which police can give reporters on specific crimes.

Captain Govender has various ways of communicating with the staff at *Grocott's*. She releases statements about crimes if they are considered to be particularly important for the community to be aware of; or she sends out general press releases on a variety of crimes which a journalist will compile in to a segment known as The News in Brief. Finally, if a reporter (either themselves, or through the editor) comes to know of an event which they feel needs to be reported on, they either phone or email Captain Govender to get comment. According to both the permanent employee interviewed, and the student reporters, the length and depth of her responses vary depending on various factors. These can be anything from time of day, the specific reporter asking for information, and the knowledge that Captain Govender has on the case. The student reporters in particular argue that she does not necessarily know the details of the case in question, and this can result in very little, if any, response from the official police source.

It is difficult, given this small staff, to allocate reporters to individual beats and crime news is therefore usually reported on by any available reporter. Crime news is usually carried on the first two pages of the newspaper. Typically there will be one or two full-length articles carrying quotes, and descriptions of scenes and people, and also a News in Brief column with three or four crime stories of 50 words or so briefly describing an incident, group of crimes that share common characteristics, or police warnings of increasing numbers of a particular type of crime.

Occasionally, the newspaper will run an awareness campaign alerting the public to a perceived increase in a certain type of crime (see 'Arson: Third fire this year'), or embark on a campaign to advocate for a particular kind of action related to a crime that is considered particularly heinous (see 'Stop the rape!').

Grocott's Mail is a community newspaper that operates in a unique environment and is concerned with a unique set of tensions. It caters specifically to Grahamstown, and therefore to the widely different needs of the different people in the town. This is because, as explained above, the town is highly segregated and the informational interests of the groups in town are extremely different. For instance, working professionals might require in-depth economic news, whilst unemployed and impoverished people might find news about municipal service delivery much more necessary. Further, students might find entertainment news more fulfilling than motoring news. The newspaper therefore has a broad range of interests to cover as the newspaper's audience consists of some people who can support the newspaper

financially if they find that they are well represented, and others who cannot support the newspaper financially even if they are well represented.

Nevertheless, the newspaper defines itself as a community newspaper that attempts to appeal to a mass audience with regional, rather than interest-related boundaries. Given the roles a community newspaper can take on, the editorial staff have moulded the newspaper into a publication that takes it upon itself to monitor the efficacy with which the municipality delivers its services, as well as whether it does so honestly and suiting the best needs of the people. Christians et al defined the monitorial: “This label emphasises the open character of the activity and its intention to benefit the receiver of the information rather than the agents of information or control” (2009: 139).

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

In the next two chapters I will attempt to plot a road map through the context and the research that has been conducted on media crime. When considering a media text it is usually valuable to begin from the problem of how texts work in relation to reality. In other words, texts can be problematised because they cannot exactly replicate or mirror reality and as such necessarily distort reality to an extent. All representations deal with distortions, and in no instance is that distortion made more obvious than when dealing with crime. This is because the crimes that are most often reported in the media are simple narratives where there is a clear hero and a clear villain, and the slant that the newspaper takes will determine which role a character takes (Richardson 2007: 24). When this idea is applied to crime, Cohen argues from a British perspective that the selective reporting of facts contributes to moral indignation regarding certain issues, and also constructs ‘folk devils’, or delineates the boundaries of civil society by constructing an idea of what society should not be (Cohen 1972: 6-7). Ben-Yehuda (1986) argues that moral panics are a way for moral entrepreneurs to maintain the boundaries of what is good, acceptable behaviour in society because they clearly delineate what is right and wrong for society using mass media to emphasise the idea (1986: 497-8). For instance, Ben-Yehuda’s study of the moral panic around drugs and youth in Israel in 1982 found that it functioned on various levels to reinforce and monitor acceptable behaviour for youth, police, teachers, principals, the education department and others (1986: 498). Some research has argued that crime in the news and entertainment media come to “stand in for public anxieties around various wider concerns” (Sparks 1992: 155). Media work to “define deviance and effect control on a broad range of individuals and in various institutional sites” since they operate as a central institution of social control (Doyle 2006: 875). This is possible partly because of the volume of crime news in the media and the construction of crime as ‘deviant’ behaviour (Cohen 1972: 8).

Altheide (2002) argues that the relationship between crime and the media is a ‘problem frame’ which promotes a discourse of fear, meaning that risk and danger are pervasive and central to the effective environment (Altheide 2002: 41). Altheide argues that the perception of constantly being in danger is generated by the news media by its consistent and continuous reporting of negative and ‘problem-centred’ events. This problem-centred focus creates the perception that the world is dangerous. This perception that the world is dangerous is then exacerbated by the media, because the media is such a perpetual part of everyday life. Altheide and Michalowski (1999) argue that ‘fear’ creates a risk society “organised around

communication orientated to policing, control and prevention of risks” (1999: 476). The media thus adopt a ‘problem frame’ perspective when undertaking news reporting because it meets the objectives of making crime seem interesting, in order to sell the media product, which has the effect of pivoting media, especially news media on fear (Altheide 2002: 47). The problem frame works in the same way as a secular ‘morality play’, using the concerns of their audiences framed in new ways in order to maintain interest, and arguably, fear (Altheide and Michalowski 1999: 493). Doyle (2006) argues that media either construct moral panics around particular types of crime or they construct new kinds of crime problems (2006: 869).

Altheide (2009) argues that the concept of moral panic fits well into American newspapers’ ways of selecting, organising and presenting information to “shape audience assumptions and preferences for certain kinds of information” (2009: 81-84), and this fits in well with the representations apparent in South African media as well. The characteristics of the problem frame mirror closely the characteristics that are meant to define ‘news values’. The problem frame includes narrative structure, universal moral meanings, specific time and place, unambiguous content, focus on disorder and cultural resonance (Altheide 2002: 47).

Related to this phenomenon is the idea that media normalise (create, sustain, amplify) social identities by drawing on particular news values, and by framing news reports in particular ways (Altheide and Devriese 2007: 384). However, the impact of crime news on audiences is a difficult thing to research empirically (Doyle 2006: 870). This is partly because hypothesising ‘audience effects’ assumes a model of a passive audience, rather than one which actively interprets media messages by drawing on a variety of sources (Doyle 2006: 870). Furthermore, hypothesising the potential effects of crime news on audiences assumes a kind of unitary, homogenous mass audience which flattens the possible interpretations of media messages into one singular meaning (Doyle 2006: 872).

Marginal People

Researchers argue that crime news in the media can have various negative effects. In a paper investigating the role of the press in the marginalisation of certain voices in Nigeria, Adebani (2004) argues that the mass media’s role in contemporary society is a crucial one because “the mass media have come largely to determine the cognitive and affective perceptions of the non-local world through their portrayal of events, issues and places” (2004:763). As such, the news media eventually defines the important issues in politics in society (Adebani 2004: 763). Unimportant issues and politically powerless groups are

marginalised in the media, through for example, stereotyping (Gutman 2003: 193). This is at least in part because of the sourcing methods which are used by journalists to gather information. Journalists tend to choose their sources based on who is considered to be important in society. This is not only because journalists themselves are usually part of the dominant, powerful group but also because the marginalised are not considered important news when considering the interests of consumers of media. Therefore, their views will not be called upon by journalists, because they are not important, and because they are not sourced, their news never becomes available to be made important in the mainstream news. In this way, marginalised communities become even more marginalised. Adebani (2004) in his study of marginalised voices in Nigeria argues that the term 'marginal' is preferable to 'minority' or 'majority' because there are minorities who are in power and the power centre is more clearly understood in the term 'marginal'. As such, I shall adopt this term when discussing the politically powerful versus the politically marginal, rather than discuss the power-relations in the country in terms of racial minorities and majorities.

In this regard, research conducted on media crime representations concludes that crime is portrayed in the media as a feature of individual deviance and operates as an aspect of marginalised communities within the spaces in which those communities are perceived to reside. However, there are further aspects to crime in media criminality. Chiricos and Eschholz (2002) for example argue that there is an assumption that criminals are typified as particular races and ethnicities (2002: 402). In their study in the United States, which aimed to determine whether this assumption has any basis in the reality of representations of crime in media, they found that black and white people are not over-represented as criminals on TV news but match their proportions in the population. However, black people were more likely to be represented as perpetrating violent crime and in a more menacing light than in any other role (2002: 412).

Indeed, in research on a popular crime-orientated reality television series in the US that uses CCTV footage, Lippert and Wilkinson (2010) go so far as to suggest that the high percentage of ethnic and racial minorities on "Crime Stoppers" represented committing crimes could be responsible for increasing the 'ethnic' prison population (2010: 146). They further argue that these marginalised groups could experience further marginalisation through these representations as these groups are then associated with criminality (2010: 135). They also note the lack of reference to causal factors (social, structural or otherwise) that could have resulted in these crimes being committed by these individuals (2010: 140).

The concept of individual or group marginality is not isolated: it is usually associated with a space and place that assumes the same marginal characteristics as the marginalised person.

Marginalised Space

The concept of the ‘unpredictable stranger’ and that of ‘geographies of fear’ are strongly linked according to research on both. In research conducted in Australia on media constructions of the ‘unpredictable stranger’, Lupton (1999) argues that the media help the individual to construct their notions of safe and unsafe spaces and places (1999: 8). These then become ‘mythologised’ places of danger “because they are associated with people from deviant and marginalised social groups” (Lupton 1999: 12). In his 2005 study which aimed to determine the way that media influence the fear of crime in the local community context in Manchester, Banks (2005) argues that media contribute to the creation of ‘geographies of fear’. When a public or private space is associated with danger in the popular imagination, the use of and orientation towards that space changes (Banks 2005: 170). Banks argues that “a *sense of place* is argued to be significant in structuring household relationships and attitudes to media crime” (2005: 170 emphasis in original).

Geographies of fear, wherein spaces and places are mythologised via the kinds of discourses which surround them and the people who are supposed to reside within them, create a dangerous space. Saff’s (2001) study of the discourses of crime and dirt that are used to exclude certain types of people is a mythologising discourse which serves to alienate marginalised groups based on little or no personal experience, but rather gleaned from mainly media sources and inter-personal relationships.

However, margins can be considered to be contentious spaces in which meaning is created and recreated according to the dominant position. Hartley (1984) argues that the Myth of Marginality is the idea that the margins are simultaneously irrelevant and threatening (1984: 109). It is a myth, because it ‘magically resolves’ this ambiguity so that the margins can be both dangerous and irrelevant (1984: 109).

Media therefore assist in a construction of a ‘mental map’ of the dangerous places to be avoided, constructed through the use of personal experience, media constructions and ideas about the people who live in those places (Lupton 1999: 13). Lupton argues that individuals tend to rely on media constructions of dangerous places more when they have no personal experience of the place in question. However, he further found that the media were not the primary source for information on crime and that personal experience had a much greater

impact on individual's constructions of dangerous places than media consumption (Lupton 1999: 8).

In a research paper based in the UK which aimed to determine where women receive their information regarding danger from men, Valentine (1992) argues that women's fear is spatialised mostly due to a sense of danger instilled in young girls by their parents and perpetuated in the media (1992: 25). The media contribute to this spatialising of danger by blaming the victim of sexual assault or rape for being in a space that is understood to be dangerous when they were victimised (Valentine 1992: 26). Women's perceptions of dangerous places are constructed partially from media images of 'danger', emphasised and re-emphasised because dramatic, violent crime such as rape is more often reported in news media than less violent kinds of crime.

The research suggests that the media represents crime as an aspect of individual deviancy. In other words, people who commit crime are individually deviant, rather than a victim to an economically and socially exclusive system of governance. In the same way, space and crime are connected: the media perpetuated images of 'safe' spaces, where crime does not happen, and 'dangerous spaces', where it does. Many studies have tried to get a handle on the relationship between reportage, reality and the effects on people that the incongruity between reportage and reality that often exists. In this way, many researchers have studied various aspects of this complex relationship in an attempt to understand it better.

Working in Cape Town, Saff (2001) found that amongst the discourses used to prevent or justify the prevention of a squatter camp settling on the border of a Cape Town suburb, was a discourse of crime. Saff found that the discourses used were not racial but socio-economic (Saff 2001: 102). He found that the more affluent the black people were who wanted to move into the suburb, the less resistance the white people put up to them. He found that there was opposition to black neighbours when they were economically underprivileged. Objections to economically underprivileged neighbours were premised around a discourse of crime and 'filth' and the people were seen as dirty, criminal, low class, and thought of as responsible for bringing dirt and crime to the neighbourhood (Saff 2001: 96).

Saff also found that the middle class neighbourhood was considered a 'safe space'. The residents' hesitance to allow working class black people into the neighbourhood was as a result of the middle-class residents perception that lower-class people are associated not only with deviancy, but with dangerous spaces, like the township. They therefore constructed an

idea of 'safe' and 'unsafe' in terms of people and spaces because they assumed that the 'danger' they associated with the people living in the township would migrate with them into the suburb.

The outright opposition of the middle-class suburb's residents is an example of the ways in which perceptions of crime and danger can police the boundaries of the in-group and define the out-group. In this instance, a moral panic was created around the prospect of people from the township, which also constructed them as 'folk devils'.

Cohen's 'moral panic' theory is an attempt to explain the news media's reactions to certain events (specifically crimes). Moral panic is when a "condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylised and stereotypical fashion by the mass media" (Cohen 1972: 1). The 'person or group of persons' defined here can be identified as 'folk devils'. Folk devils then function to police the borders of 'normal' behaviour in society, because the folk devils are defined by the in-group, and the folk devils then become the out-group (Cohen 1972: 8-9).

Altheide (2009) argues that the concept of moral panic fits well as a description of how newspapers' select, organise and present information to "shape audience assumptions and preferences for certain kinds of information" (2009: 81-84). Moral panic is a very newsworthy and often news driven idea because moral panic is defined by the over-reaction to a situation that surrounds a particular group of people. This makes moral panics easy to write about in a news format because it is a simple narrative structure wherein the folk devil becomes the 'villain'. Altheide's concept of the problem frame then is the way that moral panics and their folk devils become written into the news. In other words, moral panics are written within a problem frame that narrativises folk devils as villains.

The characteristics of the problem frame include: narrative structure, universal moral meanings, specific time and place, unambiguous content, focus on disorder, and cultural resonance. For instance, the problem frame that the media employs to report news is defined by a narrative structure because it imposes coherence on concepts which can be confusing and complicated. These characteristics closely follow those journalistic concepts which aim to define 'news', known as news values. News values provide a guide for journalists in selecting and constructing the news such that it is suitable for consumption. For instance, Harcup and O'Neill (2001) include on their list of news values determined from a study of

British newspapers ‘unambiguity’, ‘reference to something negative’, and ‘meaningfulness’ among others (2001: 268-9). These news values are in line with Altheide’s characteristics of the problem frame. In this way, newspapers not only determine what is newsworthy, but also perpetuate the idea of what events qualify as news, thereby encapsulating the news process in a positive feedback loop whereby only certain kinds of news is reproduced.

Furthermore, Altheide’s problem frame perpetuates what he calls a discourse of fear: “the pervasive form of communication, symbolic awareness, and expectation that danger and risk are a central feature of the effective environment or the physical and symbolic environments as people define and experience them in everyday life” (2002: 60). Altheide’s discourse of fear is a development on the idea of the ‘risk society’ thesis discussed by Carrabine (2008) in which the media may amplify knowledge of potential threats (for example, hackers and terrorists).

The media deal with concepts like crime and criminals in a variety of ways, and there are as many reactions to these representations as there are people to engage with them. However, the representations of danger in the media, whether crimes, criminals, or dangerous spaces, are infinitely more researchable than the many and varied reactions to them. The initial foray into determining the ways in which people perceive crime in the media began with trying to understand the ways in which people deal with crime on a first hand, unmediated basis.

Fear of Crime

Ferraro, an American researcher, defines the fear of crime as “an emotional response of dread or anxiety to crime or symbols that a person associates with crime” (Ferraro 1995: 23). On the other hand, Ferraro also defines risk: “Perceived risk is defined as people’s assessment of crime rates and the probability of victimisation” (Ferraro 1995: 28). Ferraro argues that perceived risk might be a better measure of the way that the occurrence of crime affects a person’s fear of victimisation; and it certainly helps to account for the ways in which individuals plan routine activities and how they understand their location in a larger area (Ferraro 1995: 28). We can see from this that the impact on feelings of safety and security, assessment of risk and fear of crime are all related concepts. For instance, Chadee (2003) assessed influences on fear of crime in the West Indies. Specifically he assessed the influences of age, sex, residence, victimisation and perceived risk on the fear of crime. He found that people living in low crime areas are more fearful. This is largely because fear is an emotional response, whereas risk is a cognitive assessment of the situation and therefore

more realistic; much research has demonstrated that there is usually little correlation between the official crime statistics and the fear of crime (Ferraro 1995: 29). Chadee argues that fear is influenced by perceived reality created by rumour and the mass media (2003: 91), and is therefore often unrelated to the 'objective' realities and chances of victimisation.

Powdthavee (2005) argues that the effects of the fear of crime are largely psychological. In his study of the relationship between unhappiness and crime in South Africa, he found that people who were victimised by crime had a lower sense of well-being than those who were not victimised, and that households that had not been victimised by crime nevertheless had a feeling of a lower quality of life in high-crime areas, than those not in high-crime areas (Powdthavee 2005: 542). This may be at least partially explained by Carrabine (2008) who argues that modern life is more fraught with things to fear than it used to be in the past. She argues that it is not necessarily true that people are more afraid today than they used to be, but there are more things to fear (she cites international terrorism and hackers as two 'new' concerns for the modern human, particularly in developed countries such as the UK, Carrabine 2008: 48-51).

Nevertheless, fear of crime can have more concrete effects than simply being fearful. Altheide and Michalowski (1999) also argue that fear of crime is independent of the risk of victimisation as evidenced in their Arizona study, but that fear nevertheless may result in "decreased social integration, out-migration, restriction of activities, added security costs, and avoidance behaviours" (1999: 478).

One of the effects, whether of perceived risk or of fear of crime, is an increased dependence on private security. Berg and Nouveau (2011) say that the South African security industry is the largest in the world in terms of its contribution to the country's GDP (approximately 2%, Berg and Nouveau 2011: 23). Berg also argues that what is unique about private security in South Africa is that "public space law enforcement, surveillance and order maintenance have become the object and focus of private security activities and not merely a by-product or overlap with some other duty" (Berg 2010: 289).

However, Kempa and Singh (2008) argue that this trend towards private security (and the violence that often accompanies it) is a reflection of and contributing agent towards "a broader exclusionary political economy" in South Africa (Kempa and Singh 2008: 334). They argue that the disciplinary and exclusionary practices in which private security engage, work to "freeze essentialist conceptions of 'race' – general irresponsibility as gauged through

poor socioeconomic standing and low levels of personal wealth – in time” (Kempa and Singh 2008: 336). They argue that exclusion is no longer based in racial terms, that wealthy middle-class South Africans argue that “squatter and unskilled labourer’s perceived predilection to crime and associated lack of industry, environmental irresponsibility and overall lack of respect for the legal rules of private property ownership” (Kempa and Singh 2008: 344) to justify exclusion using walls and fortifications. This discourse is then reified by the actions of private security and powerful groups’ perceptions of racialised groups are thereby reinforced (Kempa and Singh 2008: 344). The private security industry, Kempa and Singh argue, actively fuels the fear of the wealthier classes with something to lose, and directs that fear towards the ‘dangerous other’, identifiable by their skin colour and their inability to operate within a market system (Kempa and Singh 2008: 345).

In their study of the racial and ethnic typification of crime and the criminal typification of race and ethnicity in television news, Chiricos and Eschholtz (2002) found that perceiving crime and race as synonymous has very concrete effects for black populations in their study area. They note that effects range from pizzas not being delivered to black neighbourhoods, to police more readily shooting unarmed suspects if they are black. Whites are also more afraid to go into black neighbourhoods (Chiricos and Eschholtz 2002: 401).

The other development that has sprung up around discourses of fear is that of gated communities. Grant (2005), studying gated communities in Canada, argues that the various stake-holders actually use different discourses to justify the exclusion and seclusion that is achieved by gated communities. While developers seem to be concerned with exclusivity and privacy, residents are concerned with safety and security. He did find that planners tend to use various discourses around integration, mostly arguing that homogeneity (usually couched in terms of race) is preferable (Grant 2005: 299).

Crime as a Political Problem

Gordon (1998) argues that crime is a much larger problem than one which simply concerns the safety and security of individuals. She argues that crime is a political issue, because citizens blame government when they feel that government is failing to protect them. She further argues that because of the political history of South Africa, crime is racially threatening largely because whites perceive blacks as the perpetrators of crime. White South Africans therefore not only blame black South Africans for perpetrating crime when crime levels are perceived as increasing, but also blame the ‘black’ government for failing to retard

crime levels. In this way, crime can be an anti-democratic force, especially where democracy is tenuously based on the integration of the races. It is in this way that racist ideologies are perpetrated through ideas around those perceived as criminals, and those perceived as responsible for preventing crime.

She also argues that crime is not only politicised and racialised but also normalised in South Africa because violence was a normal part of the apartheid system where the oppressed majority fought for freedom, and the authoritarian government fought to oppress the majority, both using violence. These kinds of political, racial and normative discourses around crime are further entrenched, Gordon argues, by a largely Afro-pessimistic media especially when reporting on what she calls 'black crime' (1998).

Othering

Gordon argues that the racialised nature of crime in the country produces a polarity between the races: the perpetrators and the victims of crime are largely identifiable by their skin colour. Hansen similarly argues that crime in South Africa is "entirely naturalised and racialised: black bodies are criminal and naturally unrestrained" (Hansen 2006: 290). He argues that the image of fear and insecurity for white South Africans has a black face largely due to historically racialised politics in South Africa (Hansen 2006: 284). Lupton argues that this kind of stigmatising is because "cultural others often work as the repository for projected fears and anxieties because *otherness* is dangerous because it confounds order and control and confronts people with difference" (Lupton 1999:13, emphasis added).

Kohm (2009) however, argues that it is 'emotion' rather than 'fear' which produces an 'us' versus 'them' conception in society about crime and criminals. He argues that emotional depictions of crime, for instance, in the mass media such as the American tabloid television news show he studied, may lead to a kind of emotional community consensus about crime (Kohm 2009). In this way there is a kind of 'active othering' of those that are conceived of as belonging to the out-group. This kind of othering is also a form of 'demonising', and this fear of the other then becomes the basis on which to control and regulate deviance. The media assist in this process by producing narratives which demonise and reinforce the idea of the cultural other (Altheide 2009: 82), because media produce "symbols that a person associates with crime" (Chadee 2003: 79).

However, conforming to public discourses regarding crime has been argued to have another socio-psychological effect on individuals in society. Carrabine argues that the consumption of media texts between members of a community may create a feeling of understanding between them and function as an ‘in-group’ identifier, simply by identifying the ‘out-group’ (for instance, those that are routinely represented as criminals and wrong-doers in news media texts) (Carrabine 2008: 71-2).

Furthermore, Lupton also argues that ‘place’ and ‘space’ are highly emotionally charged and usually associated with ideas of ‘safe’ or ‘dangerous’. For instance, home is safe, whilst public spaces are spaces of danger (Lupton 1999: 6). These are mythologised places of danger constructed through mass media, personal experience and interpersonal experience (Lupton 1999: 8). In Lupton’s Australian study, she found that places where disadvantaged people live were singled out as being particularly dangerous because they were associated with deviants and marginalised groups (Lupton 1999: 12).

The Legacy of Apartheid

South Africa’s political history lends itself strongly to the demonisation of the cultural other, and the association of place and space with risk and danger. Apartheid pivoted on the idea of instilling fear in the white population, and segregating the races based on that fear. It was the Group Areas Act (1950) and the Black Communities Development Act (1984) which underpinned apartheid segregation laws, combined with the Population Registration Act (1950) (Christopher 2001: 453). Christopher (2001) argues that it is the progress of integration of the white population which will determine the progress of desegregation in South Africa (2001: 453) because apartheid and National Party propaganda was aimed at instilling fear of black people into the white population in order to justify ‘separate development’. After apartheid dissolved, integration began but levels of integration are still low at best, with some areas well integrated, but many others still segregated (Christopher 2001: 455). Gibson argues that the legacy of apartheid “is a legacy of inequality – economic inequality, social inequality, and political inequality – and especially the unequal evolution of South Africa’s political culture” (Gibson 2003: 774). Persistent segregation is an obvious hindrance to democratic transition, and while the 1994 elections ended legal segregation, it did not bring down what Gibson equates to the East German ‘Wall in their Heads’ which still prevents integration, both regionally and psychologically (Gibson 2003: 797).

Politically-legitimated discourses of racial inequality during the apartheid era spoke directly to the ideas of inferiority which led to the demonisation and othering of the black population (Gordon 1998). This, coupled with apartheid's normalisation of violence (violent oppression, and resistance thereto), and the authoritarian government's control over what was published resulted in the wide-spread belief that the black population was largely, if not wholly responsible for violence in South Africa (Hansen 2006: 280).

Violence in South Africa has gone through various stages and been understood in various ways. It was essentially the violent youth rebellions in black townships in South Africa that brought apartheid to an end, but those same rebellions against an oppressive government also brought a violent and dangerous situation into the townships where bloodshed became the norm (Hansen 2006: 280). After the fall of the apartheid police state, there was a dramatic increase in crime in a situation where racial integration was new and tenuous. According to Hansen, after apartheid as much as during, the image of the enemy was a violent, young black man and "only the combination of the word of the Bible and a firm punishing hand of the state, it was believed, could control the otherwise natural desire to consume and devour the white world of order and plenty" (2006: 280). This image of the criminal as 'morally inferior', stemming from the violence of the township aligned with a global trend of 'risk society', further concretised the idea that 'black' and 'criminal' are synonymous (Hansen 2006: 284).

Racial characteristics then not only defined the out-group, the 'other', but also functioned to define the in-group. The twin ideas of racial solidarity with one's own group, and racial threat from other groups were based on apartheid ideologies and arguably sustain today's beliefs and actions (Hansen 2006: 285). So apartheid not only created a literal separation between races, but also perpetuated a fear and mistrust based along race cleavages; both effects are arguably still apparent today.

Discourses of Exclusion

This persistent inequality is reinforced through discourses of exclusion. These are operationalised in various circumstances but Saff (2001) in particular studied the discourses used to justify exclusion towards squatters in suburban Cape Town. He found that the discourses used are rarely (if ever) racial, largely due to a high level of sensitivity towards racialised speech in the post-apartheid period. He found socio-economic discourses much more strongly used to exclude groups, and groups identified as 'lower class' and therefore

less economically powerful were identified with metaphors of uncleanness: dirt, disease and incivility, and therefore also identified as being criminal and dangerous (Saff 2001: 93).

Arguing against the Huntley Thesis that whites are disproportionately affected by crime perpetrated by blacks in South Africa, Silber and Geffen (2009) argue that everyone regardless of race is affected by crime, and the insecurity and fear that results from that reality (2009: 35-6). The high crime rate in South Africa ostensibly ensures that everyone is affected by crime either directly or through interpersonal contact, but also through the mass media which unrelentingly reminds South Africans of the violence which takes place daily (Silber and Geffen 2009: 35). Silber and Geffen show that black and poor people in South Africa are far more affected by crime and that the Huntley Thesis is not only an inaccurate representation of the situation in South Africa, but is also dangerous and irresponsible because it “fosters deep fear and mistrust along class and racial lines and ignores the legacy left by apartheid” (Silber and Geffen 2009: 36). It further divides an already tenuously integrated society, and supports inequality by further entrenching ideas of the cultural other as dangerous and criminal (Silber and Geffen 2009: 39).

The media are rich in discourses around crime and exclusion and representations of criminals, crimes and dangerous places. It is in the relationship between the media text and reality that the representations can become skewed and can produce moral panics and folk devils. Where the news that the media produces is based within a problem frame, it has the potential to perpetuate a risk society which in turn has the potential to marginalise people, and the spaces that marginalised people occupy. This marginalisation of space perpetuates geographies of fear, which further defines in-group and out-group boundaries, further defining the margins. The process of marginalisation is in part perpetuated by the pervasive forms of crime news in the media as described above, partly because the media reproduce ideas that are already prevalent in society, but by reproducing these ideas, they are further perpetuated. Where representations of dangerous people and places abound as part of a risk society, the fear of crime is likely to follow. Furthermore, this means that crime can become a political problem, and the legacy of apartheid and discourses of exclusion can become politically and socially stigmatising, resulting in further othering.

This formulation of the problem puts the media in the role of the central distributor and reproducer of ideas. Although this is not the only, nor even the best interpretation of the problem, the consideration of the media as perpetuating marginality can be further theorised

within the roles that the news media take on in general, and also, what impact different forms of media might have on the capacity of the media to perpetuate marginality. In the next section I will discuss the specific case of a small community newspaper and begin to introduce ideas around how the different circumstances of this newspaper in particular might affect the ways in which this newspaper perpetuates marginalising discourses.

Normative Roles of the Media

Grocott's Mail is a community newspaper in the sense that it services a specific region: the town of Grahamstown, and intends to appeal to the audience of that town as a whole.

‘Community’ can also be described in terms of interest, language, culture, or ethnic grouping, and has political and social dimensions. As such, ‘community media’ “originates, circulates and resonates from the sphere of civil society. ... This is the field of media communication that exists outside of the state and the market (often non-governmental and non-profit), yet which may interact with both” (Rennie 2006: 4).

Different types of media, mainstream, alternative, community etc., have different roles within society and within the audience or group to which they appeal. Christians et al (2009), in their book *Normative Theories of the Media: Journalism in Democratic Societies* argue that there are several roles which the media can play, largely determined by (but also determining, or reinforcing) the kind of democracy of that society. They begin with a discussion of the ‘monitorial role’ which stems from the idea of surveillance, and argue that because it is the role most concerned with the provision of information to the public, it is the one most appropriate to democracy, especially deliberative and/or participative forms of democracy (Christians et al 2009: 148). They also describe the ‘facilitative’ role of the media, wherein media are an active agent of democracy and “reflect the political order in which they are situated” (Christians et al 2009: 158). This kind of media role is most appropriate to civic republicanism as the media try to engage their audience to actively participate in civic life. The ‘collaborative’ role refers to the media as co-operating with state or governmental control either out of a sense of patriotism (for instance, withholding information in times of war) or out of coercion (Christians et al 2009: 196-7). Finally, they also discuss a radical role of the media. These definitions of the various roles that media play in society are largely academic with the result that in real-world examples, they can be blurred, altered, combined or completely disregarded. Although *Grocott's Mail* displays certain characteristics of facilitative media, most notably, providing a platform for citizens to express their views, the

newspaper most often takes on a monitorial role. The editor himself described the newspaper as functioning this way. The monitorial role takes a neutral stance politically: it neither rejects the prevailing government or power, nor does it entirely ascribe to the ideologies thereof. Similarly, monitorial media neither regularly advocate for the powerless, nor do they cater specifically for the powerful. *Grocott's Mail*, for instance, in its monitoring of crime acquires its information primarily from the police and courts, and gives space for the voice of the victims, while criminals act only as a secondary source, if at all. However, because the newspaper does occasionally embark on campaigns, it cannot be entirely monitorial, but crosses the floor of objectivity into facilitative media. Although *Grocott's Mail* does certainly criticise power (mostly, the municipality) it does not advocate to the extent that is required for it to be described as radical. Nor, similarly, does it collaborate with power to the extent that it can be described as collaborative. For this reason, I shall focus on the normative role of the media as defined by Christians et al as monitorial.

As mentioned above, the idea of monitorial media comes from the idea of surveillance, as in surveying the state, the government, local municipalities and any other political (or otherwise) seat of power for the purposes of bringing information to the interested parties. The appropriateness of this role to the community media is evident. Community newspapers usually operate within a small region and their audience is usually confined to a fairly well-defined group. They will have specific concerns; on which the monitorial community paper will be able to produce information. These concerns run the gamut from political information at election time; to service delivery concerns and issues; to concerns regarding crime and law and order, as well as entertainment news which is regionally specific. As such, the role of the monitorial journalist is largely to survey the appropriate channels and deliver appropriate information. The monitorial journalist therefore primarily aims to report on public interest issues objectively, but in some cases a journalist will find themselves crossing the objectivity line, into a role of advocacy and agency when the interests of the audience call for this (Christians et al 2009: 141). Monitorial media then report on public events; pass messages on to the public from external sources; provide the public with information about risks, threats and dangers; provide a guide to public opinion; provide an agenda of issues; act as both fourth estate and watchdog, and initiate investigations into deviances from the moral or social order (Christians et al 2009: 145-6).

Christians et al further argue that the role of the monitorial media is to define the boundaries of public space and public life, to shape and mould public opinion, and to make

visible, because what is not brought into the public sphere by the monitorial media is invisible (2009: 148). Monitorial media therefore have the responsibility to render visible, and to police boundaries. However, media are also essentially a business and therefore also subject to ‘mediatisation’

Whereby the criteria of newsworthiness and manner of presentation are more and more governed by a media thirst for a good story or good television. Central to this rationale is a strong attachment to dramatic narrative, to compelling characters and personalities. There is a premium on action, surprise, excitement, and emotional involvement, as well as on whatever can be visualised in the most compelling way (Christians et al 2009: 154).

Therefore the role of monitorial media to responsibly police the boundaries of public discourse may be blurred by commercial and economic pressures, as well as the effect of mediatisation (Christians et al 2009: 151).

In conclusion, the role that a newspaper takes up within society has an effect on the way in which it reports crime. In particular in South Africa where crime is a political issue, a purely monitorial media may for example focus on the ways in which state institutions, like the police and courts, deal with crime with a view to providing a criticism of their processes and ideas. On the other hand, a newspaper which has taken up a collaborative role might report on crime in such a way as to praise the institutions involved in justice and not question or criticise state institutions. In the case of *Grocott's Mail*, the findings show that although the newspaper self-identifies as monitorial, the reporting of crime is overwhelmingly collaborative, although there are a few exceptions.

Of course the role of the newspaper, and the ways in which crime is reported in a newspaper is dependent on the approach that the journalists and editors take. Here, the effect of journalistic ideologies is the main contributing factor. Importantly, journalists usually self-identify as following a certain set of beliefs regarding their work – such as objective reporting, that is fair, balanced and unaffected by the agendas and ideologies of sources. However, journalists are necessarily and inescapably affected by the ideologies that are prevalent in the society within which they operate. While journalists might have a routine for gathering and reporting on the news which follows journalistic ideologies of fair and unbiased reporting, the processes and routines are themselves biased towards a certain type of audience and a certain definition of fairness. Therefore, because media are central to the

process of marginalisation described elsewhere, the processes and routines of the active agents that produce the media will be discussed below.

Professional Ideologies of Journalists

There are multiple factors which may have an effect on the production of news and the representations which are produced through news media. Avraham (2002) conducted a study in Israel looking at the representations of marginality that are produced in various newspapers around the country. He isolated several representations that he found to be dominant, and then interviewed journalists and editors to try to determine the reasons that the representations he found were produced. He found that the socio-political environment in which journalists (including editors) operate in the newsroom has a hugely constricting effect on the representations, especially of marginalised groups, that they produce. The social-political environment consists of the central values of society, political culture and public opinion (Avraham 2002: 71). He argued that marginalised groups lack power in society, and so are typically ignored or misrepresented by journalists, or covered in association with negative subjects (Avraham 2002: 71). This idea ties in with the idea that the social and professional backgrounds of the journalists affect the work the newspapers produce as well. He argues that low status assignments are assigned to low status reporters, with the result that marginal and marginalised communities don't get significant coverage from the newspapers (Avraham 2002: 72).

News organisations do not operate in a vacuum. The forces which act upon the journalists who produce representations are many and varied and have multiple and unpredictable effects on the kinds of representations which are inevitably published. The social-political environment in which journalists work shapes their work based on certain cultural assumptions, learned from experience and processes of socialisation (Avraham 2002: 70). These assumptions establish the ways in which journalists will go about producing news, gathering information, sorting the information and constructing the news item. Therefore, "the media content reflects the atmosphere and dominant opinions of the social-political environment towards subjects, issues and groups, as claimed by the constructionist approach to news" (Avraham 2002: 70).

Deepening the idea that news is produced in the conflict of various forces acting on the journalist, Reiner (2006) argues that news production is a struggle between reporter, managers and editors, dominant ideologies, audience ideologies and sources. He calls this

phenomenon ‘crime news as hegemony in action’ (Reiner 2006: 323). Further, the news item that is produced is the result of a negotiation between these parties. The journalist is therefore in the precarious position of balancing these often conflicting forces, with their own professional ideologies which may add to the conflict. Although reporters do look for a scoop, the competition between publications also has the opposite effect of finding the scoop: reporters will ensure that they report on the same events and news that other publications do so as not to appear as though they have missed a news piece that is important. This often leads to very similar, or indeed the same news being reported by all the newspapers affiliated with the same; or similar area of interest.

The professional ideologies of the journalists and editors also have an impact on the ways that news representations are produced. In particular, the organisation’s definitions of news (news values and how news is determined to be newsworthy); the organisation’s perceptions or ideas of their intended target audience, and the socialisation process of the journalists and editors taking into account their backgrounds, all impact on the ways in which crime news is reported (Avraham 2002: 78-81). For example, the news values of an organisation will be adjusted if the target audience is conceived to be elite groups of middle-class and wealthy people, as opposed to politically-marginal and economically-powerless people. Collins et al, in their study of how news magazines in the US and UK cover various types of crime, argue that crime is attractive to news organisations because “crime stories are cost-effective to produce and report, can easily be manipulated to fit time slots that vary in length and more importantly can consistently attract the attention of large audiences” (Collins et al 2011: 8), but that different crimes receive differential coverage because of socio-political factors, but also because of the journalistic ideologies at play (Collins et al 2011: 8).

They argue that in large part, what determines the publication of a news article about crime is its uniqueness rather than the degree of importance of the event itself. As a result, the crimes that are reported on in the media have been found to be disproportional to the actual occurrences of those crimes, some research even finding that the crime reportage is inverse to the proportions of crimes committed (Collins et al 2011: 8). Surette’s *Media, Crime and Criminal Justice* (1992), written in an American context, largely concurs with the above summation of the media’s representation of crime. Surette argues that the media over-represent violent crime, under-represent victims, and place a greater emphasis on crimes that are least likely to happen (for instance, murder is more commonly represented in media, whereas housebreaking is more likely to happen than murder, according to statistics). They

further found that much research conducted on crime news found that crimes are largely reported as individual incidences of deviance rather than having any relation to structural, social, political or economic causes (Collins et al 2011: 8).

We can therefore argue that news is constructed under external (socio-political) and internal (journalistic ideologies) pressures. I will now discuss the various aspects of the construction of news, and look at each aspect in relation to crime news reporting.

Constructing the News

The definition of news, as explained above, has a significant effect on the ways that news is gathered, constructed and presented. Avraham argues that news organisations adopt the definitions that are in use amongst those they believe to be their target audience. Once, for instance, a place (like a city, a township or even an area like a suburb) is defined by the news organisation's audience and consequently by the news organisation “as a place of crime, violence and disorder, news people tend to use the police and courts as their main sources of information”, and so determine the ways that those areas are discussed, further entrenching ideas about dangerous spaces (Avraham 2002: 73). This is because police and courts deal with crime and justice and no other aspects of cultural, social or political life and so can only comment on crime and justice issues. As a result, police can exert substantial control over the kinds of representations, not only of spaces but also of crimes and criminals, that are produced by a news organisation (Doyle 2006: 870). Police and courts are readily available, lend authority to an article of news, and have access to information (Doyle 2006: 870). Sacco (1995) argues that this availability and constant reliance of reporters on police and courts shape news reports of crime within the narrative used by these sources: that of ‘villain’ and ‘victim’, and blurs, distorts and restrains the way we think about crime, making it difficult to posit alternative causes of crime such as those political, social, structural or economic (Sacco 1995: 144). Surette also notes that because of the media’s fascination with violent crime, individual deviance is blamed for crime, and not social problems, essentially freeing society from the responsibility of crime (Surette 1992: 66). Surette and Reiner both agree that the media criminal is overwhelmingly represented as male whereas female criminals are woefully underrepresented, although female victims are in no short supply. The individuals responsible for crime are generally represented as “psychotic super-male” criminals (Surette 1992: 64). As a result of journalists relying on police as sources of crime news, Doyle notes in his 2006 article assessing crime in Canadian media that news media and entertainment

media tend to represent a high proportion of solved crimes, “emphasising police success as crime-fighters” (Reiner 2006: 869).

Apart from representing certain people as dangerous, police are also responsible for designating certain spaces as dangerous in various ways.

It is the definition of news, or the news values, that a news organisation adopts which determine the ways in which news is gathered, constructed and produced for public consumption. These definitions of news are learned through a process of professional socialisation and learning on the job, where journalists and editors learn what and who are newsworthy and in what circumstances. Avraham argues that often marginalised groups are neglected because the power elite are considered more news worthy than the politically powerless. This is true also of the socially, economically and culturally powerful whereas the marginalised are typically ignored by news organisations (Avraham 2002: 72). Conflict is also an important determinant of newsworthiness and the result of this is that the marginalised communities are excluded from news or are covered by news organisations only in terms of conflict (Avraham 2002: 73).

In a study of the coverage of marginalised communities in Israel, Avraham found that violence, deviation from and threat to the status quo were the most likely determinants of publication in relation to marginalised communities. He found that because of the intersection of a variety of factors, marginalised communities were more likely to find themselves represented in the news in relation to stories about violence, deviation from the status quo and threat to the status quo (Avraham 2002: 81). Cohen, in his *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* (1972) argues that “the mass media, in fact, devote a great deal of space to deviance: sensational crimes, scandals, bizarre happenings and strange goings on” (1972: 8). Innes (2005) calls these types of crimes ‘signal crimes’, those which are widely publicised but are least likely to occur, and are dramatic and sensational and therefore attract widespread attention (2005: 55-6).

Carrabine (2008) argues that narrativising crime stories in the news media makes crime easier to understand for audiences. She argues that the concepts of ‘villain’ and ‘victim’ make for more attractive news because these concepts are simpler to write, but also to read than the idea that crime may less often be about individual deviancy than about structural, social, economic or political inequality (Carrabine 2008: 121-7).

In 1987, Katz conducted a sociological study in California of what makes crime ‘news’; essentially trying to determine not only why newspapers produce crime news on so regular a basis but also in an attempt to determine why audiences so consistently consume crime news. He found that ‘whimsical circumstances’ and ‘important people’ were important elements for the publication of crime news, but also that the personal ideologies and sensibilities of the readers were important for readers’ interpretations of crime news (Katz 1987: 48-50).

More recently, and more generally, Harcup and O’Neill (2001) found that there are 10 major news values, one or more of which need to be present for a news article to be published. News values are representative of the perception that news producers, in this case, newspaper editors, and reporters, have of their audience. However, news values also describe the conflict between what the publication (or journalist) believes their audience should want to, or need to know. The contest that is represented in the idea of news values, is therefore that between what the audience wants, and what the publication thinks the audience needs. For instance, news values such as magnitude and relevance have different meanings for publications and for audiences. Where the magnitude of an event might be momentous for a media institution (like the protection of information bill being approved by government); it might not necessarily strike a chord with the institution’s audience.

However, as noted above, it is important to note the interlocking concepts of news values and the organisation’s perception of the audience for whom they produce. This interlocks with the role that the news organisation plays and in what kind of society they operate. Avraham argues that “the definition of target audience affects not only decisions as to which events are considered news, but also the choice of rhetoric used to describe events. Thus, the reporting includes stereotypes, prejudices, motifs, myths and metaphors to which the audience is accustomed and which can be counted on to affect them in a predictable way” (Avraham 2002: 74). In his own study, Avraham found that editors view news as a ‘zero sum game’ in the sense that there is limited space in a newspaper for news, and because the audience is considered part of the centre, there is more news concentrated on the centre, resulting in news about the periphery being generally pushed out (2002: 81). When news about the periphery is included it is because it is sensational (it deals either with violence, deviance, or threat to the status quo) and so interests or affects the audience (the centre) in some way (Avraham 2002: 81).

He argues that this perception of the audience, as middle class and more powerful (politically, economically, socially etc.) than marginal communities results in very little attempt to understand the problems in marginal spaces, essentially reinforcing the abovementioned stereotypes and prejudices already used to describe those places (Avraham 2002: 82).

Conclusion

The media, whether it be community or national, funded or commercial, or any other type of media, does not operate in a vacuum. Different kinds of media may have different levels and degrees of influence, and in turn subject audiences to different levels and degrees of influence, but whatever the form media takes it necessarily relies on influence from society, and is influenced by society.

The primary influence is in the form of discourse. When theorists discuss the effects of certain images and representations in the media on an audience, they are discussing the discursive forms and ideologies which are transmitted to the audience. The reception of the represented discourses aren't necessarily received as they are intended to be, but it is nevertheless, discourse which is generated. In this way, social norms and hegemonic values such as ideas around marginalised spaces and what they represent, are transmitted, received and reinterpreted via the same medium: discourse. Whether the discourse concerns marginalised spaces as places of fear, danger and avoidance, or crime as a political problem concerning the government's ability to protect citizenry and the legal system's ability to prosecute offenders, the way in which it is spoken about and acted upon is discursive.

Discourse is therefore the way in which ideas and ideologies are circulated within society. This chapter discussed various discourses regarding the construction of others, exclusion, crime and the fear of crime, as the discourses surrounding the legacy of apartheid. I then went on to discuss the ways in which the influences of these discourses in their various apparitions affect the production of media from the perspective of the journalist as an active member of society, as well as a journalist as an individual battling the various tensions surrounding the production of news – not the least of which being the various, contradictory, and often highly emotive discourses surrounding crime and its representation and effects in society.

Chapter Four: Methodology and Methods

The following sections will detail the methods and methodology that I used in this research study. I shall begin by discussing the qualitative tradition as methodology and briefly compare the positivist tradition associated with quantitative studies to the interpretivist tradition associated with qualitative studies. I shall then go into more detail regarding interpretivism and its association with Critical Discourse Analysis as theory and method. I shall then discuss Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) at length in order to lay out the goals and aims of this form of textual and social analysis, and how it applies to my research aims. I shall then discuss the value of coupling CDA with qualitative interviews and discuss the method of qualitative interviewing at length. To conclude, I will discuss research ethics and how they apply to my chosen methods, and detail the ways in which I applied research ethics in such a way that this research can be considered vigorous and reliable.

The Qualitative Tradition

Qualitative research is concerned with the study of human action from the ‘emic’ or insiders’ perspective, description, and the understanding of human action and behaviour (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 270). As such qualitative research usually relies on ‘thick’ description which is an anthropological tradition of immersive research first described by Clifford Geertz (1973: 10). The tradition relies on in-depth descriptions of social phenomena using the idea of sensual scholarship (rather than just observation) to record in detail the processes and ideas at work, and the context, and so to come to a more complete picture of the human processes at work (Geertz 1973: 15). Qualitative research tends to be concerned with the context in which the research is conducted as part of the understanding of the actions or behaviour being described (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 270). An understanding of the context in which the social research occurs (that of the researcher and the research subject/s) is therefore gained by allowing the processes to be researched in their “concrete, natural context in which they occur” (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 171). This context-dependency however, means that it is not generalisable to a larger population in the same way that quantitative research findings can be (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 270).

The last point regarding qualitative research which is relevant to my current research is that of the way in which hypotheses and theories are derived inductively from the research process rather than tested through the research process (Babbie and Moutin 2001: 270). As such, the researcher approaches the research from a position in which they do not necessarily

expect to find any particular results, but rather observes, describes and tries to understand the processes involved and forms hypotheses and theories through the research process. The researcher is therefore the “‘main instrument’ in the research process” (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 270).

In media studies, the object of study typically involves the process of communication at some point along the process of signification and the production of meaning through mediated forms. Lindlof (1995) describes the process of communication and meaning-making socially as performances and practices (1995: 17). Practices are the larger, overall guidelines for how performances should be carried out such that the performance is the individual exemplar of the practice (Lindlof 1995: 17). She argues that performances are “rich with symbolisation” and the researcher is tasked with teasing out the meanings of those symbolisations which are individually influenced and authored, making them context-dependent (Lindlof 1995: 17). It is largely because of this and the above that qualitative studies are considered ‘soft’. They do not study fixed and immovable objects like figures but rather try to get a handle on something as slippery as thoughts, feelings and reasons for action, and then interpret and describe them rather than explain them (Lindlof 1995: 25).

In order that the research be as thorough and reliable as possible, the researcher must establish validity through methods such as ‘triangulation’ (using multiple methods); by writing extensive field notes and subjecting the research to member checks and peer review (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 275). It is the neutrality of the research findings that determine the quality of the research largely because qualitative research is not highly reproducible (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 276).

In-the-field strategies like remaining immersed for a prolonged period of time until ‘data saturation’ occurs, and triangulating methods increase the level of credibility of the research findings (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 277). As such in the following study I conducted extensive textual analysis in the form of critical discourse analysis, and triangulated this method with qualitative interviews conducted to the point of ‘data saturation’ (the point at which the same data begins to emerge repeatedly). By combining these two methods the research goes beyond textual and institutional analysis, and becomes social analysis (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 281).

Interpretivism

Qualitative research methods stem largely from a tradition of inquiry known as the interpretive tradition. Interpretivism aims to explore “the ways that people make sense of their social worlds and how they express these understandings through language, sound, imagery, personal style and social rituals” (Deacon et al 1999: 6). As described above, interpretivism involves immersion into the research field and is interested in the co-production of knowledge where the researcher is part of the research project (Deacon et al 1999: 7). This is because interpretive researchers argue that the social world is constructed through social actions through which meaning is made and therefore research has an interpretive role: “to make sense of the ways other people make sense of their worlds by continually ‘guessing at meanings, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guesses’” (Deacon et al 1999: 7). In this way, social interactions and social life can be read and interpreted as a polysemic text the meanings of which have to be ‘teased out’ (Deacon et al 1999: 7).

Although interpretivism is a qualitative technique it should be noted that it is almost impossible to completely reject a certain degree of quantification (Deacon et al 1999: 8). References, for example, to ‘how many’ people said something is a quantified statement. These types of references make the interpretation more manageable without boiling down social thoughts, ideas and actions to quantities which may not necessarily supply the nuance that is reflected in the social world (Deacon et al 1999: 8). Therefore the difference between positivism and interpretivism is largely in the way that figures are used and not whether they are used (Deacon et al 1999: 8).

Critical Discourse Analysis

I shall begin this section with an overview of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as theory and apply the various elements and aspects of the theory to the study of media in an attempt to demonstrate the ways in which this kind of understanding of the media can be useful for textual analyses. I shall then continue by discussing CDA as a method of textual analyses, bearing in mind the various aspects of CDA as theory. In this section, I will discuss the tools of linguistic, social and discursive analysis which I will be using to conduct a Critical Discourse Analysis. These tools include narrative analysis; analysis of syntax; transitivity and presupposition, as well as discourse and social hegemonic norms.

The initial stage of the research involved a textual analysis to determine how crime, criminals and criminal spaces are represented in Grahamstown's community newspaper, *Grocott's Mail*. As such, I conducted critical discourse analysis on 32 crime and crime related news articles from the first two pages of the publication, selected from the first six months of 2012.

In order to select 32 articles, I used the systematic sampling method. I separated my sample into two selections: News in Brief articles, and full-length articles. I selected 10 articles from the News in Brief section because these have less detail than the full length articles but are often very rich in analysable data because of their concise nature. The remaining 22 articles are full-length news stories which are typically thicker in detail than the News in Brief articles.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is concerned with the discursive aspects of texts as well as the specific practices of production and consumption, and the relationship between journalistic discourse and other discourses of symbolic and material power (Richardson 2007: 1). According to Richardson (2007) who writes about the concept and methods of analysing newspapers in the United Kingdom, "these three sets of characteristics – that is, the language of journalism, its production and consumption and the relations of journalism to social ideas and institutions – are clearly interrelated and sometimes difficult to disentangle" (2007: 1). Fairclough (quoted in Richardson) argues that although there are different elements, they are not fully discrete in that each element influences the others (2007: 1). Therefore, CDA is specifically a "theory and a method of analysing the way that individuals and institutions use language" (2007: 1). CDA starts by identifying a social problem, considers the perspective of those most marginalised and then critically analyses those in power from that perspective (2007: 2). It looks to correct those social problems, so CDA typically has an overt moral and political position. Newspaper analysis that focuses on social issues should consider "the material realities of society in general; on the practices of journalism; and on the character and function of journalistic language more specifically" (2007: 2). Therefore, CDA is "an approach to language use that aims to explore and expose the roles that discourse plays in reproducing (or resisting) social inequalities (2007: 6). CDA is about *what* is produced by journalists, but it is also about *how* it is produced (Richardson 2007: 10). It is therefore an interpretive, contextual, and constructivist approach and aims to interpret the meanings of texts, situate them in context and argue that textual meaning is constructed through an interaction between producer, text and consumer (Richardson 2007: 15).

Richardson argues that hegemony is maintained through misguiding the proletariat and marginalising and subduing dissent. This is achieved discursively and “the language used in newspapers is one key site in this naturalisation of inequality and neutralisation of dissent” (Richardson 2007: 6). Richardson argues that “journalism exists to enable citizens to better understand their lives and their positions in the world” (2007: 7). But, he says, journalism also disseminates the views of the powerful and privileged, and is also a commodity to be bought and sold (2007: 7). However, Richardson argues that it is when institutions privilege journalism as a commodity over the role of enabling understanding in society that it stops being journalism (in favour of, for instance, propaganda) (Richardson 2007: 8).

Language use or discourse is social: it makes meaning by representing social realities and contributes to the production and reproduction of social reality or social life. Language use also enacts identity; is always active and related to context and is such social action; it has power; and it is political because it is social and has power (Richardson 2007: 13). Although Richardson makes the disclaimer that there are many definitions of the term ‘discourse’ and that his particular usage is only one of many (2007: 21), I shall be adopting his particular definition for the purposes of this study largely because his method of Critical Discourse Analysis is the one which I will be using to analyse these texts; as such, his definition of discourse is most applicable to the method.

The functionalist definition of language is that which emphasises the social aspect of language as ‘language in use’ (Richardson 2007: 23). The functionalist definition of discourse highlights the active aspect of language and “discourse analysis is the analysis of what people *do* with language” (Richardson 2007: 24). This definition assumes that language is meant to mean something and to do something, both of which are linked to the context of the language use. Richardson argues that in the news media, meaning and context are interlinked through assigning sense and assigning reference.

The context of a particular language act is two-fold: it is the immediate context wherein the speaker addresses the audience and the audience uses their immediate contextual understanding to determine the meaning of the language use; but it is also the wider and more complex context that is the socio-political, cultural and historical context through which the language act happens (as noted above, that language use or discourse produces and reproduces) (Richardson 2007: 25). Language is therefore instrumental in the shaping of social reality (Richardson 2007: 26).

Critical discourse analysis goes beyond the analysis of the textual in accepting that language use is social: CDA also uses discourse analysis to analyse the social (Richardson 2007: 26). The functionalist definition of discourse incorporates an aspect of social life, in that it assumes that since discourse produces and reproduces social life, it also produces and reproduces social inequalities (Richardson 2007: 26). Therefore CDA “may be focused ‘at different levels of abstraction from the particular event: it may involve its more immediate situational context, the wider context of institutional practices the event is embedded within, or the wider frame of the society and the culture’” (Fairclough 1995: 62 quoted in Richardson 2007: 26).

Richardson summarises the principles of CDA (as per Titscher et al 2000 and Wodak 1996) as being concerned with social problems; power in discourse and power over discourse; the influence that discourse and society have on one another; discourse as being ideological; historical and contextual; and an interpretive and explanatory analysis (2007: 27). Therefore, “CDA investigates, and aims at illustrating, ‘a relationship between the text and its social conditions, ideologies and power-relations’” (2007: 27).

Therefore power is a central theme of Critical Discourse Analysis, as is ideology. Richardson argues that “individuals and groups gain power from their social relations to others and their position in a hierarchical social system” (2007: 31). In particular, Richardson argues that it is through discourse that power can affect someone in a manner contrary to their interests (2007: 32). He argues particularly that it is language acting ideologically through discourse that this can occur.

The definition of the term ‘ideology’ is highly contested as discussed in the previous chapter. Therefore it is more useful to explain the evolution of the term from Marx’s initial conception thereof to Thompson’s ‘meaning in the service of power’. The concept of ideology can be used as part of a CD Analysis. It is here that we can begin to conceptualise ideological state apparatuses, such as the media, as the site for the realisation of the domination of the powerful over the powerless. This, Richardson argues, means that media for instance, are themselves a site for class struggle (2007: 34). Important in the concept of ideology is that of hegemony, or the difference between coercion and consent which ultimately reinforces the dominant ideology. Gramsci’s concept of hegemony is that process wherein the less powerful classes consent to be dominated by the powerful classes negating the need for coercion or force (although the threat of force may be a necessary part of the

process) (Richardson 2007: 35). Also necessary for successfully gaining consent is the involvement and support of the ideological state apparatuses, like media, that was mentioned above (Richardson 2007: 35). In Gramsci's conception of hegemony, consent is achieved by the ruling classes taking the 'interests and tendencies' of the subordinate classes into consideration, and by publicising any concessions to public demand such that they can be seen to be just and moral leaders (Gramsci 1971: 161 in Richardson 2007: 35). Hegemony is also maintained by ruling class ideas and values being disseminated largely through the education system, and this, Gramsci argues, is the most major factor in the hegemonic process because it prevents the subordinate classes from rising up by teaching them not to (Gramsci 1971: 350 in Richardson 2007: 35). As such the media is responsible for bridging the gap between ruling class ideology and news content, but also supports hegemony by naturalising the existing class relationships of society (Richardson 2007: 36).

I shall now discuss CDA as method, and to begin I shall provide Norman Fairclough's (1995) definition of CDA in the words of Titscher et al (2000: 149-150):

"the analysis of relationships between concrete language use and the wider social cultural structures. [...] He attributes three dimensions to every discursive event. It is simultaneously text, discursive practice (which also includes the production and interpretation of texts – and social practice. The analysis is conducted according to these three dimensions" (Titscher et al 2000: 149-150).

This particular definition of CDA shapes discourse into a circular or cyclical pattern wherein each element affects the next: social practices influence the text, that shape the context, and the production of the text; and the text then shapes society through those that consume the text (Richardson 2007: 37). However, this conception of discourse makes beginning the process of analysis problematic. Richardson suggests beginning with textual analysis (2007: 37).

Textual analysis is "the analysis of the way propositions are structured and the way propositions are combined and sequenced" (Fairclough 1995 in Richardson 2007: 38). However, where content analysis, for instance, only looks at what textual elements exist within the text, CDA also aims to analyse critically what could have been but is not included in the text, and treat this absence or presence as a choice made by the producer of the text as acting within the confines of their own contextual limitations (Richardson 2007: 38). Where CDA does analyse texts in terms of grammar, semantics, word choice etc., it also examines

the text in terms of the functions that these elements serve within the text and context, and in relation to their involvement with maintaining or reproducing hegemony and the ideological norm (or not) (Richardson 2007: 39).

As such, the first level of textual analysis is linguistic analysis which consists of various levels of analysis. Therefore, I will be conducting each of the following linguistic analyses in accordance with the initial textual analysis portion of CDA. Lexical analysis aims to interpret the connotation and denotation of the choice of the words selected in a text (Richardson 2007: 47). Particularly, Richardson argues that nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs are particularly capable of carrying multiple meanings on the connotative and the denotative levels (2007: 47). This is because “the words used to communicate the message(s) of a text [...] frame the story in direct and unavoidable ways” (Richardson 2007: 48).

The names and references associated with concepts in a text can have substantial influence over how they are perceived (Richardson 2007: 49). For this reason, the next aspect of textual analysis has to do with naming and referencing. For instance, how a person is portrayed foregrounds a particular social category over another similarly applicable one (choosing to name someone a ‘mother’ rather than as a ‘professor’), and may even serve to exclude them from one social category in favour of another. Richardson argues that there are clear and important differences between the connoted meaning and the denoted meaning of these references (2007: 50). Naming projects social values but also forms “coherence relations with the way that *other* social actors are referred to and represented” (Richardson 2007: 50) by simultaneously presenting a positive self-image and a negative other-image. This is achieved by associating the ‘negative’ (foreigner, ex-con, alcoholic) with the ‘other’ or socially deviant, and the ‘positive’ (family-man, teacher, nurse) with the social norm (Richardson 2007: 51). These words clearly represent a kind of value. As does the next level of linguistic analysis: predication.

Predication has largely to do with descriptions or labels associated with concepts or social actors. These are more directly used to represent values and characteristics and can be used to “criticise, undermine and vilify” (Richardson 2007: 53).

The above three linguistic groupings all refer to particular word choice, but the analysis of syntax (the arrangement of words in a sentence) and transitivity (the relationship between actors and roles) can also assist the researcher in determining ideological and discursive positioning. Texts are consciously or unconsciously constructed in such a way that particular

meanings are more apparent than others; but should the text be rearranged, dissimilar meanings might be understood. As such, the author of the text has made a choice to represent the participants, the process and the circumstances in a particular way. It is largely the representation of the process as expressed by the verb which is most relevant here. Verbs can describe verbal processes, mental processes, relational processes and material processes. Each of these can render the participant in the process active or passive (as in, active and passive voice) or indeed, render the participant absent ('The Money was Stolen') and each of these has particular connotative and denotative meanings and interpretations (for instance, deleting the participant creates a vague and indefinite sense in a sentence, Richardson 2007: 55).

Transitivity refers to the verbal processes that take place within a sentence. There are different types of verbal processes each of which have a slightly different ideological positioning. For instance, verbal processes like speaking, saying and testifying tend to indicate that a certain level of power is afforded to the speaker. Their voice is heard and their words are understood. On the other hand, mental processes like investigating and considering are associated with socially active subjects who do not necessarily have a voice (although they sometimes do), but play an active role in society, like judges and detectives. Relational processes confer an attribute on a subject and describe them in a particular way without usually giving the subject a voice or chance to alter that attribution. Subject is described as something: 'she is saddened', 'he is hated'. Lastly, material processes carrying the suggestion of the material being dominant ('the robbers broke in') over the mental but can also be divided into transitive and intransitive actions. Transitive material processes involve two actors and a verb: 'He raped her'. This kind of transitive attribution clearly labels one actor as the subject of the action, and one as the object and as in the example above, leaves no room to absolve the subject from the process of the verb (Richardson 2007: 54-55).

On the other hand, intransitive material processes only involve one actor namely, the object of the sentence. Using the example above again, the sentence would read thus when passivised: 'She was raped'. In this example it can be clearly understood that the subject is absolved from the responsibility of the verbal process 'was raped' by omitting the subject of the sentence. It is possible to infer further that in this example, the responsibility for the verbal process can be laid at the object of the process (Richardson 2007: 55-56). Richardson refers to this kind of linguistic alteration as a transformation from active to passive voice, and notes that it is achieved by deleting the subject or agent from the sentence. He also makes

note that this kind of transformation happens “very frequently in newspapers” (Richardson 2007: 55, emphasis in original).

Importantly, passivisation is also an ideological function. Thompson (1999) describes passivisation and nominalisation as two of the ways in which reification might be expressed. Where this particular mode of ideology serves to represent a “transitory, historical state of affairs as if it were permanent, natural, outside of time” (Thompson 1999: 65), passivisation focuses

the attention of the hearer or reader on certain themes at the expense of other. They delete actors and agency and they tend to represent processes as things or events which take place in the absence of a subject who produces them. They also tend to elide references to specific spatial and temporal contexts by eliminating verbal constructions or converting them into the continuous tense. These and other grammatical or syntactic devices may, in particular circumstances, serve to establish and sustain relations of domination by reifying social-historical phenomena. (Thompson 1999: 66).

Modality is yet another linguistic tool for the analysis of a text. Modality broadly refers to the conviction with which a statement is made in a text. It refers to the speaker’s confidence in the statement and the vehemence with which it is made (Richardson 2007: 59). Modality can be expressed in terms of truth and obligation or duty. Truth modality slides along a scale from categorical assertions, to hedging, to reduced certainty expressed by words such as ‘will’, ‘can’ and ‘could’. Obligation modality refers to future actions and the degree to which the speaker believes that an action should or ought to be taken (Richardson 2007: 60). This can also be expressed categorically (as in ‘must’) or less certainly as in ‘ought to’. It is clear then that categorical modal statements are far more authoritative than less certain statements and tend to be used more often in the news media, particularly in quotes by persons considered authoritative themselves (Richardson 2007: 60). These kinds of statements give clear insight into the particular beliefs and attitudes of the journalist(s) responsible for the article, as well as every person through whose hands the article passes in the production process.

Meanings can also be less explicit than those described above, where claims can be made simply in the presuppositions of texts (Richardson 2007: 63). Presupposed meanings can be marked in three ways: change of state verbs (like stop and begin) and implicative verbs (like forget) invoke presupposed meanings because they suggest that for instance, something has

been going on (in the case of 'stop') or something was meant to be remembered (in the case of 'forget'). The definite article and possessive articles also trigger presuppositions because they suggest that something is a singular, existing entity, or that something is the property of something else. Presuppositions are also signposted in the use of 'wh-' questions because for instance, a 'who' question can insinuate a 'someone'; a 'what' question insinuates a 'something' (Richardson 2007: 63). Lastly, nouns and adjectives can also signpost a presupposition (such as describing something as being a particular way, Richardson 2007: 64).

The argument of the journalistic construct often rests on the use of rhetorical tropes because tropes can be used to denote-connote something apart from the original meaning of the word (Richardson 2007: 65). Hyperbole for instance, makes use of excessive exaggeration to convey a particularly dramatic effect (Richardson 2007: 65). Metaphor works by invoking a sense of one thing in relation to another (Richardson 2007: 66). Metonymy is the substitution of a part of one thing for another "from a semantically related field of reference" (Richardson 2007: 67). Neologism refers to a newly created word, or a new meaning for an existing word (Richardson 2007: 69). Puns can work on two levels: homographic puns which play on different meanings of homophonic words which are spelled the same way; ideographic puns which work by substituting similar sounding but not homophonic words; and homophonic puns that play on words that sound the same but are spelled differently, and have different meanings (Richardson 2007: 70).

Narrative Analysis

Richardson does not consider narrative analysis to be part of critical discourse analysis, although he does consider narrative an essential part of meaning making which allows for basic links to be created throughout a text for it to be logical (2007: 23). Narrative elements impose a logical structure on a text such that the hero, the villain and the other characters fit into a regular and understandable structure such that meaning is easily and recognisably gleaned from a text. Journalism is therefore a kind of story-telling: comprising a narrative content (the sequence of events which imposes the structure and meaning on the story) and the narrative form (the way in which the events are presented).

News stories have a simple plot consisting of setting, event and outcome, often presented in a different form to other mediums making it recognisably one medium or the other (Richardson 2007: 71). For instance, whilst the narrative content might be similar or the same

in a movie or news story, the form that the story takes defines the one genre from the other and allows the receiver to understand the logic which is imposed on that genre. News stories can be presented in various ways, most recognisably, the inverted pyramid structure where the climax of the story is presented to the audience first (Richardson 2007: 71).

It is entirely due to these two aspects of narrative, content and form, that narrative analysis is an essential part of textual analysis. Analysing narrative draws out the logic of the story: understanding the hero role allows the function that this character fulfils to be understood more clearly. Furthermore, it allows the researcher to discuss a text in depth according to a set of rules: the character that fulfils the function of a hero can be referred to as a hero across multiple texts; similarly with the character function of the villain etc.

The construction of news articles is the construction of a story for public consumption. Therefore, news, as much as fictional mediums, present information in a narrative form because this is recognisable and understandable to an audience that understands how stories work. Narrative is therefore the sequence of events and the characters which drives those events as they occur in the text (Richardson 2007: 71). The difference between the news narrative and the fictional narrative is that news narratives often lack a resolution; instead they focus on setting, event (or complication) and outcome (Richardson 2007: 71). Narrative, however, is a complicated concept. Structuralists argue that narrative and language share common structures, that it works on connotative and denotative levels, and that it is structured along paradigmatic and syntagmatic lines (Fiske 1987: 128).

Three theorists are particularly important in any discussion of narrative, narrative theory, and narrative analysis. Levi-Strauss for instance studied myths and found that mythic narratives are structured around binary oppositions which are reified through the mythic narrative by a process Levi-Strauss named the 'logic of the concrete' (Fiske 1987: 132). This is the easiest way to transfer meaning because we understand a concept in terms of its opposite (Wigston 2001: 108). In this way, abstract concepts such as good and evil can be represented in a more concrete manner through the narrative (hero versus villain for instance; Wigston 2001: 109).

Todorov was more interested in the sequential development of the narrative than Levi-Strauss and as such developed a very simple model for how the narrative moves through the various stages of development. He theorised five stages in which there is a state of being, either stable or unstable; and a causal transformation via a series of events such that

equilibrium can be restored (because narratives usually begin with some kind of state of equilibrium; Wigston 2001: 110).

Barthe, though similarly structuralist in position to Levi-Strauss diverted from an analysis of the linguistic structure of the mythic narrative. His Marxist point of view gave rise to his idea that myth is used by the bourgeois to naturalise their particular ideology and as such, to oppress the proletariat (Fiske 1987: 134). He concentrated on the idea of codes and developed a set of codes which work on a narrative level: the hermeneutic or enigma code, the semic code, symbolic code, proairetic or action code, and the referential code (Wigston 2001: 108-9).

On the other hand, Propp, in analysing one hundred Russian folk tales found the same basic narrative structure was present in each tale and listed 32 narrative functions divided into six sections. He argued that although each narrative might not contain every one of the 32 functions, every narrative contains these functions, as listed, in the listed sequence (Fiske 1987: 137). Further, Propp detailed eight character roles which essentially move the action forward and work through the narrative functions. Each character role has a specific sphere of action within which they work (Fiske 1987: 137). Todorov's model of narrative is very similar to Propp's in the sense that the one deals with the broader aspects of the narrative structure; Propp's narrative functions focus on the minute aspects of narrative development (Wigston 2001: 111).

Modes of Ideology

However, it is important to consider the text as a whole (considering the meaning of the text rather than of the sentence) in order that the discursive and ideological positions of the text (or publication) can be extrapolated, rather than the meanings of the sentence be finitely examined (Richardson 2007: 58). Thompson's Modes of Ideology described in *The Media and Modernity* (1999) are also a useful tool in textual analysis as Thompson describes several aspects of language and language use which can be identified in a text to function to provide meaning in a particular way. He outlines five modes of ideology: Legitimation, dissimulation, unification, fragmentation and reification (1999: 60). Legitimation refers to the way in which ideas are reported on (with particular reference to news media) as being worthy of support. Dissimulation refers to the ways in which the relations of domination can be textually concealed by the media. Unification refers to the use of symbols of in-group membership to unite the populous despite differences and divisions. This idea often works in tandem with

that of fragmentation which refers to the ways in which the out-group are pointed out and signalled for rejection. Lastly, reification refers to the ways in which contemporary ideologies are naturalised and normalised by presenting them as historical and permanent.

Each of these has specific textual and linguistic uses to achieve a particular kind of reproduction of dominant ideologies. Legitimation in news media reports is achieved through rationalisation, universalisation and narrativisation. Rationalisation serves to justify why certain social ideas are dominant through chains of reasoning. Universalisation is the process through which the dominant ideologies are represented as serving the interests of all people whilst only serving the interests of the dominant. Narrativisation serves to invent traditions in which current ideological states of being are represented as cherished and important parts of social life (Thompson 1999:61).

Euphemism is the main form of dissimulation although other rhetorical tropes function in the same way. Rhetorical tropes serve the dominant interests by re-evaluating and re-describing ideas as different to how they actually are. This creates a slippage between what is said and what is actually referred to, allowing states of being to be evaluated in positive or negative terms as needs be (Thompson 1999: 62).

Symbolisation of unity is the main way in which unification is achieved. Symbols of common interests and collective identities are utilised to create a sense of belonging to an in-group through identification with common symbols – for instance, a national flag. Standardisation also works to unify. Standardisation is when symbols are transformed to become an aspect of common identification; here the national flag is also an example because not everyone in a country can necessarily identify with that flag (for example, right wing groups in the Free State continue to associate with the old national flag), yet they are still defined under the national flag (Thompson 1999: 64).

Fragmentation is achieved through differentiation wherein differences and divisions are emphasised in order to point out an out-group such that a challenge might be mounted to their legitimacy. Expurgation of the other is another type of differentiation where an enemy is constructed as being illegitimately within the ranks of the in-group and are constructed as harmful, dangerous, or threatening, and their expulsion from the group can be legitimately called upon from members of the in-group (Thompson 1999:65).

Finally naturalisation is achieved through reification, eternalisation and nominalisation/passivisation and functions to reify. Reification is when an historical phenomenon is presented as natural; while eternalisation is when historical phenomena are represented as unchanging and unchangeable. Nominalisation and passivisation are linguistic devices which delete actors and agency in order to focus on particular themes thereby naturalising the deleted processes. An example of this is: “A man was arrested...” which naturalises law enforcement by deleting them from the action (Thompson 1999: 65-66).

Discursive Practices

Richardson argues that for textual analysis, the next step in CDA should be analysing the discursive practices of news discourse. Fairclough says: “The discourse practice dimension of the communicative event involves various aspects of the processes of text production and text consumption. Some of these have a more institutional character whereas others are discourse processes in a narrower sense” (1995: 58). Richardson argues that Hall’s model of communicative practices as being encoded by a producer and decoded by the consumer goes a long way to understanding how discourse analysis might work. However, Richardson also argues that consideration should be given to the idea that meanings are also the result of professional practices and techniques, which relate to social relations and relations of power (Fairclough 1995: 204 in Richardson 2007: 40). Similarly, at every stage of the creation of the text, there are external influences on the text. Richard argues this idea thus:

“The producer shapes the text but the text, and its conventions, shapes its production too. Similarly at the point of consumption the discursive practices occurring are also a two-way street. First, the messages of the text (which may or may not be ideological) attempt to shape the understandings of the reader; this observation is widely taken as read, and forms the basis of much political critique of ‘the media’. However, reading is an activity in which readers ‘do not simply receive messages; they decode texts’ (Richardson 2007: 41).

Socio-cultural Practices

The final stage of a Critical Discourse Analysis is “an analysis of the texts’ ‘socio-cultural practice’ or ‘the social and cultural goings-on which the communicative event is part of’ (Fairclough 1995: 57 quoted in Richardson 2007: 42). In other words, socio-cultural practice refers to the broader social context within which the journalistic institution may function and from whence it draws its definitions, ideologies and discursive practices (Richardson 2007: 114).

In this way, the purpose of this final aspect of Critical Discourse Analysis is to focus on “the interaction and inter-relation between economic, political and ideological practices” (Richardson 2007: 155) of the communicative process specific to newspaper journalism. In particular, it is the effect that journalism may have on the relationships of dominance within established socio-cultural contexts in which CDA is most interested (Richardson 2007: 115). Richardson uses the example that newspapers often fulfil several economic obligations when undergoing a campaign. Campaigns are particular examples of the power that newspapers have because they have the ability to enact change, but it is, importantly, change which is sanctioned and defined by the newspaper itself and has particular benefit for the publication (Richardson 2007: 117). Campaigns fulfil the operating and marketing needs of a newspaper, and are therefore a reaction to prevailing capitalist ideals couched in socially-conscious terms (Richardson 2007: 117). A campaign has the double advantage for a newspaper of appealing to their readership on a personal level (for instance, warning people that there is an arsonist in town, or that hand-bag muggings are increasing along high street) and increasing readership (Richardson 2007: 120-121). These social, political contexts, when aligned with the newspaper’s double agenda of selling newspapers to audiences and the audience to advertisers can provide great insight into the agenda and workings of the newsroom and explain why certain topics, subjects and ideas are given preference over others.

Qualitative Interviews

I conducted qualitative interviews following the critical discourse analysis in order to complement and give context to the textual analysis. Texts do not operate in a vacuum: they are influenced by and influence society in such complicated and confusing ways that various metaphors have been applied to how texts work in order to attempt to describe the relation of text to society. Whether texts are mirrors or stained-glass windows, a purely textual analysis, whether it includes a social and discourse analysis or not, cannot thoroughly explore the discourses which are in operation around a text’s construction without considering the constructors. The special relationship that this newspaper has with the town and its people required an additional level of analysis: essentially an institutional analysis which required interviewing the journalists who live, work, interact with, influence and are influenced by the town which this newspaper services. The qualitative interviews then were conducted in order to determine from whence the discourses which are evident in the texts arise, what tensions act upon the journalists who produce them, and if they are aware of the discourses which are produced.

Qualitative interviews differ from their quantitative cousins in the form and structure of the interview. Qualitative interviews can be described as ‘a conversation with a purpose’, and as such the format is more loose and adaptable, and flexible than a survey for instance. This allows the researcher to engage on a more personal level with their subject and get a feel for the context of the subject, but also allows the researcher to explore alternative avenues of research rather than focusing on gathering information on a particular hypothesis (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 290).

Lindlof (1995) describes purpose of qualitative interviewing: “to understand their [the interviewees’] perspectives on a scene, to retrieve experiences from the past, to gain expert insight of information, to obtain descriptions of events or scenes that are normally unavailable for observation, to foster trust, to understand a sensitive or intimate relationship, or to analyse certain kinds of discourse” (Lindlof 1995: 5).

The skill of qualitative interviewing then is in earning the subject’s trust and gaining rapport, but also in listening to the subjects’ responses and wording questions in such a way as to neither bias the responses nor alienate the subject (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 189).

A well-designed qualitative interview should be able to extract the information pertinent to the research question and provide additional details that might be necessary for some other research purpose, without alienating the subject from researchers to come (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 290). Therefore, even qualitative interviews should be designed. Steiner Kvale abstracted seven stages of the interviewing process: thematising, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying and reporting (Kvale 1996: 88 in Babbie and Mouton 2001: 290). It should be noted that the qualitative interview, in generating thick descriptions, should also involve a fair amount of observation and sensual scholarship. For the purposes of this study I conducted interviews within the working space of the newspaper’s offices in Grahamstown, during the normal working day, at the subjects’ convenience. This method of procuring interviews allowed me to spend some time observing the working practices of the journalists, editors and other staff at the newspaper, but it also allowed me to gather some insight into their professional relationships.

For the qualitative interview portion of my research I relied on a theoretical sampling technique:

Theoretical sampling is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes and analyses his [sic] data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges. (Glaser and Strauss 1967: 45 in Babbie and Mouton 2001: 287).

Having collected interviews from three journalists at the newspaper, *Grocott's Mail* it became clear that further participants were required to accomplish the research goals. This was primarily due to the limited number of permanent employees at the newspaper, and partially because I met with some resistance to the questions I had posed to one of the interviewees. As such, it was decided that in addition to the three individual interviews which I conducted on site, at the *Grocott's Mail* newsroom, I would also conduct a focus group made up of a slightly different group of participants. The individual interviews were conducted with the crime reporter, another reporter who worked a different beat and the editor. The focus group participants were students who had all worked at *Grocott's Mail* for a semester.

Focus Groups

The focus group was made up of three student reporters who had all worked at *Grocott's Mail* for the first semester of the year (the time of the year from whence I had pulled the material for the Critical Discourse Analysis). The structure of the student reporting programme is that fourth-year writing and editing specialisation students spend the first semester of the year working as reporters at the newspaper. During this time each student must write two articles for each beat of the newspaper, and take photographs. They are essentially full-time employees of the newspaper, but are given time off from this work to attend media studies lectures and seminars.

This unique experience with the newspaper offers these students a unique view of the practices of the newspaper. They are not only journalists in training, but students who are expected to critique their own work, the work of the newspaper, and their experiences at the newspaper. This allows them a far more nuanced, reflective and reflexive sense of their time at the newspaper than the reporters and the editor.

For the focus groups I invited three fourth-year students whom I knew to be open and honest about their experiences at the newspaper, and they in turn suggested I invite two additional students whom they knew were particularly interested in the crime beat at the newspaper. These latter two students were unable to attend, and the three former students

made up the focus group which was held on a Saturday morning after the Critical Discourse Analysis and individual interviews had already been conducted. The focus group was conducted in the Journalism and Media Studies building (the Africa Media Matrix, or AMM) so that the students could feel at ease when discussing their impressions of the newspaper and its practices. Morgan and Krueger (1993) argue that focus groups participants are often open to discussing sensitive topics, if the setting and the moderator are conducive to allowing a discussion of sensitive subjects (1993:6-7).

The questions took two forms: they were either based on specific findings from the CDA and the individual interviews, or they were based on general practices and journalistic ethics and ideology and were framed to give some background or explanation for findings gathered from the previous analyses. The questions were prepared and based on the three major areas of interest for the research question: criminal, crime and space. Although some additional questions were asked by the interviewer during the course of the focus group discussion, these were minimal and the discussion generally flowed naturally between the participants.

The focus groups discussion lasted just under two hours and required very little directing, or redirecting from the moderator as the students were eager and interested in the subject matter and equally eager to put forward their opinions. In this instance, the advantage of the smaller group was that because they were friends and colleagues, they were mindful of each other and allowed each other to express their own ideas. Morgan and Krueger discuss this aspect of the focus group in the context of the myth that focus groups should be made up of strangers: "Limiting ourselves to groups composed of strangers would make it exceedingly difficult to conduct focus groups in organisations, communities, and other on-going social settings," (1993: 6). Arguably, a newspaper is a social setting composed of many intricate social relationships, and in this focus group, the emphasis was on the horizontal relationship between the students who worked at the newspaper. Morgan and Krueger argue that "[b]y creating and sustaining an atmosphere that promotes meaningful interaction, focus groups convey a humane sensitivity, a willingness to listen without being defensive, and a respect for opposing views that is unique and beneficial in these emotionally charged environments" (1993: 18). They go on to argue that friendliness, as opposed to a stranger acquaintance, can be a major advantage in gathering useful ideas of their mutual interactions (Morgan and Krueger 1003: 18).

I chose to moderate the focus group myself for two reasons: although I am not an experienced moderator, the questions and content of the discussion were based on my previous research and any questions the interviewees had about the content would have been best answered by myself. Furthermore, because the discussion hinged on my personal relationships with the participants, using a moderator might have alienated the participants and they may not have spoken as openly as they did. Morgan and Krueger (1993: 5) in fact argue that using a moderator from within the research team might be preferable to using a professional moderator for precisely these reasons.

Focus groups fall into the qualitative research paradigm although they are more structured, and therefore the data collected from focus group discussion are more codable than in other forms of qualitative interview (Morgan and Krueger 1993: 4). Furthermore, including focus groups as a method for gathering further in-depth understanding in this context added to the validity of the research through triangulation. Morgan and Krueger argue that focus group interviews are particularly suited to this method of ensuring quality research because it allows the researcher to conduct a great amount of research in a relatively short amount of time and “thus would complement any other method being used” (Morgan and Krueger 1993: 24).

In this instance, a focus group was the most appropriate form of data gathering because the research deals with journalistic practices and ethics, and to a large degree these are only formed when there is consensus around the practices and ethics. Morgan and Krueger (1993) argue that there are many ways in which a range of opinions and ideas can be expressed in a focus group discussion, but that only by making it clear that the discussion is a forum for a range of opinions, will the consensus around a topic be made visible to the researcher (1993: 17). Here, the research participants were able to reach consensus within their own opinions because they not only had the same experiential knowledge of the situation which they were being questioned on, but also because they each expressed their own opinions on various topics.

Research Ethics

Ali and Kelly (2004) argue that “the central ethical issue for much social and cultural research is how the rights of participants (and researchers) are to be balanced against the potential benefits to society,” (2004: 126). Research ethics then amount to a kind of professional practice, relating to the integrity of the researcher; Ali and Kelly (2004) particularly note the importance of ‘informed consent’ (2004: 116-18). Therefore, an ethical

consideration which had to be made fairly early on in the research process was deciding on how to approach the research subjects ('overt' or 'covert' research) (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 293). Ali and Kelly note that research involving participants concern two main ethical issues: that of privacy and that of gaining informed consent (2004: 119). This is because research must necessarily involve some invasion of privacy, but this should be understood by the participants (Ali and Kelly 2004: 120).

The research design called for an institutional analysis which might reveal some difficult questions for the journalists from the textual analyses therefore covertly gathering information on the social interactions and political understandings of the journalists at the newspaper may have been easier in terms of gathering information without alienating the subjects. However, for practical reasons (such as that the editor and several other staff already knew me as a researcher) and for ethical reasons, I chose to reveal the general idea of my research project to the subjects and give them the choice to participate or not. This approach allowed me to focus on the subjects who were willing to participate rather than spending time with more reluctant participants. The obvious disadvantage however, is that the subjects' knowing of my purpose may have biased them into carefully wording their responses to my questions and keeping their guard up so as not to appear in a negative light in any way (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 296). This possibility was at least partly negated by conducting follow-up interviews with the participants and verifying various interesting features of their original interviews.

An aspect of professional integrity is the concept of 'objectivity'. The idea of 'objectivity' is understood in two different ways within the qualitative research tradition. Firstly, objectivity must be understood in the context of the researcher immersed within the research subject/s. The researcher is the primary research tool. Secondly, because of the highly immersive nature of qualitative research, objectivity must also refer to the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the research subject. In order for the research to be carried out effectively, the research must not only gain the trust of the subject, but establish a rapport and maintain that rapport and trust throughout the relationship (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 273).

On Babbie and Moutin's scale of observation through participation (2001: 296), I conducted observation to a larger extent than participation largely due to the already existing dynamics of the newsroom. The processes and routines that were in place during my research

period had been well established over the year and I was not expected to participate in any of the news related activities in the newsroom.

I kept both written field notes and audio recorded field notes where possible in the interviews so as to ensure that I would not have to rely on my memory. I primarily relied on the audio recordings, and written field notes to record my own observations (feelings of anxiety, anger, disquiet, surprise, whether someone appeared uncomfortable, irritable or fatigued etc.) and my ideas of what I thought was happening. Upon concluding my interviews and observations for the day I would write out my observations into a more coherent form and transcribe the day's interviews while they were still fresh in my mind. Following this process I would carefully record some theoretical thoughts and ideas that had occurred to me in the process of recording the day's work. When all the qualitative and focus group interviews were finished, I used the recordings of the interviews to make transcripts of the interviews, from whence I coded the interview responses into groups of topics.

Chapter Five: Analysis and Findings

In the following chapter I will outline the main findings of my research project from my analysis of the newspaper articles and from the qualitative interviews.

Modes of Ideology

Most of the analysed crime articles shared some basic common characteristics. For instance, the modes of ideology which were operational within the texts were fairly similar. In general crime news articles can be said to legitimise through the rationalisation of the police force and courts in investigating, capturing and prosecuting criminals.

However, the most notable modes of ideology which are used in these crime news articles are those of fragmentation, both through differentiation and expurgation of the other. Crime news works on the character functions of hero and villain where though the hero may be transient and changeable, the villain is decidedly the criminal character. As such, criminal acts and criminals themselves in some notable cases are described in such a way as to differentiate them from the law-abiding public, and to rouse (in some cases) emotional reactions through the use of syntax and presupposition to expurgate the criminal other: for example, where the crimes of a defendant in court are dramatically retold in order to justify a finding of ‘guilty’, or a particular sentence.

Reification through naturalisation predominantly occurs through the passivisation of the actions of those characters whose main role is to do with the justice system. Police officers’ and courts’ actions are often passivised such that they are simply not even mentioned within the context of their relevant actions. In the article ‘Motorbike theft’ for instance, which appeared on the second page of the 29 May edition, the article explains that ‘a 34-year-old man was arrested on Sunday’. This sentence which actively removes the subject from the action serves to naturalise the police’s role in the justice system because it assumes that it is natural enough in society for arresting to be done by police that the subject need not feature in the sentence for the sense to still be apparent.

Student journalists reflected on the passivisation of the justice system citing both time restrictions, and legal restrictions on the journalist:

Student Reporter 1: It’s about restrictions, you’re right. You’re restricted in terms of what you can ask and the responses you’ll get, there’s a restriction there in terms of who you can actually speak to and what information you can get from them. And it’s that all the time, you can’t speak to six people involved: the guy who put the

handcuffs on, the guy who drove the car, the guy who ran down the road and caught the guy, the people involved in the process of the court thing. So it's time restrictions definitely.

Reification through naturalisation has a distinctly regional determination. For instance, in the News in Brief story headlined 'Audiovisual equipment' the focus of the article is on the items that were stolen rather than on the beating that the victim suffered by the thief, or on the housebreaking. The headline points to the items stolen and glosses over the beating, housebreaking and the theft of the goods. Further, the house is described as being in Vukani Location before the crimes above are described and the beating which the owner of the house suffered is described as 'allegedly'. This conglomeration of ideas points more to the oddity of the idea that a house in Vukani should have audiovisual equipment, naturalising the violence suffered by the victim in favour of pointing this oddity out. In short, the 'man bites dog' value of this article seems to be that audiovisual equipment was in a house in Vukani, and not that it was stolen and the owner of the house beaten.

Rhetorical Tropes

Crime news also makes use of euphemism. Euphemism is an aspect of dissimulation according to Thompson's Modes of Ideology. Dissimulation is the concealment of relations of domination by representing them in such a way that it deflects attention from existing relations and processes (Thompson 1995: 62). In the case of crime news reporting, euphemism most notably occurs in relation to the role of the hero where police and courts are cast as heroic through euphemism (for instance using the word 'detained' rather than 'imprisoned' in order for their actions to sound just and noble, quashing any objection to questionable conduct or processes. Understatement is used to reference the actions of the hero (being either police in general, police officers in particular, security company employees, or courts), whereas in one particularly notable example, hyperbole through the use of adjectives is used to describe the actions of the criminal.

Euphemism may also be used to describe the victim, especially in cases where a murder is being reported on. For instance, in the article 'Teen found dead' on the second page of the 19 June edition, euphemism is used extensively to soften the obviously horrific circumstances in which the victim was found murdered. The only time in which the article (a News in Brief) refers directly to 'murder' is in reference to the police investigation. The 'teen' described is 'found dead' (rather than 'murdered'), 'partially clothed' (rather than 'stripped', or 'naked'),

and as having ‘several stab wounds’ (rather than ‘stabbed to death’). The murder is also referred to as an ‘incident’ which both softens the reality of the material facts (that a teenage boy was stabbed to death) and naturalises it so as to seem that this sort of event is more routine than a bloody murder by stabbing. The fact that the article does not refer directly to ‘murder’ except with reference to the police investigating the ‘incident’ as murder, casts some suggestion of doubt over the circumstances of the teenage boy’s death: that perhaps, despite being found dead with several stab wounds, the incident may not have been a murder. This idea is furthered by the passivisation of the finding of the body: the article does not state who found the body, but rather that it was found. The passivisation in this instance not only removes agency from whomever it was that found the body, but also casts a mystical light over the murder, almost suggesting that it is at the same time a natural, normal part of everyday life that a horrific murder like this should occur, and that someone unnamed and unknown should discover it.

Another example of the effect of euphemism can be found in the above mentioned article headlined ‘Motorbike theft’. The News in Brief article describes a motorbike as having been ‘removed from where it was parked’, describes the event as a ‘theft’ in the headline, and explains that someone was arrested, thusly allowing the audience to conclude that the removal of the motorbike refers actually to a theft of property.

Grocott’s Mail seems seldom to use any other rhetorical trope but there are occasional examples. ‘Bad carma’ for instance, is the headline used on an article about a collision between a bus and a car. Interestingly, the article explains that the collision was in fact caused by the bus driver and not the car, as suggested by the headline. The pun is therefore, in this instance, misleading in at least the facts of the case as given by the newspaper, but arguably used only for comic effect, which in this instance may not be completely inappropriate since no-one was injured in the collision.

Narrative

Furthermore, the narrative structure of the news articles was also very similar across most of the stories. With reference to Todorov’s narrative model, the initial equilibrium was assumed in all of the stories, and none of them concluded with a reinstatement of equilibrium, although it is less unusual for a crime news article to conclude with restored or renewed equilibrium than it is for it to begin with one. News articles usually begin with the second stage of narrative: disruption, without any real initial equilibrium being established.

Arguably, the events reported by the news are disruptions to an equilibrium which is assumed because it is never expressly stated in news articles. For instance, in the article headlined, 'Food and phone' from the 10 January edition, the body of the article begins: "A man was robbed...". The initial equilibrium here is assumed because the article does not need to begin: "A man was walking in Valley Road when...", as other genres of writing might in order to contextualise the scene. This is largely because the newspaper audience understands the context of the newspaper before they open it: it is a form of writing in which the disruption, recognition and attempt to restore equilibrium are emphasised with the understanding that 'news' means these things.

In the above example, 'Food and phone', the disruption occurs when the man is robbed; the disruption is recognised when the police arrest three men; and the attempt to restore equilibrium is hinted at when the article notes that the three men will appear in the Grahamstown Magistrate's court. As such, no new equilibrium is restored. The assumption is that equilibrium will be restored pending the outcome of the three men's court case: either they go to prison, or they do not. This article therefore focused on the disruption and recognition aspects of the crime; articles in which recognition and attempt to restore equilibrium are more often court stories. For instance, in the article headlined 'Frustrations grow in rape trial' on the second page of the 13 March edition, the article details the attempt of the court to restore equilibrium, but their eventual failure to do so as a result of the high volume of cases appearing before the court. In this article the inability of the court to restore the equilibrium is noted by the two main characters in the article: the group of protesters outside the court who wished to see the rapist sentenced, and the rape survivor who expressed disappointment at the rapist not being sentenced. In this instance, the equilibrium which is most desired is obvious: that the rapist is sent to prison. In most rape articles dealing with a rape that has gone to trial, the idea is for the rapist to receive a life sentence. The article, 'No life sentence for serial rapist' points to this ideal, which the newspaper duly supports by printing the disappointment of the characters in the former article, and the tone of the latter in which the rapist not getting a life sentence is clearly framed as a negative outcome.

It is court stories which can, in essence, complete the narrative by including the renewed equilibrium. These articles conclude the criminal justice process: where police recognise the disruption, the courts attempt to restore equilibrium, and in articles where the court has sentenced a criminal, the equilibrium is often restored. For instance, in the article 'Five years jail for city sports bar fraudster', the headline proclaims both the disruption (fraud) and the

restored, renewed equilibrium (that he was handed a five-year sentence). However, there are stories in which the court has not sentenced the criminal satisfactorily: this may mean that a rapist has not been handed a life sentence (see ‘No life sentence for serial rapist’).

Importantly, the *dramatis personae* as per Propp’s narrative model varied according to the kind of crime article. For instance, articles about police competence framed the police as the hero, whereas court articles tended to frame the court as hero. In very few, but notable cases, the police were framed as the villain, or at least sharing the role of villain. One example, from the 13 January 2012 edition of *Grocott’s Mail*, carries the headline ‘Cops assault conviction and sentence set aside’, wherein the High Court set aside the conviction of four police officers for kicking, pepper-spraying and punching a man in Extension 6. In this article, the judge who turned over the conviction is painted as one of the villains. After dramatically describing in detail the assault by the officers, and describing the witnesses statements as fitting the evidence “like pieces of a puzzle”, the judge who overruled the sentence is given six paragraphs to explain her decision. She is quoted as claiming that the doctor’s medical evidence is incorrect, and explaining her ruling by arguing that the witness is ‘not a good witness’. Although this may or may not be true, and regardless of the legality of this decision to overturn, the article is written in such a way that it clearly frames the judge and the police officers as wrong-doers, and the original magistrate who convicted them as well as the complainant, as victims of injustice.

Another example is printed on the front page of the following edition, and is as a result connected with and contextualised by the previous edition’s article. In the 17 January edition, the front page headline runs ‘Cops attacked me’, and the article is accompanied by a large photo of Ayanda Kota (the complainant) and runs on to the second page where another image of Kota is printed. The article frames the complainant as a ‘social activist’ who protests against bad service delivery, as well as a father. The article states that Kota was assaulted and taunted in front of his six-year-old son, not only framing him as a caring and concerned father, but simultaneously framing the police who were involved as evil because they involved a child.

In terms of narrative a more expected finding is that the criminal was always framed as the villain. Not one article framed the criminal as the victim of an inefficient government policy on poverty, or social and economic equality or gave any other social or psychological justification.

The narrative analysis also revealed that crime news tends to run slightly outside of the narrative model of characters in narrative. In particular there is no character which could definitively be described as the 'victim' as there are spaces for hero and villain in the narrative model. The 'princess' character model fits to some degree with each of the descriptions of the victims of crime in the crime news articles analysed, but this character model is incomplete and inadequate for an analysis of crime news characters.

Furthermore, a blurring of the roles of courts and police occurs when both are involved in a crime news report. In some instances the police are securely framed within a 'helper' role, and the courts in such an instance are definitively 'hero'. In other cases the police are clearly framed as 'hero' and the courts are represented as an extension of the same unit, thus rendering the courts and the process of prosecution part of the character function of the 'hero' of the police. In these cases the role of police and courts might be referred to as 'the process of justice' or simply, 'justice' and incorporates the role of police as investigating and capturing criminals, and the role of the courts in prosecuting criminals.

In those examples which clearly represent police and/or security company employees as the hero, the narrative progression of the article focuses on the events which can be described as the disruption and the recognition of the disruption. Articles about arrests for instance, do not tend to highlight the actions of the victims in recognising the disruption, but rather the actions of the police in recognising the disruption. These articles tend also to focus more on the crime itself and include the victims' perspective more often than do the other kind of crime news article: court stories. In these kinds of articles, the court is the dominant character and the role of the police is often passivised, where arrests occur without the subject (police). This further entrenches the naturalisation of the institutions of justice, particularly the police force.

Articles which focus on the role of the court as hero tend to focus on the attempt to restore equilibrium. These articles do not tend to represent the role of the police as absolutely central, rather as a necessary initial instrument in the progression of justice from one institution to the next, with the courts being the more important one largely because of their role as hero restoring the equilibrium. However, it is often the case that the recognition and the restoration in the narrative are conflated, most notably when the roles of the police and courts are conflated into one supreme kind of institution of justice.

A further difference between these kinds of stories is often the ways that the villains' voices are heard and how they are represented. In police stories which encompass private security stories, the villain tends to have no voice; the actions of the villain, on the other hand, are given a vast amount of voice. In court stories, the villain is often given a paraphrased sentence in which to represent themselves, most often as 'not-guilty' after a lengthy discussion of the crimes of which they are accused, and importantly, the evidence against them.

Discussing the criminal's lack of voice in news articles in the newspaper, the student reporters from *Grocott's Mail* who took part in the focus group discussed journalistic ethics and practice as a reason that the criminal voice is not included:

SR1: I think giving them a voice is very problematic because I think as a journalist – and that's why it is so interesting, objectivity – to give them a voice, you're immediately put into a position where you're taking their side, and publishing that would seem to push the reader in a certain way. Even if it's just journalistically ethical, this is his version make your own decision, because he's a criminal, giving him a voice at all, I dunno. It's just something about – it undermines ... I dunno. It undermines something.

SR2: It's like putting him on the same social standard as the other people in the article, as though he has as much right to tell his side of the story as the other people in the article, such as the victim, and the police. Whereas he's the perpetrator of the crime, he's the reason they're all suffering so much, he shouldn't even be given a voice.

Legal restrictions were also brought up as part of the reason that criminal voices are neglected:

SR3: The thing is technically, even in law, he is still given that voice. So you should technically – you should and it is hard because people will come to you and say no but he's messed with their rights, why should we give him the right to speak.

SR2: But also I think a lot of the time if someone's just been accused of a crime, what are they actually gonna say but I didn't do it. It can also just be a bit of a boring line of questioning.

SR3: Ja, waste of time. And also access to him, sometimes you can't just get access to him. Or her.

A further point which the narrative models of Propp and Todorov tend to neglect is that of space and place. For this I find it necessary to turn to the binary oppositions of Levi-Strauss as a closer estimation of the role that space plays in narrative. In crime news, space is either

urban and civilised, or rural and uncivilised. This binary opposition picks up on Levi-Strauss's idea of civilised and wild. This is made most clear when two full-length articles, both concerning citizens approaching the police, are juxtaposed. In the article headlined 'We destroyed that house' in the 26 April edition, a group of Hlalani residents reported themselves as having destroyed the house of a man in Hlalani who was arrested for murdering his girlfriend. The residents are described as having 'destroyed the shack with spades, pitchforks and pangas' – the tools of the rural peasant, the imagery of which conjures up the scenery of ignorant peasant folk vandalising someone's home for no good reason (because the man was then released for insufficient evidence). This further entrenches the idea that people from these areas are primitive and uncivilised because their only tools are farming implements. This article is discussed in more detail in relation to lexicon, where the primitiveness of the people is discussed in relation to the language used to describe them.

In comparison, on the 31 January an article headlined 'My card theft ordeal' details a case where a Rhodes University lecturer's credit card was stolen and used in stores in town. The lecturer approached the Grahamstown police station when she realised that her card had been stolen and the police refused to open a case stating that there was no proof that a crime had been committed.

In the first article the crimes are of a violent and uncivilised nature – murder and vandalism. The scene is that of the townships, illustrated by an image of an angry woman in the act of throwing a pitchfork at a tin shack on a mud street. Additionally, the reaction of the police is rather patronising towards the citizens who confess to the vandalism. They not only fail to charge them, but they lecture them on the law and legal procedure. By comparison, the crime that the second article deals with are property crimes of a different, moneyed, and middle-class nature. Where the first article deals with a shack, the second deals with a credit card. Furthermore, the setting is Grahamstown West, within an institution of higher learning and the reason that the police do not jump to action is very different: in the first, patronising sympathy for the simple-minded despite the confession to a crime; in the second, lack of evidence that a crime had been committed.

In the article 'Teen found dead', the place of the crime is clearly noted: "Ncame Street, Extension 8". However, in this article very little suggests that a crime has actually been committed, rather than a teenage boy was 'found dead' with 'stab wounds' (rather than 'was

murdered by stabbing'). The murder took place in Extension 8, but it is never described as a murder and the victim never described as murdered.

The gender of criminals is most usually male. However, there are notable exceptions where the gender of the criminal is female and the article is treated very differently by dint of the woman-villain being represented. For example, the News in Brief section in the 5 April edition carries only two articles, both concerning incidents on the road: 'Cradock Road death' and 'Drunk driving arrest'. The former article describes that an unidentified driver lost control of a vehicle, leading to an 'incident' in which one person died and four were injured. The latter article describes how a woman was taken into custody and charged for drunk driving after crashing a car into a wall. No one was injured in this incident, but the police describe her as 'very drunk'. The notable difference between these two articles which appear one above the other on the second page of the edition; is the way that the incidents are treated, and the way the drivers are identified. In the first article, the driver is not identified to the extent that it does not use any pronouns to refer to the driver; there is therefore no way of knowing just from the article whether the driver in the first article is male or female. Despite someone having died, and four people being injured in the first article, the police are not referred to, and the incident is treated very much as though it was accidental. The details of the incident, how the people were injured, are not specified: the reader has no way of knowing exactly what 'lost control of the vehicle' means; whether it refers to the car rolling over, crashing, or something else.

In contrast, the second article details the driver (a woman who is described by the police as very drunk) and the incident (the car crashed into a wall). Furthermore, despite the less serious consequences of the incident described in the second article, the police are involved from the opening line where she is described as having been arrested. In short, in the first story the reader has no idea why the driver lost control of the vehicle (was the driver drunk, was the vehicle over-loaded?) but the details of the causation of the incident in the second article are laid out very clearly: there was a crash because the driver was 'very drunk'.

These articles describe two very different attitudes towards the content. Whether the prejudice displayed in the second article is as a result of the article being about a woman, or a drunk driver, or a combination of both is difficult to determine, but there is obvious prejudice against the incident related in the second article having both to do with the driver and the incident itself.

In the 27 March edition, also in the News in Brief column, and compiled from information from the police by the same writer as in the previous example, runs an article headlined 'Multiple drunk driving arrests'. This article details two specific incidents out of eight drunk driving incidents. In neither of the two incidents that are described in detail are the genders of the drivers mentioned; however, both their ages (50 and 42 years old) were given. In both cases the details of the reason the police were called out is given: the first because the car was being driven recklessly, and the second because a pedestrian had been knocked over. In the first case the driver is described as being 'under the influence of alcohol', and in the second is described as having been arrested for drunk driving. Both of these descriptions of the drivers are significantly less emotive than the 'very drunk' description of the woman driver above and it is significant that none of their genders are specified as is the case above. This comparison of the treatment of the content of the article with reference to similar incidents reveals that woman drunk drivers are treated with greater prejudice than those who seem to be 'genderless'. As maleness is fairly often considered to be a normative state in patriarchal society, it is not such a large leap to assume that the latter incidents of drunk driving referred to in the 27 March edition involve men.

The student reporters were asked to reflect on this specific case and comment on why they thought this gender difference in treatment might be so. All three women agreed that it has to do with a certain kind of stereotype regarding women and their capabilities:

SR1: Journalistically it's very rare for a woman to murder someone or rape someone. I remember in Jo'burg, this is just an example, a white woman, I think it was two white women at one point, pretended they had a flat tire, got men to pull over for them and stole their wallets and made off in their car. I remember that was a while ago, and that was shock, horror, women are active agents in crime. And I think it's just a case of women do it so rarely because physically we're weaker, and perhaps we just don't have that tendency.

SR2: You almost kind of want to give them a high five don't you.

[Group laughs]

One of the students noted news values as a possible reason for overemphasising women's involvement in crime:

SR1: Ja. And it's about sensationalism and shock value. Because it's so infrequently reported that women are the perpetrators of crime, and historically it just doesn't happen, women don't murder and rape because physically I don't think we have that strength to overpower a man. Perhaps we don't have that tendency generally.

The students also engaged in a discussion about the nature of crime as understood by the public and the justice system, and some common stereotypes around women:

SR3: I think then you bring in the nature of the crime. Now a crime is also still applicable to abuse, maybe women, and I'm sure it happens, and again, I'm sure these are very much assumptions, but abuse does happen, neglect does happen, these are all crime and we sometimes don't see it like that. We view crime as stabbing, or people stealing or whatever, you don't think of even maybe the domestic sphere –

SR1: It's inside the home and I think a lot of crime happens, a lot of verbal abuse and stuff like that from wives to husbands, from wives to children.

SR3: And that it not a crime.

SR1: It's not considered a crime, no. But that in itself could even be worse than mugging someone, just because –

SR2: It's more damaging in the long run.

Naming, Reference and Predication

Crime news articles involve many characters all of whom have to be referenced in some way. A common way of referencing villains and victims, without breaking the law by revealing their names, is to state their ages. However, this device is most often used when the character is not a notable character and so can't be described as 'Rhodes lecturer' or 'notable community member'.

A student reporter who worked at *Grocott's Mail* reflected on this during the focus group interview:

SR2: It's also about news values a little bit because I feel like people from Grahamstown West are more likely to be famous in a local sense, either they own this or that, or they own that, or the person who runs this shop, or they've achieved this, they're a professor, they're a principal. They will have this kind of degree of social standing, and it seems like that gives their concerns more importance. It's also, and this is also very problematic, easier for student journalists because of language and because they are often a lot more educated than a source in the township may be, which makes them a better source to talk to. Get better quotes, give better information.

In these instances, the character's ages are given, and most usually reflect a kind of binary opposition between the aged and the young. Youth is usually represented as criminal, and age is usually represented as the victims of youth criminality.

However, there are other ways in which criminals and victims can be referred to in crime news articles. The article, 'Local link in laptop bust' from the second page on 15 June refers to the criminals as 'foreign nationals', and one of the victims as a 'prominent Grahamstown resident'. In this example, there is a clear creation of fragmentation through differentiation of the criminals by referring to them not only as 'robbers', but also as 'foreign'; and a clear unification created through a symbolisation of unity by referring to the victim as not only as a 'Grahamstown resident', but a 'prominent' one at that. The former refers to a similar notion expressed in several examples regarding 'the Grahamstown community', where the reader might be united around a common identity loosely associated with residence in Grahamstown; the latter refers to a particular kind of resident whom the newspaper considers to be 'prominent' enough to predicate that individual as such. This suggests that not only does the newspaper unabashedly choose who is considered important in the news, but it also alienates those residents for whom this particular individual is not 'prominent', namely, those who live in Grahamstown East.

In various kinds of crime articles, the Grahamstown community is called upon for various reasons. In the article 'Thieves steal classroom doors' the Grahamstown community is called upon to provide information about the thieves who stole from 'one of the oldest schools in Grahamstown'. The concept here and elsewhere of the Grahamstown community is a nebulous and indistinct group of people, and the function of the term in this instance and others seems to be to establish an 'in-group' and an 'out-group'. The Grahamstown community therefore is made up of those Grahamstown residents who would be willing to provide information about the crime to the school to help catch the criminals, who are in this instance, the out-group. This symbolisation of unity then functions to include those who are good, law-abiding citizens, and exclude those who commit crimes like stealing doors from a school. In this way the term serves to fragment, through the construction of a common enemy.

Space and place seem to be imminently important to *Grocott's Mail* largely because nearly every crime news article refers in some way to space and place including shorter News in Brief articles which are often no more than one or two sentences long. For instance, the article 'Local link in laptop bust' referred to above, prominently boasts in the headline that the article refers to an event connected with Grahamstown by using the word 'local', and delineated which part of Grahamstown the article refers to in the word 'laptop', and it's not that part of Grahamstown in which laptops are not common. In the News in Brief article

‘Sexual assault’ space is referred to twice: Zolani Location and Hlalani. The article is two sentences long and although the word ‘rape’ is used, it is used only in connection with the police investigation. The euphemism ‘sexual assault’ softens the article and the victim’s voice is passivised and even doubted, thus creating the overall impression that this is not only a natural event, but also an eternalised event by not questioning that this should occur in this place.

Space is important according to the student journalists who took part in the focus group discussion. In terms of writing and researching articles the students declared that their ‘safe place’ was their familiar space:

SR3: Ja, even just driving to Nduna library today I was like ‘wooo’ [suggests caution and anxiety]. Like, Nduna’s not far. So I feel safe, when I’m here. But that’s also like going out in Grahamstown. Going out last night – just walking around, you still don’t feel safe as a woman. But as a journalist I feel safer here. It’s a place I know.

SR1: But journalistically I know our safe space as journalists is this white middle-class area, that affluent area in huge inverted commas, where people speak the same language as you, the concerns are the same, you can sort of engage on the same playing field. You can understand when they get robbed because you yourself have a laptop, you have a TV, you have things to lose. When you go to the township, people are living in mud huts, they all sleep in one bed, there are five of them. So you can’t really connect with those concerns, but personally I feel incredibly comfortable in that space, going in to those homes and engaging and I’m not sure why. And I feel very safe in general just driving round parking my car, getting out, talking to people, I’m not sure why that is. I can understand your safe space and where you feel most comfortable and capable as a journalist to report, is in areas where you can engage on the same playing field, engage on the same level of understanding, and not have to branch out and challenge yourself. It’s a huge challenge going in there, into a context you don’t understand, into a financial context you don’t understand, and engage in a linguistic context you don’t understand, which is why those stories don’t come out as often as those property crime and all that other kind of stuff that is white middle class concerns.

The journalists were asked about specific journalistic practices and how they might be affected by the space and place of the news event:

SR1: I think it’s also about readership, it’s about them catering for a particular type of people, so they give more space, by default to people who come from the same readership area. I think that there are people that form part of your readership and if something happens to them you report on it, you would automatically give them more space because those are the people with money, the people that actually help you publish and people from the township don’t have money. They’re not there to buy the paper, they’re not there to reinvest. I think

it's about reinvesting, you give them more space, you're investing so they reinvest in you. Oh I was in the paper, so I'll buy the paper. [...]

SR2: It's also about news values a little bit because I feel like people from Grahamstown West are more likely to be famous in a local sense, either they own this or that, or they own that, or the person who runs this shop, or they've achieved this, they're a professor, they're a principal. They will have this kind of degree of social standing, and it seems like that gives their concerns more importance. It's also, and this is also very problematic, easier for student journalists because of language and because they are often a lot more educated than a source in the township may be, which makes them a better source to talk to. Get better quotes, give better information.

On the other hand, the student journalists had conflicting ideas about space in terms of the location of the *Grocott's Mail* newsroom. Initially they argued that black residents from the township were unlikely to visit *Grocott's* to tell the journalists about news that needed reporting on. However, when asked specifically about the physical space that *Grocott's* occupied, the student were very positive:

SR1: I think it's a huge plus that they are equidistant from the bell tower in High Street to Shoprite, the Shoprite complex, I think that is really good because you can get people coming from both sides. It's a very friendly presence I think where it is, it's not highbrow 'you can't come in', the door is always open, and they've often got people reading the newspapers on the couch.

SR2: That citizen journalism section there at the bottom –

SR3: People wander in --I'll never forget the guy who was so happy he got into vox pops and he was like, he even got his picture out and 'you must tell them you took such a great picture of me' and that sort of thing and people feel like they can walk in and sit on those couches and read that newspaper. And they've got all the other newspapers there and it's very nice, people are chatting, and everything, and it's very friendly.

SR2: It's that approachable, it's very accessible –

Modality

Modality (as above) refers to the speaker's own belief in the truth or probability of the statement that they have made (Richardson 2007: 59). Truth modality may be considered categorical, whereas hedging reduces the certainty of the statement. Categorical statements are more authoritative than those which are hedged. Categorical statements tend to be used more often in the news media, particularly in quotes by persons considered authoritative themselves (Richardson 2007: 60).

Crime news stories tend to exhibit a very categorical tone except for in some notable cases mostly involving women. Men are usually described in highly categorical tones as having

said or done something, where women are represented in less definitive ways as having allegedly said or done something. This is particularly notable in the case of court stories where women's testimony tends to be described, when not directly quoted, as 'alleged'.

In the article, 'Sexual assault', a News in Brief story which appeared on the second page of the 12 June edition, the word 'allegedly' is used to refer to the woman's testimony: "It is alleged that the victim was on her way to Hlalani when she was confronted by an unknown man who sexually assaulted and stabbed her on the lower body before fleeing". The use of allegedly here is odd in the sense that it relates directly to where the victim was walking, rather than that she was confronted and assaulted. This example also passivises the woman in the article in two ways: it does not directly express that this is her testimony, and it paraphrases her testimony thus removing her words from her. In this way, and by using 'allegedly' to cast doubt even on where she said she was walking, the reader is guided into doubting her testimony.

The student reporters who had worked at *Grocott's Mail* were asked about this case specifically and at first argued legal restrictions regarding the seriousness of rape allegations and the impending investigation and trial as reasons to use the word 'allegedly':

SR2: If it was her testimony and she said this person did it, why should that be alleged and the rest of it not, she could just as easily be lying either way. And also it's pretty much journalists covering their asses [laughs].

SR3: Ja, at the end of the day you have to protect yourself, if you want to stop this advocate or lawyer coming after you saying, 'no this is not right'.

SR2: If you weren't there and you don't have witnesses to back up that story, you can't say it's a fact because it's someone's claim. And when it's linked to a legal matter. It's not truth until it's been brought before the court.

Beyond this, the students argued that the term was likely added by the subeditors:

SR3: But like ja because if you didn't say that you're gonna have some finicky lawyer come after you and say this is wrong, this is libel, I'm going to charge you with saying one word, or the loss of one word –

SR2: Defamation. It's not even the journalists so much though, it's the subeditors. They love 'allegedly'.

Later, the students reflected that perhaps the personal feelings of the journalist responsible for the article were to blame for the gender difference in the way that the words were used:

SR1: But it's also, as a black man, he's [referring to the journalist who wrote the article] coming from a culture where women are seen as, not inferior, but I think in black culture especially when you get married and stuff, the Makoti, whoever you've married, she has to cook all the food, she has to serve everybody, the men get served first, whatever. And there is a culture of women as, not as being inferior –

SR3: Need to be protected, maybe –

SR1: Ja, and also less capable, I think. So maybe it's a case of alleged, because she could not know what's going on, maybe she got it wrong. Whereas the man knew, he was certain. But I don't know, that's also a huge assumption on my part. Because I work with [the journalist] and he's a very good journalist. Very thorough.

The students then also reflected on the ways in which women are perceived and linked the use of 'allegedly' to a social sexism:

SR1: But I'm thinking maybe, you know this whole women and hysteria, perhaps it's because women are seen to be more emotional. So perhaps that emotional component, that 'oh my gosh' and the dramatics and women are seen to be a lot more vocal and hysterical in huge inverted commas, it's a huge generalisation, but perhaps the 'alleged' could come in because she was so flustered and so freaked out by it and so overcome by fear and whatever, that whole stereotypical, women are much more emotionally hysterical, perhaps she didn't know what was going on, perhaps she –

SR3: Added it to her story by saying she walked from here to here, and it might not be true because she's female [sarcastic tone].

The discussion around this case ended when one of the students put forward that the discrepancy may have been produced by the source, the police spokesperson, rather than the journalist:

SR2: Also, News in Brief does come directly from the police department, so that may have been from an email from Mali Govender it may have been transcribed off a – you know what I mean? So it may be –

Q: It might not have been the journalist at all?

SR2: Ja, but even so the subeditors should standardise that kind of thing. But it may also be because of the nature of the crime because a rape is obviously a hell of a lot more serious than a mugging.

Lexicon

An association is made with many of the crime stories that crime is at the same time primitive and uncivilised, as well as mysterious and very threatening. Especially when crime affects children, or institutions which are perceived to be intimately attached to the Grahamstown community, the criminal villains tend to be portrayed as particularly primitive and

uncivilised. In the article that appeared on the second page of the 18 May edition, headlined ‘Thieves steal classroom doors’, the article calls on several techniques of unification, such as ‘one of the oldest schools in Grahamstown’, and ‘the Grahamstown community’ to create a strong feeling of ‘us’ (the Grahamstown community) against ‘them’ (the criminals who stole the classroom doors). The ridiculousness of stealing the classroom doors is emphasised by quotes which describe that the school previously had their fence stolen and their bathrooms vandalised. All of this suggests both cruelty and ridiculousness, affecting children negatively for a very mediocre gain, thus raising the ire of the community which is called upon to help.

Barbarism is also suggested in the lexicon of the headline ‘New street burglary loot’, which appeared on the second page of the 2 May edition. The News in Brief article is one sentence which describes how three men were arrested for possession of suspected stolen property. The word ‘loot’ used in the headline however, suggests a very particular kind of villain, in this case the dangerous, pillaging and ruthless kind of villain associated with pirates both of historical and narrative fiction. This single word sets up the thieves to appear much as the pirates of these genres, but connecting them with a real crime and so they appear dangerous and savage. The loot referred to is not mentioned in detail and so the reader is left to imagine what great bounty these pirates might have gained from their burglary in New Street.

This kind of discourse around crime and the criminal other being dangerous and savage was apparent in part of what one of the student reporters discussed in the focus group, concerning the ways in which the police frame crime:

SR1: It’s a good question, you see I can’t speak from experience this year working at *Grocott’s*, but last year when I was talking about street kids and the kind of threat that they pose to pedestrians and stuff sometimes they have weapons, pull out knives and stuff like that. And when I spoke to Mali about it she was very in line with a common understanding that they do, they are a menace and they need to be taken away, she sort of talked a lot about, ‘oh we throw them in jail, we can’t keep them because they’re minors so we have to let them go, but we have to do it’, and about street clean ups during fest and stuff like that. So ideologically she’s living this, and she has to be exposed to it, has to deal with it and has to deal with the potential of theft and stuff from them, she’s sort of like one of us and finds them irritating and wants to get them off the streets and stuff like that. So in terms of that interaction with her she was very in line with what I thought about it as well, that they do pose a threat. In terms of her powers, she’s also talking about cleaning up the streets like that’s an actual possibility, there’s an illegal element to that but she says, ‘we have to do it, we can’t keep them but we do it anyway just to get the message out there’. That’s

operating from a position of power. They're very marginalised in society like you were talking about. And she's very open about it like there's nothing wrong with throwing kids in jail for a night and then letting them go. Which I found quite interesting.

Yet another example of this kind of social framing in which the perpetrators of crimes are represented as primitive and uncivilised has to do with the police's reaction. In the article headlined 'We destroyed that house' which appeared on the second page of the 26 April 2012 edition, a group of Hlalani residents reported themselves as having destroyed the house of a man in Hlalani who was arrested for murdering his girlfriend. He was subsequently released due to insufficient evidence against him. The article explains that the residents' anger resulted from this being not the first but the second occasion in which the family had suffered a traumatic murder, but that the first murderer is currently serving time in prison. However, the main focus of the story is the police's reaction to the residents who confessed to destroying the shack: the Lieutenant Colonel is described as having addressed them, describing police process and urging them not to 'take the law into their own hands'. The ward 7 councillor is further quoted as describing the residents as 'lacking information', and as not understanding the rule of law. These ideas, that the residents had to be educated on the rule of law and told that vigilante justice is bad, does not square with the idea that the residents themselves came to the police to confess the crime. They clearly had some knowledge of the rule of law as they were admitting to the crime they committed, arguably not something they would do if they didn't know any better. The police are described therefore as treating the residents like primitive humans who don't understand the process of police work, essentially giving them a slap on the wrist and sending them off. Their ignorance is highlighted and portrayed in the article as the main focus of the narrative in which multiple murders and the failure of the police to capture a murderer feature. Arguably then, the lesser crime of vandalism is foregrounded to favour the portrayal of the people from Hlalani as primitive, even uncivilised.

The residents are described as having 'destroyed the shack with spades, pitchforks and pangas' –further entrenching the idea that people from these areas are primitive and uncivilised because their only tools are farming implements.

This article is a follow-up on the article from the front page of the 17 April edition. The page is dedicated entirely to a large image of a shack surrounded by several people, and in the

foreground, a figure is preparing to launch a pitchfork at the shack. The headline in large dramatically 'white on black' font reads 'Death enrages mob'. This strong, emotional imagery goes a long way to presenting the Hlalani residents as uncivilised peasant-folk. First considering the headline: the word 'death' here makes 'enrages mob' seem an overreaction – much like the 'mob' was whipped into a frenzy because someone died of old age. Second, the verb 'enrages' also suggests an irrational and inappropriate response, the image of a bull being enraged by a red waving flag is conjured. Further, despite there being a total of eight people in the photograph, the group is described as a 'mob', as though these eight people rampaged through the location causing massive amounts of destruction. The image itself is powerful only in that one of the eight figures depicted is seen to be causing any damage to the shack in question; the others appear only to be watching and the faces and expressions of the people are mostly not visible. It is therefore largely the dramatically presented and dramatically worded headline which turns the photograph into a picture of vengeful, ignorant and uncivilised violence.

In this instance, the police are framed as the caring community members who attempt to educate and inform the ignorant peasants, and, shrugging their shoulders, give them a slap on the wrist and letting them go because they didn't know any better, but we can feel better about it because now they know that it's the police's job to find and arrest the criminals.

During a discussion about the restrictions on journalists reporting crime, this case was passively evoked by one of the student journalists during the focus group discussion.

SR2: Do you remember that incident that happened while we were working at *Grocott's*: a woman was visiting her boyfriend, and while in his home, someone came in and raped her. And she moved away or she was at the police station, or something else and a mob came and torched this guy's home and chased him out. And I'm pretty sure they tried to kill him. And it was trial by public justice. And as it turned out, he had not raped her, he had not done anything wrong but the surrounding community decided that he had and –

SR3: – took it into their own hands.

SR2: Ja, and then one of the reporters, was it Thembeni, found this guy, and got an interview with him, and gave him his voice in the story, in the newspaper. And he told his story about how he's now been chased out of his home and he has to live with this family and this tiny little whatever and he hasn't done anything wrong, and he's absolutely traumatised because he loves his girlfriend and this awful thing's happened to her and he's been blamed. I thought that was really, really great of them to give his voice. Absolutely fantastic.

In this instance, the student agrees with the approach of the newspaper, and condemns the ‘mob’ by referring to them in much the same terms as the newspaper itself had done.

Lexicon also helps to establish the binary between hero and villain in crime news articles and in some notable examples, does so using emotional, evocative and rousing language which also functions to unify through symbolisation of unity. In the article ‘Cops go the extra mile’ on page two of the 1 June edition, the police officers who were involved in arresting a rapist are described as diligent and having done extraordinary work. The article unashamedly showers the two police officers with praise for doing their jobs and even lauds them for ‘abandoning their Sunday plans’ when their superior officer called them in to duty. The tone and word choice in the article suggests not only that catching rapists is an extraordinary event which is worthy of a longer length article (not a News in Brief), but that police officers reporting for duty is an extraordinary event.

The article is packed with emotionally-charged language, both in describing the conduct of the police officers and in describing the crimes of the criminals. The crimes are described as ‘horrific’ in the first line of the article, unusual in the sense that the newspaper rarely even acknowledges rape as a crime (choosing rather to classify it as an ‘alleged’ crime). Further details of the crime are given as that the men ransacked the woman’s house after breaking in, and then proceeded to pepper-spray and gang-rape the victim. At no point is the modifier ‘alleged’ used to describe the actions of the men in question, and the event is taken therefore as unadulterated fact. This stark contrast created by the horrific actions of the criminals and the diligent good work of the police officers who arrested them places each of them very clearly, neatly and unproblematically into their separate boxes of good and evil, light and dark, right and wrong. This classification or categorisation of the good and the bad is extended in the predication of the characters: the numbers of each (four bad men and two police officers) further extends the heroic deeds of the police officers essentially in battling twice their number and defeating them. On the other hand, the evil of the criminals is extended even further by comparing the four bad men to the one woman who was their victim; in essence then also extending the good powers of the police officers because the men are even more evil than if their victim had been two women, or a man. In this instance, the woman could be considered to function as the princess. She is rescued, although in an indirect manner, from the four evil villains by the two good police heroes.

Lexicon is strongly linked with modality in the sense that word choice indicated the writer's impressions of the event being described, or 'modality' as referred to above.

Syntax and Transitivity

The following two tools of linguistic analysis, syntax and transitivity, are functions of sentence construction and both speak to the relationships between ideas and concepts in the sentence which reflect social constructions of those ideas. Syntax loosely refers to the choice of words in a sentence and in this case relates to transitivity in the sense that it can refer to what words are left out if a sentence is written in passive voice.

Transitivity refers to verbal processes within sentences. As previously noted, passivisation of the material process is a common occurrence in newspaper parlance and this idea is supported by this research. Most often it is the processes involved with police and courts which are deleted and serve to naturalise (or reify) the justice system. For instance, in the article 'Food and phone' which appeared in the 10 January edition, three men were arrested, and are due to appear in court. In this way, the police force and the officer who arrested the men are deleted from the actions of the material process of 'arresting'. This naturalises the police force and the ideas around justice and serves to create the idea that these processes are natural and ahistorical.

This process frequently happens in relation to the courts as well. For instance, in the article 'High Court to sentence serial rapist today', which appeared in the 24 January edition, the first sentences reads: "A young man found guilty of raping a number of girls and young women at knife-point will be sentenced in the high court in Grahamstown today." The first clause of this sentence passivises the court's role in trying criminals by deleting the court and the judge from the material process of finding the man guilty. The second clause alters the meaning of the sentence to naturalise it by referring to the high court as the place of sentencing rather than the body which provides the infrastructure to carry out the sentencing.

The other material process which is often passivised is that of the criminal action that takes place. For instance, in the article 'Food and phone' cited above, a man was robbed of his cellphone and chicken-pieces. Although the criminals in this case were later described as having been arrested, in this instance, the passivisation of the 'robbing' material process naturalises the crime and even transfers the responsibility for the robbing on to the noun remaining: that of the victim of the crime. This is further enhanced by the syntactic choice to include the location of the crime (Valley Road, Grahamstown East) and the time (10.15,

Saturday night), establishing that the man who was robbed was walking (presumably) alone in a ‘dangerous’ area late at night. The passivisation of the material processes then largely achieves a kind of blame-the-victim naturalisation in this instance as it deletes the criminals from the action.

In the article headlined ‘Shop owners stabbed, robbed’, which appeared in the 17 February edition, the robbery is described thus: “Both victims were stabbed before paraffin was poured over their wounds”. Previous to this the article explains how the shop owners were awakened by people shouting to be let in and the shop owners opened the door. In this example again, the verb processes of stabbing and pouring are without a subject, leaving the object of the sentence, ‘both victims’ solely responsible for the verb processes. When this point was discussed with the student reporters during the focus group, they argued journalistic practice for the reasons that the action of the criminal is often passivised:

SR1: I honestly think it’s journalistic practice. I don’t think that anyone is consciously passivising in terms of seriousness as well, what this person’s doing. It might just be – I’m not sure what the style is for hard news I thought it was present tense to be honest with you, so to say poured, stabbed –

SR2: Well I mean you’re talking about the actual act of –

SR1: It might just be present tense. I as a journalist I never diminished what this person’s done, by writing what had happened.

SR2: But you also don’t want to write it like the script of a horror movie, because it is a little –

SR1: He stabbed him, he –

SR2: Ja, so it is a little bit of a problem because you want to sound disinterested, under the guise of objectivity.

SR1: And it’s also that you don’t want too much quotes, like a dialogue, you don’t want a sort of back and forth like a script or something like that, like a ping ponging between a he-said she-said, so the style is just to have in a bit more detached way.

Presupposition

The article headlined ‘Motorbike theft’, mentioned above is also a good example of writing which presupposes a kind of social knowledge on the part of the audience. The article consists of only one sentence: “A 34-year-old man was arrested on Sunday after a motorbike was removed from where it was parked in Park Road”. However, the wording of the sentence does little to connect these three ideas: the theft of the motorbike in the headline, the man who was arrested in the first phrase of the sentence, and the motorbike which was removed in the second phrase of the sentence. The audience must themselves connect these three ideas: that the motorbike that was taken is the same motorbike as that which is described as having

been stolen in the headline, and more tenuously, that the man who is described as having been arrested, is the man who is suspected of stealing that motorbike. This is an example of presupposition in several ways: it assumes that the audience can link these three ideas which seem fairly separate on the surface, but it also passivises the role of the police in arresting the man who we assume stole the motorbike thereby forcing the audience to assume that it was indeed the police who arrested him. The disconnection comes from the use of the word ‘after’ rather than the usual phrase ‘in connection with’, the former substantially disconnecting the man who was arrested from the stolen motorbike.

Textual and linguistic analysis can only go so far in analysing the discourses which are present in the production of journalistic texts. As Richardson argues, it is important also to consider not only the textual and linguistic aspects of journalism, such as I have done above, but also to consider the discursive practices around the production of journalism – such as journalistic ideology – as well as social practices – such as those ideas and ideologies which permeate the society in which the journalism operates and which therefore influences and is influenced by the journalism produced.

Discursive Practices

The discourses around journalism and journalistic practice are many, varied and as changeable between institutions as are the ways in which the news can be presented. However, in South Africa there are aspects of journalistic professionalism and journalistic practice which can be relied upon to give some insight into the ways in which journalistic and media institutions operate. In this way, news media in particular can arguably and to different degrees be said to subscribe to certain journalistic standards through which their work can be judged. In this particular instance, the research deals with a community newspaper whose editor and consequently, journalists, perceive the newspaper to function as monitorial media.

Function of Newspaper

The editor describes the function of the newspaper as providing news and information about Makana municipality:

I consider that a core function of the newspaper is to keep track of what’s going on at the municipality.

Q: So it’s about civic engagement?

E: Ja. For example, if we hadn’t told the readers that council had allocated R800 000 for a car for the mayor, they wouldn’t know about it.

E: There can be stories, there's murder stories, there's rape stories, there's crashes, every now-so-often there's a crash, there are failings within the municipality that provide us with a lot of front pages, maladministration, incompetence sometimes verging on corruption, we get a lot of protest stories that come marching down the road with a whole lot of protesters carrying their banners and things like that, these are all dramatic stories that get people's attention.

However, as with many monitorial media, *Grocott's* does occasionally consider its role within the community as going beyond simply providing information. For instance, the newspaper prints an educational supplement every Tuesday, with the view that parents can work through the material with their children.

E: So it does have value beyond news and information. But at the same time, why do we put that education stuff there? Well because we've identified the fact that a lot of people in the Makana area don't have educational material. So, there's a purpose there, it's for a definite purpose so that it can help people educate their kids. Even if it's just a tiny little bit at least it's something positive.

However, this supplement is only one example of the newspaper's particular view of its monitorial role, and the above sentiments expressed by the editor are echoed by the permanent staff at the newspaper as well, though with slightly different emphasis, placed more on entertainment value than on purely informational or civic engagement lines.

Reporter 2: There's one I did about an eviction, I think that's the only story so far, this one here [shows the interviewer the edition front page]. This woman [indicates picture] was evicted from her house. It was quite a dramatic story, community members all coming out in her defence and stuff so, that was a nice story. But not so nice for that woman.

R2: Like this story for instance [indicates his front page story again], some people are still talking about it and they wanna know what's happening about it, 'has this lady lost the house'. So I'm working on another follow-up to this story. In court, it's easier, you just find out who the person is and you go back to court every time the case is postponed you go back to court, you know that's a follow-up. Court is just a nice follow-up.

The ideas which the editors and journalists have regarding the function of the newspaper within the community are closely related to their perceptions of the audience.

Perception of Audience

This is Richardson's first major category within discursive practices, and the first aspect to be considered is the way in which the audience is treated by the journalist. Arguably, the audience can be considered both consumer and commodity (2007: 77-8) but in the particular case of *Grocott's Mail* there is an additional tension between these two conceptions of the audience: *Grocott's Mail* is not only producing news to draw audiences, which can then be sold to advertisers, the newspaper additionally works as a teaching environment for student journalists. The newspaper's unique position as simultaneously independent from and reliant on Rhodes University both for student reporters and funding means that the ultimate news product can also be considered the output from teaching practices.

Grocott's Mail is as independent from the newspaper's funders as can reasonably be argued given the particular stresses and strains that an economic ownership of an independent newspaper is under. The audience is certainly treated largely as consumer, as the newspaper is sold and subscriptions are available to the audience. The audience can be defined as consumer also because the newspaper is produced according to the demands of the audience. The most obvious example of this being that there is very little if any news in any given edition which goes beyond the Grahamstown city limits. There is some news which reaches into the Eastern Cape, even less which can be considered national news, but the newspaper is comparatively devoid of international news. This is largely due to the audience of *Grocott's Mail* being fairly regionally stable: they live and work within Grahamstown and their area of influence, and the issues which influence them can largely be said to have a limit at the edge of town. Therefore the news which is produced by *Grocott's* for their Grahamstown audience is local: local crime, local weather, local sport, local politics and local government.

The emphasis on local news and other local content is described by the editor as a function of the newspaper in providing the 'Grahamstown community' with news and information about Makana municipality. He also described the ways in which news and information is selected for the newspaper as simply being information that is relevant to this community. He described the readership of the newspaper thus:

Look out the window and see who's there. People that walk around the streets, I want them to buy the newspaper. If you walk around, go to Pick n pay, go to Shoprite Checkers, you see lots of different people, and those are the audience.

Although the student reporters who took part in the focus group discussion did not entirely agree that the newspaper meets its goal of meeting the needs of the entire town as an audience, they agreed that the editor himself does try to accommodate everyone:

SR2: Ja, [the editor] makes a huge effort to be representative of the town.

SR3: [quoting the editor] 'Please partner up with [a reporter] and he'll take you to this part of town, or please go with [another reporter] or [other reporter] they'll take you there. And there's even [another reporter], in the municipality, and she knows her way around there'. It's so sad that she left half way through our time there. But there are people and there are journalists who actually make the effort to understand that part of town, or that system or, but there should be more.

SR2: Definitely, [the editor]'s very wary of being too campus-centric but it's skewed also because for most of the year the vast majority of his manpower, his journalists, are students. And it's not just that we cater to middle class values, I don't really, I mean I think that they make a very admirable effort to balance the news from throughout the town, but the thing is, it seems to be that if a house is robbed in the township, they don't come down to *Grocott's* and report it, whereas if a dig is robbed or a home is robbed, and you're in the more affluent areas of town, people will come in in a rage, or they'll text in and say 'this is ridiculous, what is, the police are failing', they'll kick up a fuss about it so we'll hear about it much more often. And the people are accessible to speak to, they're outraged, whereas the crime news that reaches us from the township is only of huge things like fires, murders and rapes.

On the other hand, the newspaper does subscribe to the idea that the audience can be sold to advertisers in order to increase revenue streams. The editor describes this tension between producing 'quality' journalism and selling papers:

E: We deal with realistic stories that happen on a daily basis, so a good news story is one that will sell the newspapers. People often obliquely criticise this point of view, they say 'you're commercialising it and political economy and selling out', well the fact of the matter is in order for the newspaper to keep existing we need to sell newspapers. So it's very important for me to look at what kind of story is going to sell, but it's not exclusively based on that. So for example if I looked at it purely from the commercial point of view, I could go the route of one of the tabloid newspapers and look for sex and scandal and 'snot en tranen', and everything else and that always sells more. But I try not to be too sensationalistic or getting sensation for the point of sensation. I have always at the back of my mind the criteria that this is a community newspaper and what we do has to be in the interest of the community. So I report from that perspective, that 'is this relevant to the rest of the community, is it interesting to the rest of the community?'

The tension that is expressed by the editor here, between producing informational content which is important for the audience to know, and selling newspapers is expressed by a

reporter in a different way. She describes what she thinks the editors are looking for in a news story:

R1: I think what they look for is what would be in the interests of the people of Makana as a whole. What makes them happy, what makes them angry, and it's always the issues of service delivery. If the water pipe burst there then it's going to be something that interests them, in my beat that's what they want, they want everything that's got to do with service delivery. Are the services being delivered to Makana as they should be according to the regulations, is the council delivering those services with all the resources that they have.

However, Grahamstown is a highly unequal society and appealing to an audience which is highly diverse seems to be a sticking point. The editor describes the audience that he is trying to reach as 'the Grahamstown community', and 'the people of Makana municipality' and the range of audience members:

E: You have farmers, you have businessmen [sic], you have unemployed people that search for garbage, you have private school people, you have people that send their kids to a school that doesn't even have a tap. So it's a very diverse group but the one thing that that grouping has in common is that it's geographically located within this area.

This idea is expressed by a reporter when she is trying to explain who she writes for:

R1: For me, because what I've noticed here, there's such a social imbalance in Grahamstown, there's poor, poor, poor people and there's the elite, and when you write a story you think 'ok, I want that person in that elite group to think that 'although I know this position, socially, there's this other person who cannot even imagine being here''. I always think like that. But my first encounter was that 'ok, here there's lots and lots of people who are very, very poor' and there's a particular group, some of them have businesses, some of them work in government, and there are those that are fortunate, so I always have those two different people in my mind every time when I write a story.

Q: So you write for both groups?

R1: Yes, because the community is theirs and whatever happens in Makana concerns them, even though most of the time it concerns those ones in the lower, the poor people, but even if it doesn't affect those ones in the elite group, that it makes them think. That's always what I think. Even if it doesn't affect them but they'll think about it.

Ideas around community and the regional area of the newspaper audience seem to be the most common ideas which influence the editors' and the reporters' perceptions of the audience. It is because of this preoccupation with community and region that the audience

becomes an imaginary reading public consisting of a diverse and segregated public in reality, but which becomes a solid mass and entity which is tangibly recognisable for the journalists and producers of the newspaper. Importantly, their vision of their reading audience is necessarily a great deal more homogenous than the target audience is – resulting in a fairly homogenous production of articles which are argued to appeal to a massive audience. In particular, the perception of the audience at the newspaper at large influences both which stories are selected for inclusion in the newspaper, and how they are handled:

R2: Follow-ups are also important because people wanna know what happened, where is the guy now. So it's not always easy to get the follow-up but if you try hard enough you gonna know what's happening and you wanna keep up with what you started. Like this story for instance [indicates his front page story again], some people are still talking about it and they wanna know what's happening about it, has this lady lost the house. So I'm working on another follow-up to this story. In court, it's easier, you just find out who the person is and you go back to court every time the case is postponed you go back to court, you know that's a follow-up. Court is just a nice follow-up.

The regional area of crime also seems to have an impact on the way in which crime is reported in the newspaper, according to the student reporters who took part in the focus group. The geography of the crime affects the both the length of the article (full length or News in Brief), as discussed earlier, and probability of the crime being reported on at all:

SR3: It's a part of their [referring to residents of Grahamstown East] lives. And it has to happen I think for it to actually have an impact in your mind so if there were a lot of attacks and rapes happening, because I'm sure that there are so many more rapes happening that we don't know about. Also what people report on, if one rape happened here, in Grahamstown West, it would be [gasps]. I honestly think you need a multiple number of rapes for someone to sit up and listen which is actually, ja, but it's just so embedded in our psyche sometimes.

SR1: Sometimes they don't report it because they do have mob justice, not to the extent that it is in Diepsloot in Jo'burg or anything like that, but sometimes property theft they deal with it in their own community. If they found out who did it they deal with it in that clump of people as opposed to coming to *Grocott's* like 'I'm outraged'. Also there's poor black people like in inverted commas you would almost group those stories in small, News in Briefs almost –

SR3: Like they're not important –

SR1: 'Ag, why are we surprised that this happened in the township, it is black people', and it stems from there's such a racism still and I don't think it's as explicit in *Grocott's Mail* but I think it does come from that, you know 'what did we expect but rape and murder in the township, well it's the township' and I think it's such a negative frame of reference to be working in and it's such a negative standpoint to have, especially when as reporters you're ill equipped to handle what's going on there. So to be like, same old same old, is also very unfair.

There are comparatively significant portions of the newspaper which are dedicated primarily to adspace. The local audience which is drawn by the unique local content of the newspaper is thusly sold on to (mostly local) advertisers. These two ideas are hardly separable from one another in the sense that the newspaper must appeal to large audiences in order for advertisers to be interested in the audience the newspaper has appealed to and of which the advertisers can take advantage. However the ownership structure of *Grocott's*, namely that it is owned by the local university, means that the newspaper can be argued to have a function that can be described as beyond the product that is produced: teaching journalists. While it remains true that the newspaper must still make money through not only sales of individual copies of the newspaper, as well as subscriptions and adspace, it is equally true that the newspaper is responsible for guiding young student journalists through the process of producing news. This adds additional tensions to the production of news in the newsroom.

Selection

The selection process through which a journalist goes is the first step of the story construction process. Selection specifically refers to the stories which the journalist or editor chooses to tell, and this is largely dependent on new values, perception of audience, and newspaper agenda, all of which interact and interlink to make the selection process a difficult and complicated thing for the journalist. For instance, the reporter responsible for the crime and courts beat at *Grocott's Mail* described his selection criteria as choosing the 'interesting crimes':

Q: What are the interesting crimes?

R3: I'd say stuff like murder, because if a person dies I feel it's something people will always speculate and say 'this and that happened', you hear a lot of these things but you need to get the official comment from the police and give that to the people so they at least understand what's going on from an official point of view. So I follow a lot of murder cases but I go to court as well.

Q: So you don't focus on robbery and house breaking because they happen a lot?

R3: Ja, they happen a lot. So unless somebody's seriously hurt and there's a shootout, and we get pictures, some of the things we need pictures to go with. Whereas a murder you can just take a picture of somebody, a family member, maybe an emotional family member or somebody. Robberies and other stuff you just need pictures to go with, I think. So without pictures the story [is not so interesting], ja, it's not so interesting.

Q: A story with pictures is better then?

R2: Ja, [pictures make it], ja. That's what you go for. You'll see a lot of my stories have not appeared on the front page because a lot of the time they don't come with pictures. And pictures make stories stronger. You can see, we're not just talking about an eviction, you can see the person there sitting with her stuff outside [referring to his front page article again]. That makes the story stronger and it will go on the front page because you have a good picture.

He describes his selection criteria as purely journalistic:

R2: If there are pictures, if maybe somebody took pictures or I took pictures myself, of the robbery and there's a murder that happened I'd do both. I go with anything that's news. It doesn't matter where it happens, if a murder happens we report and stuff like that.

Another reporter described her process as more instinctive:

R1: As a journalist, you have that instinct, you that, 'ok, this is not going to be a story'. You know when you get a subject that this is not going to be a story for me but anyway you go and make sure, you can't rely on your instinct, you can't wholly rely on it, you need to make sure if you're right, if your instincts are right. At the same time you get a, for instance, your editor tells you that he'd like you to do something like this, and then you do it because you report to the editor.

Construction

The construction of the news article is a more difficult concept to pin down. Construction refers to the ways in which facts, ideas, ideologies and discourses are combined and written into a text to create a narrative. In short, whilst selection refers to the narrative content, construction refers to the narrative form. This includes the ways in which the information is combined, in what order, what is left out or included, whose voices are left out or included, and even where the article will be positioned in the newspaper. However, both reporters and the editor described the main consideration of the construction of news stories to be the verifiability of the facts of the story, usually couched in terms of responsibility to the reader:

E: You might have noticed that there was – although we mentioned the fact that there was conspiracy theories and things like that, we didn't make a big deal out of it. We didn't play that out, for the very simple reason we couldn't substantiate it. But what we could substantiate was that there are such rumours, we didn't say that there's a possibility that there's an arsonist, we said that people are saying that there's an arsonist [referring to the article headlined: "Arson: Third fire this year."]

Q: And there have been fires.

E: Yes, and there have been fires. Fires, very straight forward. So I try very hard to be responsible and not fan unsubstantiated conspiracy theory type of things. You know we've got a responsibility here, and we take it very seriously.

In a separate interview, a reporter discusses a similar incident:

R2: There was an incident where a 75-year-old person in town last week just fell on the ground and died. We didn't do a big story on that because we just wrote a brief just to say what happened, what we got from the police, just confirmation. It was a heart attack I think. But I don't think that was in the story because you can't unless you've got proof that it was a heart attack you can't just say that it was a heart attack.

Crime stories in particular are often constructed from a human interest perspective:

R2: But basically what I usually do is, there's been a lot of murders in this area in the past month or so and sometimes when I can I go to the families of the people who for instance, a person who was murdered. I go to the family to find out how they feel about the whole thing and what had happened. And just speak to them, that's if I can or if they want to talk. I don't follow rape cases because a lot of the time you can't use a lot of the information that we have on rape stories, a lot of things need to be confidential, so, I choose not to unless it's something really that's out of the ordinary. There are a lot of rape cases that you find in the crime briefs as well, it happens a lot so I can't always, unless it's a child. If it's a child it's different, it doesn't happen a lot so I would follow that up and see and go to court obviously to keep track of the cases. That's how I usually do it. And the rape cases take a long time in court.

However, there is some disagreement with this perspective amongst the student reporters who took part in the focus group discussion. When specifically asked about the case above, the article that was headlined 'Arson: Third fire this year', the students had very conflicting ideas about the editorial process and the resulting sensationalism:

SR1: It's journalistically irresponsible too because *GM* knew the third fire was not arson. Ja it's fine it was a fire but to lump it under the category under arson I think is journalistically irresponsible because people then think –

SR3: There's an arsonist running around going and lighting fires –

SR2: Taking two separate facts and lumping them together in a completely –

SR3: And you panic –

SR1: Talk about Kariaga horns which is so on the same topic.

SR2: [Laughs]. Ja that's the major crime story I did this year, the rhino poaching and I spent most of the day out at Kariaga and witnessed them tranquilising the rhinos and performing these horn removals which is the tactic that Kariaga had chosen in order to discourage further poaching. And they were all devastated

about it because obviously they don't want to chop the horns off their rhino, and it's an absolute travesty, but they figured rather have a hornless rhino than a dead one. And I reported on that and filed the story and – well first I emailed it to [the editor] and he said, 'this is great story, well done'. Then later that day I got an email from [the production manager] saying, 'Oh we've changed your story a little bit, hope it's ok'. And I just saw that and I knew it had happened to a couple of other people and I was just like, 'oh my god, I know what has happened here, and it's going to be horrific'. That was at four in the afternoon on a production day so time is tight - there's not much time to do anything about it and I said - there wasn't time for me to go down there and read over it, I was busy sub editing on *SciCue* and I said to her, 'listen, I haven't seen these changes you've made actually please just take my byline off the story and she didn't'. And it came out in the newspaper with the headline, 'Secrecy over Kariega horns'. And the article was reordered to suggest what was happening with the hugely valuable horns had just been sawn off the rhino. It turned Kariega – it turned the suspicion and the accusation on the Kariega game rangers –

SR3: Who are trying to protect Rhinos –

SR1: Like they were going to sell, like there was this huge storeroom of valuable horns and now what was going to happen to them –

SR2: Yeah, they suggested that they were making huge piles of money off - [unclear] and turned them into suspected poachers themselves.

SR1: Like they were going to sell the horns on the black market or something –

SR2: Ja exactly –

SR1: And that's the thing with headlines. Saying 'Secrecy over Kariega horns', it immediately implies that someone's not saying something and that something's underfoot. And saying 'Arson, three fires this year', immediately you think, well shit, there's an arsonist now. And I think that's very irresponsible journalism and [SR2]'s thing was so horrifically done, she was so upset by it and it was reordered and changed for shock value. It's about readership, it's about getting the numbers.

SR2: And there is secrecy involved but that's because they don't want to tell everyone where they're keeping the horns because they're going to get robbed blind by poachers with guns. I mean, obviously. Oh my god it made me so angry.

SR1: And I think this was one of *Grocott's* huge failings, I really, really believe that. And it's a big problem in the subediting process where things were written by us and when they were printed it wasn't even how our voices were –

SR3: Ja, our voice was gone.

Later, the students discussed the subediting process:

SR3: And it's so difficult as well because a subeditor doesn't get – their name doesn't get put in that article, and you at the end of the day are responsible for all those words that are printed. Not the editors, not the subeditors – well, the editors to some extent. But the subeditor is often the one with the red pen.

Q: So they remain blameless.

Crime articles usually involve legal concerns around privacy and court appearances. As such, the crime and courts reporter describes how he rarely reports in depth on rape cases and

usually stays away from reporting the perpetrator's name completely in court cases until they've pleaded:

R2: Usually with crime briefs you get the statement from the police, the person hasn't appeared in court, so you can't use their names. So you have to just use their ages until you go to court and report on what you heard in court then you can start using the person's name but when you just get those press releases you can't use their names because they haven't appeared in court and maybe they haven't even been charged for that murder.

Q: So ages are used just to differentiate?

R2: Exactly. Because you can't always say 'a man', 'a man', 'a man'. You just have to give people an idea of what the situation is, how old the man is usually works well.

The same reporter described how his selection criteria for crimes news articles is based on how interesting the story is, and therefore reports on more murders when they occur than rapes and housebreaking which happen frequently. He also notes how these crimes tend to occur more frequently in Grahamstown East:

R2: I'm from here, so I know a lot of people, and it happens in the township a lot, we get a lot of murders happening in the township and the informal settlements, the newer settlements also. I can't explain why but it happens a lot in the township in different areas. It's not something you get in one area. I can't just say out of my mind, Extension 9 for example, you get a lot of murders there, because all the murders I've written about since I started in August are in different areas, I haven't done two in one area, so in different areas but in the township, all of them are in the township.

INT: Grahamstown East?

R2: Ja.

Part of the construction process of a news article is writing the article so as to adequately represent all of the aspects of the news accurately. This entails not only verifying the facts of the article, but representing all the parties which have a stake in the situation about which the article is written. This requires the journalist to approach a range of sources. One journalist describes her attempt at objectivity thus:

R1: For instance, if say it's about infrastructure in Grahamstown, then I go to the director of the infrastructure and technical services, as they call it here. And then I would interview the director and find out what is the problem if there's a problem and find out his side of the story. And then obviously go to the people who are directly affected by that particular subject, get comment from them. Are they being disadvantaged by whatever is happening. I try to get all sides of the story and give each and everyone involved in the subject an opportunity to respond.

This is clearly a response based on the journalistic professionalism ideal of objectivity and even in the explanation of how journalistic objectivity is achieved, there is a clear bias. Here, Richardson's argument regarding competing verbalisations of truth claims (Richardson 2007: 87) is clearly illustrated: the authoritative source (in this instance the director of infrastructure and technical services) is approached by the journalist before she approaches those whom she describes as 'directly affected'. This initial determination of an official source as primary over other sources illustrates that powerful voices have greater voice even in community, monitorial media than do others.

Richardson argues that journalistic ethics amounts to four basic aspects: "seeking and reporting truth; acting independently, of sources and other journalists; minimising harm; and [journalists] being accountable for their work" (Richardson 2007: 83). Arguably, there are already tensions in these ideas; for instance the seeking and reporting of truth may require dependence on sources, indeed, the act of selecting and constructing news articles is arguably entirely hinged on the dependency of the reporter on the source.

For instance, one journalist declares that her most reliable sources of information are official sources:

R1: In terms of the council here, in Makana, the people that always give you the reliable information would be the people involved in the council. Like your ward councillors and your PR [public relations] councillors that type of thing in the council because they know what is happening. They know first-hand what is decided, so you go straight to them and you get the information. And obviously you don't have to say 'ah no, you know, so-and-so told me', because there's a lot of confidential stuff that is being discussed but it doesn't mean that we can't get information because we have people like that. They're not malicious but they believe that the people of Makana need to know that stuff and their link to that would be *Grocott's Mail*.

When it comes to crime news reportage, the authoritative source is the police, or the courts. According to the crime news reporter, any additional source is purely human interest related:

R2: You see, the police, I have to have their comment on any story I do that's crime related, I just need to have their comment unless it's something that's happening in court. So most of the time I just go to them for that official comment that's coming from the police so that I know I can back myself up.

And:

R2: I go to a family to find out how they feel about the whole thing and what had happened. And just speak to them, that's if I can or if they want to talk.

In the instance of crime reporting at *Grocott's Mail* Richardson's sentiments seem to be particularly true. The student reporters discussed the relationship with the police as hinging entirely on the spokesperson for the municipality: Mali Govender. She was variously described as helpful, unavailable, busy, amongst other things but all the students agreed that she is the only in-road that reporters have into the Grahamstown police station:

SR1: Doesn't it jeopardise the evidence and stuff? So I think our channel is Mali Govender because she knows what she can and cannot say in terms of crime reporting, what's allowed to be published, what isn't. So if you go to a police officer at the station and said 'look, this happened, can you tell me something', they're not sure where their boundaries are, they tell you everything, you publish it, you jeopardise the paper and you jeopardise whoever is involved in the case, their jobs are jeopardised. So I think for that kind of thing Mali Govender is our port of call.

Seeking and reporting truth may also conflict with the idea of minimising harm when the truth of something important might endanger the lives of citizens. The example most often used here is military information and secrecy: the press cannot know particulars of military movements and the security in place in a country because once printed, that information becomes widely known to the public and can be used against an entire country.

This is a concern in Grahamstown which the student reporters discussed during the focus group, in light of a discussion about police sources and the difficulty of balancing legal restrictions and the public's right to know. One of the student reporters brought up a specific case in which the unique geography and close-knit circumstances played an important role:

SR3: The one thing I specifically remember was that girl, [victim], getting attacked in her home on African Street, and she was violently attacked, and everything, and I remember being all like 'I have this story to pitch, it's going to be great', it's the second day of the second week at *Grocott's* and everyone had already heard about it. Before me [student reporter] pitched it and I was like 'damn, I wanted that one', but she knew [the victim] and she could do it sensitively as well. But that story didn't end up being published because of the

police saying it would jeopardise the case and [the student reporter] was crying about it.

SR2: It was because the police said to [the student reporter] that if this got published, the girl would be targeted because it said somewhere in there that her gate was damaged and she could become a target, and it could jeopardise their investigation. And [the student reporter] didn't worry too much about that and then [the victim] called [the student reporter] in tears terrified for her life saying 'please, you can't publish this'. And then [the student reporter] had stuck her neck out a long way and worked very hard –

SR3: And she knew people at [estate agency], who to speak to.

SR2: So she'd dealt with some very difficult information and sources and also just shocked that she had the power to put someone's life in potentially in danger, and it was a friend of hers.

Social Practices

Newspaper content often points quite obviously to the ideals and ideologies of the society within which it finds itself being influenced and which it influences. When it comes to crime news reporting, the naturalisation of the crime event and the sheer extent of the number of crimes which are committed to be reported on every day is the starkest indicator of a social reality. In particular, there is a naturalisation of the attitudes associated with crime, in particular the idea that crimes are committed when victims allow them to happen by not being vigilant enough. A similar but more specific ideology is demonstrably present both in the press coverage of rape, and in the reactions of society to rape (see Bonnes 2010) which can be described as a 'blame the victim' mentality. In general when it comes to crime reporting specific mention is rarely made of the victim, but when there is specific mention made, it is significant in its connotations. For instance, in the News in Brief article headlined 'Sexual assault', the victim is specifically described as 'on her way' from one place to another when she was attacked and the spaces between which she was walking are often cited within the newspaper as being places of violence: Zolani and Hlalani. In this way the newspaper points out the way in which she could arguably have avoided being raped: by not walking in those areas, presumably by herself.

This mentality is even more obviously apparent in the articles which literally describe to the audience how not to become a victim of crime, and there are several examples from the six month period studied. From 13 January 'Warning as bogus bank staff trick clients'; from 20 January 'Vehicles, valuables at risk'; from 31 January 'If it's too cheap to be true'; from 17 February 'Hints for students'; from 9 March 'Laptops and cellphones'; from 2 May 'Late-night rape warning' and 'Muggers target men'; from 18 May 'IT alert' and 'Home-safety tips'; from 29 May 'How can you protect yourself – advice from the police' beneath an

article headlined ‘Cops brace for convicts’ about convicts granted early release from prison, and adjacent an article headlined ‘Prisoners who won’t be released’ about those types of offenses for which prisoners will not be released; from 1 June ‘Weekend-away tips’; from 12 June ‘Do not become vulnerable’; from 15 June ‘How to avoid rape – police advice’; from 26 June ‘Keep safe this fest’ adjacent an article headlined ‘Fest visitors [sic] safety warning’.

Fourteen articles in a six month period aim to educate the public as to how to prevent themselves from becoming the victims of crimes, often adjacent to articles which laud the police as the heroes who defend the public by arresting criminals. For instance on the same page on which the article headlined ‘How to avoid rape – police advice’ is printed, are three articles in the News in Brief which describe the police as having made arrests; the main article on the page concerns thieves having been caught with R800 000 worth of stolen property; and the secondary article is an article headlined ‘Still no arrests in school rape case’ (below which the ‘avoiding rape’ article is positioned adjacent the weather report for the week. The lead article on the page concerns police success in arresting thieves, where the secondary article, that which is assumed to be less important and so therefore less prominent on the page, concerns police failure to arrest a child rapist. The News in Brief demonstrates a similar regard for police success: the first two articles focus on police capturing criminal offenders; the third describes an offence and concludes by explaining that the police did arrest the offender because he faces a charge of robbery.

When asked about the proliferation of warnings that *Grocott’s Mail* runs in the first two pages of the newspaper, the student reporters who took part in the focus group cite a range of reasons, mostly journalistic, that these should be such common fare:

SR3: From my part when something like that happens it’s laziness on their part, because they feel like they’re doing something by maybe just putting a warning out, that’s how I feel. Like the 49M thing at the moment, ‘please put off your lights because we can’t actually provide you with power, so it’s your fault that you’re sucking all this power’. So then when you print a warning you’re saying ‘we warned you about this so you getting raped or pulled into a bush, that is your fault’.

However, this discussion devolves into a similar blame-shifting which the police are seen to be the centre of. This change of pace illustrates the extent to which the student reporter considers the police’s discourse regarding crime to be related to the newspapers’:

SR3: We don't claim responsibility, not even from the paper's point of view, from the police's point of view, don't claim responsibility for not being there, not to say that they must be in every spot twenty-four-seven – so it's like a little asterisk like, 'by the way'.

SR1: But it's like a disclaimer, 'we're not there but we warned you so, sorry'. And I think that that's wrong, rather spend the time you spend typing out warnings investigating more about the rapes that do happen in Grahamstown East, or whatever crimes happen here, but save that word space for actual things, not very limp warnings that don't do anything. Because people know, in South Africa, trust me, people know. We're not stupid.

The conversation then turns to victim blaming, and the discourse around whether it's the newspaper, or the police who are responsible for victim blaming, especially in the case of rape, is again blurred:

SR3: Ja, I think where a lot of the discourse around crime and reporting crime that maybe it's always your fault you left the window open so maybe it was used to –

SR1: It's like a discourse of blame. It's not explicit, it's not like, 'oh, you as the person that got raped, it's your fault for walking at night'.

SR2: Wearing a short skirt –

SR3: Ja, wearing a short skirt.

SR1: It's that subtle discourse of blame that underlies everything, like if your phone gets stolen, 'well, what were you doing with it.'

SR3: 'You shouldn't be holding it out in public', now that irritates me, like, that I can't use the stuff that I have on me because of the fear of being attacked –

SR1: And that's the warning that Mali Govender explicitly made me put into my article. 'Tell people when they have to take a call, back against the wall, survey the scene', that's bull. In what society do you feel like you can't take out your cellphone and talk to someone, because you can't walk with it for fear of being punched in the face and your cellphone taken away, which is what happened to that girl that I wrote about.

Supporting conclusions drawn by previous research (see Bonnes 2010 who researched rape discourse in the same newspaper), the above is supported by specific evidence from crime news articles related to rape. In rape articles the testimony of the woman involved about the rape event is often reported on in hedged terms like 'alleged' and 'allegedly', take for example the article cited above headlined 'Sexual assault'. However, in articles which report on other kinds of crimes these kinds of terms are seldom if ever used. In an article which appeared on the second page of the 11 May edition, headlined 'Cellphone arrests', which reports on two men appearing in court after mugging and threatening a school pupil with a knife, the wording is categorical: "The teenager was followed by a group of men as

she walked to school in the morning. One of them confronted her and threatened her with a knife.” These two sentences demonstrate no doubt as to whether these events, as relayed by the victim, actually occurred in contrast with ‘Sexual assault’: “It is alleged that the victim was on her way to Hlalani when she was confronted by an unknown man who sexually assaulted and stabbed her on the lower body before fleeing.” The latter sentence not only hedges the validity of the statement by using the word ‘allegedly’, but in euphemising that the woman was raped by calling it ‘sexual assault’, it also minimises the seriousness of the crime. The former article does neither despite the youth and gender of the victim, and the gender of the attackers: the pivotal difference appears to be the kind of crime. Where rape is considered taboo the newspaper hedges to the point of denying the rape ever took place; in the event of other kinds of crimes, such as the mugging cited above, there is no doubt as to whether the crime took place.

The criminals reported on by *Grocott’s Mail* are most often men. This is borne out by the crime and courts reporter who unabashedly refers to criminals in the masculine, and by using the masculine pronoun:

R2: Because you can’t always say ‘a man’, ‘a man’, ‘a man’. You just have to give people an idea of what the situation is – how old the man is usually works well.

Counting the number of gendered criminals in the selection of 32 articles revealed that 23 articles dealt with males in the position of criminal, or villain, while only three articles describe the same character function as female. Eight articles do not mention whether the criminal or villain is male or female.

Furthermore, 13 of the criminals mentioned in the articles reported on were between the ages of 24 and 34. Only four were younger, and five older. According to the crime and courts reporter at *Grocott’s Mail*, the ages of the criminals are used only to differentiate between characters in the article, largely for legal reasons:

R2: Usually with crime briefs you get the statement from the police, the person hasn’t appeared in court, so you can’t use their names. So you have to just use their ages until you go to court and report on what you heard in court then you can start using the person’s name but when you just get those press releases you can’t use their names because they haven’t appeared in court and maybe they haven’t even been charged for that murder.

Furthermore, the reporter says that part of his selection process is to determine whether the criminal or victim is unusual in some way:

R2: I don't follow rape cases because a lot of the time you can't use a lot of the information that we have on rape stories, a lot of things need to be confidential, so, I choose not to unless it's something really that's out of the ordinary. There are a lot of rape cases that you find in the crime briefs as well, it happens a lot so I can't always, unless it's a child. If it's a child it's different, it doesn't happen a lot so I would follow that up and see and go to court obviously to keep track of the cases.

The crime most reported on in *Grocott's Mail* is property theft, with seven articles dedicated to reporting on property theft directly. An additional three articles dealt with police warnings as to how to prevent one from becoming a victim of crime: two of these article dealt with preventing property theft.

Rape is the crime next most reported on, with sex articles in the selection dealing with rape cases in various areas of the justice system, from investigation by police, to arrests and sentencing by courts.

The remaining types of crimes are more rarely dealt with. For instance, there was only one article dealing with fraud; one dealing with vandalism; one with possession of arms and ammunition and one dealing with homicide resulting from negligent driving. Housebreaking is more often reported on and so are police warnings. Homicide and attempted homicide are fairly frequently reported on.

This is in complete contrast with the crime and courts reporter's own perceptions of the articles that appear in the *Grocott's Mail*:

R2: A lot of it is mostly robberies and housebreaking and so you can't really follow that and make a story out of that unless you see a pattern or something and then you can report on that and how it started and how it's gone. But basically what I usually do is, there's been a lot of murders in this area in the past month or so and sometimes when I can I go to the families of the people who for instance, a person who was murdered.

And:

R2: So I follow a lot of murder cases but I go to court as well. I'm not sure but there's a lot of other interesting stuff, like there's a guy, [citizen], who has thrown

stones into the High court, broke windows. So that's an interesting story but that's been done a lot but I've now continued to follow that story.

And:

Q: So you don't focus on robbery and house breaking because they happen a lot?

R3: Ja, they happen a lot. So unless somebody's seriously hurt and there's a shootout, and we get pictures, some of the things we need pictures to go with. Whereas a murder you can just take a picture of somebody, a family member, maybe an emotional family member or somebody. Robberies and other stuff you just need pictures to go with, I think. So without pictures the story [is not so interesting], ja, it's not so interesting.

However, this discrepancy is easily explained by the change of reporter between the time of the Critical Discourse Analysis and the interviews. The reporter that was in the position of crime and courts reporter at the time of the interviews was new to the job, and not the same reporter as had been reporting the beat during the time of the Critical Discourse Analysis.

The most crime reported on emanated from Grahamstown East (as taken from and including Sun City Informal settlement and Fingo Village, and Eastwards). A full seventeen of the articles dealt with crimes which were committed in the Eastern half of Grahamstown. Only nine articles dealt with crimes committed West of Sun City and Fingo and thus designated Grahamstown West. Two articles dealt with crimes committed further afield into other areas of the Eastern Cape and six articles dealt with crimes which were not described as having occurred anywhere more specific than in the Grahamstown area.

The crimes most commonly occurring in Grahamstown West appear to be theft: property theft (one notable case of credit card theft which made the front page involved a lecturer at the Journalism and Media Studies department at Rhodes), motor vehicle theft and business robbery. One article dealt with drunken driving, where the driver who was arrested had driven into a wall in Grahamstown West. In the vast majority of these articles, the criminal has been caught, and in some, the criminals are being heard in court or are being sentenced. In only one case (the credit card theft mentioned above) the police are framed as incompetent as they refuse to investigate the crime. When *Grocott's Mail* reports on Grahamstown West crime the police are framed as incompetent if they are not investigating.

Furthermore, the crimes which occur in Grahamstown West are more likely to receive full-length article treatment than those reported on that occur in Grahamstown East. For

instance, 'Signature no proof of crime' mentioned above, appeared on the front page of the newspaper, as do 'Security officer outsmarts 'car-jamming' crook', 'thieves fight over botched job', and 'Solidarity with rape survivors' which is an article reporting on Rhodes University's annual 'Sexual Violence equals Silence' protest. The two business robbery articles which are reported on having occurred in Grahamstown West also appear as full length articles: 'Pirates thief caught' and 'No bail for Fishaways heist accused'.

This contrast between coverage of crimes that occur in Grahamstown West and Grahamstown East was reflected on by the student journalists in the focus group discussion. The students were asked why this contrast should exist:

SR3: Middle-class values, socio-economic factors, advertising. I mean last night apparently one of my digsmates saw the owner of [a restaurant] who's also a big property owner in Grahamstown sitting with a money clip of like R5000. So property obviously is important to those people who actually pay for advertising. And I just think, also, what I struggle with and it puts me off about reporting is speaking a second language, I don't speak a second language and to go to Grahamstown East is the worst. Because I mean that's where this whole course comes from, making the first year journ students learn, and I wish I'd done that because that language barrier holds me back every time and I wish I could do more –

SR1: It's actually debilitating trying to – but *Grocott's* readership is so small and they're all middle class, or the vast majority, so I think you write and you report on things that cater to middle class values and cater to middle class interest. I think they would lose readership and lose advertising if they reported on the rapes and the murders and whatever's going on in the location and also in a language that the majority of them can understand, because we've got the Xhosa page that we run every two weeks or something. And you know in my *Grocott's Mail* reflection that I had to do, I said you know to do that more often would alienate the majority of people are buying the paper, it would alienate advertisers who are the readership who actually pays for the paper as opposed to you might be a black domestic worker buying the paper and sharing it amongst her family and her friends and passing it off, and that's not going into Grocott's but it's not one middle-class person buying, each person will buy one. So the paper should reflect their concerns, white concerns, middle-class concerns, concerns that deal with property which is a big thing, which deals with theft of their things by black people and that's just how it is unfortunately, everywhere actually. I mean most papers except for The Daily Sun.

SR3: I mean it's just so sad that is the majority of Grahamstown right there (indicates Grahamstown East), it's no way that we outnumber them, I think, it's so sad because you're putting profits first over people and providing a service to them. And as much as we say it's the language barrier and it's middle class values it doesn't excuse that we're not telling their stories. They need to actually start reporting on them, to be quite honest, but it is so difficult. [The editor] does try – SR2: Ja, [the editor] makes a huge effort to be representative of the town.

In contrast with what appears to be a gold-star record for police work in Grahamstown West, a significantly higher number of crimes reported on occurring in Grahamstown East are reported as under investigation by the police. The number of articles in which crimes have been ‘solved’ (the criminals arrested, the court hearing or sentencing the criminal) are far fewer if the crimes emanate from Grahamstown East. For instance, in the article ‘Shop owners stabbed, robbed’, the police invite the readers of the newspaper to assist police in apprehending the criminals by asking for anyone with information of the business robbery to call the police. The newspaper also reported that police are investigating a murder and a rape, as well as theft.

All-in-all, the crimes which are reported on in the newspaper which have occurred in Grahamstown East are much more violent. Mugging (in one case with a knife), several instances of rape, a few instances of murder, assault, and many more instances of drunk driving than in Grahamstown West.

Grahamstown East crimes are also rarely given full-length article treatment, and are instead subject to News in Brief shorts of one or two sentences. For instance, in the article ‘Food and phone’ a man is mugged on the street, in ‘Shop owners stabbed, robbed’ a violent attack is perpetrated on a resident of Extension 9, and in ‘Audiovisual equipment’ a man is beaten and stolen from in Vukani’. These articles are examples of articles which are treated as News in Briefs despite their obvious news appeal. Further, an article such as ‘Ammunition’ is a unique article with particular public interest and appears as a single sentence in the News in Brief column. Yet another example: ‘Multiple drunk driving arrests’ is an article which explains that eight people were arrested in one weekend for drunk driving. This article is not only of public interest but is highly topical in Grahamstown, being a student town. The main article on the second page of the edition in which ‘Multiple drunk driving arrests’ appears is headlined ‘Bookkeeper to lose assets’: an article which describes the fraud and theft of an accountant working for the Grahamstown West veterinary clinic.

These observations are borne out by the crime and courts reporter at *Grocott’s Mail*:

Q: So where does crime happen in Grahamstown?

R2: I’m from here, so I know a lot of people, and it happens in the township a lot, we get a lot of murders happening in the township and the informal settlements, the newer settlements also. I can’t explain why but it happens a lot in the township in different areas. It’s not something you get in one area. I can’t just say out of my mind, extension 9 for example, you get a lot of murders there, because all the murders I’ve written about since I started in August are in different areas, I

haven't done two in one area, so in different areas but in the township, all of them are in the township.

Q: Grahamstown East?

R2: Ja.

This reporter does not argue any particular preference for stories despite being from Grahamstown. Indeed, he argues that if the story has journalistic qualities, he will follow it up. In this way, he argues that whether a story is reported on has more to do with journalistic ideology than with social and cultural ideas:

Q: How would you choose between a housebreaking and shooting in Grahamstown West and a murder in Grahamstown East?

R2: It depends on what I have. If there are pictures, if maybe somebody took pictures or I took pictures myself, of the robbery and there's a murder that happened I'd do both. I go with anything that's news. It doesn't matter where it happens, if a murder happens we report and stuff like that.

Conclusion

News discourse is ideological, illustrated here most often as creating an 'other'; dangerous and frightening. The mode of ideology most often employed in crime news is fragmentation. As Thompson argues

Relations of domination may be maintained not by unifying individuals in a collectivity, but by fragmenting those individuals and groups that might be capable of mounting an effective challenge to dominant groups, or by orientating forces of potential opposition towards a target which is projected as evil, harmful or threatening (1995: 65).

This is achieved through differentiation and expurgation of the other in which the differentiations of the out-group are noted (for instance by pointing to the space of crime and constructing a sense of danger around that space, Hlalani, Extension 6, Joza), and the construction of an evil and harmful enemy (for example, by describing in detail the violent and dramatic crimes which someone from Hlalani, Extension 6, or Joza committed). In this way, a clear image of a dangerous other and a dangerous space is created via an ideological discourse of fear, violence, harm and danger.

This fragmentation is glossed over further by the use of euphemistic language, which coats this othering in a veil of concealment. This is most often carried out by using language which conceals the genuine nature of an institution such as 'the police' or 'the courts', and make

them seem both infallible and unerringly just. However, euphemism can also normalise. By polishing words like ‘steal’, and ‘murder’, crime becomes normalised and the efforts of police, when they fail to yield results, are justified because crime is constructed as a normal part of life. This creates an opposition between the infallibility of the legal system, from police to courts, and simultaneously justifies their inability to perform their function with greater success.

These constructions, of a dangerous other, and of this paradoxical legal system can be smoothed out and understood by the application of the story-telling device of narrative. When these contradictions and constructions are slotted into a neat crime news package, they make sense, tell a story, and often create very little room for contradiction or question, despite the contradictions inherent within them. By utilising narrative content and importantly, narrative structure, the contradictions of the dangerous other, and the legal system can be resolved into an explicable story which is easily understood and digested by the reading public.

Other elements in the construction of a crime narrative, such as naming, modality, lexicon, syntax, transitivity, and presupposition carry contradictions in the narrative, but allow the author to frame them in a logical way. Naming, reference and prediction can be used to construct the in-group and the dangerous other within the context of the narrative content. The villain and the hero are set up through the association with the words they are aligned with, and as such, the lines between good and bad are drawn. Similarly, lexicon can associate good and evil with other elements – such as place, space and action, to construct the in-group from the dangerous other. The categorical language associated with news articles lends credence to the construction of the dangerous other. The notable exception is the cases where the dangerous other is constructed by a fragile and emotional woman.

Presupposition (the assumption of the author of a text that the audience knows enough to ‘fill in the gaps’) relates to social practices. As the constructors of the text are equally members of the social network of which the audience consists, social knowledge becomes a necessary part of the construction of a text. It is largely social truths (see for instance the section on the Huntley thesis) that inform that construction of a text within a social context. Ideas and ideologies regarding spaces, places, people, activities and institutions are normalised and to an extent, codified by the media which acts within the hegemony of the society in which they participate. As such, ideas around dangerous others, dangerous places,

and good and heroic institutions are reproduced and reinforced through discourses which to a large extent, fail to question them.

This is all informed by the discursive practices of the institution of journalism itself. Through various tensions in the newsroom created by the hegemonic norms of society, the requirements of financial security, the professional journalistic ideologies imposed on the journalist, and the normative roles of the media, the text that is produced is a result of all these factors. This creates a tight and unwavering dedication, in the form of a crime news narrative, to the discursive, social, hegemonic, and normative values of society, disallowing the questioning of institutions, representations, stereotypes or indeed the contradictions inherent therein.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

Media crime fulfils various functions both for the news consumer and for the media outlet. It is a steady and reliable source of content which can be drawn on to fill empty space in pages or dead air in broadcasts and to be a reliable audience pleaser. Crime is fascinating – one only has to consider the volume of it on TV to conclude that audiences enjoy watching it – in entertainment and news media varieties (Doyle 2006: 869). On top of this fascination, it is not the mundane crimes that happen every day that are compelling and make for returning audiences. Crimes like housebreaking and rape (unless it involves a child or significant violence) are not sensational enough to draw audiences; as was noted by the crime journalist working at *Grocott's Mail*. Murder, according to the same journalist, is what the people want, and certainly, it is what he endeavours to present to them.

Readers also want closure, resolution and justice. They expect to hear from the authoritative voice of the keepers of law and order. These voices provide the framework around which journalists might conduct their business of presenting the crime news to their audiences. Police spokespeople not only dictate which crimes are of enough import for the newspaper to report on, but often also dictate the ways in which the articles represent the crimes, according to the student journalists who have worked for *Grocott's Mail*. Police discourses around crime are often translated directly into the newspaper: criminals are individual deviants, not victims of the legacy of apartheid or a capitalist system, or of social mechanisms that leave them desperate. Nor are police overworked, battling to solve crimes and put criminals away. Indeed, crimes in the newspaper are solved, the police involved in the case heroes, and the victims grateful and relieved.

The media serve a central function in society, arguably to bring hegemonic ideas into the public sphere, to attract debate and reach consensus, and to represent consensus about an issue. Those then who are not best served by the consensus are silenced as media define and redefine deviance and the justice system in conjunction with media images of criminals, crimes and spaces, exert control over ideas and individuals (Doyle 2006: 875). At *Grocott's Mail* then, the media take on a law and order perspective of crime and legal structures, condemning the criminal, vilifying and demonising deviance. In the context of a country which has laid claim to a pandemic of crimes across the gamut of definitions of crime from major political corruption, to petty theft, this vilification has serious consequences for the political and social stability of the country.

In a microcosm of this experience, *Grocott's Mail*, in the small, close-knit community of Grahamstown West, unwittingly vilifies based on apartheid segregation structures which persist in the city today. Although the effects of media crime are not within the scope of this thesis, it is hardly without concern that students who have worked at the newspaper patently argue that financial imperatives and middle-class values account for the representations of crime that prevail in the newspaper.

As the dangerous other is constructed by these pressures that bear down on the journalist, so is the association of the dangerous other to the dangerous space and place. It is not simply and without question a result of the prevailing apartheid city planning which has segregated not only the town, but the minds as well. It is hegemonic norms which have constructed a binary opposition in the town. Good and bad, civilised and uncivilised, urban and rural, developed and undeveloped. Grahamstown East is constructed literally and figuratively on the ground, where people avenge murder using pitchforks: the rural peasant in a rural and backward setting, juxtaposed startlingly with the civilised brick and mortar Grahamstown West where credit cards are stolen, and concern for property outweighs the concern to avenge a murder with any implement whatsoever. Therein the contradiction; therein the construction of the in-group and the dangerous other, reproduced within the pages of the newspaper.

In a situation where the tensions and constraints on the journalist are not only constant but often highly contradictory, the result can only be undemocratic representations of human beings. In this instance, news values and financial imperatives more obviously than any other factor pull the representations of crime into the deviant, dark side of Grahamstown, simultaneously vilifying and producing exotic, dangerous others and spaces, allowing the middle-classes to maintain an ideology congruent with the apartheid era in which the face of crime is black, and marginalised (Hartley 1984: 109), and to a large extent, not only justifies the vilification of the marginalised, but maintains marginalisation.

To conclude, I shall return to Reiner's six conclusions of the representations of media crime to conclude whether this research has found similar results. Reiner found that crime is a prominent feature of all media. This holds true for *Grocott's Mail* as at least the first two, but often the first three pages of the newspaper are almost entirely concerned with crime news events. Reiner also concluded that violent crime and those crimes least likely to happen are most often represented. Although this research, being qualitative, did not conclusively prove this, it did find that violent crime is a very prominent feature of the newspaper's

representations of crime. Furthermore, it was demonstrated that the journalists consider violent, and infrequently occurring crime more news worthy than, for instance, white collar crimes like fraud. Reiner found that criminals are generally older and have higher status than statistics suggest and that children are frequently featured in crime news. Again, whilst this qualitative research could not conclude this, the crime journalist interviewed did indicate that he was more likely to report on a crime if a child was involved. He found that the risk of crime is portrayed as serious, but that property crime is underrepresented. These hold true for the current study. In particular, police issued warnings printed in the newspaper, and the reporter's own indication that property crime occurs too frequently to be news worthy, prove this to be in line with these findings.

Of all the findings which Reiner made, that of the police having a high success rate and a high degree of integrity, this holds most true for this study. Indeed, largely due to the sourcing techniques that the journalists employ, police are represented as not only highly capable of capturing and prosecuting criminals, but also that they will go out of their way to do so. Reiner's final finding is also supported by the reporter at the newspaper: the suffering of the victim and their family is a very influential factor in crime news reporting.

As has been demonstrated, the media play a central role in marginalising people and places through a process which involves the demonisation of marginalised groups. However, this process of demonising groups has a strongly political and historical foundation in South African where the recent history of the country involved the systematic and legalised demonising of a group of people based on nothing more concrete than their appearance. This historical dimension is important because the culture and the tangible geographies that were created out of this system still remain in a contemporary South Africa which asserts to be democratic.

In this thesis I have shown how the historical influence of apartheid segregation provides the ideal breeding ground for marginalisation to continue to occur within the discourses of media, especially in a town like Grahamstown where the effects of apartheid are still visible and tangible in the geography of the city. Importantly, this demonisation of space is strongly linked to the marginalisation of people, and this process breeds a particular representation of marginalised people relating to crime news.

Although South Africa is in no way yet fully integrated, the kinds of dangerous, violent and fear-inducing discourses that the media associate with marginalised people and places arguably significantly stunt the country's ability to integrate more fully.

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